

CONSEJO PERMANENTE



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ACTA  
DE LA SESIÓN ORDINARIA  
CELEBRADA  
EL 27 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2007

Aprobada en la sesión del 1 de abril de 2009

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DOCUMENTOS CONSIDERADOS EN LA SESIÓN  
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CP/INF.5578/07, Nota de la Misión Permanente del Canadá mediante la cual solicita la inclusión del tema “Sesión informativa del Presidente de la Comisión Interamericana de Cultura, señor André Frenette” en el orden del día del Consejo Permanente

CP/INF.5571/07, Nota de la Misión Permanente de los Estados Unidos de América mediante la cual solicita la inclusión de un punto en el orden del día de la sesión ordinaria del Consejo Permanente del 28 de noviembre de 2007

CP/doc.4250/07 corr. 1, Nota de la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos remitiendo el documento “Lineamientos para la elaboración de indicadores de progreso en materia de derechos económicos, sociales y culturales”

CP/doc.4248/07, Informe anual de la Oficina del Inspector General correspondiente al período comprendido entre el 1 de enero y el 31 de diciembre de 2006

CP/doc.4247/07, Informe sobre las actividades de la Oficina del Inspector General – enero a diciembre de 2006

CONSEJO PERMANENTE DE LA ORGANIZACIÓN DE LOS ESTADOS AMERICANOS

ACTA DE LA SESIÓN ORDINARIA  
CELEBRADA EL 27 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2007

En la ciudad de Washington, a las once de la mañana del martes 27 de noviembre de 2007, celebró sesión ordinaria el Consejo Permanente de la Organización de los Estados Americanos. Presidió la sesión el Embajador Rodolfo Hugo Gil, Representante Permanente de la Argentina y Presidente del Consejo Permanente. Asistieron los siguientes miembros:

Embajador Manuel María Cáceres Cardozo, Representante Permanente del Paraguay y Vicepresidente del Consejo Permanente  
Embajador Denis G. Antoine, Representante Permanente de Grenada  
Embajador Izben C. Williams, Representante Permanente de Saint Kitts y Nevis  
Embajador Bayney R. Karran, Representante Permanente de Guyana  
Embajador Francisco Villagrán de León, Representante Permanente de Guatemala  
Embajador Aristides Royo, Representante Permanente de Panamá  
Embajador Osmar Chohfi, Representante Permanente del Brasil  
Embajador Pedro Oyarce, Representante Permanente de Chile  
Embajador Carlos Sosa, Representante Permanente de Honduras  
Embajadora María del Luján Flores, Representante Permanente del Uruguay  
Embajador Camilo Alfonso Ospina, Representante Permanente de Colombia  
Embajador Graeme C. Clark, Representante Permanente del Canadá  
Embajador Denis Ronaldo Moncada Colindres, Representante Permanente de Nicaragua  
Embajador Efrén A. Cocíos, Representante Permanente del Ecuador  
Embajador Gustavo Albin, Representante Permanente de México  
J. Robert Manzanares, Representante Interino de los Estados Unidos  
Ministra Consejera Clenie Greer-Lacascade, Representante Interina de Santa Lucía  
Ministra L. Ann Scott, Representante Interina de Jamaica  
Ministra Consejera La Celia A. Prince, Representante Interina de San Vicente y las Granadinas  
Embajador Luis Guardia Mora, Representante Interino de Costa Rica  
Ministra Consejera Rhoda M. Jackson, Representante Interina de las Bahamas  
Embajador Luis Menéndez-Castro, Representante Alterno de El Salvador  
Ministra Consejera Mayerlyn Cordero Díaz, Representante Alterna de la República Dominicana  
Embajador Nelson Pineda Prada, Representante Alterno de Venezuela  
Embajador Antonio Rodrigue, Representante Alterno de Haití  
Primer Secretario Ricardo Kellman, Representante Alterno de Barbados  
Primera Secretaria Tanya Musa, Representante Alterna de Belize  
Ministro Alejandro Riveros, Representante Alterno del Perú  
Consejero Michiel Glenn Raafenberg, Representante Alterno de Suriname  
Ministro Martín Gómez Bustillo, Representante Alterno de la Argentina  
Primer Secretario Garth Andrew Lamsee, Representante Alterno de Trinidad y Tobago

También estuvieron presentes el Secretario General de la Organización, doctor José Miguel Insulza, y el Secretario General Adjunto, Embajador Albert R. Ramdin, Secretario del Consejo Permanente.

#### APROBACIÓN DEL PROYECTO DE ORDEN DEL DÍA

El PRESIDENTE: Declaro abierta la presente sesión ordinaria del Consejo Permanente, que ha sido convocada para considerar los asuntos que aparecen en el proyecto de orden del día [CP/OD.1618/07 rev. 1].

[El proyecto de orden del día contiene los siguientes puntos:

1. Aprobación del orden del día (CP/OD.1618/07 rev. 2)
2. Nota de la Misión Permanente del Canadá mediante la cual solicita la inclusión del tema “Sesión informativa del Presidente de la Comisión Interamericana de Cultura, señor André Frenette” en el orden del día del Consejo Permanente (CP/INF.5578/07)
3. Presentación sobre la misión del Buque Hospital USNS COMFORT en asociación con América Latina y el Caribe
  - Nota de la Misión Permanente de los Estados Unidos de América mediante la cual solicita la inclusión de un punto en el orden del día de la sesión ordinaria del Consejo Permanente (CP/INF.5571/07)
4. Transmisión de informes a las Comisiones pertinentes:
  - a. Nota de la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos remitiendo el documento “Lineamientos para la elaboración de indicadores de progreso en materia de derechos económicos, sociales y culturales” (CP/doc.4250/07 corr. 1)
  - b. Informe Anual de la Inspector General correspondiente al período del 1 de enero al 31 de diciembre de 2006 (CP/doc.4248/07)
  - c. Informe de Actividades de la Oficina del Inspector General correspondiente al período del 1 de enero al 31 de diciembre de 2006 (CP/doc.4247/07)
5. Aprobación de las siguientes actas de las sesiones del Consejo Permanente:
  - CP/ACTA 1497/05 (sesión ordinaria del 20 de julio de 2005)
  - CP/ACTA 1499/05 (sesión extraordinaria del 26 de julio de 2005)
  - CP/ACTA 1505/05 (sesión extraordinaria del 1 de septiembre de 2005), y
  - CP/ACTA 1583/07 (sesión extraordinaria del 9 de marzo de 2007)
6. Otros asuntos.]

A esta altura de nuestra sesión solicitaría la indulgencia de los señores Representantes para hacer el siguiente cambio en el orden del día: que el punto 3 pase a ser el punto 2, y el punto 2 el punto 3. Es decir, que el señor André Frenette sea el primero que exponga en el día de hoy.

De no haber objeción a la propuesta de la Presidencia, así se acuerda.

#### PRESENTACIÓN DEL PRESIDENTE DE LA COMISIÓN INTERAMERICANA DE CULTURA

EL PRESIDENTE: Pasamos entonces al punto relativo a la Nota de la Misión Permanente del Canadá mediante la cual solicita la inclusión del tema “Información del Presidente de la Comisión Interamericana de Cultura, señor André Frenette” [CP/INF.5578/07].

En ese sentido, me es muy grato conceder la palabra al señor André Frenette, Presidente de la Comisión Interamericana de Cultura. Monsieur Frenette.

EL PRESIDENTE DE LA COMISIÓN INTERAMERICANA DE CULTURA: Muchas gracias.

Su Excelencia señor Presidente, Su Excelencia señor Vicepresidente del Consejo Permanente; excelencias, estimados señores Representantes: Buenos días.

Es un honor y un placer tener esta oportunidad para hablarles en mi calidad de Presidente de la Comisión Interamericana de Cultura (CIC) de la Organización de los Estados Americanos.

Antes de continuar, quisiera aprovechar esta oportunidad para dar las gracias a Su Excelencia Albert Ramdin por haberme brindado esta oportunidad. A través de sus discursos, el Secretario General y el Secretario General Adjunto frecuentemente reconocen la importancia de la cultura en nuestro hemisferio.

C'est un réel plaisir pour moi d'être ici avec vous pour vous parler aujourd'hui de la culture, mais aussi pour vous parler du rôle et du mandat du Comité interaméricain de la culture. Mon souhait aujourd'hui, c'est d'obtenir de vous un appui sur l'approche horizontale que nous aimerions adopter dans la mise en oeuvre du mandat et des projets du Comité.

So what is culture? How do we define it? What does culture mean to the people of the Americas, to our governments, and to our institutions? It can mean all of these things that appear on the screen, and, of course, it can mean much more. It touches on every aspect of our lives, whether through the enjoyment of the arts, how we interact and understand each other, or how we prosper within our communities. It is how we express ourselves and our identities. Culture, however we define it, is central to everything we do and think.

With respect to the four thematic pillars of the Organization of American States, culture plays an important role, whether in integral development, by building human capacity and strengthening institutions; in democracy, by promoting good governance and instilling democratic values in society; in human rights, by looking at the relationship between citizens' security and human rights; and, of course, in multidimensional security, by taking into account a range of evolving threats. Culture can provide solutions to the challenges and opportunities that emerge from these priorities.

As noted on numerous occasions by the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General, culture and development go hand in hand. In terms of economic growth, the World Bank has reported that culture and cultural industries account for seven percent of global gross domestic

product (GDP). Countries in the Americas are certainly following this trend: 6.7 percent in Mexico, for example; five percent in Brazil; and four percent in Colombia. In my country, Canada, the cultural sector employs just over four percent of our population, so indeed culture does contribute to economic prosperity and to creating jobs.

Culture is a source of identity and of social inclusion. It does play a role in addressing inequalities, and culture combats exclusion by promoting the values of diversity.

The member states of the OAS have recognized the importance of culture to development through their discussions at the Summits of the Americas, in particular at the Quebec Summit in 2001, and this certainly helped set the stage for the First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture. We've had three meetings this decade: in Colombia in 2002, in Mexico in 2004, and in Canada in 2006, and ministers looked at issues, such as cultural diversity, social cohesion, and enhancing the dignity and identity of the peoples of the Americas. These themes are linked directly to the preliminary themes that are currently being discussed for the next Summit of the Americas.

One of the concrete initiatives that has come out of the Meetings of Ministers of Culture is the creation of the Inter-American Committee on Culture (CIC), which was established in 2003. The ministries of culture are the highest appropriate authorities in the Americas, and the CIC is a permanent body of the OAS that ensures communication between cultural authorities.

So what have ministers asked us to do? What is the mandate of this Committee? As you can see on the slide, it is to coordinate the implementation of inter-American dialogue and cooperation on culture and to ensure follow-up to the priorities of the Summits of the Americas and to the Meetings of Ministers of Culture.

The authorities of the CIC meet regularly. Canada was recently re-elected for a second two-year term as Chair of the Committee; and Brazil, Jamaica, and the United States were also re-elected for a second two-year term. Colombia was elected for the first time.

How are we guided with respect to culture in terms of our activities in the Americas? We're guided by the priorities of the OAS, and we focus on three major issues: economic growth, social inclusion, and youth engagement. We accomplish our goals through horizontal cooperation, sharing of successful policies and programs between governments, and knowledge-sharing events. Our goal is to tell the story of culture in the Americas.

I'll go back to the four thematic pillars of the OAS and quickly relate to you some events that have occurred in the past year.

Very recently, the OAS partnered with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to put together a workshop entitled "Culture as an Engine of Economic Growth and Social Inclusion in the Americas." Finance officials and cultural officials were in the same room, together discussing culture's contribution to the economy and growth of jobs, and culture officials were learning how to access financial resources.

Recently, we held a seminar in Brazil on cultural diversity as a component of human rights, among other things.

Regarding security, we promoted the use of cultural programming to engage marginalized youth and reduce gang violence. The Government of El Salvador recently hosted a seminar on youth gangs and violence and how arts and culture can contribute to alleviating this problem.

So what is the Plan of Action? What do we want to do for the next two years? There are two specific focus areas.

The first area is that of building institutional capacity for cultural industries. We want to promote economic growth and development through culture. We feel that promoting skills development has a direct payoff in the job market. Creating economic opportunities for young people in the Americas through culture helps to combat exclusion and marginalization. We believe that stronger cultural industries can have a measurable impact on the economies of the Americas, which in turn can help alleviate poverty and close the gap between the rich and the poor.

The second theme is that of culture as a tool to promote social inclusion, particularly with regard to youth. The OAS has already begun to recognize the importance of engaging young people. Right here at the Permanent Council, under the leadership of Antigua and Barbuda as Council Chair, you recently recognized the youth as a thematic focal point.

I believe there's a real lack of opportunity for young people to participate in society and to contribute to its development. Inequalities and barriers, whether they be social, economic, or political, are key causes of marginalization and social exclusion that lead to criminality and to gang violence.

In Canada, a long-term study of arts programs for youth showed that at-risk youth not only developed artistic competencies, but, also, more self-confidence; better interpersonal relations; better capacity to resolve conflicts and problems; and a decrease in emotional problems, academic failure, and the use of alcohol.

We know that in the Americas, we face major challenges with respect to inequalities and exclusion. Culture is one of the tools that can help reduce violence and criminality, promote social inclusion, and create economic growth.

So where do we go from here? We're focusing on social inclusion, economic growth, and development. Our goal is to work with the Permanent Council and other areas of the OAS to implement the Plan of Action through concrete projects and activities. We hope to receive the endorsement of this Council to move forward with this goal of horizontality in order to ensure a more effective implementation of the Plan of Action.

We need to plan for another ministerial event in 2008. The Government of Barbados has expressed interest in hosting the next ministerial, which is very important because it comes on the eve of the next Summit of the Americas. We will work with Trinidad and Tobago to ensure that links are made between the theme of the Fifth Summit of the Americas and our work on culture.

We can't do this alone. The CIC has a very, very small budget; it's almost nonexistent. The Department of Education and Culture (DEC) here at the OAS could certainly benefit from increased resources, whether they be financial or human, but we aren't limiting ourselves. We're looking at partnerships inside the inter-American system and outside the borders of the Americas. We have



been talking to the IDB, the World Bank, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Council of Europe, and other European authorities about partnering with us.

We want to work with the Summits of the Americas Secretariat to offer culture's perspective on the tentative themes of the Summit—social inclusion and cohesion, as well as human security. We also agree that the mandate for the Summit must consist of realizable goals that focus on the peoples of the Hemisphere.

Mr. Chairman, these are the activities of the Inter-American Committee on Culture. I would be pleased to answer any questions that members may have.

Thank you so much.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias, señor Frenette. Tiene la palabra el señor Representante del Brasil.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DEL BRASIL: Muito obrigado, Senhor Presidente.

Em primeiro lugar, eu queria agradecer ao Senhor André Frenette, Presidente da Comissão Interamericana de Cultura (CIC), a sua apresentação. Também o felicito pela sua merecida eleição para um segundo mandato à frente da Comissão. Cumprimento também os Estados Unidos da América, a Jamaica e a Colômbia por sua eleição para três das quatro vice-presidências da CIC. E não posso deixar de aproveitar esta oportunidade para agradecer o apoio oferecido por todos os Estados membros à candidatura do Brasil a um segundo mandato como Vice-Presidente da Comissão.

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O Brasil vem acompanhando com apreço o dinamismo do trabalho e o amadurecimento dos debates no âmbito da CIC e congratula-se com os demais Estados membros pelos progressos alcançados. É necessário ressaltar também o empenho da equipe do Departamento de Educação e Cultura da Secretaria-Geral e a eficiência com que tem apoiado a Comissão, apesar da escassez de recursos e de pessoal.

Como mencionado pelo Presidente da CIC, o Brasil teve a satisfação de sediar, em junho passado, o Seminário Internacional sobre Diversidade Cultural. Durante três dias, representantes dos Estados membros, da sociedade civil e da comunidade acadêmica puderam discutir idéias e intercambiar experiências sobre aspectos diversos relacionados com a diversidade cultural e a importância de sua promoção.

O Brasil teve também a satisfação de participar do Seminário sobre Arte e Cultura como Estratégias na Prevenção da Violência Social, realizado em San Salvador no último mês de fevereiro. Na ocasião, representantes do Ministério da Cultura do Brasil puderam compartilhar com os demais participantes os efeitos positivos que tem sobre a inclusão social o programa Pontos de Cultura que atinge comunidades socialmente vulneráveis no Brasil.

O Governo brasileiro reconhece a cultura como dimensão essencial do ser humano e as políticas públicas na área da cultura como parte integral de suas políticas de desenvolvimento. E essa convicção materializou-se no último dia 4 de outubro com o lançamento, pelo Presidente Lula e pelo Ministro Gilberto Gil, do Programa Mais Cultura, que tem como diretrizes a garantia de acesso aos

bens culturais, a qualificação do ambiente social das cidades e a geração de oportunidades de trabalho, emprego e renda.

Além da ampliação da atual rede de Pontos de Cultura, o Programa prevê um conjunto de ações variadas, entre as quais eu destacaria a ampliação e a modernização da rede de bibliotecas públicas, a criação de linhas de microcrédito e de crédito para empresas culturais, microempreendedores e trabalhadores da cultura, bem como projetos de capacitação de gestores culturais e formação de mão-de-obra técnica especializada.

A implementação do Programa será realizada em colaboração com vários ministérios, órgãos governamentais, empresas públicas e organismos internacionais. E não posso deixar de mencionar, entre essas entidades, o Banco Nacional para o Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social do Brasil que tem dispensado especial atenção à economia da cultura, criando um departamento dedicado exclusivamente ao tema que vem desenvolvendo e implementando linhas de financiamento para projetos culturais.

Senhor Presidente, as apresentações e os frutíferos debates ocorridos durante o Workshop sobre “A cultura como motor do crescimento econômico e da inclusão social”, uma iniciativa conjunta do Banco Interamericano de Desenvolvimento (BID) e da OEA, revelaram que os organismos internacionais se têm mostrado cada vez mais sensíveis à importância de incorporar a cultura nas suas políticas de desenvolvimento. Pelo que já realizou até hoje, a CIC demonstrou que a OEA tem uma contribuição significativa a fazer nesse processo.

Reitero, neste sentido, o compromisso do Brasil com as atividades da Comissão e com a plena implementação do seu plano de trabalho para o próximo biênio.

Muito obrigado, Senhor Presidente.

El PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias, señor Embajador del Brasil. Tiene la palabra la Representante del Uruguay.

La REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DEL URUGUAY: Muchas gracias, señor Presidente.

En primer lugar, quería felicitar al Presidente de la Comisión por su exposición tan clara. También le quería preguntar en qué consisten las alianzas que mencionó con otras organizaciones. Digamos, por ejemplo, con la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura (UNESCO), ¿en qué consiste esa alianza?

Gracias.

El PRESIDENTE: Gracias, señora Embajadora. Tiene la palabra el Presidente de la Comisión Interamericana de Cultura.

El PRESIDENTE DE LA COMISIÓN INTERAMERICANA DE CULTURA: Thank you, Ambassador, for the question.

The Inter-American Committee on Culture (CIC) is increasingly developing partnerships with other international organizations. You mentioned the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). For example, regarding youth and youth exclusion, we could look at a variety of ways to learn from other organizations about policies and programs that are being developed, particularly with respect to intercultural dialogue, not only here in the Americas, but in Europe as well.

We are developing a partnership with the Council of Europe. In partnership with other international organizations, the Council has conducted comprehensive studies about the root causes of social exclusion, particularly with respect to youth. The CIC wants to work on a similar project—a very comprehensive study, a literature review, for example, of some of the programs and policies that exist in the Americas that can address social exclusion. The Council of Europe has expressed an interest in partnering with the CIC to do this project. We also want to work more closely with the Organization of Ibero-American States (OEI), for example, on similar issues. So, social cohesion and social inclusion, as they concern youth, are the kinds of issues that we're looking at in our partnerships with international organizations.

El PRESIDENTE: Gracias, señor Frenette. Señora Embajadora, ¿queda con esto satisfecha su inquietud?

Si no hay más observaciones, la Presidencia sugiere que este Consejo tome nota de la información brindada por el Presidente de la Comisión Interamericana de Cultura, señor Frenette.

De no haber objeción, así se acuerda.

Muchas gracias, nuevamente.

#### PRESENTACIÓN SOBRE LA MISIÓN DEL BUQUE HOSPITAL USNS *COMFORT* EN ASOCIACIÓN CON AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE

El PRESIDENTE: Pasamos al siguiente punto del orden del día —ya que ha habido la inversión que recordamos—, que se refiere a la Nota de la Misión Permanente de los Estados Unidos contenida en el documento CP/INF.5571/07. En dicha Nota solicita que la presentación del Teniente General de la Fuerza Aérea de los Estados Unidos, señor Glenn F. Spears, y del Asesor Político del Comando Sur (SOUTHCOM), señor Lewis Amselem, sobre la misión del buque hospital USNS *Comfort* en asociación con América Latina y el Caribe sea incluida en el orden del día de esta sesión.

En ese sentido, me permito ofrecer la palabra al señor Robert Manzanares, Representante de los Estados Unidos, para que nos presente una breve introducción sobre el tema a tratar, así como de los oradores que lo acompañan en este evento.

Tiene la palabra el Representante de los Estados Unidos.

El REPRESENTANTE INTERINO DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary General, Mr. Assistant Secretary General, fellow permanent representatives:

On behalf of the Delegation of the United States, it is a great pleasure and, indeed, an honor for me to introduce and welcome to the Permanent Council Lieutenant General Glenn Spears, Deputy Commander of the United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM). It is particularly gratifying to have him with us here today to share with the Council the successful humanitarian mission carried out by the United States naval ship (USNS) *Comfort* earlier this year throughout the region, bringing a message of hope, care, and compassion to our neighbors on behalf of the American people.

On March 5, President Bush ordered the deployment of the *Comfort* to aid the people of Latin America and the Caribbean as part of his initiative on advancing the cause of social justice in the Western Hemisphere. In June, the *Comfort* began a four-month deployment, visiting 12 ports in Central America, South America, and the Caribbean, accompanied by doctors and nurses, staff from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and volunteers from U.S. nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), such as Project HOPE and Operation Smile, and partnering with the countries of our hemisphere to provide free health care services to communities in need.

In reading the countless testimonies and messages of gratitude that have poured in from so many across the region, there is one particularly poignant testimony that I believe best captures the core essence of this initiative. It is from a patient who writes: "God bless you for coming to my country and helping our people without expecting anything in return."

Indeed, this is what it's all about. It's about giving. The mission and message of the *Comfort*, as President Bush has noted, are about extending the blessings of liberty. This mission is about hope and helping fulfill the destiny of an Americas where the dignity of every person is respected, where fundamental rights are honored by governments, and where the aspirations of each citizen for progress and for a better future for themselves and their loved ones can come closer to reality.

Lieutenant General Spears, thank you for being with us today. My delegation appreciates the service rendered by you and all those who made this mission possible. It is so emblematic of the generosity and spirit of the people of the United States.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

El PRESIDENTE: Gracias, señor Manzanares. Tiene ahora la palabra el Teniente General Spears.

El TENIENTE GENERAL DE LA FUERZA AÉREA DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS: Good morning to all of you!

It is truly an honor for me to visit the Organization of American States for my very first time. I must admit, coming to you from the beautiful, magical city of Miami, where the temperature today is 82°F, that I would prefer to make my visits to Washington, D.C. short so that I can return home to Miami, where it is a little bit warmer. However, I do very much appreciate the opportunity this morning to share with you some information on the deployment of the U.S. naval ship (USNS) *Comfort* to our region.

To give you some context, I represent Admiral James Stavridis, who commands the United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), which is one of six regionally focused commands

within the Department of Defense (DOD). A key part of our mission is to promote security cooperation with and among the nations of the Caribbean, Central America, and South America, and within our home of the Americas.

I will describe to you the recent deployment of the *Comfort* and attempt to answer questions that you may have. Why did the United States conduct this mission? Where did it happen? What was accomplished? How was it accomplished? Who performed this mission? I will close by attempting to answer the “so what” question: so what about the deployment of this hospital ship, the *Comfort*?

Let’s start with addressing why the United States, as a nation, deployed this ship to our neighborhood in the Americas. Its purpose was to demonstrate the enduring commitment of the United States to the peoples of the Americas, the peoples of our home. Our goal in deploying the *Comfort* was to help encourage regional partnerships throughout the Americas. It enabled us to foster goodwill within this important region and to solidify existing partnerships, while encouraging the establishment of new partnerships between and among the nations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and other international organizations, many of whom, when we work together, are able to be so much more effective. So encouraging regional partnerships was a key reason why we deployed the *Comfort*.

Another reason was to enhance regional stability and security by demonstrating the commitment and support of the United States to Latin America and the Caribbean, and we did this on this mission by providing medical services and humanitarian assistance.

Also, such a mission allows us to advance the forward defense of the Americas—not just the United States, but of the nations of the Americas. It is true that through this kind of mission, we are able to train some of our military medical health care providers, but it also enables us to train civilian medical personnel and the medical personnel of the 12 nations that the *Comfort* visited. By advancing the forward defense of the Americas, we combat disease and improve the health and well-being of citizens, and, in that respect, we combat poverty within the region.

The next question is “where”? Where did the *Comfort* deploy? This beautiful former oil tanker, which has been converted into a floating hospital, deployed from its home port of Norfolk, Virginia, from the middle of June through the middle of October. It visited 12 countries, transiting almost 12,000 nautical miles during its deployment, and its first port of call was in Belize. Following a generally clockwise pattern through the deployment, it transited the Panama Canal twice so that it could make visits on both the Atlantic and the Pacific sides of our region. The countries visited are identified on the chart before you.

You now know why and where we conducted this deployment, so what did it accomplish? It certainly provided direct medical care in many different specialties, and our focus was to service, both at sea and onshore, the areas that were in greatest need. The *Comfort* provided general and specialty surgical care; primary care, both for children and adults; dental care; optometry services; and ophthalmologic services to arrest cataracts in elderly citizens. The *Comfort* also carried out many public health initiatives, including assessing and helping to improve public water systems; providing veterinary services; and offering immunization services to combat influenza, measles, mumps, rubella, typhoid, and other diseases.

During the deployment the ship's crew helped improve the infrastructure of the nations it visited by boosting basic biomedical capabilities and repairing biomedical equipment. It conducted water and sewer system assessments and other engineering assessments.

The *Comfort* was able to provide medical education and, quite clearly, to receive medical education from the experts in each of the countries visited. There was mutual education and training, and it was very important, especially regarding tropical medicine, for the medical personnel aboard the *Comfort* to gain that kind of education from experts in the countries visited. Other education included midwife training and basic nursing skills training.

You can now understand what was accomplished, so how was this done? There was a terrific synergy of governmental, nongovernmental, and international cooperation with the host countries. There was extensive coordination and planning, well before the *Comfort* deployed and well before she visited the countries, with the host nations' medical leadership and security personnel to ensure that logistical requirements could be met, and it was all done with the cooperation of our embassies in each of the countries visited.

There were international participants aboard the *Comfort* throughout its deployment, including military medical staff from Brazil, Canada, Chile, France, England, and the Netherlands.

As you can see across the bottom of this slide, at each of the ports, the ship was able to host many distinguished visitors, including the President of El Salvador, who, I understand, was briefing you prior to my arrival today.

So who carried out this deployment? It was certainly not exclusively U.S. military personnel or U.S. medical personnel. An exciting new area for us was the inclusion of so many nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and even private organizations, all of which made this deployment successful.

This chart lists some of the NGOs and international organizations that partnered with us throughout the deployment of the *Comfort*. Let me highlight a few of the very many contributions of these NGOs:

- Project HOPE had 83 volunteers aboard the *Comfort* through her deployment, including four surgeons, so it greatly increased the capacity of the *Comfort* to execute surgical missions. In fact, 80 additional surgeries have been attributed to those four surgeons from Project HOPE. Much of the onshore training was also conducted by the 83 Project HOPE personnel, and they donated almost three and a half million dollars worth of vaccines, medical supplies, and books during the deployment.
- Another wonderful organization called Operation Smile performed more than one hundred cleft lip and cleft palate surgeries during the deployment. Many of those operations were conducted on board the ship in its surgical suites. Operation Smile also conducted all of the prescreening for these life-enhancing and life-changing surgeries.
- Project Handclasp, another wonderful organization, facilitated the delivery of many donated items.

- International Aid donated more than one hundred and ten thousand dollars in medical supplies.
- The Lions Club donated 30,000 pairs of eyeglasses, which were all distributed during the deployment of the *Comfort*.

So the “who” of the USNS *Comfort* is not just the U.S. Navy; it’s not just the U.S. military; in fact, it’s not just the United States. Many nongovernmental and international participants worked together to make this deployment successful.

Let me now try to answer the “so what” question. What was the value, the importance of the deployment of the *Comfort*? This very busy slide attempts to summarize the number of patients treated in each of the 12 countries visited. Almost 100,000 patients were treated during a four-month deployment. It’s a wonderful outreach across our neighborhood, the Americas.

This chart shows some of the summary data from the *Comfort*’s deployment. Over eleven hundred surgeries were performed and over thirty-two thousand individuals were immunized. Eyeglasses were dispensed, veterinary assistance was provided to domestic animals, and almost thirty-two thousand students and other medical professionals were trained. It enhanced the capability of these countries to reach their own citizens by improving their own medical capability.

The bottom line is that the *Comfort* was able to treat almost one hundred thousand patients, and since many of those patients received upwards of four or five individual treatments, almost four hundred thousand treatments were performed during this four-month deployment.

Well, it would be fair to ask whether this was a one-time event. Is this the only type of outreach that USSOUTHCOM and the DOD conduct within the Americas? The answer is, not at all. This was an important outreach, but it is simply one in a long series of enduring outreaches to the Americas.

Our command consistently manages a series of humanitarian assistance, disaster preparedness, and disaster response programs that include medical outreach. On this chart, indicated in green, are the countries the *Comfort* visited in 2007 alone. But there were also 15 medical readiness and training exercises and an additional 43 deployments to 14 countries in 2007. We have more than one hundred projects in 2007 to 26 countries in this region and a budget of over thirteen million dollars. We continue to conduct medical readiness and training exercises as part of our outreach in the region.

Let me show you additional information to prove that this was not a one-time event. We expect to deploy this ship, or a follow-on ship with similar capabilities, in 2008, and we hope to return in the *Comfort* or a ship like her in 2009. We expect to expand our coordination and cooperation with NGOs and to expand our partnership with other public and private organizations, especially in the areas of public health. Through innovation and partnership, we believe that we are showing the commitment of the United States to this region.

I’ll be very happy to take questions if we have time, sir. Thank you very much.

El PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias, señor Spears. Creo que su disertación ha sido tan completa y ha contestado absolutamente todas las preguntas que tenían en mente nuestros estimados colegas, porque no veo oradores anotados. Tiene la palabra el Representante de Saint Kitts y Nevis.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE SAINT KITTS Y NEVIS: Chair, I want to thank you for having Lieutenant General Spears present this outline of the work of the U.S. navy vessel (USNS) *Comfort*. I'm very pleased that this kind of initiative is being taken by the U.S. military and that so many ports were visited in such a short period of time. You have taken a tanker, converted it into a hospital ship, conducted productive pursuits, and delivered to 12 nations in four months.

The General mentioned Project HOPE, which has served the region for well over 40 years. I know that it operated ships in Jamaica in the 1970s and in other parts of the Western Hemisphere and did a remarkable job, so it's heartening that the U.S. military is taking this kind of initiative and working with so many nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and countries, giving it not just an inter-American but a transatlantic flavor.

As a physician, I have many questions. I don't want to take up too much of the Council's time, but I wonder, for example, about the role of the premier inter-American health institution, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), in this initiative. I have not seen or heard mention of PAHO, which is the agency that we look to in terms of health screening and surveillance and that can best appreciate the health situation in the Americas.

The idea of the *Comfort* engaging the Americas at this time is also welcome because health care delivery, health diplomacy, and health partnership are the best means by which to engage nations with which you have friendly relations. I want to encourage a more sustainable approach. I believe that the Organization of American States, as well as PAHO, can provide opportunities for the U.S. military to determine how best to optimize future deployments.

Health surveillance is one way of sustaining this kind of initiative. Another method is ongoing partnerships—not in a revisitation way—with health authorities in the territories. It's fine to offer service within a country as you visit, but follow-up is more important.

One aspect of that partnership can be training; for example, by way of distance-learning facilities from the ship, which is quite possible in this age of modern technology. That can build relationships through health initiatives. There's no better way to strengthen bonds between countries.

The engineering skills that the U.S. Army and Navy bring to the area are very important, but you could also have people from our countries join you for periods of time as you go about your deployment so that they can go back home with newly-developed skills. Many times we—the small developing states of the Caribbean—have equipment that we just aren't able to maintain because we require advanced training to keep up with modern technology.

I don't think I should use up any more time. I'd really like to engage you after this meeting so that I can share some other thoughts. I thank you and the U.S. Government very much for this initiative, and I look forward to it developing into something bigger and stronger and more all-embracing.



Thank you, Chair.

[Pausa.]

El TENIENTE GENERAL DE LA FUERZA AÉREA DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS: ...<sup>1/</sup>organization. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) was involved in the planning and will be involved in the planning of similar missions, so we do cooperate fully with PAHO and very much appreciate its leadership in addressing health issues throughout the Hemisphere.

Thank you for your recommendations, sir.

[Ocupa la presidencia el Representante del Paraguay.]

El PRESIDENTE: Gracias. Le quisiera solicitar al señor General que espere a que todos los países hagan uso de la palabra para proceder a responder a las preguntas.

Tiene la palabra el Representante de Grenada.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GRENADA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I was not looking, and when I heard your voice I realized the Chair had changed! [Risas.] I hope Ambassador Gil did not leave.

Mr. Chairman, we generally hear about these types of initiatives in times of crisis and disaster in our region. I recall the U.S. navy ship (USNS) *Comfort* visiting in the aftermath of disasters, but this time, it came in time of need.

The scope of work of the Organization of American States reflects the need for this type of intervention in our region, these goodwill exercises being presented to us today as examples of good practices. I know that other big states in this organization have the capacity to send out flotillas like this and to make a difference.

I have a few questions. For example, are there criteria for choosing the populations that you visit in a particular state? Are there criteria for your visits? How often is the *Comfort* deployed? As my colleague from Saint Kitts and Nevis indicated, how can greater reliability be achieved through such significant humanitarian or mercy missions? Have health statistics been collected to determine the true nature of the health needs of our hemisphere?

My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to say “thanks” for a demonstration of goodwill and humanitarian sensitivity at a time when we are also dealing with the HIV/AIDS pandemic and other diseases. Our region is well served by this initiative. I wish to express my admiration for this deployment, and I do hope that our port is big enough for the *Comfort* to call!

I thank you.

El PRESIDENTE: Gracias, Embajador. Tiene el uso de la palabra el distinguido Representante de Guatemala.

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<sup>1/</sup>. Grabación defectuosa.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUATEMALA: Gracias, señor Presidente.

Quiero agradecerle al General Glenn Spears su presentación y su visita a nuestra Organización, y sobre todo la visita del buque hospital *Comfort* a varios de nuestros países. Estoy seguro de que en mi país fue bien recibida la visita del buque hospital *Comfort* y estoy seguro de que será bien recibida también en futuras ocasiones. Es bien conocido el déficit de mi país y de muchos de nuestros países en el ámbito de la salud, así que, en ese sentido, la cooperación de países amigos es siempre bien recibida.

La pregunta que yo tenía ya fue formulada por el Embajador de Saint Kitts y Nevis. Se refería al grado de coordinación o de información que se recaba en la preparación de estas visitas de instituciones del sistema interamericano que trabajan en el ámbito de la salud, como la Organización Panamericana de la Salud. El General Spears ya ha respondido esta pregunta, pero es ciertamente algo que nos interesa. En la misma medida en que se puedan coordinar las iniciativas que lleva adelante la Organización Panamericana de la Salud, se va a lograr darles un mayor impacto y un mayor beneficio.

De nuevo, agradezco la visita del General Spears. Gracias.

EL PRESIDENTE: Gracias, Embajador. Tiene ahora el uso de la palabra el Representante del Perú.

EL REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DEL PERÚ: Muchas gracias, señor Presidente.

Solamente unas palabras para agradecer, en primer lugar, al General Spears, el despliegue del barco en el Perú y la acción que han realizado allá. Nosotros ya tenemos experiencia con las cooperaciones que ha habido en el pasado y las apreciamos bastante.

En realidad, quería mencionar un tema que puede servir como punto de referencia o de reflexión.

A raíz de los desastres naturales que están afectando a muchos países, en el caso del Perú el terremoto del pasado mes de julio, creo que esto puede ser una iniciativa interesante en el sentido de agrupar los esfuerzos que hacen organismos no gubernamentales con gobiernos de diferentes Estados para tratar, de alguna manera, de paliar o superar los problemas que se presentan en los países. Ya en algún momento se ha mencionado la posibilidad de hacer una coordinación a nivel interamericano dentro de la OEA para paliar justamente los efectos negativos que generan los desastres naturales.

Creo que esto puede ser un punto de referencia y de reflexión para ver si algo práctico o útil se puede desarrollar a partir de iniciativas de este tipo, la cual agradecemos nuevamente.

Muchas gracias.

EL PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias. Tiene el uso de la palabra el distinguido Representante de Belize.

EL REPRESENTANTE INTERINO DE BELIZE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Delegation of Belize appreciates the initiative undertaken by the United States. It was both welcomed and well received, and we look forward to future collaborations in this regard. Thank you very much.

El PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias. El distinguido Representante de Guyana tiene la palabra.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My delegation thanks the Delegation of the United States for the insightful report from Lieutenant General Spears about the visit to our region of the U.S. navy ship (USNS) *Comfort*. That exercise was a fine example of the kind of practical results that can be achieved through cooperation between governmental and nongovernmental agencies to address areas of critical need in our hemisphere. The visit to Guyana was highly appreciated by the Government and people.

In addition to the extension of medical treatment to so many needy citizens in our region, the goodwill that has been generated is very important.

My delegation wishes to congratulate the United States, as well as the other agencies involved, for developing this initiative and for their willingness to continue it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

El PRESIDENTE: Gracias, Embajador. Tiene el uso de la palabra el distinguido Representante de El Salvador.

El REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DE EL SALVADOR: Gracias, señor Presidente.

Al igual que quienes me han precedido en el uso de la palabra, intervenimos para destacar la metodología de trabajo de la visita del buque hospital *Comfort* a los países del Hemisferio. Es precisamente el hecho que estimula los partenariados entre sectores públicos y privados, con la sociedad civil, los gobiernos, las instituciones competentes en la materia. Ciertamente que con ello, con la atención médica recibida y los ejercicios de preparación se complementan los esfuerzos nacionales en la materia. Con ello también se expresa el compromiso de los Estados Unidos con aportes concretos a la seguridad multidimensional y el desarrollo de los países del Hemisferio. Por eso, deseamos destacar la visita de dicho buque hospital a los países mencionados.

Gracias.

El PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias. Ahora sí, General, tiene el uso de la palabra para contestar las múltiples preguntas que surgieron de su interesante intervención.

El TENIENTE GENERAL DE LA FUERZA AÉREA DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS: Thank you again very much for the opportunity to address you.

I mentioned already our cooperation with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the important leadership that PAHO provides regarding medical missions and medical needs in the region.

An important question was raised regarding criteria for visits and how often the United States plans to deploy this capability. The criteria for visits are based on a combination of the needs identified by the countries to the U.S. Mission within that country and the timeframe available to deploy the *Comfort* or another similar vessel in order to meet these needs, bearing in mind the need to include international, nongovernmental, and other organizations that are aboard the vessel.

One of the ideas that we are considering is better preplanning by identifying the medical requirements much earlier, through the host nation, and perhaps even conducting medical screening further in advance before the ship arrives. Very often, medical screening is conducted the day before the ship arrives or, sometimes, after it arrives. If we were able to do that type of screening, especially for complicated surgeries or procedures, then we might be more efficient in meeting those medical needs and in determining how best to provide medical follow-up for those procedures.

Now, I must admit I'm a bit out of my area of expertise. The wings on my uniform are not medical wings; they are the wings of an aviator. The personnel in the Office of the Surgeon General, in cooperation and coordination with PAHO and organizations in the host nations, are taking the lessons that we have learned from this deployment and from our other ongoing medical outreach initiatives to figure out the best criteria to use for future similar deployments.

The other question was: how often do we plan to make this type of deployment? We will continue to conduct medical readiness and training exercises (MEDRETES) in many of the nations in the region, and we do hope and plan in 2008 to deploy, not necessarily the *Comfort*, but a different U.S. navy ship with similar medical capabilities. We will reach out to nongovernmental and international organizations to participate in that deployment, just as we did with the *Comfort*.

The final question that I remember was whether we can institutionalize this type of outreach, and that is a question that perhaps the Organization of American States, through PAHO, can better help answer. We are hopeful that we will be able to continue this kind of deployment each year and perhaps be able to reach out to other countries so that we can extend this experience and the training provided, as well as the medical diplomacy, to other countries in the region.

I think I've taken more than my allotted time, sir, but I do very much appreciate the opportunity to describe this mission to you. I hope that I was able to answer most of your questions, and we at the United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) look forward to continuing to work with PAHO and with other institutions like the OAS.

Thank you very much, sir.

[Vuelve a ocupar la presidencia el Representante de la Argentina.]

El PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias a usted, señor Spears. Creo que dada la importancia de la tarea emprendida, bien valió la pena el tiempo invertido en la explicación detallada de ella. Nuevamente muchas gracias.

Pregunto a la Sala si alguien más quiere hablar. No habiendo más intervenciones, la Presidencia sugiere que este Consejo Permanente tome nota de las informaciones recibidas esta mañana acerca de la misión del buque hospital USNS *Comfort*.

#### TRANSMISIÓN DE DOCUMENTOS A LAS COMISIONES

El PRESIDENTE: Pasamos al siguiente punto, que se refiere a la transmisión de documentos a las comisiones de trabajo de este Consejo Permanente.

El primero de ellos es la Nota de la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos remitiendo el documento “Lineamientos para la elaboración de indicadores de progreso en materia de derechos económicos, sociales y culturales”, documento CP/doc.4250/07 corr. 1 en español. Respecto a este documento presentado por la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (CIDH), quisiera recordar a los señores Representantes que, como lo indiqué en la última sesión de este Consejo, el documento es una propuesta preliminar de avance y no el documento final, tal y como lo indica la resolución AG/RES. 2267 (XXXVII-O/07).

En este entendido, la Presidencia sugiere que el mencionado documento sea transmitido a la consideración de la Comisión de Asuntos Jurídicos y Políticos, por ser el órgano dependiente de este Consejo que trata el tema de derechos humanos y que ha venido tratando esta cuestión en los últimos años, y solicitar a la CIDH que transmita a la brevedad posible el informe final sobre este asunto, tal como lo acordó la Asamblea General oportunamente.

En cuanto al Informe anual de la Inspector General correspondiente al período comprendido entre el 1 de enero y el 31 de diciembre de 2006 –documento CP/doc.4248/07–, y el Informe sobre las actividades de la Oficina del Inspector General, enero a diciembre de 2006 –documento CP/doc.4247/07–, la Presidencia sugiere que ambos documentos sean transmitidos a la consideración de la Comisión de Asuntos Administrativos y Presupuestarios.

De no haber objeción a lo propuesto por la Presidencia, así se acuerda. Acordado.

#### APROBACIÓN DE ACTAS

El PRESIDENTE: Nos corresponde proceder ahora a la aprobación de las actas CP/ACTA 1497/05, CP/ACTA 1499/05, CP/ACTA 1505/05 y CP/ACTA 1583/07 referidas en el orden del día.

Pregunto si hay observaciones. De no haberlas, las damos por aprobadas. Aprobadas.

#### AGRADECIMIENTO DEL REPRESENTANTE DE MÉXICO

El PRESIDENTE: Pasamos ahora al punto “Otros asuntos”. Tiene la palabra el señor Representante de México.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE MÉXICO: Muchas gracias, señor Presidente.

Muy brevemente, en esta oportunidad, quisiera reiterar el agradecimiento del pueblo de México por las innumerables muestras de solidaridad y simpatía, así como los ofrecimientos concretos de apoyo recibidos por la situación de emergencia que vive mi país, provocada por fenómenos hidrológicos extremos que causaron inundaciones en el estado de Tabasco, así como deslaves y otras complicaciones en el estado de Chiapas, afectando a más de 1.300.000 personas.

La magnitud de las afectaciones requirió de un esfuerzo sin precedentes para recibir y canalizar la ayuda internacional a México. La Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, a través de sus representaciones, instrumentó una estrategia para facilitar la recaudación de la ayuda financiera, de la asistencia técnica y de contribuciones en especie. Por instrucciones del Presidente de la República, las dependencias competentes de mi Gobierno han puesto especial atención en la canalización ágil y eficiente de los apoyos dirigidos a la población afectada.

En este sentido, deseo agradecer muy especialmente, en nombre del pueblo y del Gobierno de México, a los Estados Miembros de la Organización de los Estados Americanos por el aporte de \$15.000 provenientes del Fondo Interamericano de Asistencia para Situaciones de Emergencia, conocido como FONDEM. Agradezco también muy especialmente al Secretario General y al Secretario General Adjunto por su rápida y decidida intervención para concretar esta contribución. Sin duda, esta aportación, aunada a las del resto de la comunidad internacional, nos permitirá enfrentar los grandes desafíos que se refieren tanto a la atención de los damnificados como a las futuras etapas de reconstrucción.

Muchísimas gracias, señor Presidente.

El PRESIDENTE: Gracias a usted, señor Embajador de México.

#### DECLARACIONES DE LAS DELEGACIONES DEL CANADÁ Y LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS SOBRE LA SITUACIÓN EN BOLIVIA

El PRESIDENTE: Tiene la palabra el señor Representante del Canadá.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DEL CANADÁ: Gracias, señor Presidente.

Mr. Chairman, having taken note of the press release issued yesterday by the Secretary General on the current situation in Bolivia, I'm instructed to make the following brief statement:

Canada is concerned by the recent violence surrounding the constitutional reform process in Bolivia. We encourage the Government of Bolivia to work through the current political situation through democratic means and with full respect for the rule of law. Canada believes that an open, inclusive, and transparent process, in keeping with the principles enshrined in the Inter-American Democratic Charter, is key to ensuring the success of Bolivia's democratic reforms.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

El PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias, Embajador Clark. Tiene la palabra el señor Representante de los Estados Unidos.

El REPRESENTANTE INTERINO DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We, too, would like to read a statement regarding the situation in Bolivia:

We deplore the violence in Sucre, Bolivia, that claimed at least three lives during the weekend of November 23rd, stemming from constituent assembly deliberations on Bolivia's proposed new constitution. Democratic governments have the responsibility to protect their citizens' right to freedom of expression.

We urge the Bolivian Government and the opposition to show restraint and tolerance during this critical period. An environment that encourages inclusion and open debate is vital to the success of any democratic reform process.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

El PRESIDENTE: Gracias, señor Representante de los Estados Unidos.

Si ninguna otra delegación desea hacer uso de la palabra, se levanta la sesión.

De nuevo muchas gracias por su colaboración.

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