

CONSEJO PERMANENTE



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ACTA
DE LA SESIÓN ORDINARIA
CELEBRADA
EL 22 DE AGOSTO DE 2012

Aprobada en la sesión del 8 de mayo de 2013

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DOCUMENTOS CONSIDERADOS EN LA SESIÓN
(SE PUBLICAN POR SEPARADO)

CP/doc.4793/12, Propuesta para la distribución de mandatos emanados del cuadragésimo segundo período ordinario de sesiones de la Asamblea General y mandatos continuados de años anteriores

CP/doc.4795/12, Proyecto de Programa-Presupuesto 2013, presentado por el Secretario General

CP/INF.6483/12, Nota de la Misión Permanente de Guyana al Presidente del Consejo Permanente mediante la que solicita que el tema “Información sobre las recientes protestas y manifestaciones en Guyana” sea incluido en el orden del día de la sesión del Consejo Permanente programada para el 22 de agosto de 2012

CONSEJO PERMANENTE DE LA ORGANIZACIÓN DE LOS ESTADOS AMERICANOS

ACTA DE LA SESIÓN ORDINARIA CELEBRADA EL 22 DE AGOSTO DE 2012

En la ciudad de Washington, a las tres y treinta de la tarde del miércoles 22 de agosto de 2012, celebró sesión ordinaria el Consejo Permanente de la Organización de los Estados Americanos. Presidió la sesión el Embajador Stephen C. Vasciannie, Representante Permanente de Jamaica y Presidente del Consejo Permanente. Asistieron los siguientes miembros:

Embajador Diego Pary, Representante Permanente de Bolivia
y Vicepresidente del Consejo Permanente
Embajador Bayney R. Karran, Representante Permanente de Guyana
Embajador Cornelius A. Smith, Representante Permanente del Commonwealth de las Bahamas
Embajador Nestor Mendez, Representante Permanente de Belize
Embajador Roy Chaderton Matos, Representante Permanente de Venezuela
Embajadora Gillian M. S. Bristol, Representante Permanente de Grenada
Embajador Bernadino Hugo Saguier, Representante Permanente del Paraguay
Embajadora Carmen Lomellin, Representante Permanente de los Estados Unidos
Embajador Darío Paya, Representante Permanente de Chile
Embajador Hubert J. Charles, Representante Permanente del Commonwealth de Dominica
Embajador Neil Parsan, Representante Permanente de Trinidad y Tobago
Embajador Joel Antonio Hernández García, Representante Permanente de México
Embajador Leonidas Rosa Bautista, Representante Permanente de Honduras
Embajador Edgar Ugalde Álvarez, Representante Permanente de Costa Rica
Embajador José Rodrigo Viemann de León, Representante Permanente de Guatemala
Embajador Milton Romani Gerner, Representante Permanente del Uruguay
Ministro Martín Gómez Bustillo, Representante Interino de la Argentina
Embajador Luis Menéndez-Castro, Representante Interino de El Salvador
Ministro Consejero Breno de Souza Brasil Dias da Costa, Representante Interino del Brasil
Consejero Kenneth J. Amoksi, Representante Interino de Suriname
Embajador José de Jesús Martínez González, Representante Interino de Panamá
Consejera Wendy Ellen Drukier, Representante Interina del Canadá
Ministra Consejera Mayerlyn Cordero Díaz, Representante Interina de la República Dominicana
Ministra Consejera Nicolla Simone Rudder, Representante Interina de Barbados
Ministra Elizabeth Moreano Cruz, Representante Alterna del Ecuador
Ministro Consejero Luís Exequiel Alvarado Ramírez, Representante Alterno de Nicaragua
Ministro Consejero Omari Seitu Williams, Representante Alterno de San Vicente y las Granadinas
Ministro Consejero Javier Yopez, Representante Alterno del Perú
Kemoy Liburd Chow, Representante Alterna de Saint Kitts y Nevis
Ministro José Luis Ramírez, Representante Alterno de Colombia
Embajador Bocchit Edmond, Representante Alterno de Haití
Ministra Marcha Monique Coore Lobban, Representante Alterna de Jamaica

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: I am pleased to call to order this regular meeting of the Permanent Council, convened to consider the items included in the draft order of business, document CP/OD.1866/12.

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

1. Aprobación del orden del día (CP/OD.1866/12).
2. Elección de autoridades de los órganos subsidiarios del Consejo Permanente.
3. Consideración de la propuesta de distribución de mandatos emanados del cuadragésimo segundo período ordinario de sesiones de la Asamblea General y otras sesiones ([CP/doc.4793/12](#)).
4. Presentación de la Propuesta de Programa-Presupuesto 2013 ([CP/doc.4795/12](#)).
5. Información sobre las recientes protestas y manifestaciones en Guyana ([CP/INF.6483/12](#)).
6. Aprobación de actas de las sesiones del Consejo Permanente: CP/ACTA 1838/12; CP/ACTA 1839/12; CP/ACTA 1841/12 corr. 1 y CP/ACTA 1845/12.
7. Otros asuntos.]

If there are no objections, the draft order of business is approved as presented. Approved.

ELECCIÓN DE AUTORIDADES DE LOS ÓRGANOS SUBSIDIARIOS DEL CONSEJO PERMANENTE

El PRESIDENTE: We now move to item 2, election of the officers of the subsidiary organs of the Permanent Council.

Regarding committee officers, I would like to remind distinguished representatives that Article 15 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council establishes that “the Chair and Vice Chair of the Permanent Council shall serve respectively as Chair and Vice Chair of the General Committee.” Article 21 establishes that “the representative of the member state presiding over the Summit process shall serve as Chair of the Committee on Inter-American Summits Management and Civil Society Participation in OAS Activities (CISC).”

Regarding the election of the officers of the installed committees, Article 29.a of the Rules of Procedure establishes that:

Elections for the chairs and vice chairs of the permanent committees, except for the officers of the General Committee and the chair of the Committee on Inter-American Summits Management and Civil Society Participation in OAS Activities, must be held no

later than the last meeting of the month following the close of the regular session of the General Assembly. Except as provided for the General Committee and the chair of the Committee on Inter-American Summits Management and Civil Society Participation in OAS Activities, pursuant to Article 3 of these Rules of Procedure, the terms of office of the chairs and vice chairs of these committees shall be one year.

The Chair has been informed that the member states have reached agreement on proceeding to elect the chairs of the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP) and the Committee on Hemispheric Security (CHS), and that the elections for the chairs of the other committees will be postponed until the next meeting of the Permanent Council.

As mentioned before, the representative of the member state presiding over the Summit process shall serve as Chair of the CISC. Therefore, the CISC will be chaired by Ambassador Andrés González Díaz, the Permanent Representative of Colombia.

[Pausa.]

Let us proceed now to elect the Chair of the CAAP. I offer the floor to the delegations so that they can submit their nominations. I see that Barbados has requested the floor.

La REPRESENTANTE INTERINA DE BARBADOS: Thank you, Chair.

It gives the Delegation of Barbados great pleasure to nominate His Excellency Ambassador Allan Culham of Canada to be the next Chair of the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP). We are confident that under his expert guidance and leadership, the CAAP will move expeditiously to make progress on the tasks assigned to it. Thank you.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Barbados for her nomination. I see that the distinguished Representative of El Salvador has requested the floor.

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

Por los motivos indicados por la distinguida Representante de Barbados, es motivo de especial complacencia para nuestra Delegación secundar la candidatura del Embajador Allan Culham, Representante Permanente del Canadá, para presidir los trabajos de la Comisión de Asuntos Administrativos y Presupuestarios. Los miembros de este Consejo Permanente saben del conocimiento que el Representante Permanente del Canadá tiene del sistema interamericano. En ese sentido, su Delegación se ha caracterizado consistentemente por presentar iniciativas constructivas, y en este caso, para refinar el funcionamiento de la Secretaría General, el sistema de pesos y contrapesos y la rendición de cuentas.

En razón de ese alto perfil y de antecedentes que a él lo caracterizan, como el hecho de haber fungido previamente como Inspector General, es decir, auditor interno de su Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, nuestra Delegación secunda su nominación y solicita que su elección sea hecha por aclamación.

Gracias.

[Aplausos.]

El PRESIDENTE: The Delegation of Barbados has presented the candidacy of Ambassador Culham, the Delegation of El Salvador has seconded the proposal, and that proposal has been received by acclamation. It is my pleasure, therefore, to announce that Ambassador Allan Culham, Permanent Representative of Canada, has been elected Chair of the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP), in which position I'm sure he will continue to display his usual skill and efficiency. On behalf of the Permanent Council, I wish him every success in his endeavors.

I see that Canada has requested the floor.

La REPRESENTANTE INTERINA DEL CANADÁ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I know that Ambassador Culham would have loved to have been here to accept this appointment himself, but on his behalf, I'd like to thank everyone for their support for his nomination and election to chair the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP) for the next year. Canada is honored to be entrusted with this position.

Canada is committed to a strong and effective Organization of American States, and our intention is to continue working on strengthening the capacity of the Organization to deliver on its mandates to meet the challenges of the Hemisphere and to assist it with its ongoing strategic planning and reforms.

We would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Barbados, Ambassador Beale, for his contribution to the CAAP over the last year. We will do our utmost to carry out the objectives for which such important groundwork has been so carefully prepared. Thank you.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Canada for that intervention and congratulate once again Ambassador Culham on his election.

The election of the authority for the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs (CAJP) will be postponed until the next meeting of the Council. I would be grateful, therefore, if the member states could conduct the necessary consultations so as to ensure that the corresponding elections can be held during the Permanent Council meeting of September 5, 2012.

Let us now proceed to the election of the Chair of the Committee on Hemispheric Security (CSH). I offer the floor to the delegations so that they may submit their nominations. I see that the distinguished Representative of Grenada has requested the floor.

La REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GRENADA: Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon!

My delegation takes the floor with great anticipation and enthusiasm this afternoon to nominate to the position of Chair of the Committee on Hemispheric Security (CSH) of this Council His Excellency Bayney Karran, Guyana's Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States. As we all know, he is also Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United States of America, so he fills many roles at the same time. He is the concurrent nonresident Ambassador of Guyana to Chile, Colombia, and Ecuador, three sister nations and member states of this organization.

Ambassador Karran has quitted himself with well-known and now legendary aplomb, distinction, and gentlemanliness—always. His eloquence has filled these halls, and he has conveyed so much wisdom—with wit, no doubt—during the many hours he has sat in the Council, and he has demonstrated that he is clearly capable of leading the Committee on Hemispheric Security.

He has been both Chair and Vice Chair of this Permanent Council, and under his stewardship, the 34 member states have managed to conclude issues, such as the Social Charter of the Americas and a review of the Inter-American Democratic Charter on the tenth anniversary of its adoption.

He has also led delegations on behalf of his country to international climate change deliberations. He has participated in World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) meetings. His experience goes to matters of law of the sea and international maritime boundaries, especially as regards his country and neighboring countries.

Ambassador Karran has carried out so many roles here in the OAS, but maybe we are not even aware that he is currently the Vice President of the Young Americas Business Trust (YABT), one of the most important semi-independent entities of this organization. So, he's versed in entrepreneurship, in youth, in everything that concerns this organization.

His background is in media broadcasting and legal affairs.

I haven't said anything about security [risas.], but that does not mean that he doesn't know anything about it. Under his leadership, Guyana's Permanent Mission has participated very actively in the Committee since he arrived here in 2003. He is called on to be the Chair, and he is no doubt most capable of leading the Committee and successfully concluding the mandates to be assigned to the CSH prior to the next regular session of the General Assembly.

My delegation takes tremendous pride in nominating him and giving him this unenviable task on behalf of us all.

Thank you, Chair.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Grenada for her nomination, and I see that the distinguished Representative of Brazil has requested the floor. You have the floor, sir.

El REPRESENTANTE INTERINO DEL BRASIL: Obrigado, Senhor Presidente.

A Delegação do Brasil gostaria de secundar a proposta feita pela distinta Representante de Grenada. O Brasil também entende que o Representante da Guiana poderá exercer de maneira bastante qualificada essa presidência de uma comissão que tem tarefas hercúleas a serem levadas adiante. Só para que possamos nos lembrar, a "super-resolução" está aí para demonstrar que o Representante da Guiana vai ter uma tarefa muito árdua. Mas, por suas qualidades pessoais e profissionais, entendemos que ele poderá desempenhar muito bem essas funções. E a Delegação do Brasil gostaria de sugerir que a indicação fosse feita por aclamação.

Muito obrigado.

[Aplausos.]

El PRESIDENTE: The Delegation of Grenada has presented the candidacy of Ambassador Bayney Karran. The Delegation of Brazil has seconded the proposal and has requested that the election be by acclamation. There has been acclamation.

It is therefore my pleasure to announce that Ambassador Bayney Karran, Permanent Representative of Guyana, has been elected Chair of the Committee on Hemispheric Security (CSH), in which position I am sure he will display his usual skill and efficiency. On behalf of the Permanent Council, I wish him every success in his endeavors.

I see that Ambassador Karran would like to say a few words. Ambassador.

El PRESIDENTE DE LA COMISIÓN DE SEGURIDAD HEMISFÉRICA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I wish to thank the Ambassador of Grenada for an extremely enthusiastic nomination. I am not sure that people intimate to me would recognize me after that introduction. I also wish to thank the distinguished Interim Representative of Brazil for seconding the nomination.

Mr. Chairman, security is one of the key pillars of our organization. It is something in which all of us have a keen and abiding interest, and I wish to thank the Council for the confidence that it has reposed in me. I pledge to put my best foot forward without fear or favor, and I look forward to and thank everyone in advance for the cooperation I will receive.

Thank you very much.

El PRESIDENTE: Thank you, Ambassador Karran, for your response, and congratulations once again.

I see Colombia has asked for the floor. The floor is yours.

El REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DE COLOMBIA: Muchísimas gracias, señor Presidente y excúsenme por pedir la palabra un poco a último momento. Sé que no es justificación pero recién ayer estaba regresando de vacaciones y decía en broma que cuando uno llega de vacaciones sucede lo que dice el maestro Gabriel García Márquez, que el cuerpo llega un día y el alma llega tres días después. Entonces, apenas estoy acomodándome a todo el procedimiento de nuestras sesiones del Consejo Permanente.

Fuera de broma, Presidente, quería comentar lo siguiente y simplemente tener una aclaración por parte de la Secretaría.

Como es de conocimiento, y le agradezco muchísimo el tema de la designación a Colombia, que por derecho propio le corresponde en la Comisión de Gestión de Cumbres Interamericanas y Participación de la Sociedad Civil en las Actividades de la OEA (CISC), es muy probable que en muy pocos meses, como en efecto va a suceder, se entregue la coordinación nacional de la próxima Cumbre de las Américas a la hermana República de Panamá quien asumirá esas funciones.

Tengo entendido que en ese momento, a pesar de que ahora continuaremos detentando el manejo de la Presidencia del CISC, por parte de Colombia, haremos la entrega de la Presidencia del CISC a Panamá en el momento en que se haga la entrega de la coordinación nacional. Entonces creo no estar equivocado, simplemente para tener, por parte de la Secretaría, una confirmación al respecto.

Muchas gracias.

[Pausa.]

El PRESIDENTE: Thank you, Colombia, for that inquiry. I note that you have asked the Secretariat for guidance on the matter, and so I turn you over to Assistant Secretary General Ramdin.

El SECRETARIO GENERAL ADJUNTO: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Distinguished Representative of Colombia, the transfer of the chairmanship of the Summit process is often done by the ministers of foreign affairs. I believe that the next opportunity to do that, if both countries agree, would be in November when the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) meets. Once the chairmanship of the Summit process is transferred from Colombia to Panama, the next host of the Summit of the Americas, Panama will take over the chairmanship of the Committee on Inter-American Summits Management and Civil Society Participation in OAS Activities (CISC). That's the process.

El PRESIDENTE: Thank you, Assistant Secretary General Ramdin, for that clarification. The Representative of Colombia appears to be satisfied with that response. Welcome back! I'm glad that your body came with your soul! [Risas.]

CONSIDERACIÓN DE LA PROPUESTA DE DISTRIBUCIÓN DE MANDATOS EMANADOS DEL CUADRAGÉSIMO SEGUNDO PERÍODO ORDINARIO DE SESIONES DE LA ASAMBLEA GENERAL Y OTRAS SESIONES

El PRESIDENTE: The next item on the order of business concerns the distribution of mandates of the forty-second regular session of the General Assembly. As representatives may be aware, Article 30 of the Rules of Procedure of the Permanent Council provides that:

The Permanent Council shall distribute the mandates of each General Assembly among its different committees, subcommittees, and working groups within one month following the date of closure of the regular session of the General Assembly.

In keeping with the Rules of Procedure, the Secretariat has prepared, for the consideration of the member states, a proposed distribution of mandates assigned by the General Assembly at its forty-second regular session, as well as of those of an ongoing nature adopted by the General Assembly in recent years. The proposed distribution of mandates, document CP/doc.4793/12, was drawn up according to the criteria used in years past of assigning implementation and follow-up of General Assembly mandates to the committees within whose framework the original proposals were submitted.

I offer the floor to delegations that wish to state their position regarding the proposed distribution of mandates. I see that El Salvador has sought the floor. El Salvador, the floor is yours, sir.

EL REPRESENTANTE INTERINO DE EL SALVADOR: Gracias, señor Presidente.

Inicio felicitando al Representante Permanente de Guyana, por supuesto, por su muy merecida y representativa elección, así como al Representante Permanente de Colombia, en ausencia.

Señor Presidente, respecto a la propuesta de distribución de mandatos de la Asamblea General, desearía formular un comentario y realizar una consulta a la Secretaría. Sabemos que este es un documento vivo, que es concomitante con otros desarrollos que tienen lugar a efecto de canalizar y diligenciar el seguimiento de los mandatos otorgados por la Asamblea General. Esta misma tarde hemos procedido a la elección de las autoridades de las Comisiones a las que les compete, puesto que fueron instaladas hace varias semanas, la depuración de mandatos que ha sido encomendada en su momento. Y este es un documento que va en esa dirección, que contribuye a ello.

El comentario de por qué lo calificamos de un documento vivo es por cuanto, por ejemplo, el mandato que se refiere a la Carta Social compete ahora, siempre de manera conjunta, a ambos Consejos. Sabemos que es un tema en el cual la naturaleza del mandato se refiere a ponerlo en marcha con un Plan de Acción que complemente la Carta Social de las Américas adoptada en Cochabamba. Es ese el comentario.

La consulta a la Secretaría, ya que usted introdujo el tema en términos de que este documento había sido diseñado en función de las pautas dadas en años anteriores, se refiere a la resolución AG/RES. 2761 (XLII-O/12) "Seguimiento de las recomendaciones del Informe del Grupo de Trabajo Especial de Reflexión sobre el Funcionamiento de la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos para el fortalecimiento del Sistema Interamericano de Derechos Humanos". Advertimos que en esta propuesta el mandato de su seguimiento aparece asignado al Consejo Permanente. Asimismo aparece asignado a la Comisión de Asuntos Jurídicos y Políticos.

Entenderíamos que esa clasificación repite la pauta establecida en la distribución del año pasado porque recordamos que el tema fue objeto de un grupo especial del Consejo Permanente. Evidentemente, este es un tema cuyo tratamiento se complementa en razón del ámbito natural del mismo, como es la Comisión de Asuntos Jurídicos y Políticos.

En relación al numeral decimosegundo, asignado a la Comisión de Asuntos Jurídicos y Políticos, la resolución AG/RES. 2723 (XLII-O/12) o, en concreto, el "Programa Interamericano para el Desarrollo del Derecho Internacional", entenderíamos que el mismo tema se menciona en dos resoluciones. Al inicio de la página cuarta, en la resolución AG/RES. 2660 (XLI-O/11) "Programa Interamericano para el Desarrollo del Derecho Internacional", también se alude al mismo pero bajo el manto de la resolución aprobada el año previo. Entenderíamos que eso obedece a que en el 2011 se aprobó la versión revisada del Programa Interamericano y que en el 2012 la resolución alude al seguimiento propiamente de ese tema.

Espero haber sido claro, señor Presidente, y por su digno intermedio recibir la ilustración de la Secretaría General sobre este asunto.

Gracias.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of El Salvador for his comments. The Secretariat has taken note of your comments and has undertaken to make adjustments to the document. Would you wish a firmer commitment than that, or is that sufficient for your purposes?

El REPRESENTANTE INTERINO DE EL SALVADOR: Gracias, señor Presidente. Es suficiente.

El PRESIDENTE: Thank you very much, sir. I see no other delegation requesting the floor at this time. If there are no further comments, I suggest that the Council approve the distribution of mandates contained in document CP/doc.4793/12 in their current form, subject to consultation with members of the Secretariat. If there are no further observations, it is so decided. Approved.

PRESENTACIÓN DE LA PROPUESTA DE PROGRAMA-PRESUPUESTO 2013

El PRESIDENTE: Pursuant to Article 91.c of the OAS Charter, the Permanent Council shall “act as the Preparatory Committee of the General Assembly, in accordance with the terms of Article 60 of the Charter,” which establishes that one of the functions of the Preparatory Committee is to review the program-budget of the Organization.

For its part, Article 90 of the General Standards to Govern the Operations of the General Secretariat establishes that “the Secretary General shall present the proposed program-budget to the Preparatory Committee and shall send a copy thereof to the Chair of CEPCIDI.”

In addition, resolution AG/RES. 1 (XLII-E/11) convokes a special session of the General Assembly to consider and approve the 2013 program-budget, and that session should be held no later than November 15, 2012. To comply with that standard, the Secretary General has prepared a proposed program-budget of the Organization for the year 2013 and will present it at this meeting.

It is my pleasure, therefore, to give the floor to Mr. José Miguel Insulza, Secretary General of the Organization of American States. Secretary General, you have the floor, sir.

El SECRETARIO GENERAL: Muchas gracias, Presidente.

Señor Presidente, señoras y señores Embajadores Representantes: me dirijo a ustedes a fin de presentar mi propuesta de programa-presupuesto para el año 2013. Entiendo que ustedes han recibido o van a recibir un documento o alguna de esta información, entregada por la Secretaría de Asuntos Administrativos y Financieros.

Solamente antes de empezar mi exposición quería hacer una corrección. Ustedes tienen en esa documentación el organigrama del año 2012 y algunos eventuales cambios para el 2013. Por favor dejemos de lado la segunda hoja. No van a haber cambios en el organigrama entre el 2012 y el 2013. Por lo tanto, no debe considerarse.

A fines del año pasado, señor Presidente, presenté al Consejo Permanente un documento titulado “Una Visión Estratégica de la OEA” y en febrero de este año expuse las ideas centrales

contenidas en esa presentación. Ahora que ha habido suficiente tiempo para reflexionar sobre este informe lo que deberíamos estar haciendo en este momento, y espero hacer, es la expresión numérica de esa propuesta política.

Por lo tanto nuestra línea central de trabajo busca consolidar la estrategia de alineamiento de los recursos del Fondo Regular en los cuatro pilares que fundamentan la actividad de la OEA: defensa y protección de la democracia; derechos humanos; seguridad multidimensional; y, desarrollo integral.

En segundo lugar corresponde también a la demanda de los Estados Miembros de focalizar los recursos, facilitar la transparencia, mejorar la eficiencia y avanzar por la administración por resultados.

No obstante es importante señalar que antes de mostrar cuál es la expresión numérica, es importante recordar la situación especial en que nos encontramos. Hace pocos meses atrás nuestra Asamblea General se fijó el techo del presupuesto para el año 2013. Ese techo tiene una reducción respecto del año pasado de algo de alrededor de 3.3 millones de dólares.

Por lo tanto, me gustaría a poder decir que la focalización de nuestra estrategia se refleja en los aumentos que sufren las áreas o que se dan a las áreas que estamos considerando como fundamentales. En una reducción tan sustantiva del presupuesto y en que además se ve incrementada por otras obligaciones, como es, por ejemplo, hacernos cargo de los incrementos de costo de vida, en realidad en algunos casos reconozco que esa focalización se expresa en la no reducción de las cifras asignadas con respecto al año pasado.

Teniendo esto en mente, por lo tanto, y estamos hablando de focalizar pero también estamos hablando de un presupuesto sustantivamente reducido respecto del año anterior, me permito referirme a esos puntos.

En materia de focalización de los recursos del Fondo Regular, el único aumento propuesto es de un millón de dólares a las instituciones del Sistema Interamericano de Derechos Humanos: 500 mil dólares a la Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos y 500 mil dólares a la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos.

Para mejorar la liquidez del Fondo Regular, y haciéndome eco de una demanda muchas veces repetida por los Estados Miembros, he incluido además una partida presupuestaria para el Subfondo de Reserva al Fondo Regular de medio millón de dólares.

Para facilitar la transparencia de las actividades de la Organización, ustedes encontrarán un reordenamiento de la estructura presupuestaria que destaca los programas esenciales y le otorga una mayor congruencia temática. Para ello se reordenan los capítulos relacionados con derechos humanos y jurídicos. Se incluyen los mismos capítulos, denominado ahora de cumplimiento y fiscalización de la gestión, las funciones de la Inspectoría General y del Tribunal Administrativo. Se focalizan también, en un capítulo separado, las conferencias y reuniones directamente relacionadas con las propuestas del Consejo Permanente. Y, finalmente, se incluye en el capítulo de organismos principales y especializados al Comité Jurídico Interamericano.

Asimismo se ha puesto en práctica la recomendación de la Asamblea General relacionada con la nueva forma de publicación de los informes de personal, que incluyen ahora grado y paso; además de la ya tradicional información sobre origen de los fondos y nacionalidad, que nuevamente está incluida, por cierto. Tal como ya era costumbre, este reporte de personal mantendrá su frecuencia trimestral.

Para mejorar la eficiencia en las operaciones de la Secretaría General, el programa-presupuesto incluye una serie de medidas. Entre ellas destaca la reorganización de la oferta de becas. Gracias a una agresiva y exitosa política de firma de convenios bilaterales con las principales universidades del Continente, hemos logrado aumentar significativamente la oferta de becas aliviando al mismo tiempo la carga presupuestaria sobre el Fondo Regular. Esta exitosa política que por cierto, será expuesta con claridad y con todos los detalles en la discusión del presupuesto, refleja la capacidad de nuestros equipos para generar alternativas y constituye un ejemplo claro de una nueva visión integral de la Organización, de la que tanto hablamos.

La disminución del aporte del Fondo Regular no significa para nada una disminución en los beneficiarios del programa porque gracias al desempeño de nuestros funcionarios y a la actitud cooperativa de numerosos países miembros, ha sido posible alcanzar resultados más transparentes, más efectivos y hasta mejor distribuidos regionalmente, con un menor uso de fondos tradicionales.

En segundo lugar, y en el plano interno, en materia de mejoramiento de la eficiencia cabe destacar la puesta en marcha de unidades administrativas en cada una de las Secretarías. Los esfuerzos por sistematizar y simplificar los procesos administrativos comienzan a rendir frutos y esperamos que el próximo año la introducción de nuevas herramientas informáticas nos permita una mejor distribución de personal y de recursos materiales. Esperamos también una administración más eficiente de los programas, evitando duplicidades e incrementando la coordinación interna de las áreas.

En tercer lugar, los recursos administrativos financiados por Recuperación de Costos Internos (ICR) serán reducidos en 1,5 millones de dólares. Se mantendrá, como había señalado, un Fondo de Reserva en concordancia con lo dispuesto por la resolución de la Asamblea General.

Finalmente, se propone una reorganización de las Oficinas Nacionales que no afectará ni su número ni sus roles fundamentales como enlace político clave y principal nodo regional de administración de proyectos. Por el contrario, se busca enfatizar dichos roles y a la vez aumentar la eficiencia en el uso de los recursos, priorizando en la medida de lo posible la utilización de agentes locales y de personal de menor graduación por sobre los actuales representantes internacionales, y apoyando una política de descentralización que impulse la creación de espacios de toma de decisiones fuera de la sede central. De esta manera se promueve la estrategia de descentralización con responsabilidad ya asumida en otras áreas de la Organización.

Para permitir un manejo integral del personal y de los recursos materiales y avanzar en la gestión por resultados, las áreas serán consideradas como una unidad integral. Los tres fondos que financian su personal y recursos materiales, es decir, el Fondo Regular, el ICR y los fondos de proyectos específicos se alinearán en la búsqueda de resultados comunes basados en objetivos únicos, derivados de los mandatos y prioridades.

Es por ello que el presupuesto se presenta integrado por programa, como un resumen de todos los recursos que permiten financiar los programas esenciales de la Organización. Es por ello también que los reajustes presupuestarios en el Fondo Regular no necesariamente implicarán la desaparición de actividades, sino una apertura hacia otras fuentes de financiamiento y una redistribución de recursos. Tal es el caso de algunas entidades autónomas como la Junta Interamericana de Defensa, la Fundación Panamericana para el Desarrollo, la Comisión Interamericana de Telecomunicaciones, la Comisión Interamericana de Puertos, el *Trust* de las Américas, donde se eliminará o disminuirá el subsidio, el dinero del Fondo Regular, aunque manteniendo la infraestructura de apoyo, espacio y servicios.

Respecto a la gestión por resultados, ya es conocida por muchos Representantes la estrategia desplegada en la gerencia de los Fondos Canadá y España que incluye la aplicación de instrumental de última generación. Dicha práctica, que ya cuenta con varias evaluaciones externas continúa generalizándose hacia el manejo de otros fondos específicos y está también siendo incorporada al manejo del Fondo Regular. Prueba de ello es que tras discusiones de este presupuesto se presentará un nuevo formato piloto de presupuesto por resultados que vincula mandatos, resultados previstos y recursos programados.

Antes del fin de mi mandato se espera contar con una estructura administrativo-gerencial que de cuenta de los gastos e ingresos de la totalidad de fondos, incluido el regular, y de la política de búsqueda de financiamiento en términos de resultados amparados en metodologías de evaluación que muestren los logros alcanzados y su impacto más allá de la mera enunciación de actividades.

Respecto a la política de personal, en los próximos días se presentará una nueva estrategia de recursos humanos que dispone el reclutamiento por concurso para todas las posiciones de la Secretaría General y que mantiene los nombramientos de confianza dentro del 4% que se aprobó en la reciente Asamblea General de Cochabamba. Lo anterior, por otro lado, se complementa con una exploración más agresiva de alternativas de financiamiento a nivel de fondos específicos. Ello, sin embargo, no elimina la necesidad de cerrar la brecha estructural que sigue pesando sobre la finanza de la institución; el histórico desajuste entre los ingresos fijos por cuotas y los egresos indexados.

En suma, soy consciente de que a la par de propuestas que buscan mayor eficiencia y eficacia, estamos proponiendo también decisiones difíciles que, sin duda, serán motivo de discusión en la Comisión de Asuntos Administrativos y Presupuestarios (CAAP) y en este Consejo Permanente. Pero esto se hace sin perder de vista la propuesta de reorientación que compartimos en diciembre.

Por ello necesito la cooperación de este Consejo Permanente. Me permito invitar a la CAAP a que evitemos el micro gerenciamiento del pasado, evitando ingresar en un debate por puestos y áreas de responsabilidad, que la Carta de la Organización atribuye a esta Secretaría General. Que ayudemos a mantener la integridad de la visión y el presupuesto que de ella se deriva. Que comprendamos que es necesario poner en práctica los temas que repetimos hasta el cansancio; la necesidad de disminuir las prioridades y alinearlas en una canasta mixta de fondos regulares y específicos. E, inauguremos también un diálogo al más alto nivel que pueda incorporar al Secretario General como un interlocutor directo en todos los casos en que lo consideren necesario.

Señoras y señores Embajadores y Representantes, ustedes sabrán reconocer que esta no es una tarea fácil porque debemos ajustar, a la baja, las cifras con las crecientes demandas de nuestra Organización. Sabemos que nuestros Estados Miembros tienen prioridades distintas y que son estas

diferencias las que en el pasado impide que todos queden igualmente satisfechos. Es por ello que esta vez he procurado presentar un programa que se sitúe por encima de estas diferencias y que, en lugar de atender a mandatos específicos, se oriente por las grandes necesidades comunes de todos nuestros Estados.

Hemos hecho un esfuerzo por concentrar los recursos del Fondo Regular solo en aquello que es de la esencia de la Organización: democracia, derechos humanos, seguridad multidimensional y aquel desarrollo integral que nos encargan las Cumbres de las Américas. Solo cuando arribemos a un consenso político sobre estos temas, podremos responder con toda la fuerza de nuestra institución a las más altas expectativas que nos fijan nuestros Estados Miembros para el beneficio de los ciudadanos de las Américas.

Muchas gracias, Presidente.

El PRESIDENTE: Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary General, for your report.

I now offer the floor to delegations wishing to comment on the program-budget proposed by the Secretary General for 2013, contained in document CP/doc.4795/12. The floor is open. The distinguished Representative of the United States has indicated that she wishes to speak. The floor is yours, Ambassador.

La REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, the U.S. Delegation would like to thank the Secretary General for his presentation of the proposed program-budget for 2013. Some of the proposals, such as increasing the funds assigned to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), are of great interest to the United States, since we assign a very high priority to the work done by the inter-American human rights system. There are other proposals that we will have to study very closely to ensure that the levels reflect the balance between the pillars and the specific areas under them.

What is clear is that all of our countries are facing difficult discussions on our own national budgets; therefore, we must take a hard look at what we have been financing up to now and what is the way forward.

That being said, Mr. Chairman, it is very, very important—and we'd like to stress this with the Secretary General—that throughout this entire process, we respect the rights of all OAS staff, and that during this difficult period, which I know will include downsizing, management communicate with staff on a regular basis. There is nothing more nerve-wracking or disheartening than getting information second- or third-hand via *radio pasillo*. Our delegation will be most attentive to these and, indeed, to all budget issues and deliberations.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of the United States of America for her comments, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Grenada. The floor is yours.

La REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GRENADA: Thank you, Chairman.

My delegation takes the floor to express its appreciation, first of all, to the Secretary General for his proposal on what the program-budget should be for the 2013 period. We are pleased to see the tremendous effort that has been made to reduce the deficit in the budget, but having only received this document this week, we will, of course, have to look at the various proposals, which seem to be quite profound. There are numerous changes and reorganizations proposed, even in merging chapters and moving chapters around, so we will be looking at it very carefully.

We agree fully with the statement just made by the Delegation of the United States. However, we do appreciate that it is going to be difficult to restructure, to reorganize, to achieve savings without some hard cuts and sacrifices somewhere along the line.

But we think, Chair, that there is room for making the bureaucracy of the Organization of American States more flexible, agile, efficient, and economical when it comes to the use of human, time, and financial resources. We are certainly in a new age in which we have the advantages of technology, where we have come out of certain international dynamics that no longer obtain, and we have moved forward more than 100 years so that we don't need to be stuck in the same mindset and approach. So, in finally adopting a program-budget for 2013, we may want to look at some innovative but definitely constructive and efficient ways of conducting the affairs of this organization.

I do want to mention to the Secretary General, however, that articles 1 and 2 of the Charter of the Organization do not speak to human rights. Every time that he mentions the pillars of this organization and mandates, he puts human rights above integral development. And yet, in regard to its principles in Article 2, the Charter speaks of the objective of cooperation among the member states. That, for my country—if not for each and every country in this hemisphere—has to be of fundamental importance.

We have come up with an organization in which we are supposed to cooperate with each other for our social and economic development. That Secretariat, the role of this organization in that regard, continues to be overshadowed in speech, and in action, and in the allocation of resources.

My delegation finds it very unconscionable to sit here, year after year, and see the whittling away of that Secretariat. There used to be a unit for tourism, which has now become a third appendage to a department within that Secretariat. We cannot, when tourism is a major foreign exchange income earner for my country, sit by and see that continuing to be so. There have been dynamic changes, as I said, but some things remain fundamental to our stability, our growth, and our development.

And the Secretary General is absolutely right when he says that for the countries, priorities differ, but they cannot differ so much that we create, ad hoc and willy-nilly, new priorities. Our priorities are set out in the Charter of this organization, which was adopted in 1948. None other overrides or supersedes it, and so until we design a new Charter, we want the structure, the speech, and the resources of this organization to reflect what is in our Charter.

So, Chair, we will be examining very closely the 143 pages of this document. We will no doubt, Secretary General, propose differences to what you have put before us for consideration, but I hope they will be received in the spirit in which they are intended, and that spirit is that we can be

more efficient and can start to concretely and bravely dare to make this organization what it ought to be.

We have been accused time and time again of being irrelevant, of being overburdened, of being top heavy, of having too much bureaucracy, of being too slow to react—all sorts of criticisms. We feel it ourselves! Well, it's time that we build an organization that really reflects us. We need a budget that streamlines our structure without hurtful sacrifices, yet brings us in line with modern times. We look forward to contributing to that process, Chair and Mr. Secretary General, and to some constructive, new ways of going forward.

Thank you.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Grenada for her intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Peru. You have the floor, sir.

El REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DEL PERÚ: Muchas gracias, Presidente.

Queremos, del mismo modo, agradecer la presentación de la propuesta del programa-presupuesto para el año 2013, efectuada por el Secretario General. Mi Delegación considera pertinente destacar los esfuerzos que se hacen evidentes de parte de la Secretaría para tener un enfoque que concentre justamente los recursos en las actividades esenciales de la Organización. Estamos dispuestos a participar activamente en el proceso de negociación de esta propuesta porque entendemos que es un esfuerzo y una actividad coyuntural con miras a su aprobación, como máximo, a mediados de noviembre.

Sin embargo, también estamos dispuestos a seguir participando como lo hemos venido haciendo de manera activa en el esfuerzo, si se quiere, más permanente o de largo plazo en las acciones que se vienen desarrollando en el Grupo de Trabajo sobre la Revisión de los Programas de la OEA. Mi Delegación desea seguir contribuyendo a ese esfuerzo común que es el de tener una Organización funcional, eficiente, y con los recursos necesarios para la materialización de sus objetivos.

La propuesta, Presidente, ha sido enviada a nuestra Cancillería y oportunamente estaremos alcanzando nuestros comentarios.

Muchas gracias.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Peru for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Mexico. You have the floor, sir.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE MÉXICO: Muchas Gracias, Presidente.

Al igual que lo han hecho otras delegaciones, queremos agradecer y reconocer al Secretario General, a su equipo y en particular a la Secretaría de Administración y Finanzas por la integración y presentación de esta propuesta de programa-presupuesto de la Organización para el año 2013. Lo hemos remitido a nuestra capital y estamos en espera de respuesta para los efectos de la negociación.

La Asamblea General reunida en Cochabamba en junio pasado aprobó el techo presupuestal para 2013 con una reducción significativa respecto al de 2012. Lo que es claro para todos es que estamos obligados no solo a reducir el gasto de la Organización sino a reorientar recursos, de tal manera, que se privilegien las actividades comprendidas en los cuatro pilares de la Organización.

Mi Delegación entiende el difícil contexto de insuficiencia de recursos en el cual se ha estructurado esta propuesta. No obstante consideramos que la Secretaría General nos presenta una propuesta de presupuesto realista que tiende a propiciar la congruencia entre los gastos y los ingresos que nuestra Organización genera a través de las contribuciones y otros conceptos.

Es evidente que en un escenario de reducción de esta magnitud se ven impactados todos los niveles de la Organización en mayor o en menor medida. Por lo que hace un reconocimiento por los esfuerzos desarrollados para que en estas difíciles condiciones se proponga un aumento al fortalecimiento del sistema interamericano de derechos humanos.

En ese sentido mi Delegación ve de manera positiva, en lo general, la propuesta presentada en el día de hoy por el Secretario General ante este Consejo Permanente, dejando claro que existen algunos aspectos de esta que requieren de una profunda reflexión, así como otras que requeriremos de mayores elementos para entenderlas mejor. Pero estamos listos para participar de manera propositiva en los debates que se llevarán a cabo en la Comisión de Asuntos Administrativos y Presupuestarios (CAAP) y en sus Grupos de Trabajo.

Finalmente, queremos reiterar lo que es una realidad. La estructura del gasto del presupuesto nos indica que la mayor parte, 64%, lo constituye lo relacionado con personal. Para los casos de terminación de la relación laboral con motivo de la reducción de recursos es preciso que se observen estrictamente los derechos de los funcionarios pero también, y de manera muy importante, las directrices contenidas en la resolución política de recursos humanos de la Secretaría General, aprobada en la Asamblea General de Cochabamba.

Muchas gracias.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Mexico for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Chile.

El REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DE CHILE: Muchas gracias, señor Presidente.

Mi Delegación quiere aprovechar esta oportunidad para, asimismo como lo han hecho otras delegaciones, agradecer la propuesta presentada por el Secretario General, la que vamos a estudiar con mucho cuidado y atención, teniendo siempre presente la necesidad de tener una administración racional y eficiente de los escasos recursos con que se cuenta.

No podemos dejar pasar este momento sin reflexionar sobre el difícil momento presupuestario que se está viviendo. Cada año se cuenta con menos recursos y a la vez buscamos fortalecer ciertas áreas de esta Organización. Por ello el desafío es mayor y tenemos que, de alguna manera, compensar la necesidad de cumplir obligaciones anuales como los costos de vida, con cuotas que son fijas y, asimismo, administrar de manera más eficiente y racional los recursos con que se cuenta.

Señor Secretario General, acogemos su llamado de trabajar para cooperar logrando dos objetivos que vemos en su propuesta en una primera lectura. En materia de personal, una política orientada por las competencias de los funcionarios y dirigidas hacia objetivos específicos y predefinidos. En materia financiera, una administración racional y eficiente.

De alguna manera, vamos a trabajar durante estos meses que quedan para poder lograr tener este presupuesto de la mejor manera posible.

Muchas gracias.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Chile for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Brazil. You have the floor, sir.

El REPRESENTANTE INTERINO DEL BRASIL: Obrigado, Senhor Presidente.

Antes de mais nada, a Delegação do Brasil também gostaria de agradecer ao Secretário-Geral a apresentação desta proposta. Com base nela, estaremos discutindo nos próximos meses o orçamento de 2013.

A Delegação do Brasil entende que esta proposta apresentada hoje formalmente pelo Secretário-Geral traz avanços bastante positivos. Há muita coisa boa a considerar nesta proposta. Por outro lado, é preciso também considerar com mais profundidade alguns dos capítulos ou algumas das propostas feitas neste documento.

Quero dizer que, diante de todos os assuntos que tivemos esta semana, ainda não tivemos tempo de considerar exaustivamente o documento apresentado, inclusive por ser um documento bastante extenso, mas numa visão preliminar, identifiquei algumas questões que mereceriam um maior aprofundamento.

Darei um exemplo na área de direitos humanos, mas, por favor, não me venham com o velho argumento de que falar de recursos para direitos humanos é querer debilitar o Sistema Interamericano; por favor, já passamos dessa fase.

Com relação à questão de recursos adicionais para a Comissão Interamericana de Direitos Humanos (CIDH) e a Corte Interamericana de Direitos Humanos. Foi-nos sugerido um valor de US\$500 mil a mais para a CIDH e o mesmo valor para a Corte. Até o momento, a única explicação que ouvi a respeito desta proposta foi que isso era um compromisso dos Estados. Hoje, me parece que esta explicação não seria suficiente para entendermos as razões desse incremento. Tendo em conta que todas as áreas sofreram cortes substantivos, um incremento tão significativo na área de direitos humanos evidentemente deve ter uma razão.

A minha pergunta é: por que US\$500 mil? Por que não US\$400 mil? Por que não US\$600 mil? Por que a Comissão e a Corte precisam do mesmo valor adicional? Não seria o caso, talvez, de se verificar se a Comissão precisa de mais e a Corte de menos, ou vice-versa? Quinhentos mil me parece um número mágico e não vejo uma explicação contábil para chegarmos a esse valor. Evidentemente isso poderá ser facilmente explicado nessas nossas conversações ao longo deste semestre.

Gostaria de chamar a atenção também para um ponto mencionado pela Representante dos Estados Unidos e pelo Representante do México no que diz respeito aos funcionários da OEA. Entendo que, diante das restrições orçamentárias, o Senhor Secretário-Geral tem sido bastante coerente no sentido de enxugar essa máquina. Mas, esse exercício é preciso que seja feito da maneira mais transparente possível, exatamente para que esses funcionários, como disse a Embaixadora Carmen, não venham a ser informados apenas pela “*radio pasillo*”. É fundamental um diálogo com esses funcionários. A Delegação do Brasil tem ouvido uma série de preocupações por parte dos funcionários da OEA que acho que mereceriam ser ao menos ouvidas. Acho que isso enriqueceria esse diálogo.

E, por fim, uma referência ao mencionado pela Representante de Grenada no sentido de que tenhamos uma visão equilibrada das prioridades desta Organização. Assim como mencionado por Grenada, o Brasil também vê na área de desenvolvimento integral um setor prioritário e fundamental para as atividades e o funcionamento desta Organização, sem desmerecimento das demais áreas que também vemos como relevantes.

Muito obrigado.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Brazil for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Canada. You have the floor, madam.

La REPRESENTANTE INTERNA DEL CANADÁ: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Canada would like, first, to thank the Secretary General for his presentation of the 2013 proposed program-budget. We understand that the task at hand is a difficult one, as we are in a period of austerity with increasingly scarce resources.

We are also concerned about the long-term financial sustainability of the Organization of American States, and we do believe that important measures must be taken in order to achieve a sound and stable financial situation.

We would like to note that the budget contains positive elements, such as the replenishment of the Reserve Subfund and a baseline for indirect cost recovery (ICR), which will help us mitigate risks and bring us closer to a results-based management approach. Canada will be closely examining the proposals put forward by the Secretariat, and we will carry out that examination before commenting on any specifics of the proposals.

Having just this afternoon been entrusted with the chairmanship of the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP), Canada will also press on with our work through that body and examine closely the reallocation options put forward by the Secretariat in the context of the mandates of the Organization, and we will make our recommendations accordingly.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Canada for her intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of El Salvador.

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

Nuestra Delegación agradece al Secretario General la presentación de la propuesta de programa-presupuesto para el año próximo, particularmente en lo que respecta a las explicaciones de las diversas asignaciones en cada uno de los capítulos, así como a las novedades contempladas en dicha propuesta.

Aplaudimos la idea cardinal bajo la cual se ha formulado el proyecto de presupuesto: “concentrar los recursos en aquello que es absolutamente esencial a la existencia de la Organización”. Cabe ahora a nosotros, los Estados Miembros honrar esa premisa e iniciar la discusión presupuestaria despojándonos de lo accesorio y manteniendo y, de ser posible, fortaleciendo lo esencial.

Un uso mesurado y eficiente de las reuniones y conferencias puede allanar el camino no solo para una mejoría presupuestaria sino sobre todo para la discusión sustantiva de los temas hemisféricos.

Reconocemos la utilidad del capítulo decimocuarto y lo atinente a recursos humanos. Notamos los planteamientos consecuentes sobre becas, el sistema interamericano de protección y promoción de los derechos humanos, el Subfondo de Reserva y el techo presupuestario sobre lo que aportaremos a la discusión en el ámbito natural de la negociación del tema.

Gracias, señor Presidente.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of El Salvador for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Guatemala.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUATEMALA: Gracias, señor Presidente.

Gracias al Secretario General y todo el equipo de la Secretaría por el amplio esfuerzo que indudablemente representa la conclusión del documento que hoy se presenta formalmente al Consejo, ciento cuarenta y tantas páginas que ameritarán un análisis detenido de cada uno de los Estados Miembros.

Las discusiones sobre temas presupuestarios nunca son sencillas porque siempre partimos del punto que los fondos disponibles no son suficientes; si a eso le sumamos las complicaciones fiscales que ocupan a muchos de los Estados Miembros; si a eso le sumamos el encarecimiento de día a día de los servicios que se requieren en la Organización; si a eso le sumamos la reducción del techo presupuestario aprobado en la reciente Asamblea General, tenemos una receta que nos garantiza un profundo debate para encontrar, mediante un esfuerzo conjunto, la mejor salida a esta crisis presupuestaria que viene atravesando la Organización.

Preocupa el hecho de que el Fondo de Reservas se ha ido consumiendo en períodos fiscales anteriores. Estamos en un momento de análisis crítico interno, importante, para garantizar la continuidad y el funcionamiento futuro de la Organización. Este ejercicio se beneficia del esfuerzo que ha venido dándose en la priorización de mandatos de la Organización, en donde se podrá, ojalá, identificar mandatos en los que se dejaría de utilizar recursos para priorizar otros, acorde a los pilares fundamentales de la Organización.

Estamos también embarcados en un proceso de reforzamiento y mejoramiento del sistema interamericano de derechos humanos; de revisión del sistema interamericano de defensa, procesos en

donde todos estaremos participando con mucha atención para analizar, también, el impacto financiero presupuestario de estos procesos de revisión que estamos llevando a cabo.

Mi Delegación estará participando y apoyando toda iniciativa que impulse normas de transparencia en el gasto de la Organización, con eficacia y eficiencia, en la asignación de esos recursos para tener una mejor cobertura de los recursos que podamos lograr.

También es importante un llamado a todos los Estados Miembros que hoy tienen convenios de pago de cuotas atrasadas para que se hagan los esfuerzos correspondientes y ponerse al día, pues sabemos que todas las cuotas de años anteriores ingresan al Fondo de Reserva. Pero es importante que ese Fondo de Reserva se vaya recuperando y aún cuando todos los países están cumpliendo con estos convenios de pago, idealmente, sería que pudiéramos estar todos los Estados al día para poder trabajar con números reales en este análisis presupuestario y abrir el debate en las distintas Comisiones y Grupos de Trabajo para el análisis del documento presentado esta tarde.

Muchas gracias, señor Presidente.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Guatemala for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the Secretary General.

El SECRETARIO GENERAL: Muchas gracias, Presidente.

En realidad voy a limitar mi intervención a responder solamente algunas cosas o más bien aclarar algunas cosas que me parece indispensable hacer.

Primero, nosotros tenemos ya fijada para el día de mañana a las once de la mañana una reunión con el *Staff Association*, con todo el personal de la OEA, para informar sobre el proyecto de presupuesto y sobre todos estos asuntos. En realidad estaba fijado para el viernes pero como se decidió hacer una Reunión de Consulta de Ministros de Relaciones Exteriores, la adelantamos un día para poder informar antes que yo salga la próxima semana.

Segundo, respecto de lo que se ha planteado aquí en cuanto a las áreas, tal vez lo que me ha traicionado en este caso es la mala costumbre de citar las áreas en un cierto orden establecido: político, derechos humanos, de seguridad, desarrollo integral. Pero en términos financieros, si lo hiciéramos en orden descendente, en realidad los derechos humanos son el 8.4 por ciento del total del gasto de la Organización. Y enfatizo: del gasto no del presupuesto regular. El presupuesto regular es menos que eso porque ciertamente hay una parte importante que viene de fondos extraordinarios; es decir, de recursos externos, de recursos específicos.

Recursos humanos, repito, es el 8.4 por ciento del presupuesto de la Organización que incluye, además, la Comisión Interamericana de Mujeres, que está puesta dentro de eso. Y desarrollo integral, es 21.5 por ciento del total del gasto de la Organización. Dado que democracia y gobernabilidad es el 18 por ciento; que seguridad multidimensional es 16 por ciento y todos los demás son más bajos, por lo tanto, desarrollo integral es el área en la cual seguimos gastando la mayor parte de los recursos de esta Organización.

Ahora, si nos vamos al presupuesto que ustedes van a discutir, al presupuesto regular, esa diferencia es aún mayor. Desgraciadamente es cada vez más difícil obtener recursos para esta área y

más posible de obtenerla para las áreas políticas de derechos humanos y de seguridad multidimensional. Por lo tanto es importante entender que en el presupuesto regular se hace un esfuerzo aún mayor para mantener los financiamientos en materia de desarrollo integral.

Quiero agregar además que tenemos que examinar este tema bien en detalle porque por alguna razón, incluso, algunos recursos que hay, están ahí –por ejemplo el Fondo Especial Multilateral del Consejo Interamericano para el Desarrollo Integral (FEMCIDI), tiene atraso en gasto de varios millones de dólares; yo sé que es esto porque se ha decidido revisar todo el proceso de la forma en que esto se gasta. Pero no es bueno, ni por mucho tiempo que los fondos que son destinados a proyectos que los países aprueban dentro del fondo, estén paralizados sin ser gastados.

Tercero, en realidad el Representante Permanente del Brasil ha hecho una pregunta que tiene mucha lógica. ¿Es un número mágico? En realidad no es número mágico. Lo que pasa es que las presentaciones que nos han hecho la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos y la Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos son, yo diría, cuatro a cinco veces mayores para la Comisión y el doble para la Corte en materia de gastos necesarios para su funcionamiento. Yo he escuchado todo el debate de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos que se ha planteado en este Consejo y en la Asamblea y que parte de la base de arreglar problemas. Se habla mucho de las medidas cautelares y otra serie de cosas. Pero, finalmente, también se dice que tenemos que ser capaces de financiar con nuestro Fondo Regular nuestra Comisión Interamericana, nuestra Corte de Derechos Humanos que, repito, es entre regular y específico del 8.4 por ciento del gasto de la Organización.

Por eso es que me pareció razonable hacer un esfuerzo adicional para esta área que, repito, es la que menos fondos o menos recursos gasta en la Organización, para poner esta cifra que, naturalmente, como todas las demás cosas están sujetas a la discusión del Consejo Permanente o de la Comisión de Asuntos Administrativos y Presupuestarios (CAAP) y el Consejo Permanente.

Finalmente, yo quiero decir que en realidad por lo menos, como una pregunta, bueno, muchas veces se dice ¿de dónde se sacan más recursos? por ejemplo, voy a decir una parte, con el perdón de Gerald Anderson [Secretario de Administración y Finanzas] que, en realidad, en estas cosas uno consulta con él y la voy a decir sin consultarlo. Pero realmente nosotros estamos proponiendo quinientos mil dólares para crear una cierta reserva mínima que nos dé una posibilidad de operar en casos de emergencia porque la reserva está completamente agotada. Pero en cuotas adeudadas anteriores al 31 de diciembre de 2011; es decir, yo estoy contando lo que algunos países todavía adeudan del 2012. Estoy contando nada más que lo de esa deuda del 2011, del 2010 y más atrás. En esas cuotas se deben a la Organización 2.908 millones de dólares.

Naturalmente si tuviéramos esos fondos, si los países se pusieran al día... repito, ni siquiera en el 2012; solamente antes del 2012 podíamos tener una reserva de cerca de tres millones de dólares y vivir mucho más tranquilos. Y ahí tendríamos quinientos mil dólares más para aportar en la parte del presupuesto que a algunos países les preocupa. Por lo tanto, si me preguntan qué gestión se podría hacer, bueno, tratemos que se pongan al día los países que deben más de un año de cuotas.

Yo voy a decir que esto no son todos o menos de todos. Algunas cantidades son mucho menores que otras. Y hay que reconocer que si comparamos esto con la situación que se vivía el año 2005 cuando yo llegué a la Organización, la situación es incomparablemente mejor. Pero todavía, tres millones de dólares de deuda neta, de deuda neta, repito, sin considerar el año corriente, es algo que si lo resolviéramos podríamos por lo menos resolver bien uno de nuestros grandes problemas.

Porque como lo ha dicho muy bien el Embajador de Guatemala, esos dos millones novecientos siete mil dólares irían al Fondo de Reserva. Y eso nos permitiría usar lo que estamos destinando al presupuesto de este año al Fondo de Reserva. En el Fondo de Reserva, un saldo para otros gastos y mejorar así la situación de algunos sectores.

Es cuanto puedo decir hoy, Presidente, porque creo que, como digo, no entro a la discusión concreta de las distribuciones y otras cosas y de los capítulos y de las cosas que deben entrar o salir porque entiendo que para eso habrá tiempo más que suficiente en la Comisión de Asuntos Administrativos y Presupuestarios y les agradezco mucho la atención que han prestado a este trabajo.

Gracias.

El PRESIDENTE: Thank you very much, Secretary General. Thank you very much, distinguished representatives, for your comments and observations. I give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Colombia.

El REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DE COLOMBIA: Gracias, Presidente.

Un muy breve comentario. No solamente sumarme a los agradecimientos al Secretario General por el documento presentado, que también fue enviado a Bogotá y esperamos tener los comentarios precisos al respecto.

Quería hacer dos brevísimas precisiones. La primera, que fue mi Delegación una de las más interesadas en que se pudiera dar esta racionalización del presupuesto a favor de la Comisión y de la Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos. Y quiero resaltar este hecho por algo muy singular, señor Presidente.

Hoy, en Bogotá, en un evento sobre el tema del fortalecimiento y la reforma al sistema interamericano de derechos humanos, el Presidente Juan Manuel Santos se refirió al tema. De hecho, acabo de ver una noticia en los medios de comunicación donde resalta como un hecho muy significativo el que la OEA, en la reunión de Cochabamba, haya planteado este fortalecimiento desde el punto de vista económico de los recursos que se dan tanto a la Comisión como a la Corte, englobando, en esencia, a todo el sistema interamericano de derechos humanos. Entonces quería hacer esta breve referencia porque creo que nos cae muy bien en este momento de la discusión y del debate con las aclaraciones que hizo el Secretario General.

Muchas gracias.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Colombia for that clarification, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Grenada.

La REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GRENADA: Thank you, Chairman.

Just to share a concern of my delegation. The discussion on financing the 2013 budget is assigned to the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP). The Committee deals strictly with a numbers issue. But we're looking at this proposal presented to us today by the Secretary General, which has a lot of fundamental changes in terms of reorganizing the Secretariat, the budget, and its chapters. There's a lot of food for thought in there. We have no objection to

discussing those matters at the level of the CAAP; however, we have a concern that the Secretary General is not present at those CAAP meetings.

My delegation, as you all know, is so small that very often we turn ourselves from two into more than the proverbial biblical loaves and fishes. Almost on a daily basis, it feels like my dear deputy and I end up turning into thousands of people.

It would be most helpful to my delegation, and I imagine to others, Mr. Secretary General, if you could make yourself available personally for the discussions, wherever they take place. I have no doubt that the numbers will be very well handled by the Secretary for Administration and Finance and the other members of his staff, but we will get into conceptual issues in terms of structure and procedure and efficiencies. So if it is more convenient, Chair, that at least the initial, preliminary discussions of the proposal take place at the Council, my delegation would go along with that. Once we have ironed out some of the bigger issues, then it could go to the CAAP for discussion of the financing aspect. The mandate states “financing of the budget” very clearly. Otherwise, I repeat that we would appreciate it if the Secretary General could make himself available for those discussions.

Thank you.

El PRESIDENTE: I invite the Secretary General to respond.

El SECRETARIO GENERAL: I do believe that it would be a good idea if the initial discussion—for example, the opening statements of each member state about the budget—could be made at the level of the Permanent Council. Then we could go to the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP). From my point of view, that doesn’t preclude the CAAP from beginning to work right away. I mean, just having meetings in which member states would express their general views on the budget would be a very good orientation.

I cannot promise that I will be present at every meeting of the CAAP, but I can promise that I will be present in every meeting if I’m in town. That’s as far as I can go in terms of commitment.

El PRESIDENTE: Thank you, Secretary General.

Thank you very much for your comments and observations. I would now like to propose that the Permanent Council take note of the Secretary General’s [risas.] presentation and of the comments and observations of the delegations. I also suggest that in its capacity as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly, the Permanent Council assign analysis of the proposal to the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP), with a request that it commence its review as soon as possible.

I see that Grenada has asked for the floor. Grenada, you have the floor.

La REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GRENADA: Thank you, Chair. My apologies for interrupting you, but you were just proposing that we take note, and that has now become a decision. We were going to take note and send something to the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP), but we just said that the initial round of discussions of the proposal would take place here at the Council. And so, if you don’t mind, we can substitute the Council for the

CAAP. Subsequently, we will send the proposal to the CAAP, all as soon as possible. That's just a slight amendment to our "taking note" decision. Thank you.

El PRESIDENTE: Thank you, Grenada.

Having listened closely to the comments of the delegations on the presentation by the Secretary General on the draft program-budget of the Organization for 2013, and taking heed, in part, of the feeling of the meeting [risas.], it is appropriate that statements be made at the Permanent Council and, as far as possible, in the presence of the Secretary General, so that the underlying assumptions that are made and the changes to those underlying assumptions will be brought fully to the attention of the Secretary General and the members of the Secretariat. Grenada?

We would also seek by every possible means to adopt decisions without losing sight of the change of direction being proposed to us. In my opinion, in transmitting this draft to the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP) for its consideration, after having discussed it in the Permanent Council, we should request our representatives on the CAAP, and, in particular, its recently elected new Chair, Ambassador Culham of Canada, to examine the draft and open a dialogue at the highest level.

Are there any objections to this approach? There being no objections, we shall proceed as suggested.

INFORMACIÓN SOBRE LAS RECIENTES PROTESTAS Y MANIFESTACIONES EN GUYANA

El PRESIDENTE: The next item, information on recent protests and demonstrations in Guyana, has been included at the request of the Permanent Mission of Guyana. The escalation of the unrest in the community of Linden followed the July 18 killings of three protesters and injuries to 20 others. The residents were protesting an increase in a proposed electricity tariff.

I give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Guyana, Ambassador Bayney Karran, so that he can inform member states about recent incidents of unrest in one of the principal towns of Guyana. Ambassador Karran, you have the floor, sir.

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

Mr. Chairman, the Government of Guyana appreciates the opportunity to bring to the attention of the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States recent developments in Guyana that pose risks to the stability of the country and to its democratic traditions.

Guyana's positive economic growth over five consecutive years, and the expansion and diversification of investment in the exploration of oil and natural gas, gold and bauxite mining, hydropower, forestry, and information-based technology, have radically contributed to the emergence of a modern economy, based on a Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS). The latest assessment by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) gives Guyana a positive outlook.

In the elections of November 28, 2011, the governing party won the single largest bloc of votes and therefore constitutionally formed the Government with 32 seats. The two opposition parties

won 26 and 7 seats respectively; thus, they have a combined one-seat majority in the National Assembly. This is the first time in Guyana's history in which such a situation exists in the Legislature.

The Government has been challenged at every level in the Legislature, with the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker being elected from the opposition, the opposition taking control of the parliamentary committees, and the reduction of the Government's 2012 annual budget by approximately US\$100 million. These cuts emerged after seven meetings between the Government and the major opposition party in April 2012.

The Government has been forced to approach the courts to rule on several issues that have taken place in the National Assembly. Despite the courts' ruling on the budget cuts and the Government's return to the Legislature to restore these allocations as recently as August 9, 2012, the opposition parties, in contempt of court, opposed the same budgetary heads again.

In this charged environment in the Legislature, the opposition reneged on an agreement on April 19, 2012, to support the introduction of tariff increases in the Linden township, one of their strongholds. This is the signal event that led to the unrest that emerged on July 18, 2012, the killing of three persons, injuries, and loss of public and private property.

To provide a brief background to the issue of the electricity tariffs, Mr. Chairman, Linden township is strategically located in the middle of Guyana and is the gateway between the coastline and the interior of the country. As a bauxite mining town from the 1920s, its fortunes have been difficult. Nationalized in 1971, with poor management and fierce competition internationally, the bauxite industry went into a tailspin in the mid-1980s and eventually collapsed in the mid-1990s. During that period, the governments of the day subsidized and eventually took over the provision of health, education, and other ancillary services in order to reduce the impact on the community.

In the last five years, the population has grown to approximately 40,000, and the presence of new and significant foreign private investments in bauxite, timber, and other areas have contributed to a reversal of the fortunes of the community.

Historically, Lindenians did not pay for electricity up until the 1980s. Electricity was generated by the bauxite companies, and this has continued today, with one of the private bauxite companies generating surplus electricity and the Government subsidizing the cost of the production and distribution to the community through two local electricity cooperatives. The increasing cost of these subsidies to the community in the national budget has placed a major strain on resources and is unsustainable. In the last five years, these subsidies have amounted to more than US\$40 million.

As the community's fortunes have changed, there have been endless consultations and meetings between the Government and the community with regard to incrementally paying for electricity at a rate comparable with the rest of the country over a period of time. At this time, Linden residents do not pay the same electricity rates as the rest of Guyana. They pay between \$5 and \$7 in Guyana's currency per kilowatt hour versus \$64 per kilowatt hour for the rest of the country.

These attempts to standardize the rates span several decades and have been resisted. In the midst of the global economic and financial crises, the increasing cost of fuel, and following 37 consultations with the community, the Government, attempted to incrementally increase the

electricity tariffs in 2008 to bring them in line with the rest of the country over time. This was met with blockages of the key artery between the interior and the coast in 2008. An agreement was reached to defer the reduction of the subsidy and increase the rates in a phased manner to 2012.

During the 2012 budget debate, the Government of Guyana and the leader of the opposition held meetings to try to reach agreement on the budget for 2012. One of the issues was the reduction of the subsidy for Linden and the increase in the rates. Agreement was reached on April 19, 2012, and this was announced on the same day in the National Assembly by the Prime Minister, with the concurrence of the leader of the opposition. On April 20, 2012, the leader of the opposition reneged on the agreement.

The situation in Linden following this announcement was marked by agitation by extremists from within and outside of the community and a refusal to have any increases in the tariff rates. Between April 30 and July 1, the situation at the political level in the township was fraught with conflict, and Government officials found it difficult to work in that environment to reason with community leaders on the issue.

The Government of Guyana was also all too conscious that the rest of the country's electricity consumers were looking on with keen interest. The Government realized that there was a real risk of other communities in other areas of the country refusing to pay their existing rates. The Government of Guyana was therefore placed in a position in which the reduced subsidy and the increased tariffs for the Linden township could no longer be avoided.

The Government announced the introduction of the new rates as of July 1, 2012, which would have brought the community up to approximately 50 percent of what the rest of the country's consumers were paying.

On July 18, in what was supposed to be the beginning of five-day protest, the town was closed by demonstrations. Several thousand protesters blocked the main thoroughfare that links the interior and the coast. Violence erupted during the protests. The police deployed tear smoke. Three people were fatally shot and several others injured. The crowd then went on a rampage and burned several properties in the township. The small numbers of police and fire service personnel were prevented from reaching the fires by crowds. Bridges and roads were blocked.

On the same night, the Government issued a release expressing its regrets at the deaths, injuries, and loss of property, and committed to a complete and full investigation.

On July 19, His Excellency President Donald Ramotar met with a delegation from the business community of Linden and with delegations from the major opposition political party, A Partnership for National Unity (APNU), and the junior opposition party, the Alliance for Change (AFC), as well as the Regional Chairman for the Regional Democratic Council and the Geographic Member of Parliament for Administrative Region 10.

The opposition made three demands, of which the Government of Guyana agreed to two:

1. That an independent commission of inquiry be launched, inclusive of a "foreign" presence in the composition of the Commission, and

2. That the Commanding Officer of the Police be removed from the area.

The Government of Guyana did not support the third demand for the resignation of the Minister of Home Affairs.

The parties agreed to appoint two persons to draft the terms of reference for the commission, with a deadline of August 2 to complete agreement. The opposition refused to discuss the tariff increases and stated that the security issue had to be addressed first.

Despite the fact that these agreements were publicly aired, the township continued to be blockaded by crowds, and camps were set up to man the barriers.

On July 22, the leader of the opposition met with the President and admitted that no one was in control of Linden and proposed that the President meet with the Regional Chairman and his delegation, and whatsoever they agreed to, he would support. The President agreed. However, the President expressed his deep concern that extremist elements were fuelling the protests with inflammatory speeches and meetings, thus making it difficult for the Government to make a binding agreement with the opposition. The Government called on opposition parties to dissociate themselves from such action in order to restore normalcy and allow for a resolution of the issues. No such statements were issued until after the situation seriously deteriorated in August.

In meetings with private sector bodies on the same day, the Government proposed that a technical team, with agreed terms of reference, be established to examine the issue of the electricity tariff increases and submit recommendations; to set up a mechanism to discuss economic issues regarding the development of the Linden community; to stand the funeral expenses for the affected families; and to agree that an independent pathologist witness the post mortem examinations of the three fatalities.

On July 23, President Ramotar met with a delegation led by the Regional Chairman of Region 10, Mr. Sharma Solomon. The President proposed that the July 1 implementation date for the electricity tariff increases be postponed, and, in the interim, to establish a technical team to examine rates and time lines in order to arrive at a single electricity tariff for Linden and the rest of Guyana.

July 24 was scheduled to be the last day of the five-day protest. On the evening of July 24, the Government submitted its proposals to the Regional Chairman and to the political opposition concerning the establishment of the technical team and the mechanism to discuss the economic development issues.

However, at a public meeting in Linden that night, the Regional Chairman failed to inform residents about his meetings with the President or about his receipt of the Government's proposals. The Chairman and other speakers demanded that the protest be extended for 50 more days.

In the meantime, continued protests and demonstrations restricted the movement of goods and people. As a result, the residents of the affected regions were being deprived of supplies of food and fuel and of economic activity. Costs of commodities quadrupled, and robberies and extortions were being perpetrated on persons and vehicles traversing Linden from other regions.

President Ramotar, who had scheduled a visit to Linden on July 28 in order to meet with stakeholders there, was forced to cancel his visit on the advice of the heads of the Joint Security Services.

On August 1, the funeral of the three persons who were killed was held in Linden. Speeches were made by key opposition politicians encouraging protesters to continue their activities.

During a sitting of the National Assembly on August 2, the Attorney General announced the terms of reference of the commission of inquiry, which had been agreed to earlier that day between the Government and opposition. Regrettably, on the floor of the National Assembly, the leader of the opposition party, the APNU, dissociated himself from the agreement to announce the terms of reference, and the leader of the minor opposition party, the AFC, denied having been involved. As a result, further discussions continued on the terms of reference from that date to August 22.

Throughout, the Government continued to negotiate in good faith, and at no point did the Government abort this process. Meetings with the Region 10 delegation occurred on July 19, 23, 31, and August 6, 8, 15, 16, 17, and 20. At each stage of the negotiations, new issues were raised by the Region 10 delegation linking any discussion of the electricity tariffs to other issues. Any attempt to return to normalcy was frustrated with new impediments and conditionalities, although the Government repeatedly committed to postponing the July 1 tariff increases pending the findings and recommendations of the mutually acceptable technical team.

From the morning of August 10 through August 12, buildings housing the Electricity Company; the Revenue Authority; the National Agricultural Extension Institute; two privately owned buildings, nongovernmental organization (NGO) facilities that serve HIV/AIDS patients and the disabled; and the largest primary school, which accommodates more than 840 children were completely destroyed by deliberate acts of arson. A health center was burnt on August 20. A number of suspects have been apprehended.

On August 10, the Joint Services operation to clear the roads and bridges began around 9:00 a.m.

At the August 17 meeting between the Government and the Region 10 delegation, the text of the agreement on the four issues identified by the Region 10 delegation was accepted and initialed by all present for the two sides. Furthermore, the Region 10 delegation asked that it be given the opportunity to bring the agreement to the community's attention at a rally planned for August 18, and it would return to sign on August 20.

Whilst the discussions with regard to the terms of reference and the Commission of Inquiry appeared to be going well between the Government and opposition parties on August 20, just a few hours before the signing of the agreement with the Region 10 team was due to take place, new obstacles emerged from the major opposition party. Eventually, however, the terms of reference of the Commission were finalized on August 21, to the satisfaction of the Government and both opposition political parties. The agreement between the Government and the Region 10 delegation was signed on August 21, and the two opposition parties signed as witnesses.

Throughout these 38 days, the majority of residents have urged the Government to take measures to return the area to normalcy, and many have attempted to go back to work. However, the

actions of extremist elements have scared and intimidated people from returning to work and have escalated tensions, with acts of arson and mob rule being committed in the area.

The Government wishes to underscore that this prolonged period would not have been possible without the complicity of the leading opposition parties to refuse or neglect to call off the protests, as well as the advocacy and misinformation spread by certain media and social networking sites.

A most ominous development has arisen recently whereby Guyanese citizens are being targeted for their political persuasion and their ethnicity. Incitement to violence against Guyanese of Indian heritage is being promoted on social media, such as Facebook and Twitter. Elements of the media in Guyana are involved in the incitement of racial hostility and the spread of disinformation.

For instance, it was reported by one influential online media outlet, Demerara Waves, that an operation by security forces was imminent on August 8 when this was not the case. This report led to an increase in tension and to extremists using that information to trigger damage to property and clashes between protesters and security forces in the early morning hours of August 10.

The same media outlet has published a blog posting calling for the mass murder of Guyanese citizens, and Internet radio has consistently fueled race hate and misinformation. A list of supporters of the ruling party from the Linden area was circulated online in order to facilitate the targeting of these persons.

Fanning the flames of ethnic hostility and the promotion of racial hatred and conflict are particularly reprehensible in a multiethnic society, such as Guyana, which has made steady progress over the years in overcoming the bitter legacy of racial antagonism sown in earlier times.

In the meantime, the Government of Guyana is determined to continue efforts to resolve the issues to the satisfaction of all citizens. The commission of inquiry comprises eminent jurists from the English-speaking Caribbean and Guyana.

However, the Government is deeply concerned about this new political environment and the conduct of the official parliamentary parties and fringe elements following the elections of November 28, 2011. The Government is therefore cautioning that the situation in Guyana is precarious and is one that warrants close attention by our fellow OAS member states.

Thank you.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank Ambassador Karran for this information, and I now offer the floor to delegations wishing to comment on this topic. I see the distinguished Representative of Grenada. You have the floor.

La REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GRENADA: Thank you, Chairman.

Thank you very much to the Permanent Representative of Guyana for that report and for bringing this matter to our attention. We would certainly want to do as he has asked and communicate this situation to our capitals, so my delegation would kindly request that the Delegation

of Guyana provide us with a written copy of the intervention made today, or with a written report, so that we can be accurate in what we communicate.

Thank you.

El PRESIDENTE: Thank you, Grenada, and I note that the distinguished Representative of Guyana is nodding, which would suggest that he is willing to provide you with a statement.

I see that the distinguished Representative of Brazil has asked for the floor. You have the floor, sir.

El REPRESENTANTE INTERINO DEL BRASIL: Obrigado, Senhor Presidente.

Apenas para agradecer ao Embaixador Karran a apresentação feita hoje a respeito da situação no seu país e, evidentemente, mencionar a satisfação do Governo brasileiro de que os entendimentos estão sendo feitos entre as autoridades de Georgetown e as autoridades e a sociedade civil em Linden.

Por fim, desejar ao Governo da Guiana êxito nessas conversações e que a situação se resolva o mais rapidamente possível com um resultado positivo, tanto para o Governo quanto para a população guianense.

Muito obrigado.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Brazil for that intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Dominica. You have the floor, sir.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE DOMINICA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Just to thank the Ambassador for providing us with this information on the recent developments in Linden, Guyana.

Our region has always, Mr. Chairman, been characterized by a strong capacity to manage differences at the local level. We've always been characterized as a region that has managed to resolve difficulties in a manner that obviates the need for violence. As such, we sympathize with what has been going on in Guyana.

Mr. Chairman, we have every confidence that the Government of Guyana has the capacity to deal with these matters in a manner that continues that tradition of peace-building and the promotion of harmonious interracial relations. So, we wish the Government of Guyana well in this matter.

I support the request of the Ambassador of Grenada that we be given the Ambassador's statement so that a clear idea of what is going on and the actions that have been taken by the Government of Guyana can be provided to our capitals.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Dominica for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Belize. You have the floor, sir.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The Delegation of Belize wishes to thank the Ambassador of Guyana for this information. It is always very worrying when these kinds of situations arise in our countries, especially those countries in which these kinds of eruptions of violence are not very common. We have every confidence that the Government and the people of Guyana will come to a speedy and peaceful resolution of the situation.

We also want to tell the Ambassador of Guyana that we stand ready to provide, from this Permanent Council, any support that he and his country may require to expedite a resolution of the situation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Belize for his intervention. I see that the Secretary General would like the floor. Secretary General.

El SECRETARIO GENERAL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I want to thank Ambassador Karran and his government for updating the Permanent Council on the situation in Linden. We have been very concerned about what is going on, and we are heartened by the resumption of negotiations among the Government, the Regional Chairman of Linden, and the opposition political parties. We think that dialogue is the best way to deal with this matter, as with most conflicts that come up in society, and we share the view that the Government of Guyana is perfectly capable of dealing with the situation. We look forward to helping them in any way we can.

I think that it is very important that agreements are reached on the terms of reference for the commission of inquiry and its composition, as well as on matters of economic development in Linden. We hope that the commission of inquiry, with the participation of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) jurists, will be able to clarify the situation.

The most important thing here is that we assert our readiness to support the efforts of the Guyanese people and the commission of inquiry. We support the Government in searching for dialogue, and we're willing to do anything that you think is important for us to do. It's very important in these cases, and in all others, that we don't rush to judgment and that we leave room and time for the Government to try to solve the situation internally, which is always the best procedure.

Thank you very much.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the Secretary General for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Venezuela. You have the floor, sir.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE VENEZUELA: Sí, muchas gracias, señor Presidente.

En primer lugar, nuestro reconocimiento al Embajador Bayney Karran por haber traído aquí un problema que es de Guyana pero que también es de nosotros porque es un miembro de nuestra comunidad de naciones que está atravesando momentos difíciles. Debo decir que hay algo de pedagógico en su presentación. Es el mismo hecho de traer al conocimiento de los Estados Miembros esta preocupación por la situación que están atravesando. Honestamente le deseo mejor suerte que la que ha tenido Venezuela en momentos cuando hemos hecho esfuerzos por hacer entender a la institución, a segmentos de esta institución, situaciones ocurridas en Venezuela donde la oposición se convirtió no en un elemento de protesta o de oposición por sí misma, natural, sino en un elemento de perturbación y de desestabilización.

Esto nos refresca momentos complejos. Cuando se produjo el golpe con el Presidente Hugo Chávez, dentro de esta institución hubo intentos por desconocer la representación del Gobierno democrático derrocado y hubo intento, inclusive, de algunos sectores diplomáticos, para convencer a nuestro Embajador de ausentarse porque ya había otro Gobierno en Venezuela. Creo que inclusive una suerte de mini golpe de Estado porque el segundo de la Embajada, de la Misión pretendió asumir la representación del Embajador Jorge Valero.

Pero más allá de eso, y es lo que nos identifica con esta preocupación de Guyana, es que en esta institución, a pesar de nuestros reclamos o denuncias, hay ocasiones en que se le ha dado interlocución de muy alto nivel a personajes abiertamente comprometidos con la desestabilización de Venezuela, con su participación en el golpe y con su recurso a la violencia para resolver problemas de sus diferencias con el Gobierno de Venezuela.

Por eso es que le hallo ese sentido pedagógico porque sería interesante disponernos a reflexionar también no solo sobre las gestiones de Gobierno sino también las gestiones de la oposición. Eso le daría un equilibrio a la visión de cómo la democracia se ejerce en estos países y no a la visión sesgada sobre la gestión de algún tipo específico de Gobierno sin entrar a considerar elementos que ameritarían, realmente, que esos interlocutores no reciban, en este caso concreto, la atención y las atenciones de la institución.

Muchas gracias, señor Presidente. Y muchas gracias, Embajador Karran.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Venezuela for his intervention, and I thank the distinguished Representative of Guyana and other distinguished representatives and the Secretary General for their comments on the situation in Guyana. I would also request that the distinguished Representative of Guyana keep this Council informed of the situation.

APROBACIÓN DE ACTAS

El PRESIDENTE: We will now move on to the next item, the approval of the minutes of the meetings of the Permanent Council listed in the order of business. If the permanent representatives have no comments or objections, we shall proceed with the approval of the following documents:

- CP/ACTA 1838/12, of the regular meeting of February 29, 2012;
- CP/ACTA 1839/12, of the special meeting held on March 7, 2012;

- CP/ACTA 1841/12 corr. 1, of the special meeting held on March 7, 2012; and
- CP/ACTA 1845/10, of the special meeting held on March 29, 2012.

There being no comments, the minutes are approved.

ENTREGA DE UN MALLETE AL REPRESENTANTE DE HONDURAS,
PRESIDENTE SALIENTE DEL CONSEJO PERMANENTE

El PRESIDENTE: We now are at item 7 on the order of business, “Other business.” In this regard, I would wish first of all to address the matter of the previous chairmanship of the Permanent Council.

This meeting is an appropriate occasion to pay tribute to the undeniably hard work undertaken by Ambassador Leonidas Rosa Bautista, Permanent Representative of Honduras, during his term as Chair of the Permanent Council from April to June 2012. I am confident that I am conveying the views and sentiments of all members of the Council in recognizing and expressing appreciation for the excellent work done by Ambassador Rosa Bautista at the helm of the Permanent Council during the period under reference.

Besides attending to the routine tasks of that office, he undertook the preparations for the forty-second regular session of the General Assembly and served, very successfully indeed, as Chair of the General Committee. These instances are a reflection of his abilities and negotiating skills, as well as his political sensitivity.

I am pleased now to invite Ambassador Rosa Bautista to the head table to receive this gavel, which we are presenting to him in recognition of his tenure as Chair of the Permanent Council. Ambassador.

[El Presidente del Consejo Permanente entrega un mallete al Representante de Honduras. Aplausos.]

PALABRAS DE RECONOCIMIENTO AL EMBAJADOR CORNELIUS A. SMITH,
REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE LAS BAHAMAS, EN OCASION DE
SU ALEJAMIENTO DEL CONSEJO PERMANENTE

El PRESIDENTE: We will now bid farewell to one of our colleagues in the Permanent Council, Ambassador Cornelius Smith, Permanent Representative of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. Ambassador Smith presented his credentials to the Secretary General of the Organization of American States on November 13, 2007.

Cornelius Alvin Smith was born on Long Island in The Bahamas on April 7, 1937, and holds a master’s degree in business administration from the University of Miami. He has been a public school principal, a human resource expert, and a founding member of the Free National Movement (FNM) political party in The Bahamas. He has served as Minister of Education, Minister of Public Safety and Immigration, Minister of Tourism, and Minister of Transport and Local Government.

Ambassador Smith is married to the former Clara Elizabeth Knowles, and the couple has three children.

Ambassador Smith was Chair of the Permanent Council from January to March 2008 and was also Chair of the Permanent Executive Committee of CEPCIDI in 2009 and of the Inter-American Council for Development (CIDI) in 2010 and 2011.

We will be sorry to see Ambassador Smith go. I see that Dominica has requested the floor. You have the floor.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE DOMINICA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Secretary General, Assistant Secretary General, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen:

As you are all aware, our colleague and friend, Ambassador Cornelius A. Smith, demits office after some five years of service on behalf of his beautiful and dynamic country, The Bahamas. Ambassador Smith has served with distinction, not only as Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States but also as Ambassador to the White House and as nonresident Ambassador to Mexico.

Ambassador Smith has been very active in the OAS. As we have just heard, he has served severally, including as Chair of the Permanent Council very soon after his arrival. Within the framework of his contribution to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) caucus, we have on many occasions benefited from his experience as a public servant, as well as his wisdom and, more important, his wit.

I believe that this is the last time that Ambassador Smith will appear before this Council, certainly in his present capacity. On behalf of the CARICOM caucus, we wish to thank him for his service to this organization and to CARICOM. We ask him to transmit our thanks to his wife for allowing us to monopolize his time so thoroughly during this past five years.

Ambassador Smith returns home to The Bahamas, where he is both respected and loved. In fact, earlier this year, a \$20 million structure, housing several key government agencies, including the Ministry of Education, Customs, and Information and Technology, was named after him. We are sure that his experience and skills will be valued and exploited by his countrymen.

Ambassador, you have been an excellent example of Caribbean diplomacy. We wish you well and look forward to visiting you and doing some fishing together in The Bahamas—and probably in other parts of the Caribbean!

Go well, my friend!

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Dominica for that intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Uruguay. You have the floor, sir.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DEL URUGUAY: Señor Presidente del Consejo, señor Secretario General, estimadísimo Embajador Cornelius Smith:

Quizás no sea el más indicado para hacerle el reconocimiento que me han pedido, reconocimiento y despedida que me han pedido los compañeros del Grupo de la Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración (ALADI) que no han podido estar presentes, que lo haga extensivo.

Digo esto por algo que le mencioné ayer en la noche. *Some go, others come.* Yo estoy recién llegando. En cierta medida parece ser una ley de la vida. *It is the law of life. Some go, others come.* Pero en este cortísimo tiempo en que lo he conocido, brevemente en la recepción de ayer, me ha dejado muy impactado lo que yo llamo la parábola del pescador, porque contiene una sabiduría y algunas enseñanzas que me han dejado pensando desde ayer como una especie de testimonio de un Embajador que estuvo acá, con una trayectoria como la suya; y para este Embajador que está llegando puede llegar a contener algunas breves enseñanzas, por lo menos en las reflexiones que me han motivado la alusión a lo que yo llamo la parábola del pescador.

Y he pensado desde ayer de noche, desde sus palabras, si esta invitación a la paciencia del pescador implica también para este Embajador que llega de un país como el Uruguay, que tiene mucha costa fluvial y mucha costa marítima, pero que no se dedica a la pesca aunque he pensado últimamente, a esta edad, que es un futuro promisorio mío el dedicarme a la pesca.

Y por lo tanto, a partir de vuestras palabras he comenzado a reflexionar si me conviene la caña o las redes. Las redes de trasmallo grande o de trasmallo chico para capturar los mejores peces. E invito a todos que hagan las metáforas correspondientes en cuanto a nuestra función de pescador aquí en este organismo. O, también, qué sería mejor. Si esperar en la orilla con una hamaca o tomar un bote para estar flotando, que no es exactamente lo mío flotar. Prefiero los remos. No quizás un motor fuera de borda, porque no sé de pesca, pero me han dicho que eso ahuyenta los cardúmenes. Y para el trabajo de Embajador, a lo mejor, a veces conviene tener un motor fuera de borda y otras veces remar y remar persistentemente como esa bella parábola que significa aquella novela de un distinguido habitante del Caribe que fue Ernest Hemingway y que nos lo legó en esa vieja y preciosa pieza que es El Viejo y el Mar que, quizás, responda a la misma sabiduría que usted trae de Bahamas.

Por lo tanto, coincido con mi distinguido amigo de Dominica que, además de incorporar estas enseñanzas de un buen pescador, quizás lo tengamos que ir a visitar a Bahamas para aprender en campo cómo es verdaderamente una buena pesca. Y no tendríamos que despreciar los aportes que hace un buen pescador para la paz y para la tranquilidad cuando los Embajadores queremos arreglar una parte del mundo. Quizás si muchos hombres y mujeres se dedicaran a la tranquilidad y a la paz de la pesca, no tendríamos tantos conflictos en el mundo.

Por lo tanto, con esta reflexión que usted me ha motivado, apenas en estas pocas horas que nos hemos conocido, yo me permito, reitero, en nombre de mis compañeros del Grupo de la Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración (ALADI), hacerle un reconocimiento de su aporte a este Organismo y una encendida "gracias" por haber participado junto a nosotros en esto que pretende ser, también, la vida de un buen pescador.

Muchas gracias, señor Embajador.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Uruguay for his intervention, and I give the floor now to the distinguished Representative of Trinidad and Tobago. You have the floor, sir.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE TRINIDAD Y TOBAGO: Thank you, Chairman.

Chairman, on behalf of the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago, I sincerely pay tribute to the five years of dedicated service of the Permanent Representative of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas, His Excellency Cornelius Smith, to the Organization of American States.

Too often, we miss opportunities to pay tribute to leaders. Ambassador Smith is a true leader. His contributions to the politics of his beloved country, to the profound and often potentially contentious debate in these halls, and to representing his country as the White House Ambassador are all well documented.

Ambassador Smith, we pay tribute to you, sir, as a leader. Your efforts and sacrifices in keeping your country on a path to prosperity and unity are exemplary. Your patience, your candor, and your deep analytic skills have aided the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) caucus in framing debate and exchange in these halls. You have been truthful without being misleading. You have been assertive without being offensive. You have been collaborative without marginalizing. You have been unifying without compromising serenity.

Having travelled several times with Ambassador Smith, I will always recall his very vociferous and often delayed laughter when a joke was made in his presence. You will miss these walls. You will miss your friends. When these emotions come to you, sir, please feel free to call me to visit you in The Bahamas to mitigate these challenges. It is a sacrifice, but it is one I am willing to make! [Risas.]

Godspeed, my friend.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Trinidad and Tobago for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Nicaragua.

El REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DE NICARAGUA: Gracias, señor Presidente.

La Delegación de Nicaragua, en primer lugar quería unirse a las expresiones de reconocimiento hechas al Embajador Rosa Bautista por su destacada participación como Presidente del Consejo Permanente e igualmente durante la Asamblea General en Cochabamba, Bolivia.

Seguidamente, la Delegación de Nicaragua, en nombre de los países miembros del Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana (SICA), también quiere sumarse a los reconocimientos que otras delegaciones que nos han precedido en el uso de la palabra han expresado al Embajador Cornelius Smith.

Al Embajador Smith le caracteriza la sensatez, la cordialidad. Cuenta con distinguidos reconocimientos por su excelente contribución a la vida cívica de las Bahamas. Ha sido un activista político y comunitario, por lo que fue galardonado con el Premio *Paul Harris Fellow* por el Club Rotario Internacional. Ha sido igualmente el consultor de grandes corporaciones internacionales.

Muchas son las cualidades que le han distinguido al Embajador Smith. La más importante de ellas, su don de gente. Siempre está de buen humor. Se puede conversar con él incluso temas álgidos.

Desde los años setenta el Embajador Smith participa en la vida política de su país y figura entre los miembros fundadores del *Free National Movement* y fue electo como miembro de la oposición en el Parlamento en 1982. Durante su larga y distinguida carrera sirvió al pueblo de las Bahamas en las carteras ministeriales de Educación, Seguridad Pública e Inmigración, Ministro de Turismo y Ministro de Transporte y Gobierno Local.

En esta ocasión, señor Presidente, los países miembros del Sistema de Integración Centroamericana (SICA) reconocemos en usted, Embajador Smith, una larga y grata trayectoria diplomática que le ha permitido poner en alto el nombre de su país en esta Organización de los Estados Americanos. Reconocemos la encomiable labor desarrollada por usted en la que hizo gala de sus dotes de hábil negociador y forjador de consensos en esta Organización. Le auguramos el mayor de los éxitos en el desempeño de sus futuras funciones.

Hasta luego, Embajador Smith.

Gracias al señor Presidente.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Nicaragua for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Belize.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

This is one of those occasions that have become painfully familiar in this Permanent Council: when we say farewell to somebody who has really left a mark. I want to join others in saying farewell to my brother from the Caribbean, a true Caribbean diplomat and statesman, Ambassador Cornelius Smith, whose five years of service here have not gone unnoticed.

As you stated at the beginning, Ambassador Smith has been an educator, and I know when people are educators, they are always educators. They never stop teaching. I think that is one of the characteristics of Ambassador Smith, in addition to his formidable fishing skills, which I have heard about. I haven't seen any photographs yet, Ambassador, at least a photograph of a fish, but I take your word that you're good at it. But once a person is an educator, he or she is always an educator. That gift of teaching has not strayed far from Ambassador Smith.

An example is his willingness to share his counsel, sometimes listening quietly to a discussion and all of a sudden coming up with something that nobody thought about but makes so much sense. Our good friend's ability to listen keenly and carefully, to give advice, and to point out

things that people either don't want to see or prefer to overlook—although they're very important—will be dearly missed.

Ambassador Smith was an elected Member of Parliament. He told me a couple of stories about when he was running for election and who were the stalwart members of his group, as well as stories about when he was Minister of Government many, many, times—and stories about his fishing. Again, I say that we will want to see proof sooner rather than later.

I remember Ambassador Smith talking about changes in his professional life in the time between leaving government and coming back to it again. He said, "You know, sometimes I would walk on the beach in the morning and I would say, Lord, I don't have a job right now. I don't know what you want me to do. Tell me what you want me to do." So he would look up at the sky, at heaven, and after about a minute and a half of no response, he says: "Okay, then I think I should take the day off today." So he keeps walking along the beach to keep thinking, to come back and share with us more and more of his wisdom.

My brother, we will miss you and Miss Clara very much. We wish you all the best. Not many people have a building named after them in their own country. I think that is significant, and it is reflective of the kind of person you are, the kind of person we have seen you to be and whom we appreciate, and the kind of person for which The Bahamas is well recognized.

Godspeed! All the best!

Thank you.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Belize for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of the United States of America. You have the floor, madam.

La REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chair, the U.S. Delegation joins our colleagues around this table to bid a fond farewell to our most respected friend and colleague, Ambassador Cornelius Smith of The Bahamas. My government has been doubly privileged to have worked with Ambassador Smith on two fronts: as Ambassador to the Organization of American States but also as Ambassador to the United States.

The United States and The Bahamas are separated by only 45 miles at the closest point. We are neighbors, we are friends, and we value our relationship with one another. We have cooperated closely to address the flow of illegal narcotics, guns, and migrants, and we also actively cooperate on law enforcement, civil aviation, marine research, meteorology, and agricultural issues. Additionally, more tourists from the United States visit The Bahamas than any other nationality, contributing significantly to the tourism industry in The Bahamas.

But Ambassador Smith knows all about the relationship with the United States. After all, he is no stranger here, having received his graduate degree in business administration from the University of Miami.

Sir, you have been kind enough to share with us The Bahamas's valuable perspective on the issues affecting this organization and the member states that it comprises. I am personally grateful to you for your clear-eyed, no-nonsense appreciation of the issues before this Council. You could always be counted upon, as we say, to cut to the chase and pose forthright questions and well-reasoned responses to some of the most vexing matters that we face today.

Together with our best wishes for you and your beautiful country and its people, allow me to thank you and your family for your service while here in Washington.

Ambassador Smith, although I don't fish, I hope to visit The Bahamas in the very near future!

God bless you, sir, and thank you, Mr. Chair.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of the United States for her intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Grenada. You have the floor, madam.

La REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GRENADA: Thank you, Chair. This, hopefully, will be the last time that I take the floor this evening. I could not resist speaking on this particular item.

I first must, of course, thank my brother from Dominica for speaking on behalf of not only Grenada but of all of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) delegations. I ask his indulgence as I must bid a very, very special farewell to Ambassador Smith, who has become not just a colleague but a very dear friend over the last three years of my tenure as Ambassador. He extended a very warm hand of friendship to me personally. He not only reiterated the pledge of his government and country to partner with Grenada in the family of CARICOM at the Organization of American States, but his words were backed up by concrete actions.

Ambassador Smith is a man about whom much that is good can be said. He is to be lauded in so many regards, but one that comes to mind most readily and easily, at least to my mind, is his leadership through calm diplomacy. He is a very enlightened and experienced member of his government and a statesman by every definition; yet, he exudes humility. He is truly a very quiet presence but is a fount of wisdom. When we have doubts about proceeding on certain delicate matters, it has always behooved my delegation to recur to his good offices and his good grace.

Ambassador Smith has always been a willing, kind, and generous friend to this delegation and to Grenada, so I had to take the floor to say this in public and to wish you and your dear wife and family only the very best in your future. Having spoken after the Ambassador of Trinidad and Tobago, let me assure you that not only will he be running to help you remember those of us you've left here, but so will I. So, see you very soon in The Bahamas, or in Grenada, or wherever our paths may cross!

Godspeed.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Grenada for her intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Canada. You have the floor, madam.

La REPRESENTANTE INTERINA DEL CANADÁ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On behalf of Ambassador Culham and the entire Canadian Delegation, I'd like to join with others around the table to wish a fond farewell to Ambassador Cornelius Smith.

Ambassador Smith, you leave the Permanent Council and the Organization of American States with a lasting impression of your professionalism and your commitment to pragmatism and consensus building. We wish you luck and every success in the next chapter of your professional life. Thank you.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Canada for her intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Barbados.

La REPRESENTANTE INTERINA DE BARBADOS: Thank you, Chair.

Chair, I take the floor to join other delegations in expressing deepest appreciation to Ambassador Smith for the wisdom and guidance that he has continuously and so generously shared during his tenure here as Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States and as The Bahamas's Ambassador to the United States. The gravitas, Ambassador Smith, of your contributions was always enveloped in your signature graciousness.

All the members of the Barbados team have enjoyed the partnership that we are able to share with you, Ambassador Smith. I must note, for the rest of the membership, that this harmony was not only because we sit next to each other in the halls of this organization. The partnership was rooted in Barbados's deep appreciation of your positions, which were always in the very best interest of the Caribbean.

Chair, it remains for me to say, on behalf of Ambassador Beale, who is not here, and the entire Government of Barbados, that we wish Ambassador Smith all the best in your future endeavors. Thank you.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Barbados for her intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Venezuela. You have the floor, sir.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE VENEZUELA: Gracias, señor Presidente.

Como miembro del Grupo de la Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración (ALADI) me animo a hablar a pesar de que mi hermano y colega y camarada uruguayo lo hizo tan bien, con tanta riqueza de imágenes y de sentimientos, que, aparentemente no habría necesidad de decir algo adicional. Pero yo quiero decir algo muy personal porque estamos despidiendo también a un ser humano; aparte de un gran profesional de la diplomacia.

Casi desde el primer día comencé a llamarlo Lord Cornelius. [Risas.] No solo por su elegancia demostrada en trajes elegantísimos, trajes a rayas, donde las rayas coinciden, ni por los trajes Príncipe de Gales, con los cuales nos ha hecho demostración de nuestra falta de elegancia.

Pero estoy pensando no solamente en la elegancia sartorial. Estoy pensando en la elegancia de alma, en la elegancia de intelecto, y en la elegancia de maneras porque también en esta Casa es

bueno tener maneras. No importa cuántas diferencias podamos tener, las maneras es algo que nunca debe perderse y creo que él jamás las perdió. Y eso para orgullo de la diplomacia de Bahamas, un país con el cual compartimos muchas cosas. Aparte de la convicción democrática profunda, también aguas color turquesa y mares donde hay buena pesca. Pesca de la que alimenta mejor, pesca de la que enriquece, y no muchos tiburones, a Dios gracias.

Pero hay algo simbólico también en esta afición que fue motivo de buenas conversaciones ayer en la noche cuando lo despedimos en casa, donde tuvo la generosidad el Secretario General de invitarnos. Pez. El símbolo de la resistencia de los cristianos en la Roma antigua era un pez. Y se tomó el pez del acrónimo, creo que griego, *ichthus*, que significa algo así como “hijo de Dios”, “señor Jesucristo, hijo de Dios, salvador”. Y creo que “salvador”, si mal no recuerdo, es el nombre de la primera isla de las Bahamas donde llegó Colón. Entonces como simbología es muy atractiva. Pescador de anzuelo, pescador de redes. En cuando a red, depende de las redes sociales; y, en cuanto a anzuelo, depende de quién lance el anzuelo. Así que es una profesión o una afición que exige mucho cuidado.

¿Qué más puedo decir de él, de todos esos atributos, de su factor, de su capacidad de comunicador y de puente? Imagínense qué maravilla: un puente sobre el Caribe. Pescador de buenas piezas.

Pero hay algo con lo cual quiero concluir. Quiero referirme a algo que él no necesita pescar. Y lo debo decir en inglés: *He does not need to fish for compliments.* [Risas.]

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Venezuela for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of Paraguay.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DEL PARAGUAY: Muchas gracias, Presidente.

Yo creo que tengo que decir lo mismo que Gillian: ya nos escucharon mucho hablar hoy. Pero, Embajador Smith, aún cuando ya UNASUR ha hablado, ha hablado Venezuela, yo no quiero perder la oportunidad de decirle algunas pocas palabras de reconocimiento por la labor que le tocó desarrollar en este Consejo.

Vamos a sentir su ausencia. La vamos a sentir, porque en más de una ocasión usted con sus reflexiones, sus palabras sabias, su experiencia nos ha ayudado en momentos difíciles que todos hemos pasado, que seguiremos pasando, pero ya no estará usted con nosotros, lastimosamente. Lo seguiremos recordando.

Yo me quiero quedar con el recuerdo de anoche, Embajador, cuando usted nos decía en la casa del Secretario General que si algo ha aprendido en la pesca y en la OEA es a tener paciencia. Paciencia, paciencia, mucha paciencia. Pero yo le decía esta mañana que también el pescador tiene paciencia, pero llega un momento en que tira el anzuelo y levanta el pescado. Entonces, estamos seguros que volverá usted a sus lares; volverá al placer de poder seguir pescando. Y cuando esté en esos momentos de paciencia, acuérdesse de nosotros que estaremos pacientemente en este Consejo acordándonos de usted.

Que le vaya muy bien, Embajador. Gracias.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Representative of Paraguay for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the Permanent Observer of France.

El OBSERVADOR PERMANENTE DE FRANCIA: Merci Monsieur le Président. Il arrive aux Observateurs de pouvoir aussi dire des choses aimables.

Monsieur le Président, au nom de l'Observateur permanent de l'Espagne, en mon nom propre et au nom, j'en suis sûr, de tous les Observateurs, je voudrais à mon tour saluer l'Ambassadeur Cornelius Smith au moment où il quitte ses fonctions.

Pour nous tous, l'Ambassadeur Smith a été un modèle de compétence, et de professionnalisme. Je l'ai vu aussi à l'aise en chemise rouge, aux couleurs de son parti, au Département d'État, ou bien nous savons qu'il est à l'aise à la pêche dans les eaux de l'Atlantique ou du Pacifique comme il nous l'a dit. Quoiqu'il en soit, il a toujours occupé dans cette salle une place remarquée, celle d'un sage et d'un diplomate qui en tout sait trouver la juste mesure.

Ambassador Smith, to use Winston Vernon Saunders's words, you will continue tomorrow your journey through the corridors of light of your career and life, and we are eager to wish you Godspeed. Thank you very much, Ambassador.

Merci, Monsieur le Président.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the distinguished Permanent Observer of France for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the Secretary General.

El SECRETARIO GENERAL: Thank you very much. I don't intend to take much of your time, Mr. Chairman; I had a chance to say farewell to the Ambassador yesterday.

I want to reiterate that I thank him very much, first of all, for his professional quality. Ambassador Cornelius Smith has been a real diplomat among us, a very helpful and very positive one, starting with his first assignment here—which was certainly not in the job description—to head a mission to the middle of the jungle in South America. He did it with great success, without originally knowing much about the countries involved, in which we were aware of the problems that existed. I think he performed a beautiful job.

What is best is what Ambassador Smith says. First, he is very clear and says exactly what is needed at each moment; then, he creates consensus. He carried those skills through all the tasks he performed at the Organization of American States, particularly in the Permanent Council and then the Permanent Executive Committee of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CEPCIDI), so we will greatly miss him. We need clear voices, gentle manners, and an ability and capacity for consensus here.

Much has been said about your patience, Ambassador, and I learned something through it: not only your capacity to listen to all these speeches today at six o'clock in the afternoon but to stay here at the Council and be a permanent player. You have always been a permanent player and a permanent contributor.

I agree with Nestor Mendez; I think I found the clue! You were a high school principal, and that requires patience. You did that at very young age, I assume, and you managed to deal with all those young people, so I'm sure dealing with all these old gentlemen is not that difficult! But you have done a great job with us.

Ambassador Smith, we will really miss you, and we do hope that you will miss us too and that you'll miss the OAS. I know that ambassadors who leave the OAS, in spite of everything they say, really miss the give and take of this Council. From what I've learned from you through the years, you will miss the lively exchanges, the experience, and the many things you learned about our region sitting around this table.

I hope that you can continue helping us from your home country. We look forward to seeing you soon. Of course, we'll see you the day after tomorrow when you will head the Delegation of The Bahamas to the Twenty-Seventh Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, but from then on, I would hope that you keep not only remembering us but also coming to the OAS—which is your house—as many times as you want.

Thank you very much, sir.

El PRESIDENTE: I thank the Secretary General for his intervention, and I now give the floor to the distinguished Representative of The Bahamas. You have the floor, sir.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE LAS BAHAMAS: Thank you, Chair.

Mr. Secretary General, Assistant Secretary General, colleague ambassadors, alternates:

Each of you has been so kind, so generous, so gracious in your contributions and your tribute that after listening to you, I am reminded of an unforgettable experience that I had early in life. For those of you who may not know, in my country, funeral services are big community events, and it is the tradition that space is reserved on the program for community leaders to speak on behalf of the departed.

At the funeral service of one of my more ardent supporters, the preacher in his eulogy heaped lavish praises about the virtues of Gerry, the departed. He spoke of his honesty, when everyone knew that Gerry was a kleptomaniac. [Risas.] He told of his industrious and hardworking character, but the whole community knew that he never worked and that he depended on his wife to provide for the family. The town drunk was lauded for his sobriety, and the preacher ended by telling of his personal admiration for Gerry's devotion and his undying love and care for his wife and children.

At that moment, the wife, who was listening intently, asked the preacher: "Preacher, please allow the undertaker to reopen the casket just one more time so that I can see the face of the corpse, because the person you're talking about is not the father of my children and my husband." [Risas.]

Unlike that wife, colleagues, I accept your kind words of expression, and I thank each of you for them.

Wow! How time flies! It seems as if it was just yesterday that I arrived with the misconception, which is still prevalent in my country, that the Organization of American States, like

most international organizations, is not much more than a hemispheric talk shop. Today, five years later, I have a greater respect for and deeper understanding and appreciation of the value, power, and responsibility of the OAS in maintaining democracy and ensuring peace and stability in the Hemisphere. For those who question the validity and relevance of this organization, I take comfort in the fact that many member states always turn to this organization for guidance, advice, and resolution of disputes.

I go away confident in the knowledge that, even with its shortcomings and its occasional missteps, the only hope for maintaining, strengthening, and promoting the democratic process and the peaceful resolution of disputes for the stability and prosperity of the Hemisphere lies with the OAS. If we allow the OAS to fail—or worse, if we contribute to its failure—we do so at our own peril and that of future generations

As members of the Permanent Council, we ought never to forget that we have been fortunate enough to serve the peoples of the Hemisphere in this august body and have an awesome responsibility to assist in the shaping of the societies in which we live.

Chair, during my tenure here, the Hemisphere has faced a number of difficult challenges but through the auspices of the OAS and through the utilization of our collective wills to find consensus, many of these challenges were satisfactorily resolved. However, we continue to wrestle with finding successful resolutions to many other challenges.

During my term, the OAS has had to deal with and find acceptable solutions to a myriad of sensitive political issues, including coups, border disputes, and violations of air and land sovereignty. We've experienced an unusual number of natural disasters, including floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes, but we found ways to mitigate the consequences of these natural disasters.

Today, the Hemisphere is confronted with criminal gangs, drug trafficking, human smuggling, terrorism, transnational criminality, HIV/AIDS, environmental destruction, abject poverty, and the list goes on. We continue, however, to adopt the principle of shared responsibility and to search for acceptable solutions to these vexing problems.

Chair, in times of reduced budgets, and as you continue your ongoing reform efforts, may I suggest a return to our core mandates of promoting democracy, defending human rights, ensuring a multidimensional approach to security, and fostering integral development and prosperity. But in pursuit of these objectives, let us always be mindful of the need to provide resources on a shared and equal basis, never sacrificing one for the other.

I want to make it clear that development and the prosperity agenda should not be sacrificed upon the altar of political expediency, as equal access to food, shelter, and health is an insurance policy against insecurity, human rights abuses, and dictatorship.

Before I take leave, allow me to record my personal appreciation to the General Secretariat's staff for the excellent assistance that they have provided to me personally and to Permanent Mission of The Bahamas over the years. Colleagues, working with each of you has been positive, productive, and rewarding, and so I thank each of you for your advice and your friendship.

I've really been blessed with the good fortune of having a small but dedicated team of international public servants, without whose support our work would have been made more difficult. I'd like to take this opportunity to publicly thank each of them for the skill and professionalism with which they executed their daily tasks.

I look forward to welcoming each of you to The Bahamas. God bless!

[Aplausos.]

El PRESIDENTE: Ambassador Smith, you are truly a diplomat of distinction. Even before you spoke this afternoon, one representative here described you as a lord, if not the Lord. You have received tributes in three languages this afternoon. You have stimulated seven profound analogies concerning fishing, and you have prompted three people to invite themselves to The Bahamas [risas.] before you did! We all respect you and will miss you, and we pay tribute to you.

I now invite all of you to a reception in honor of Ambassador Smith in the Hall of Heroes.

There being no further business to consider, this meeting stands adjourned.

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