

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.

The Office of External Relations and Resource Mobilization (OREMR), which is part of the Department of External Relations, is responsible for the day-to-day management of activities related to the permanent observer countries. Through briefing sessions, the exchange of documents and information, and special events, the OREMR promotes these countries' active involvement and collaboration in the activities of the General Secretariat.

At the present time, the Organization has 60 permanent observers: Algeria, Angola, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, China, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, the European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, the Holy See, Hungary, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Korea, Latvia, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Morocco, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Yemen.

In 2005, the Organization received cash contributions totaling about US\$11.7 million from the following permanent observers: China, Denmark, the European Union, Germany, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Korea, the Netherlands, Norway, Qatar, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. Important in-kind contributions were also made by France, Korea, and Spain, valued at some US\$500,000. Appendix G to this report itemizes those contributions. The main areas that receive support from these countries are democracy, human rights, conflict resolution, the efforts against drug trafficking, and sustainable development and environment, among others. The Office negotiated many of these contributions and organized ceremonies at which public recognition was given to the support provided by observer countries to the Organization's activities.

Likewise, during the period covered by this report, visits were made to the OAS General Secretariat by various high-ranking government officials from the permanent observer countries. Noteworthy among them were the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland and Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, Adam Daniel Rotfeld, and the Minister of Justice of Spain, Juan Fernando López Aguilar. The Office also organized an official visit by the Secretary General to Europe, where he met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain, Miguel Ángel Moratinos Cuyaubé. His trip included a visit to Austria, where he signed an instrument of cooperation between the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the OAS, and to Italy, where he took part in a seminar on Latin America organized by the Government of Italy.