

CONSEJO PERMANENTE



OEA/Ser.G
CP/ACTA 1663/08
30 septiembre 2008

ACTA
DE LA SESIÓN PROTOCOLAR
CELEBRADA
EL 30 DE SEPTIEMBRE DE 2008

En honor del excelentísimo señor Bruce Golding, M.P.,
Primer Ministro de Jamaica

ÍNDICE

	<u>Página</u>
Nómina de los Representantes que asistieron a la sesión.....	1
Palabras del Secretario General.....	2
Palabras del Presidente del Consejo Permanente	4
Palabras del Primer Ministro de Jamaica.....	5

CONSEJO PERMANENTE DE LA ORGANIZACIÓN DE LOS ESTADOS AMERICANOS

ACTA DE LA SESIÓN PROTOCOLAR CELEBRADA EL 30 DE SEPTIEMBRE DE 2008

En la ciudad de Washington, a las once y veinte de la mañana del martes 30 de septiembre de 2008, celebró sesión protocolar el Consejo Permanente de la Organización de los Estados Americanos. Presidió la sesión el Embajador Nestor Mendez, Representante Permanente de Belize y Presidente del Consejo Permanente. Asistieron los siguientes miembros:

Embajador Gustavo Albin, Representante Permanente de México
y Vicepresidente del Consejo Permanente
Embajador Denis G. Antoine, Representante Permanente de Grenada
Embajador Michael I. King, Representante Permanente de Barbados
Embajador Izben C. Williams, Representante Permanente de Saint Kitts y Nevis
Embajadora Deborah-Mae Lovell, Representante Permanente de Antigua y Barbuda
Embajador Aristides Royo, Representante Permanente de Panamá
Embajador Manuel María Cáceres Cardozo, Representante Permanente del Paraguay
Embajador Osmar Chohfi, Representante Permanente del Brasil
Embajador Pedro Oyarce, Representante Permanente de Chile
Embajadora María del Luján Flores, Representante Permanente del Uruguay
Embajador Camilo Ospina, Representante Permanente de Colombia
Embajador Graeme C. Clark, Representante Permanente del Canadá
Embajador Reynaldo Cuadros Anaya, Representante Permanente de Bolivia
Embajador Jacques R. C. Kross, Representante Permanente de Suriname
Embajador Cornelius A. Smith, Representante Permanente del Commonwealth de las Bahamas
Embajadora María Zavala Valladares, Representante Permanente del Perú
Embajador José Enrique Castillo Barrantes, Representante Permanente de Costa Rica
Embajador Anthony Johnson, Representante Permanente de Jamaica
Embajador Jorge Skinner-Klée, Representante Permanente de Guatemala
Embajadora Glenda Morean Phillip, Representante Permanente de Trinidad y Tobago
Embajadora La Celia A. Prince, Representante Permanente de San Vicente y las Granadinas
Embajador Michael Louis, Representante Permanente de Santa Lucía
Tercera Secretaria Judith Anne Rolle, Representante Interina del Commonwealth de Dominica
Embajador Luis Menéndez-Castro, Representante Interino de El Salvador
Ministra Consejera Mayerlyn Cordero Díaz, Representante Alterna de la República Dominicana
Primera Secretaria Deborah Yaw, Representante Alterna de Guyana
Embajador Antonio Rodrigue, Representante Alterno de Haití
Ministra Consejera Carmen Luisa Velásquez de Visbal, Representante Alterna de Venezuela
Primer Secretario Juan Carlos Montoya, Representante Alterno de Honduras
Ministro Consejero Luis Exequiel Alvarado Ramírez, Representante Alterno de Nicaragua
Ministro Martín Gómez Bustillo, Representante Alterno de la Argentina
Consejero Denys Toscano Amores, Representante Alterno del Ecuador
W. Lewis Amselem, Representante Alterno de los Estados Unidos

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.

El PRESIDENTE: I am pleased to call to order this protocolary meeting of the Permanent Council, convened to receive His Excellency the Honorable Bruce Golding, Prime Minister of Jamaica. Permit me to extend a warm personal welcome to the distinguished Prime Minister of Jamaica as he joins us today.

PALABRAS DEL SECRETARIO GENERAL

El PRESIDENTE: Before introducing the Prime Minister, I invite the Secretary General of the Organization, Mr. José Miguel Insulza, to offer some brief remarks. Secretary General, you have the floor.

El SECRETARIO GENERAL: Honorable Prime Minister of Jamaica, Dr. Bruce Golding; Chair of the Permanent Council, Your Excellency Ambassador Nestor Mendez of Belize; Assistant Secretary General, Ambassador Albert Ramdin; ambassadors permanent representatives; alternate representatives; permanent observers; special guests; ladies and gentlemen:

I am very pleased to welcome to the Organization of American States the Prime Minister of Jamaica, His Excellency the Honorable Bruce Golding. We thank you, sir, for visiting us here in the House of the Americas. Being this your first visit, I should tell you that this is your house, and you are welcome any other time that you want to visit us or even use our premises for your own activities.

We congratulate ourselves on having cooperated with Jamaica yet again in the very close recent general election in which you were elected. The OAS observed those elections, and we were pleased by the fair and transparent electoral process in your country and the seriousness with which the people of Jamaica made their political decisions.

We offer our deepest regrets on the recent loss of life and property caused by the hurricanes that struck the northern Caribbean this year. The Council knows that we are working on improving our capacity to help countries build long-term resilience to extreme weather events, which are projected to increase in frequency and intensity, and to come to the help of countries that are affected.

On a lighter note, Mr. Prime Minister, I take this opportunity to congratulate you and your people on the outstanding performance of Jamaican athletes in the recently concluded Beijing Olympics. [Aplausos.] This success in world athletics is not new to Jamaica. Certainly, many of our countries look at you with admiration—and a little bit of envy.

Mr. Prime Minister, I am hearted by your decision to address us today. It demonstrates the interest of your government in promoting the mission of this Organization: to strengthen cooperation and advance common interests among the countries of the Western Hemisphere.

We have followed with interest the calls by you and your ministerial colleagues to intensify Jamaica's engagement with the Organization of American States and Latin America via a strategy of active engagement and dialogue. This is important for us, not only because Jamaica has strong cultural ties with many countries of the region, but because of the standing of your country within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and throughout the Caribbean.

We firmly believe that we have a very vital historical and cultural connection, which we cherish more than our differences, and that we can create as many opportunities as possible to work and dialogue together. We have to find common solutions to our shared challenges in the Hemisphere—such as crime and violence, energy and security, vulnerability to natural disasters, and trade and economic growth—in the framework of the political democracy that we all share now.

Your Excellency, we strongly support your recent statement at the 63rd Session of the UN General Assembly in which you called for middle-income countries with deep pockets of poverty and exposure to natural disasters to be given a new designation in the international arena. Of course, this is true of Jamaica, but I would say that it is true of the majority of OAS member states. They are middle-income countries with deep pockets of poverty and are exposed every season to natural disasters, both in the north and in the south of our region.

You are absolutely correct that the current system of classification, which deprives countries that have graduated out of less-developed-country status from receiving financing on favorable terms and accessing other poverty-alleviating incentives, is simply serving to drown these countries in crippling debt. Many of our member states find themselves in this position. President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica mentioned this fact a few days ago in Washington; he, too, is the President of a middle-income country that still has deep pockets of poverty. You can count on our collective support as we continue to advocate on behalf of a more sensible and realistic definition of developmental cooperation that would include a large number of Latin American and Caribbean countries.

I congratulate you also, sir, on the leadership you have provided during your short term as Chair of CARICOM's Prime Ministerial Sub-Committee on External Negotiations in bringing the much-debated Caribbean Forum of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (CARIFORUM)-European Community (EC) Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) process to a successful conclusion. I wish you similar success in implementing this critical agreement, as well as in the launch of trade negotiations with other countries and regions. The OAS stands ready to assist member states in establishing mechanisms and providing technical assistance to reap the benefits of these agreements.

Mr. Prime Minister, your administration has embarked upon several important local initiatives that we support. These include:

- the introduction of universal health care;
- free education for all at the primary and secondary school levels;
- stepping up the fight against pervasive crime and violence; and
- reaching out to the Jamaican diaspora to assist and participate in Jamaica's development.

We will be following the progress of these projects with great interest, and we stand ready to cooperate with you in their development.

One of Jamaica's national heroes, the Honorable Marcus Garvey, who has a prominent place in the OAS Hall of Heroes, said that "progress is the attraction that moves humanity." We in this organization and this hemisphere seek to move our people forward by advocating for social,

economic, and political progress in our respective countries. We know that we share these goals very closely with you and your government, and we wish you and the people of Jamaica much success as together, we continue our progress toward the goals of increased prosperity, equity, and sustainable development.

I extend to you once again, Mr. Prime Minister, a very warm OAS welcome. Thank you very much.

[Aplausos.]

PALABRAS DEL PRESIDENTE DEL CONSEJO PERMANENTE

El PRESIDENTE: Thank you Mr. Secretary General.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my honor to introduce the Prime Minister of Jamaica, His Excellency Bruce Golding, M.P., on this, his first visit to the Organization of American States in his current capacity as Head of Government of the sister country of Jamaica. On a personal note, it is especially gratifying for me, as the Representative of Belize, that we are ending Belize's chairmanship of this Permanent Council with the visit of a distinguished Prime Minister of a sister Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member state. Thank you for being here, Prime Minister!

Prime Minister Golding was elected following his party's victory in the general elections in Jamaica on September 3, 2007. He was sworn in as Prime Minister by the Governor General of Jamaica on September 11, 2007, and is the nation's eighth Prime Minister since its independence in 1962.

The Prime Minister entered the University of the West Indies in 1966 and graduated in 1969 with a bachelor of science degree in economics, majoring in public administration. He developed a keen interest in politics at a very young age and was active in the political campaigns of his father, Tacius Golding, in the 1960s. He was elected in 1972 to Parliament, thus becoming, at 24, the youngest person ever so elected—a national record that still stands today.

Following the 1980 election, he was reappointed to the Senate and at age 32 was appointed Minister of Construction in the Government led by the Jamaica Labor Party (JLP). Under his stewardship, the construction sector grew by 43% in Jamaica.

The Honorable Bruce Golding has had a significant presence in the leadership of the Jamaica Labor Party, having been elected Chairman on more than one occasion. He was elected leader of the JLP on February 20, 2005, and became the leader of the opposition on April 21 of that year. In his inaugural address, the Prime Minister termed himself "the chief servant of the people," a phrase that has been a hallmark of his government and of his personal leadership style.

Many of us, including me, have had the opportunity to hear presentations by Prime Minister Golding. It is therefore my personal privilege and honor to welcome him to the podium to address this Council. Excellency, you have the floor.

[Aplausos.]

PALABRAS DEL PRIMER MINISTRO DE JAMAICA

El PRIMER MINISTRO DE JAMAICA: Ambassador Mendez, Chairman of the Permanent Council; Secretary General Insulza; Assistant Secretary General Ambassador Ramdin; permanent representatives; observers; ladies and gentlemen:

You have honored me greatly today, and I am so appreciative that I have been able to meet with you. I want to thank Chairman Mendez, the Secretary General, and my own Permanent Representative, Ambassador Anthony Johnson, for having made this possible.

The Organization of American States came into being 60 years ago with the signing of the OAS Charter. It came into being in the wake of the Second World War and the efforts that had to be mounted to rebuild a world that had been impacted so severely by the effects of that war.

During those 60 years, the world has undergone so many changes—for a protracted period of time being gripped in a cold war; subsequent to that witnessing the marvels of technological advancement; and, in more recent times, being part of the experience that we call globalization—and over this period of 60 years, the OAS has remained not just relevant but absolutely necessary.

We represent some 34 countries of the Americas with a total population of almost nine hundred million. We have a great deal in common. We have a shared history. So many of our countries came out of the experience of slavery, the struggle against European colonialism, the fight that had to be waged to secure our independence, and the challenge that we now face to consolidate that independence and to ensure prosperity for our people.

Amidst the many things that we have in common, there is much constructive diversity in our ethnicity, in our culture, and in so many other aspects of life in the various countries that make up the Americas. There is a significant amount of complementarity because within our countries, there are abundant natural resources, sufficient resources to ensure a good quality of life for all the people that live in the Americas. Therefore, the things that brought us together and the things that have kept us together over these many years represent a level of importance that can not be overstated.

But as we have experienced throughout these 60 years—and perhaps as much now as at any time before—we face significant challenges, many of which have been brought about by this most recent reality of globalization. Globalization not just implies but requires an alignment of political and economical systems to achieve some level of symmetry in the way we live, in the way we relate to each other, and in the way we conduct our business.

Much of the focus of the Organization has been on perfecting that alignment in terms of promoting, expanding, and deepening democracy throughout the Americas and in giving preeminence to the observation and defense of human rights and to participation in our democratic processes—not just in electing governments but also in expanding the involvement of civil society in decision making. You have given a great deal of priority to good governance and good governance practices to combat the tendency towards corruption, overconcentration of power, and the inclination to operate in an environment in which those who hold power dislike being held accountable for the way in which that power is exercised.

In this regard, I want to commend the work of the OAS, in particular the leadership of Secretary General Insulza, in pursuing that mandate and in discharging that important responsibility. The OAS can take a great deal of credit for the level of stability that exists now within the region. There is still work to be done, and there will always be threats to that stability.

I want to endorse and commend the responsiveness and proactiveness of the OAS in identifying areas of discord and issues that need to be resolved before they become full-blown territorial disputes. One of the objectives of the OAS, which we must never lose sight of, is our commitment to promoting peace and security within the region.

I want to commend the OAS also for its focus on the plight of our brothers and sisters in Haiti, a country that deserves not our sympathy, but our support. It faces enormous challenges—challenges that some of us have already overcome but that remain with Haiti and must be overcome. Haiti deserves all the support that we can give it. I thought it necessary to include that in my remarks at the UN General Assembly last week.

Haiti has been ravished so often by disasters, to which it has so little resistance, but our support should not just be in terms of a relief response. Haiti faces a much deeper, much more comprehensive development challenge, and it is there that we must continue to put as much focus and as much of our energies as possible.

I wanted this morning to share with you some observations and concerns about the challenge of globalization and what it means to the countries of the Americas.

We live in a village, and we are no longer able to isolate or insulate ourselves from what happens in other parts of that village. The current global crisis, the worst that I can recall in my lifetime, is symptomatic of the interdependence of the entire world community. If what is now unfolding is not managed, if the appropriate responses are not forthcoming, if the world does not provide the leadership that the circumstances require, it will lead to cataclysmic consequences that will severely impact many countries of the Americas.

One of the imperatives that this global situation has brought to the fore is the need for a comprehensive, fundamental reform of the multilateral financial system. The world still pretends that the architecture that was established as part of the Bretton Woods Agreements has the capacity to manage the world that exists at this time. The Bretton Woods institutions were designed for a time that has long passed; those times have changed. There are new realities that that architecture does not take into account.

That architecture does not recognize that the China that exists today is not the China that existed in 1948. It does not recognize that there is a Brazil now that it is far more prominent a player in the global scheme of things than was the case at that time. In the arrangements that exist, India is still regarded as a little developing country struggling to get its people out of poverty. That is not the India that exists today. The multilateral framework has for too long been oblivious to the fact that the changes in these and other countries require changes in the machinery that seeks to guide, if not regulate, the world's financial arrangements, and there are some important areas in which that reform must be directed.

The global crisis, what has happened on Wall Street, and what is reverberating in financial markets across the world have shown that our financial arrangements do not have the capacity to facilitate the flow of resources into those areas and activities where real wealth can be created. Therefore, we have enormous wealth chasing its own tail, engaging in the creation of paper wealth, which eventually will come crashing down, as we are now seeing. The systems that influence economic decisions and financial activities do not know how to direct those resources into areas where they can be developmental in their effect, where they can create real wealth, where they can improve productivity, where they can improve the economic conditions of the entire global community.

I made a special plea last week for middle-income countries, among which Jamaica is categorized, for two reasons:

First, the arrangements that have been put in place recognize the need for special facilities for poor countries, particularly poor countries that are heavily burdened by debt, and various initiatives have been mounted to provide assistance for those countries. No comparable provisions exist for middle-income countries; yet, more than one third of the world's poor reside in those countries. Many of those middle-income countries, Jamaica being a primary example, are overburdened by debt.

I don't know how many of you know, and it is startling, but Jamaica's debt burden is so severe that the cost of servicing that debt is equal to all of the revenues that the Government collects. In other words, once we have paid the amount due for servicing that debt, before we can employ one teacher, before we can build one school, before we can fix one pothole, before we can put one bottle of aspirin in a hospital, we have to go to the market and borrow money.

Such countries do not have the fiscal elasticity to undertake the level of public sector investment that is necessary if we are to create a platform for growth. When we have to compete with the sovereign and private entities lining up in the capital market for the same funds, but requiring those funds for an assortment of purposes, not all of which can be satisfied with commercial funds, we find that each year, we are simply counting up how much debt we have, how much servicing we have to provide, and how much additional funds we have to borrow.

I have made a case for a special régime to be put in place for heavily indebted middle-income countries, which face particular challenges that require special attention. More than one third of the world's poor population resides there.

It is a truism, which I don't think the developed world fully appreciates, that the continued prosperity of the developed world depends on the economic conditions of the developing world, because we represent a substantial part of the market for goods and services of developed countries. I have always been at a loss to understand why something that makes such eminent common sense has not been accepted, but perhaps it's too common to be fully understood.

It requires that we all recognize that we have an investment in global development and in improving the earning capacity of people in developing countries. They face all of the challenges of underdevelopment and of poverty, but they have the potential that, if assisted, they can have an enormous impact on the world economy and on the level of world prosperity.

Second, we face another challenge brought about by globalization, and it has to do with the framework for trading relations defined and structured through the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the rules established by the World Trade Organization (WTO). We have not sufficiently appreciated the fact that one size does not always fit all. There is need for a trading régime that recognizes the difficulties faced by countries that have not yet made it to the point of development but which can, if they are provided with sufficient opportunities and facilities to do so.

There is a danger if this is not accepted, and this is why I am so disappointed at the failure of the Doha Development Round. The thrust towards free trade, unlimited and not recognizing the peculiarities of countries that are at different stages of development, could make those countries that are to be rich and prosperous either rich and prosperous or well on their way to being so, and those countries that are to be poor could be left behind in the backwater of modernity and modern-day economics. Much more attention needs to be paid to this matter.

There is also the question of climate change, which brings us together as members of the same global village. Again, I am disappointed at the failure of the deliberations that took place in December in Bali. I am hoping that much work is being done to ensure that when we meet again in Copenhagen, a more enlightened approach will be taken.

Last week, I pointed out at the United Nations that some of the practices that we thought were beneficial to developing countries may not be so. The provision, for example, for the sale of carbon credits, to which many developing countries have been enticed, may not necessarily lead to a reduction in global warming. Countries that are most responsible for producing emissions may exculpate themselves from the responsibility of reducing those emissions by going on the market and purchasing credits to make up for their failure to rein in the level of pollution.

Recently, I was having a discussion with the Prime Minister of Australia, who shared and supported my view that we need to put a limit on the amount of carbon credits that can be purchased so that those countries that are most guilty do not use that as an escape route to avoid the emissions reductions that must be undertaken.

Just before coming into this room, I expressed to the Secretary General that we have to be very mindful, in this process of globalization and all of the excitement that we are caught up in, of the danger that organizations like the OAS could become marginalized in its focus and in its scope of work. So many things have been pulled into this broad global arena, and everything else that represents regional concerns must therefore take its cue from what is happening at the global level. We have to guard against this because there are peculiarities and commonalities that bring us together and enable us to adopt a particular focus. When we get into that global arena, much of that can be lost because it is going to be buffeted by so many other concerns that do not necessarily apply to us.

Economic and social development represents part of the mission of the Organization of American States. We don't want to duplicate what takes place in other formal structures, but there are some cross-cutting obligations that I think fit neatly within the scope of the Charter of the OAS, and I want to suggest one that I feel is so important: capacity building. Some of our countries are in danger of being left behind because we do not have the capacity to take advantage of the opportunities created by globalization.

I'll give you a case in point. CARICOM countries, along with the Dominican Republic, have just completed negotiations for an economic partnership agreement with the European Commission. It's not a perfect agreement; no agreement ever is. It's an agreement that came out of negotiations; it involved giving and taking. I feel, as someone who in the latter stages had primary responsibility for guiding those negotiations, that it was, on balance, a good agreement for us. It offers significant opportunities; it poses dangers as well, and the dangers are wrapped up in the question as to whether or not we have the ability to exploit the opportunities that it offers. If we can do that, we will be all right. If we can't do that, we could be worse off than we were before.

But one of the challenges that we face in exploiting those opportunities—not just within the framework of the economic agreement with Europe but in the broader framework of the opportunities globalization offers—is capacity. We lack the capacity to penetrate markets. We lack the capacity to take advantage of many opportunities. We lack that capacity in terms of our human resources, our education, and our training, where we have a huge deficit that has to be made up.

We speak of empowering the poor. Not everyone needs to be a chief executive officer, but even the poor can be productive if the proper programs are put in place.

Very important also is institutional capacity within our countries. This is what I really want to urge the OAS to seriously consider: our ability to provide the regulatory framework that the economy needs and a bureaucracy that is not intimidating to investment, that does not strangle productive effort, and that is facilitative rather than obstructive.

Yesterday I had a meeting with the IDB; today I am meeting with the World Bank, and I know one of the issues that I am going to have to respond to is: "How is it that you are seeking more loans when you have performed so poorly with those that we have provided before?" So often, it is because we just do not have that capacity to utilize these loans and these facilities to achieve targets, to complete projects, and to move on to the next one.

The OAS may want to focus on this in greater detail, consistent with its Charter. How can we help each other? How can the OAS provide more technical support and assistance to build our institutional capacity so that we can compete in this new global race?

The OAS's mandate, as sharp and as relevant today as it was 60 years ago, cannot abide indefinitely a situation in which we, as member states, find ourselves unequally yoked. The OAS's mandate cannot sit comfortably in a situation in which such deep pockets of poverty coexist with such towering images of prosperity within our 34 member states. The OAS cannot be a sorting house where we matriculate countries into new, exclusive clubs for those that have graduated to the point where they can now be classified as developed countries, and we send them on their way.

The intention must be that we reduce, as much as possible, the imbalances that exist and that we support the aspirations of the populations in each of our countries for a better quality of life and for a prosperity that is shared among all of us, so that the Americas can become an example of collective, collaborative action to ensure prosperity for everyone. As compelling and as demanding an imperative as this is, it must be part of the mission of the new millennium and of the commitment of the OAS.

I commend that to you, and I want to assure you that Jamaica will continue, as we have done over these many years since we became a member, to participate in and contribute to the efforts of the

Organization of American States in order to transform the dreams and hopes of our people into the reality and experience of their daily lives.

I thank you once again for the opportunity to have met with you and to have shared with you these few observations.

[Aplausos.]

El PRESIDENTE: Your Excellency, thank you very much for your remarks and for gracing us with your presence here today. Your remarks were inspiring and thought-provoking. I am sure that the message you delivered here today will continue to resonate in the deliberations of this political body long after today. Again, thank you.

I now ask the distinguished representatives to stand in your places so that the Prime Minister can greet you.

[El Primer Ministro de Jamaica saluda a los Representantes.]

We are at the end of our meeting. I ask that you please remain in your places until the Prime Minister and his delegation depart.

This meeting is adjourned.

ISBN 978-0-8270-5252-9