

VI. PERMANENT OBSERVERS

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Permanent observer status in the Organization of American States was established by the General Assembly at its first regular session, held in San José, Costa Rica, in 1971 (AG/RES. 50 (I-O/71)). The permanent observers participate in the Organization's activities and contribute to its programs. As of the date of this report, there were 51 permanent observers in the Organization.

The Office of External Relations was in charge of the activities involving the permanent observers, who were interested in and participated in the Organization's work through informative meetings, documents sharing and special events.

Azerbaijan and Armenia received permanent observer status during the period covered in this report. That brought the total number of OAS permanent observers to 51, as follows: Algeria, Angola, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, the European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, the Holy See, Hungary, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Latvia, Lebanon, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Yemen.

During this period, the Organization received cash contributions of approximately US\$7.0 million from Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the European Union. It also received contributions in kind of some US\$1.4 million from France, Israel, Italy, Korea, Russia and Spain. Their support went mainly toward the following areas: democracy, human rights, settlement of conflicts, the fight against drug trafficking, terrorism, sustainable development and environment, the fellowship program and the programs of the Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN). Australia –which does not have permanent observer status- gave the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD) a grant of US\$39,000. Appendix G of this report itemizes the respective contributions.

Similarly, some permanent observers opted to hold events and special exhibits at OAS headquarters. Prominent among these were the events held to celebrate Azerbaijan's National Day, and several exhibits put on by Spain and Russia. Finally, it is important to point out that the permanent observer countries were present for the regular session of the OAS General Assembly held in San Jose, Costa Rica.