

## **OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL**

In accordance with Article 115 of the OAS Charter and in keeping with measures and policy decided on by the General Assembly and the respective resolutions of the Councils, the Office of the Assistant Secretary General serves as Secretary of the Permanent Council, provides advisory services to the Secretary General, and is responsible for all activities the latter may entrust to him.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary General provided advisory services to the Secretary General, supported the activities of the various dependencies of the General Secretariat, and made efforts to assist the member states in the search for solutions to topics of critical importance to them.

In his capacity as Secretary of the General Assembly, the Assistant Secretary General coordinated technical and operational services for the thirty-sixth regular session of the General Assembly, held in Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic, in June 2006. He also supervised the preparatory technical work for the thirty-seventh regular session of the General Assembly, to be held in Panama City, Panama, in June 2007.

The Office of the Secretariat of the General Assembly, the Meeting of Consultation, the Permanent Council, and Subsidiary Organs assisted the permanent representatives of the member states and permanent observers in the preparation and conduct of regular and special meetings of the Council, as well as protocolary meetings to welcome Heads of State and Government. It also provided support for joint meetings of the Council with the Permanent Executive Committee of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CEPCIDI) as well as the meetings of the Joint Working Group of the Permanent Council and CEPCIDI on the Draft Social Charter of the Americas.

During the period covered by the report, the Office of the Assistant Secretary General coordinated a number of special and closed meetings of the Permanent Council, joint meetings of the Permanent Council and CEPCIDI to address the issue of scholarships, and periodic coordination meetings between the Council chairs and the regional coordinators.

Support and coordination of this type were also provided in other instances, such as meetings of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE); the Conference of the States Party to the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA) and meetings of the Consultative Committee of the CIFTA; and meetings of the Special Committee against Transnational Organized Crime, the Working Group to Prepare the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Working Group to Prepare a Draft Inter-American Convention against Racism and All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance, and the Joint Consultative Organ of the Committee on Hemispheric Security and CEPCIDI on Natural Disaster Reduction and Risk Management.

As a result of the entry into force of Executive Order 05-13 rev. 1, the Office of the Assistant Secretary General—in addition to performing its statutory functions as Secretariat to the General Assembly, the Meeting of Consultation, the Permanent Council, and Subsidiary Organs—has

under it the Office of Conferences and Meetings, the Office of Cultural Services, which includes the Columbus Memorial Library and the Art Museum of the Americas; the Coordinating Office for the Offices and Units of the General Secretariat in the Member States; and the Coordinating Office for the Specialized Units, which includes the Permanent Secretariat of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), the Office of the Director General of the Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN), the Secretariat of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL), and the Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee on Ports (CIP).

Since no operating budget funds were allocated for the Coordinating Office for the Offices and Units of the General Secretariat in the Member States and the Office of Cultural Services, these areas do not have a specific coordinator. Despite its limited human resources, the Office of the Assistant Secretary General has maintained a system of communication and consultation with the specialized entities, including periodic meetings between the Assistant Secretary General and the Directors of the units and the establishment of liaison arrangements and focal points within the Office of the Assistant Secretary General corresponding to each unit. Moreover, the Office has managed to reactivate the Group of Friends of the Art Museum of the Americas and, with the support of the member states, has established a similar support group for the Columbus Memorial Library. These groups, comprising permanent representatives of the member states and representatives of the private sector, have embarked on a joint effort to improve the way these two entities operate, integrate their programs and projects more closely with the new strategic plan of the Organization, and increase public awareness of the heritage of the countries and peoples of the Americas.

The Resource Mobilization Committee, chaired by the Assistant Secretary General and supported by the Department of External Relations, worked very closely with the Office of the Secretary General and the Secretariats for Administration and Finance, Political Affairs, and Multidimensional Security, and Integral Development. It formulated a policy for recovering indirect costs and focused on improving relations with existing donors, including the permanent observers, in addition to establishing new relations with potential donors, such as foundations, private entities, and intergovernmental agencies. The Resource Mobilization Committee also established a framework for supporting the work of the OAS Project Evaluation Committee and simplifying project approval and fundraising processes.

In addition to the topics covered by these areas, the Office of the Assistant Secretary General, on instructions from the Secretary General, has been coordinating the Secretariat's activities in the area of natural disasters. In this regard, it worked closely with the Department of Sustainable Development and the pertinent organs, agencies, and entities of the inter-American system. Special attention was paid to specific disasters in countries that had led to the convocation of meetings of the executive committee of the Inter-American Committee on Natural Disaster Reduction. Likewise, measures were taken to obtain contributions from the Inter-American Emergency Aid Fund for countries affected by natural disasters.

The Assistant Secretary General continued to provide ongoing support to the Secretary General in the political affairs of the OAS member states and represented him in numerous meetings and forums. In 2006, the Assistant Secretary General chaired the Working Group on Haiti and represented the Secretary General at international meetings at which the subject of Haiti was

discussed. He reconstituted the Group of Friends of Haiti in Washington, D.C., and traveled to that country on several occasions to meet with government authorities and interested parties. In 2006, the Assistant Secretary General also headed the OAS electoral observation mission in Guyana and during the national referendum in Panama.

### **Office of Conferences and Meetings**

The mission of the Office of Conferences and Meetings (OCM) is to identify, integrate, administer, and modernize the conference services that the General Secretariat must provide to the OAS governing bodies. The Office of Conferences and Meetings is composed of the Office of the Director and three sections, whose functions are to coordinate conference services, services in the official languages, and the production and distribution of documents and information.

- Planning, management, and supervisory services

The OCM continued to develop and integrate its equipment and services for meetings of the governing bodies and helped plan, organize, and provide logistical and other services for 670 OAS meetings. That entailed preparations, the negotiation of agreements, and the mobilization and moving of financial, human, and technological resources from OAS headquarters to the countries hosting the meetings in the order of US\$927,944. The semiannual and annual schedule of meetings was updated and more efficient use made of resources for conference services. In support of the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP), the OCM successfully monitored and managed Subprogram 21-C of the Regular Fund for financing unscheduled OAS meetings, including the holding of the thirty-first special session of the General Assembly in January 2006.

The OCM worked with the Office of Information Technology Services on replacing the modernizing conference services equipment and facilities. The conference rooms of the General Secretariat use state-of-the-art equipment. The now completely renovated and functional Simón Bolívar conference room possesses first-class digital equipment capable of providing highly sophisticated multimedia audio and video services that are integrated and compatible with real-time videoconferencing services in four languages.

The OCM replaced all its document copying equipment with fast digital machines. The document storage and recovery system in the Documentation Center used to provide services to the Permanent Council in the Simón Bolívar conference room was also renovated.

The OCM and the Department of Budgetary and Financial Services completed implementation of the reform of administrative procedures in the OASES System for OAS meetings. With the help of the Office of Information Technology Services, the OCM maintained the computerized conference-services platform and access to those services via the Internet. All users can now check the schedule of meetings on line, as well as obtain official documents and information stored in a database of references.

- Conference Services

The Office coordinated at headquarters 670 meetings of the governing and technical bodies, the Permanent Council and its subsidiary organs, CIDI and its subsidiary organs, and the other specialized organizations and entities like the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL), the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), and the Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN). Another 60 high-level meetings were held in the member states, such as the thirty-sixth regular session of the General Assembly, the thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth regular sessions of the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), technical meetings of the IACHR, CITEL, CICAD, the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD), and others meetings. During this reporting period, the Office updated a semiannual schedule of the Organization's meetings, which it uses as a tool to make more efficient use of the resources needed for conference services.

- Language Services

The OCM provided translation and simultaneous interpretation services in the four official languages to all meetings of organs, agencies, and entities of the Organization, at headquarters and in the member states. The total number of events serviced came to 670. Over 44,000 pages were translated into the four official languages. The policy of modernizing equipment and programs for language services continued, in respect of TRADOS and the four-language glossary called MultiTerm. The Section continued to expand its roster of outside professional translators and interpreters living in the member states and an interpreter-administrator was added to the OCM staff. The Division also kept up inter-institutional contacts for sharing glossaries and terminology with other international organizations and expanded the e-library of OAS documents on the Internet. An extra effort has been made to add the names of more freelance translators and interpreters living in all the member states, which represents a significant savings for the host countries when meetings are held away from headquarters.

- Documents and Information Services

The OCM printed and distributed official documents of the Organization, including master copies and their photocopying, distribution, and storage. The OCM also helped the permanent missions of the member states and the permanent observers to find the information they needed. Following is a list of the main activities of the Section in the period under review:

- Printing and distribution of 5,345 separate documents: a print-run of 4,476,932 pages.
- Printing and distribution of 9,325 invitations for the Art Museum of the Americas and the Office of Protocol.
- Storage of information and processing of documents through the IDMS system
- In cooperation with the Department of Press and Communications, strengthening the possibility of providing access for a wider audience in member states to meetings of the governing bodies and other major events by using the transmission via the Internet methodology known as Webcast.

## **Office of Cultural Services**

The Office of Cultural Services was established by Executive order 05-13 Rev. 1. It coordinates the activities of the Columbus Memorial Library and the Art Museum of the Americas.

- Columbus Memorial Library

The Columbus Memorial Library was created by the First International Conference of American States on April 18, 1890. The Library serves as an information and documentation center, providing essential information to the OAS General Secretariat, the permanent missions, the diplomatic community, and the general public interested in the Organization's work and the work of the inter-American system. The Library is the repository of the institutional memory of the OAS, the Pan American Union, and the inter-American system.

In the period under review, the Library continued its Preservation and Digitalization Project, which will provide digital images of a select group of Permanent Council resolutions and declarations and proceedings and documents of the General Assembly, which will be accessible online, via the Web.

The Columbus Memorial Library recently acquired the "Library Solution" software to facilitate the creation of an Integrated Library Automation System." This system will provide services that will automate all the functions of the library, including acquisitions, serials, circulation, OAS documents, and cataloguing. "The Library Corporation" also provided bar codes for 54,098 materials in the database of the library's On Line Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). These bar codes identify each individual article and are used to link materials, users, and administrative files. Four thousand of these bar codes have already been placed in the books.

The Library's stock has continued to grow, essentially thanks to donations which supplement its modest budget. The Acquisitions Unit received and processed 1,960 new books and periodicals and prepared 35 purchase orders from requisitions received from other departments of the OAS for the purchase of books and other materials. In addition, 5,243 United Nations documents were added to the collection.

The Reference Unit circulated 13,142 books and 1,121 periodicals and answered 6,001 requests for information. The Documents Control Unit also experienced an increase in requests, answering approximately 1,585 of them. For its part, the Archives Management Unit answered 290 queries.

The use of various databases has enabled Reference Services to provide better service. The Library subscribes to "First Search" and can have access to information in 70 databases covering a wide range of subject matters and providing access to thousands of libraries worldwide and to 5.9 million articles in electronic format, taken from 9,000 periodicals, including 3,500 e-zines. The search version of the "Hispanic American Periodicals Index" (HAPI) provides global data on Central America, South America, Mexico, and the Caribbean, the U.S.-Mexican border region, and Hispanics in the United States. The Library continues to have access to "WorldCat," the "United Nations Treaty Collection Database," and "Lexis-Nexis." It also subscribes to "The

Economic Intelligence Unit – Selected Country Profiles” and the “Official Document System of the United Nations On Line”.

In the period under review, 21,600 documents were received, processed, and circulated. Search aids had to be prepared to recover these documents. The Documents Collection comprises 320,370 historical archives in paper format from the years 1960 – 2006. Likewise, the Library processed and microfilmed the OAS Official Records Series 2000 and then sent it to university and specialized libraries. Proceeds from sales helped the Library fulfill its mandate of seeking external sources of funding. Those proceeds resulted in deposits totaling \$23,689 into the Hipólito Unanue account. Finally, the Library compiled, published, and distributed the Analytical Indices corresponding to the “Summary of decisions taken at meetings and texts of resolutions and declarations adopted” in 2002, 2003, and 2004.

In 2006, the Columbus Memorial Library mounted six exhibits: The Simón Bolívar Room, Alberto Lleras Camargo, Stamps and Medals, Rare Books – Spain (on the occasion of the visit by Agrupación Hidalga de España), Art Museum of the Americas, and Jewels from the Collection of Rare Books in the Columbus Memorial Library.

The Group of Friends of the Columbus Memorial Library was formed in 1994. It consists mainly of ambassadors of the permanent missions and permanent observer missions. The purpose of the Group is to assist the Columbus Memorial Library with some of its activities and to disseminate information about them. The Group met frequently in 2006 and various countries made donations through their ambassadors/representatives.

- Art Museum of the Americas

The Art Museum of the Americas was created in 1976 by a resolution of the Permanent Council. Its purpose is to promote artistic output, understanding, and cultural cooperation in the Hemisphere. The museum collects and preserves works of artistic and historical merit for the permanent collection as well as documentary material for the art archives. It organizes exhibits at headquarters and away from it, provides reference services, and engages in educational and cultural activities. Its principal users are the general public, students, researchers, and collectors with a special interest in the art of the member states.

In 2006, the Museum mounted seven art exhibits: *Geometry and Gesture in the Permanent Collection* (March-July, 62 works); *Contemporary Photography in the Permanent Collection* (May-June, 52 works); *New Possessions, Jamaican Artists in the United States* (August-October, 44 works); *Breaking Boundaries, Photography and Digital Art in the Salvadoran Community* (November-January, 54 works); *Documented: the Community Blackboard*, interactive installation on the subject of immigration, conceived by Muriel Hasbun of El Salvador (November-January); *Selections from the Collection: Artists of Central America* (November-January, 28 works), and *New Acquisitions 2006* (December-February, 10 works). The Museum also organized an itinerant exhibit called *The Art of Engraving*, a selection of graphic art from the permanent collection that traveled to the Latino Cultural Center in Dallas, Texas, in February 2007. Some of these exhibits were reviewed in articles in *The Washington Post* (June 10, August 13, and December 15, 2006), *The Washington Times* (September 17, 2006), *The Washington Post*

*Express* (August 3, 2006), *The Washington Examiner* (December 22, 2006), *The Jamaica Gleaner* (October 15, 2006), *Caribbean Net News* (August 7, 2006), and *The Miami Herald* (July 2, 2006).

External sources provided partial funding for some of the exhibits. *New Possessions* was supported by Jamaica National Group of Companies, Grace Financial Services, Limited National Investment Bank of Jamaica, Western Union, Air Jamaica, Grace Foods International, Inter-American Culture & Development Foundation (ICDF), Inter-American Development Bank Cultural Center, Jamaica Tourist Board, Mayberry Investments, Red Stripe, Victoria Mutual Building Society, and The Friends of the Art Museum of the Americas; *Rompiendo Fronteras* received support from the DC Commission on the Arts and the Humanities, Bancomercio, Enterprise Database Corporation, HI Construction Company, Latin Travel Express, Mango y Mar, Martinez and Associates LLC- Remax, Restaurante El Tamarindo, and Vilchez and Associates Real Estate.

The Museum also lent 10 engravings from the permanent collection of Carlos Mérida to the Inter-American Development Bank for the *Guatemala: Past and Present* exhibit, and a painting by Humberto Calzada to the Lowe Art Museum in Miami, Florida, for the *Humberto Calzada: In Dreams Awake* exhibit. Works in the permanent collection were reproduced in several academic publications, including *Art History* by Marilyn Stokstad (Prentice Hall); *The Language of Objects in the Art of the Americas* by Edward J. Sullivan (Yale University Press) *Latin America: A Concise Interpretive History* by Burns-Charlip (Prentice Hall); *Mexico and Modern Printmaking: A Revolution in the Graphic Arts 1920-1950* (Philadelphia Museum of Art), and *World Masterpieces* (Penguin Literature). Within the framework of the “art in the office” project, 214 works from the collection are on loan to offices and public areas in the OAS headquarters buildings.

In 2006, the Museum added 16 donations to the permanent collection. Collector Lucille Espinosa donated two paintings by Roberto Matta of Chile and one painting by Enrique Grau of Colombia, while collector Bernice Weinstein donated three works by Marcelo Bonevardi of Argentina, one painting by Rogelio Polesello of Argentina, and two works by Pedro Friedeberg de Mexico.

During the period under review, the Museum organized several educational activities for the general public. Guided tours and briefing sessions were provided from 1,233 people from universities, high schools, colleges, and other educational and cultural associations. In addition, 310 people attended lectures, round table discussions, and art workshops organized by the Museum. Likewise, the Museum continued to provide didactic information on the exhibits and the collections in catalogues, brochures, videos, and via the Museum’s web site. In 2006, the Jamaica exhibit came with a 44-page full-color catalogue and a video of interviews with the participating artists; the El Salvador exhibit had a 45-page black and white catalogue. In 2006, the Museum published 10 videos documenting exhibits and workshops (three for the Museum’s web site) and one CD commemorating the Museum’s 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The demand for reference services continues to grow and the Museum responded to requests for information from students, art researchers, and the general public, as well as from departments of the General Secretariat and the missions. In addition, the Museum distributed 3,000 digital

images related to exhibits and collections in response to requests from a number of sources. At the same time, in 2006, the Museum participated for the first time with a kiosk at the “D.C. Latino Festival” and continued to collaborate with the “Neighbors to the President” Consortium, which, in 2006, published a “walking tour script” on the historical architecture of each museum.

Similarly, in connection with the “art weeks” exhibits, the Museum provided technical support to the Canadian mission for its crafts exhibit *All About Alberta* (44 works), and to the mission of Panama. The Museum also provided technical support to the Department of Sustainable Development, which organized a logo design competition for the “First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development; to the Inter-American Commission of Women for the creation and installation of a mobile mural created by girls on the subject “Women and Peace”; to the Staff Association for its “VIII Annual Art Exhibit”; and to ARAOS for a photography competition.

In 2006, visitors to the Museum and participants in its programs in other places totaled 12,000 people. Sales of videos, slides, catalogues, copyright, and rental of the Museum building led to deposits totaling US\$10,539.

During the period under review, the Museum continued to benefit from the support of the Group of Ambassador Friends of the Museum, whose Chair gave a presentation to the Permanent Council on the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Museum in December 2006.

### **Coordinating Office for the Offices and Units of the General Secretariat in the Member States**

In 2006, the Office of the Assistant Secretary General, through the Coordinating Office, visited and consulted with the Offices and Units of the OAS in the member states. This activity afforded greater insight into the work and circumstances of those offices, helped build confidence, and established closer working ties between them and OAS headquarters. Likewise the Coordinating Office strove to improve the cost structures and ensure the proper functioning of the Offices, while at the same time assessing their implementation of the new strategies and management guidelines aimed at enhancing their efficiency and productivity.

With a view to optimizing on-site representation, and in coordination with the Department of Human Resources, the functions and responsibilities of the OAS representatives in the member states have been updated to reflect more active team work that more closely corresponds to OAS priorities and mandates. The Coordinating Office and the Department of Human Resources are also preparing a manual on protocol, responsibilities, and rights to assist OAS representatives in the performance of their work in the field.

The Coordinating Office has set up a special web site for the Offices and Units of the OAS in the member states, which will provide a database for the annual reports of each country for 2005-2006. This site will provide access to all administrative and financial regulations and memorandums. It will also include information on the activities of the Offices, the management strategies of the Coordinating Office, and other related information.



During the period under review, obsolete vehicles in the Offices were replaced and they were issued 21 computers and 17 new scanners. This equipment, and the installation of an Internet telephony (VoIP) system significantly boosted the Offices' communication capacity and operational efficiency