

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

In keeping with the policy and practice decided by the General Assembly and with the pertinent decisions of the Councils, the Office of the Secretary General, under the provisions of Article 111 of the Charter, directs the functions associated with the promotion of economic, social, juridical, educational, scientific, and cultural relations among all the member states of the Organization.

Office of the Secretary General

Over the past year, the activities of the Office of the Secretary General were guided by the hemispheric agenda and the mandates assigned by the Summits of the Heads of State and Government of the Americas and by the need to respond to specific developments in certain member states.

Overall, the Office supported and complemented the efforts of the various organs, secretariats, departments, and sections in a wide range of issues: promotion and defense of democracy; protection of human rights; promotion of good governance; the fight against poverty and discrimination; preservation of the environment and the quest for sustainable development; the prevention of and war on crime; development of the inter-American legal system; stimulating partnership for development among the countries of the Americas to achieve prosperity and development; and the fight against corruption, drug abuse and terrorism.

The Office provided political and administrative support for the Secretary General's efforts to solve a series of political issues in the Hemisphere, especially his efforts to solve the political crisis in Ecuador and to help negotiate a political compromise between the Government of Nicaragua and the two main political parties, as well as the Secretary General's direct participation in the process of preparing general elections in Haiti.

The Office also conducted research, prepared drafts of the Secretary General's speeches, and liaised with the permanent missions, government agencies, and civil society. The Office organized the journeys of the Secretary General to the Summit of the Americas in Mar del Plata; the assumptions of office of the presidents of Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, and Haiti; ministerial conferences; official visits to member states; and to other international conferences and meetings, including those held at United Nations headquarters in New York.

As for administrative issues, the Office of the Secretary General triggered a series of substantial changes in the way the Organization is funded, managed, and organized in order to achieve disciplined, transparent, and responsible management of the Organization's human and financial resources. Thus, the Office designed the new structure of the General Secretariat, which the Secretary General submitted to the Permanent Council on December 15, 2005 in the form of Executive Order 05-13 (a revised version of which was issued on February 14, 2006). The new organic structure was based on a thorough examination of the mandates assigned by the member states, on identification of the functions performed by each area of the General Secretariat in order to comply with those mandates, and on previous reorganization efforts. The new structure comprises four main axes (the Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights; the Secretariat for Political Affairs; the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development; and the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security), plus the units to support the political organs (all of which are under the responsibility of the Assistant Secretary General), the Secretariat for Administration and Finance, and the Department of International legal Affairs.

The Office of the Secretary General promoted the establishment of the Project Evaluation Committee, which is responsible for assessing the relevance and importance of projects already under way and any

future proposals for projects to be executed with funds administered by the Organization. It also helped establish the Committee on Resource Mobilization, which is responsible for drawing up an integral strategy for the Organization's fund-raising programs and for evaluating the outcomes of activities financed by external donors.

Likewise, the Office prompted the establishment of the Department of Planning, Control, and Evaluation, which is charged with coordinating the General Secretariat's planning, control, and evaluation procedures; developing and administering the instruments used for well-coordinated management; organizing programming and budgetary control in coordination with the Secretariat for Administration and Finance; and obtaining the managerial data and institutional statistics needed for strategic decision making.

Finally, the Office of the Secretary General, working closely with the Secretariat for Administration and Finance, managed to have the General Assembly adopt, at a special session convened at the end of January 2006, a transitory scale of quota assessments that will determine the contributions of member states to the Organization for the next two years. The Assembly also adopted a new budgetary cap of US\$81.5 million for 2007, thereby laying the groundwork for the first increase in the OAS Regular Fund in more than a decade.

Department of Planning, Control and Evaluation

The Department of Planning, Control and Evaluation (DPCE) was created by Executive Order 05-13 Rev. 1. It reports to the Office of the Chief of Staff of the Secretary General and carries out the functions provided in Executive Order 05-15 of December 21, 2005.

The DPCE was created in order to coordinate the planning, control and evaluation processes of the General Secretariat, including the Secretariats, Departments, and Offices that report to the General Secretariat; develop and administer such instruments as it may require for the coordinated management of those processes; manage budget programming and oversight in coordination with the Secretariat for Administration and Finance; and take steps to obtain the management information and institutional statistics necessary to adopt strategic decisions. The Department also acts as Technical Secretariat of the Project Evaluation Committee, created by Executive Order 05-11 of October 31, 2005, revised on January 12, 2006.

The DPCE went into operation in January 2006 and initially formed a staff composed of a Director and five professionals. Between January and March this year it pursued activities in three fields: development of planning, evaluation and control instruments; budget programming; and project evaluation.

In the area of planning, evaluation and control instruments, the DPCE provided training to its staff and established methodologies for setting up a management instrument panel and procedures for planning and control, effectiveness evaluation, and project evaluation and follow up. At present, these instruments are under development.

As regards budget programming, the Department planned and implemented a programmatic goal-setting process for each of the dependencies in the General Secretariat with a view to preparation of the 2007 budget. The Department held 10 workshops, which were attended by more than 120 staff members of the General Secretariat. This process was carried out using methodology furnished by the DPCE that establishes a goal classification framework organized by products, processes, and sub-processes mainly in accordance with Organization mandates. This work has paved the way for the preparation of the Annual Operating Plan (OAP) as the first step in a strategic planning process in the Organization. The Department has also been involved in every presentation and discussion of the 2007 draft budget of the

Secretary General with the political organs of the Organization, contributing programmatic information presented for the first time in the OAS budget programming process.

Furthermore, in the area of project evaluation, the Department has provided technical secretariat services to the Project Evaluation Committee (PEC) at all five of the meetings it has held. It has created and put into operation a working group in support of the PEC, which it coordinates. The Working Group has met on four occasions to date, and the DPCE has processed around 30 project proposals to evaluate their pertinence and relevance in the light of the mandates of the political organs. In addition, it has developed instruments in support of the CEP and its working group, such as designs for project profiles to be submitted to the CEP and development of an instrument to analyze the pertinence of project proposals presented. Also under development is a database with which to manage information on OAS projects.

Department of Legal Services

The DLS was created by Executive Order 05-13 Rev. 1. It reports to the Office of the Chief of Staff of the Secretary General and provides legal advisory services on matters within its sphere of competence.

Inquiries

Between March 2005 and February 2006, the Department of Legal Services (DLS) answered, in writing, 964 inquiries from various offices of the General Secretariat, from the political bodies, and from the delegations. Of these, 441 were legal opinions. Some 326 agreements were reviewed. The institutions that made most use of the Department's services were the Secretariat for Administration and Finance, which made 250 inquiries; SEDI, accounting for 197; the Secretariat for Political Affairs, which accounted for 170; the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security, which made 87 inquiries; the Office of the Secretary General, with 52; the Office of the Assistant Secretary General with 43; and the Department of External Relations, which accounted for 21 inquiries.

Advisory Services to the General Secretariat

The Department collaborated in the drafting and review of rules and regulations, including Executive Orders on: "Restructuring of the General Secretariat"; "Department of International Legal Affairs and the Office of the Legal Advisor to the Secretary General"; "Transfer of the Coordinating Office for the Offices and Units of the General Secretariat in the Member States to the Office of the Assistant Secretary General"; "Creation of the Project Evaluation Committee"; "Contracting of Professional Personnel and Independent Contractors to Provide Professional Services to the Secretariat of the Inter-American Children's Institute, and the Permanent Secretariat of the Inter-American Commission of Women: Measures to Achieve a More Equitable Geographic Representation"; "Creation of the Committee on Resource Mobilization"; "Functions of the Department of Planning, Control and Evaluation"; and "Process of Negotiating, Preparing, Reviewing, Signing and Registering Agreements in the General Secretariat".

The Department of Legal Services collaborated in the preparation of the Directives of the Secretary General on: "Observance of the General Standards, and Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Rules Governing the Operations of the General Secretariat;" and "Guidelines for Performance Contracts (CPRs) for the Execution of Projects Financed with External Funds."

The DLS took part in the meetings held by the Assistant Secretary General in preparation for the coming General Assembly, and provided advisory services on other matters.

The Department of Legal Services provided advice to the Chief of Staff of the Secretary General on administrative and labor matters connected with the IIN, as well as on other issues.

The Department collaborated with the Special Mission of the OAS in Haiti in the preparation, coordination, supervision, and delivery to the Haitian authorities of voter identity cards, and in the bidding and selection process for companies to offer goods and services connected with identity cards.

The DLS provided assistance to SEDI in drafting and negotiating agreements with donors for execution of specific projects, and in preparing model agreements for project execution. It cooperated in the preparation of documents connected with the Fourth Stage of the Project to Rebuild Housing in Honduras, and took part in the respective bidding and contracting. It reviewed the model agreements for projects financed by FEMCIDI.

The Department of Legal Services provided advice to the Executive Secretariat of the IACHR in the review of project execution agreements with donors, and on labor matters.

The DLS collaborated with the Department for the Promotion of Democracy in the review of: the agreements on privileges and immunities; contracts for electoral observation missions in countries such as Bolivia, Guyana, Peru, Surinam, St. Vincent and The Grenadines, and Venezuela; and projects on: electronic voting; modernization of the state; and promotion of citizen participation in electoral processes. It collaborated with the Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia in the review of contracts.

The DLS helped the Department of Sustainable Development with the wording and negotiation of an amendment to the agreement for the project on the "Guarani Aquifer System" financed by the World Bank; answering enquiries on labor issues; and review of contracts with suppliers for the project on the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network.

The Department advised and helped the Tourism and Small Enterprise Section successfully to register two brands with the United States Patent and Trademarks Office.

The Department of Legal Services provided advice to the Secretariat for Administration and Finance on the negotiation and drafting of different documents, such as rental agreements for office space located in the General Secretariat Building, and contracts for renovation of the Main Building. It provided advisory services on budgetary and administrative issues having to do with the interpretation of rules to be applied in concrete cases, such as requests for hearings and reconsideration, repatriation benefits, and personnel policies. It provided advice on the application of the Agreement with the host country on Tax Refunds. It took part in the drafting of executive orders on the prohibition of workplace harassment and protection of whistleblowers, informants and witnesses in the General Secretariat. It has also been providing assistance to the Department of Human Resources in training for investigators and advisers in cases of workplace and sexual harassment.

The DLS collaborated in the drafting and review of administrative memoranda on policy for use of CPRs; review of the CPR form; rules and procedure for the use of software for which the General Secretariat possesses a user's license; administrative procedures and policies on services provided by the Office of Information and Technology Services; liability of officials who have the authority to bind General Secretariat funds; and policy and procedure with respect to cellular telephones. It also conducted the negotiations for the transfer of the 401(m) Retirement Plan to new trustees and administrators.

The DLS cooperated with the Office of the Inspector General by reviewing the terms of reference of the contracts to conduct audits in member states, by answering inquiries, and by participating in audits done of projects and cases, providing the proper legal foundation.

Advice was provided on incorporation and taxes to non-profit entities, such as the Trust for the Americas, the Model OAS General Assembly (MOAS) Inter-American Studies Foundation, and the Young Americas Business Trust.

The Department served on various committees of the General Secretariat as members and/or legal advisors. These included the Insurance Committee, the Selection and Awards Committee, the Sales Committee, the Board of Trustees of the Medical Benefits Trust Fund, and the Leo Rowe Memorial Fund.

Advisory Services to the Political Organs

The DLS provided advisory services at meetings of the General Assembly and the Permanent Council, mainly on administrative, budgetary, labor, and procedural matters. It provided advice to the Permanent Council and the CAAP in a number of areas, including preparation of draft resolutions; creation of guidelines on the use of funds of the conferences subprogram; and the efforts to find a solution to the problem of increasing member state quotas.

The Department provided advice to CIDI, CEPCIDI, and the IACD Management Board on regulatory and procedural matters, including preparation of the Partnership for Development Plan.

The Department of Legal Services advised CICAD on activities connected with its multilateral evaluation programs, legal development, arms control, and control of money laundering, including participation in the regular and specialized meetings, meetings of governmental expert groups on evaluation of policies against drugs and money laundering, and international events on control of illicit trafficking in firearms and ammunition. It offered technical assistance to several member states, by reviewing draft legislative proposals against drugs, money laundering, and illicit trafficking in firearms and ammunition.

The DLS prepared draft resolutions for CITEL and advised its Secretariat on matters connected with the formulation of the draft budget, use of specific funds, application of the Inter-American Convention on an International Amateur Radio Permit, and legal nature of the mandates of the Summit's process.

The Department collaborated with the General Assembly of Delegates of the CIM.

The DLS advised the IIN on the application of its Statutes and Rules of Procedure, and on its Strategic Plan.

The Department of Legal Services cooperated with the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) and with the Permanent Council's Committee for Hemispheric Security by amending the documents for normalizing the juridical ties between the OAS and the IADB. It cooperated with the IADB and the Inter-American Defense College in the review of contracts.

The DLS provided advisory services to the General Committee and the Committee on Inter-American Summits Management.

The DLS advised the Office of the Director General of the IICA on the creation of a new system of evaluation, merit awards, and privileges and immunities. It advised the Executive Committee and the Special Advisory Committee on administrative matters.

The Department cooperated with the Retirement and Pension Committee by drafting new provisions applicable to cases of divorce; and by drafting guidelines for the participation of the Secretary Treasurer of the Retirement and Pension Fund in the Administrative Committee of the 401(m) Plan.

The DLS provided assistance to the Rowe Fund Committee in connection with its policy on collection of arrears.

Litigation

The Department of Legal Services provided advice on tailoring decision-making to avoid litigation. It helped hearing officers and the Reconsideration Committee to find solutions to labor disputes keeping in mind the best interests of the General Secretariat. The Department secured extrajudicial settlement agreements and thus averted complaints against the Organization.

Department of External Relations

The Department of External Relations was created by Executive Order 05-13 Rev. 1. It is a dependency of the Office of the Chief of Staff of the Secretary General and performs functions set out in Executive Order 05-15 of December 21, 2005.

The Department's mission is to advise the various departments, offices, and units of the General Secretariat and the governing bodies on all activities related to external relations, while promoting and maintaining contacts with the permanent observers, the nongovernmental organizations, academic institutions, the headquarters country of the Organization, the private sector, and non-profits, among others. Detailed information regarding the activities of the permanent observers is contained as Chapter VI of this Report.

Lecture Series of the Americas

The Lecture Series of the Americas was created by Permanent Council resolution 870 in September 2004 to enrich hemispheric debate on the main topics on the Inter-American agenda and was formally launched in January 2005, thanks to the sponsorship of Universidad de San Martín de Porres. This initiative consists of monthly conferences at which renowned personalities of international stature share their knowledge and experience with the general public. After each lecture there is an exchange of views on the presentation by a panel of experts on the topics addressed at the conference. In 2005 we had a number of prestigious speakers, including former President of the United States, Jimmy Carter; former President of the Inter-American Development Bank, Enrique Iglesias; the President of the International Criminal Court, Philippe Kirsch; John Taylor, Former Under Secretary of the Treasury for International Affairs; Derek Walcott, Nobel Laureate for Literature; Alejandro Miro Quesada, President of the Inter-American Press Association; José Miguel Insulza, Secretary General of the OAS; Felipe González former President of Spain; George Alleyne, Director Emeritus of the Pan American Health Organization; and Cheng Siwei, Vice Chairman of the National People's Congress, People's Republic of China.

Based on the 12 monthly conferences of the Lecture Series, other special programs were also produced for broadcast by the "Voice of the Americas" program, HITN and EDUSAT. The programs consisted of transmissions of recordings of the monthly lectures, followed by roundtables composed of members of the local diplomatic community and recognized scholars, who discussed the presentations. During the period covered in this report the agreement was renewed with Universidad de San Martín de Porres for holding a further 12 lectures in 2006.

Model OAS General Assembly (MOAS)

The Model OAS General Assembly (MOAS) program was transferred from the Office of Conferences and Meetings to the Department of External Relations in January 2005. The effort has been made to expand MOAS activities so as to hold more than one model assembly for universities and high schools

per year. With that in mind, in March 2005 talks were initiated with the Global Foundation for Democracy and Development (GFDD) and the United Nations Association of the Dominican Republic (UNA-DR), followed by negotiations with the Dominican government. In September 2005, the President of the Dominican Republic, Mr. Sr. Leonel Fernández, the Secretary General of the OAS, and representatives of the GFDD and ANU-RD, signed an agreement to hold the XXIII MOAS for universities of the Hemisphere in Santo Domingo in March 2006. The Universidad del Norte de Barranquilla (UNINORTE) was also engaged in talks with a view to holding an MOAS for universities of the Hemisphere in Barranquilla, Colombia, in October 2006. In October 2005 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Inter-American Institute of Diplomacy (IAID) for the participation of the Office of Resource Mobilization as co-sponsor of the Washington Model OAS General Assembly (WMOAS) for universities, which is held annually in Washington, DC. From November 30 to December 3, 2005, the XXIV Model General Assembly for high schools was held in Washington, DC. The event was attended by some 370 students, mainly from the United States, as well as a delegation from Puerto Rico and another from the Dominican Republic. In all 33 OAS member states were represented. Furthermore, negotiations commenced with Universidad San Martín de Porres of Peru for holding a national MOAS for fifth-grade students in September 2006, in Lima. Contact has also been made with District of Columbia Public Schools in Washington, DC, with a view to the participation of those schools in the 2006 MOAS. The MOAS program has been disseminated through information letters sent to 70 universities in the United States, a presentation on the MOAS program to university students during tours of the Organization, preparation of a new MOAS web page to be published in the first half of 2006, production of 4,000 information leaflets on the MOAS (in English and Spanish) for distribution to universities and high schools, and publication of a one-page color advertisement about the MOAS on the back cover of the April 2006 edition of *Américas Magazine*.

Dissemination Program

The Department's external audience dissemination program received a total of 4,088 visitors and organized 226 dissemination meetings in 2005, chiefly to provide information about the activities of the Organization in areas connected with strengthening of democracy, free trade, promotion and protection of human rights, multidimensional security, and sustainable development, among other issues. Furthermore, the period covered by this report saw the launch of a special joint dissemination project with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, aimed at increasing awareness of the role that multilateral institutions play on the global stage. Visits made by external groups to the OAS increased by 9% compared with the year before.

Other Activities

In accordance with resolution 2121 adopted by the Thirty-Fifth Regular Session of the General Assembly of the OAS, held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, in June 2005, the Department of External Relations, in conjunction with the Ministry General Secretariat of Government of Chile, organized the Meeting of Government Spokespersons of the OAS Member States in Santiago, Chile, on August 17 and 18. The seminar included roundtable discussions and presentations by experts on issues related to freedom of expression and access to public information in the region. The event was opened by the President of Chile, Ricardo Lagos, together with the Secretary General of the OAS, José Miguel Insulza; the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), José Luis Machinea; and the Minister Secretary General of the Government of Chile, Osvaldo Puccio.

The Department of External Relations organized a conference which examined the results of the 2005 Latinobarómetro Polls. For more than a decade Latinobarómetro has conducted polls in Latin America and the Caribbean on confidence in, and perception in the region of, democratic institutions. This conference was led by the Secretary General of the OAS and the President of the Inter-American

Development Bank (IDB), Luis Alberto Moreno. Marta Lagos, Executive Director of Latinobarómetro, presented the results of polls carried out in 18 countries in Latin America, and Professor Robert Worcester of the International Advisory Council of Latinobarómetro examine the results of polls conducted in six Caribbean countries. In addition, Enrique García, President of the Andean Development Corporation (CAF) and Peter Hakim, President of the Inter-American Dialogue, commented on the presentations given by Lagos and Worcester.

Department of Press and Communications

The Department of Press and Communications was created by Executive Order 05-13 Rev. 1. It answers to the Office of the Chief of Staff of the Secretary General and performs the functions set out in Executive Order 05-15 of December 21, 2005.

The purposes of the Department of Press and Communications are, *inter alia*, to inform the press about the agenda of the Secretary General, the Assistant Secretary General, and the Permanent Council; and project the image of the OAS as a hemispheric forum for policy discussion with a presence in the political dealings of the member states and a meaningful role to play in the solution of any crises that occur in the Americas and the Caribbean.

Since August 2005, in order to ensure a faithful reflection in the Hemisphere's media of the efforts and objectives of the Organization of American States, the Department of Press and Communications enhanced its production of press material through greater content and closer relations with the media, with a view to regaining its former media prominence in the Hemisphere.

Organized along simple lines, the Department decided to keep the written press, radio, and television sections, strengthen the Web Cast Office, intensify photographic distribution, and redesign the profile of the *Américas Magazine*, as well as enhance the qualitative treatment and quantity of information in all these sections. With few resources for radio and television, which are sections that require technology on a level with what is in use today, priority centered on written media, with a view, once the presence and opinion of the Organization had been firmly established, to then building on that to strengthen the other sections.

The Organization has gained prominence in both the digital and the print media. This is easily confirmed by visiting the Newsclips or the OAS News pages on the website. The declarations, opinions, and image of the institution are present in the mass media.

The DPC provides significant coverage of OAS Electoral Observation Missions and of the Organization's negotiation efforts to solve crises in the countries of the Hemisphere. The widespread demand for information that the OAS currently generates necessitates intense efforts with the media, whether from headquarters in Washington, DC, or from the countries to which a particular mission or official has traveled. Nicaragua, Haiti, Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Peru have been the scene of highly newsworthy political processes in which the OAS, far from going unnoticed, has played a substantial role, is relevant, and draws media attention.

Adopting a fast-acting, direct strategy, the Department opted for the production of more extensive press releases on the audiences and appearances of the Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General, as well as the meetings of the Permanent Council, with interviews and press conferences arranged according to their public agendas. The department has switched from a purely informative style to one that contextualizes and delivers the most topical elements. In this way, developments in the area of institution building, good governance, refinement of the democratic system, and electoral observation, as well as missions, such as those conducted in Haiti, are successfully circulated.

In this context, and on the premise that to a large extent the media repositioning aims of the Organization depend on transparency in the delivery of information, the Department has developed new mechanisms to project the image of the OAS. Accordingly, in order to provide a general information framework, encounters between the Secretary General and selected groups of journalists are held in advance of events in which the Organization plays a central role. DPC professionals are also in permanent contact with a long list of journalists, who are increasingly eager for opinions from within our Organization. The policy of the Department is to attend to all inquiries and, while it is not always possible to satisfy them, a current of goodwill is generated that is important to the spirit of the relations that should prevail between the Organization and the media.

In the context of Electoral Observation Missions and visits of the Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General – in particular to Peru, Venezuela, and Haiti – the Department has played an important part in disseminating the role of the OAS. The press releases and organization of meetings with the media in each country, coordinated from Washington, are the key to the increasingly abundant flow of information. Coupled with that is the work carried out with local media organizations.

As regards the OAS website, the Department of Press and Communications has proposed a project on centralization of information management. The objective is to coordinate access to materials posted on the website, have organized guidelines for uploading documents, and harmonize the Organization's message in accordance with official guidelines. It is imperative to organize and coordinate the contents of the website in the framework of a new electronic information architecture without delay.

As to photography, the Department has managed significantly to increase photograph distribution in the media. Photographic material is not only posted on the website, but arranged for the media by topic and country. A "photo and caption" system was set up to cover events so that one image might convey the whole message. This system has been well received and is used by the media in all the member states.

With respect to technology, the hope is to modernize it so that the DPC can improve radio and television broadcasting, transmit prompt dispatches over the Internet during visits of the Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General, and equip the Press Room for outside journalists who come to OAS headquarters to cover information generated by the Organization.

It would be fair to assume, judging from the tide of information contained in the Newsclips (daily broadcasts that provide a roundup of information on the OAS and the most important local news in the 34 member states), that the discourse of the OAS has become a core item of media coverage in the hemisphere. Anything the OAS has to say on any given day is sought-after news that is singled out for publication.

Protocol Office

The Protocol Office was created by Executive Order 05-13 Rev. 1. It is a dependency of the Office of the Chief of Staff of the Secretary General and provides assistance in matters within its sphere of competence.

In the period covered by this report the PO continued to coordinate the official ceremonies of the Organization's political bodies, the Permanent Council, the Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General, and the departments of the General Secretariat. It also served as liaison between the Department of State and the permanent missions on matters related to registration and visas of staff of the missions and the privileges and immunities of the diplomats accredited to the Organization. It also organized and

coordinated the use of the Main Building for protocolary or social-cultural functions and kept current the Directory of Permanent Missions. Its most significant activities included the following.

Protocolary meetings were held for the visits of the Presidents of Honduras, Dominican Republic, and Guyana. Ceremonies were organized and protocolary meetings held to mark Pan American Day and the birth date of Simón Bolívar, and to commemorate the Discovery of America - Encounter of Two Worlds. The Office also coordinated the ceremonies for presentation of credentials to the Permanent Representatives of Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Brazil, Peru, and Nicaragua, as well as courtesy visits made by various permanent observers. Farewell receptions were organized for the ambassadors of Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay and for outgoing Assistant Secretary Luigi Einaudi. Letters of congratulations were prepared and sent to the permanent representatives and observers on the occasion of their respective independence days. The Office also organized the ceremony at which the Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General took office.

Under the coordination of the Protocol Office, 12 “Country Weeks” were staged during which member states and permanent observers hosted cultural or academic events. The Office helped organize four art exhibits and four recitals not associated with the Country Weeks Program. Protocol-related assistance was provided for all the openings and exhibits of the Art Museum of the Americas. This office also organized all the ceremonies at which protocols and other agreements between the Organization and the member countries were signed or their instruments of ratification deposited. During the regular session of the General Assembly held in Fort Lauderdale, several working events were held, as was a large reception hosted by the Secretary General for some 800 invited guests.

As regards the management of the main building, 200 receptions, luncheons, dinners, and lectures were held during the year and the expected proceeds from renting out space in the building in 2005 totaled about \$90,000. Owing to the Simón Bolívar Room’s remodeling, the Hall of the Americas had to be used for meetings of the Permanent Council, which meant that proceeds from renting out the Main Building were less than in years past. The Office collaborated closely on the organization and staging of the Food Festival of the Americas and the Christmas reception for the Christmas tree organized by the Organization of Women of the Americas, an association made up of the wives of the diplomats of the permanent missions to the OAS. Indeed, the Protocol Office collaborated with that organization throughout the year. The Office also organized and coordinated the following official events: 7 breakfasts, 12 luncheons, and some 15 receptions.

In addition, before submitting them to the Department of State, the Office reviewed and processed some 4,000 applications from the permanent missions and their staff for accreditation, issuance and renewal of visas, changes to visas, extensions of stays, work permits and their renewal, importation and purchase of duty-free goods, securing and renewal of tax exemption cards and driver’s licenses, and registration of vehicles, registration renewal, proof of insurance, and sale or exportation of vehicles. Visas were arranged for high-ranking OAS officials and letters for driver’s licenses for OAS staff and non-diplomatic personnel of the permanent missions. The office act as liaison with the Escort Service of the Department of State and with airlines to arrange travel services for the Secretary General

The “Directory of Missions, Heads of State/Government, and Senior Government Officials, OAS Organs and Affiliated Entities” was updated and published on the Intranet, and arrangements have been made with the company that produces the “Official Diplomatic Directory” to include information on the missions and the General Secretariat in that directory, which will be published in 2006. The Office kept a monthly schedule of activities in the Building.

Summits Department

The Summits Department (SD) was created by Executive Order 05-13 Rev. 1. It is part of the Office of the Secretary General and provides services on matters within its sphere of competence.

Summits of the Americas

As of the Third Summit of the Americas and in keeping with several resolutions, the SD provides technical and logistical support to the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG); manages the Summit of the Americas Information Network; preserves the institutional memory of the Summit process; updates information on follow-up activities conducted pursuant to the mandates approved by the heads of state and government of the Americas; coordinates civil society participation in the OAS and the Summits process; chairs the Joint Summits Working Group; and provides information needed by the countries on the Summits process.

The SD provided assistance to the meetings of the SIRG in preparation for the Fourth Summit of the Americas. In addition to supplying logistical and technical support, the SD helped to compile the national reports presented by the countries on implementation of Summit mandates. During the preparations for the Fourth Summit, Argentina, as Chair of the SIRG and host of the Summit, directed the work with the technical support of this Secretariat. The SIRG held eight meetings during this period, at which the Declaration and Plan of Action of Mar del Plata were negotiated, the SD provided technical advisory and logistical services, forwarded relevant documents to the national coordinators, translated documents and published them on the Internet website for government access only.

The SD helped to link the ministerial and other sectoral meetings to the Summits process, and coordinated civil society participation in them. Assistance was provided at the following meetings: 14th Inter-American Meeting, at the Ministerial level, on Health and Agriculture; 37th Regular Session of CICAD; Meeting of Ministers of Health and Environment; Fourth Meeting of Ministers of Education; Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture and Rural Life; and 14th Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor.

The SD also provides secretariat services to the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG), composed of 12 international agencies, and is in charge of coordinating its activities. The JSWG met on five occasions in 2005: February 3, March 9, June 8, September 7, and November 4.

The SD organized the seminar. "Contributions of the Joint Summit Working Group to the Fourth Summit of the Americas," which was held on September 7, 2005, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to identify concrete initiatives for inclusion in the Plan of Action of Mar del Plata and to facilitate an exchange of views among the Summits national coordinators and agency representatives on advocacy for follow-up and implementation of the mandates of the Fourth Summit. At the Fourth Summit of the Americas the Working Group presented to the heads of state and government a report entitled "Achievements of the Summits of the Americas: Institutional Outcomes".

Furthermore, in the framework of the Fourth Summit of the Americas, the Third Meeting of the Heads of the agencies was held at the invitation of the Secretary General of the OAS and the President of the IDB. The objective of the meeting was to exchange ideas on the role and contributions of the institutions to the Summits follow-up process.

The SD organized 8 events to disseminate information on implementation of Summit mandates and in preparation for the Fourth Summit of the Americas. It published 4 editions of the electronic bulletin "The Summits of the Americas Inform" in March, May, and July 2005, and in January 2006. In addition, the SD presented to the heads of state and government assembled at the Fourth Summit the reports,

“Achievements of the Summits of the Americas: National Outcomes” and “Achievements of the Summits of the Americas: Institutional Outcomes,” on implementation of the mandates contained in the Plan of Action of Québec, and the Declaration of Nuevo León. In order to facilitate information on the summits process, a series of briefings were given on the preparations for the Fourth Summit in a number of member states (Dominican Republic, Barbados, Bahamas, Costa Rica, Venezuela, St Lucia (OECS) and Trinidad and Tobago), technical units of the OAS (CICAD, Office of Education, Science and Technology), and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

The SD mobilized external funds from member states (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, El Salvador, United States, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, Nicaragua, and Guyana), members of the JSWG (IDB and CAF), as well as governmental development agencies, such as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Open Society Institute.

Support to the Committee on Inter-American Summits Management and Civil Society Participation

The SD provides technical assistance to this Committee, coordinates civil society participation in its meetings, and registers nongovernmental organizations with the Organization. Accordingly, during the period covered by this report the SD provided technical support services at this Committee’s five meetings by preparing reports and the draft work plan, analyzing applications from nongovernmental organizations, and coordinating the registration of 36 civil society organizations in the activities of the OAS, in keeping with the “Guidelines for the Participation of Civil Society Organizations in OAS Activities.”

Civil Society

In the framework of the 35th General Assembly, a dialogue was organized between representatives of more than 150 nongovernmental organizations and several ministers of foreign affairs to discuss the role of civil society in the preparations for the Fourth Summit of the Americas. With the idea of strengthening relations with civil society and its participation in the summits process, the secretariat has kept the website on this issue permanently updated. It also updated the database of nongovernmental organizations registered with the OAS.

By the same token, support was provided for the participation of civil society representatives in the ministerial meetings and specialized conferences that were held in the framework of the Permanent Council, including the Meeting of National Authorities on Trafficking in Persons. It should be noted that civil society has been involved in the preparatory activities for the Fourth Summit of the Americas through the Civil Society Hemispheric Forum held in April 2005 and through several regional seminars held in the Andean subregion, the Caribbean, and MERCOSUR. Civil society organizations also had the opportunity to present to the SIRG their recommendations on the Fourth Summit of the Americas at the following meetings: XXXVII and XL SIRG meetings.

Support to the Working Group to Prepare the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The SD provided technical and logistical support to the Permanent Council’s Working Group to Prepare the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In that connection, it helped with the preparation of its Work Plan and different projects were submitted to a variety of cooperation agencies to get financing to enable representatives of the indigenous peoples to participate in the discussions on the draft Declaration, and to improve communication and a sharing of experiences among the General Secretariat, the member states, and the indigenous peoples.

In accordance with resolution AG/RES. 2073 (XXXV-O/05), the Secretariat provided support for holding the Working Group's Fifth and Sixth Meetings of Negotiations in the Quest for Points of Consensus, which were held from February 7 to 11, 2005, in Washington, DC, and from October 10 to 14, 2005 in Antigua, Guatemala, respectively.

The SD also continued to administer the Specific Fund to Support Preparation of the American Declaration, and to maintain the database on indigenous peoples of the Americas. The Specific Fund received contributions from Brazil, Canada, United States, Nicaragua, Finland, and Guatemala.