

CONSEJO PERMANENTE



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ACTA
DE LA SESIÓN EXTRAORDINARIA
CELEBRADA
EL 4 DE MARZO DE 2015

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CONSEJO PERMANENTE DE LA ORGANIZACIÓN DE LOS ESTADOS AMERICANOS

ACTA DE LA SESIÓN EXTRAORDINARIA CELEBRADA EN LA MAÑANA DEL 4 DE MARZO DE 2015

En la ciudad de Washington, D.C., el Consejo Permanente de la Organización de los Estados Americanos celebró sesión extraordinaria el miércoles 4 de marzo de 2015. Presidió la sesión la Embajadora Niermala Badrising, Representante Permanente de Suriname y Presidenta del Consejo Permanente. La sesión inició a las diez y doce horas de la mañana y asistieron los siguientes miembros:

Embajadora La Celia A. Prince, Representante Permanente de San Vicente y las Granadinas y Vicepresidenta del Consejo Permanente
Embajador Bayney R. Karran, Representante Permanente de Guyana
Embajador Denis Ronaldo Moncada Colindres, Representante Permanente de Nicaragua
Embajador John E. Beale, Representante Permanente de Barbados
Embajador Hubert J. Charles, Representante Permanente del Commonwealth de Dominica
Embajadora Jacinth Lorna Henry-Martin, Representante Permanente de Saint Kitts y Nevis
Embajador Neil Parsan, Representante Permanente de Trinidad y Tobago
Embajador Andrés González Díaz, Representante Permanente de Colombia
Embajador Stephen C. Vasciannie, Representante Permanente de Jamaica
Embajador Emilio Rabasa Gamboa, Representante Permanente de México
Embajadora Nilda Celia Garré, Representante Permanente de la Argentina
Embajadora Elisa Ruiz Díaz Bareiro, Representante Permanente del Paraguay
Embajador Juan Federico Jiménez Mayor, Representante Permanente del Perú
Embajador Juan Pablo Lira Bianchi, Representante Permanente de Chile
Embajador Bocchit Edmond, Representante Permanente de Haití
Embajador Jorge Hernán Miranda Corona, Representante Permanente de Panamá
Embajador Pablo Barahona Kruger, Representante Permanente de Costa Rica
Embajador Hugo Cayrús Maurin, Representante Permanente del Uruguay
Embajador Francisco Esteban Laínez, Representante Permanente de El Salvador
Michael J. Fitzpatrick, Representante Interino de los Estados Unidos
Primera Secretaria Joy-Dee Davis-Lake, Representante Interina de Antigua y Barbuda
Chet Donovan Neymour, Representante Interino del Commonwealth de las Bahamas
Ministra Consejera Elizabeth Darius-Clarke, Representante Interina de Santa Lucía
Consejera Jennifer May Alice Loten, Representante Interina del Canadá
Ministro Consejero Breno Dias da Costa, Representante Interino del Brasil
Ministra Consejera Ellen Josefina Martínez de Cooreman, Representante Interina de la República Dominicana
Embajadora Carmen Luisa Velásquez de Visbal, Representante Alterna de Venezuela
Consejero Kenneth J. Amoksi, Representante Alterno de Suriname
Ministra María Isabel Marca Choque, Representante Alterna de Bolivia
Ministro Consejero Luis Carranza Cifuentes, Representante Alterno de Guatemala
Ministra Consejera Ardelle Lisette Sabido, Representante Alterna de Belize
Embajador Marcelo Vázquez Bermúdez, Representante Alterno del Ecuador
Ministra Consejera Saira Esmeralda Ponce Rosales, Representante Alterna de Honduras

La sesión continuó en horas de la tarde y contó con la asistencia de los siguientes miembros:

Embajadora La Celia A. Prince, Representante Permanente de San Vicente y las Granadinas y Vicepresidenta del Consejo Permanente
Embajador Denis Ronaldo Moncada Colindres, Representante Permanente de Nicaragua
Embajador Nestor Mendez, Representante Permanente de Belize
Embajador John E. Beale, Representante Permanente de Barbados
Embajador Hubert J. Charles, Representante Permanente del Commonwealth de Dominica
Embajadora Jacinth Lorna Henry-Martin, Representante Permanente de Saint Kitts y Nevis
Embajador Neil Parsan, Representante Permanente de Trinidad y Tobago
Embajador Andrés González Díaz, Representante Permanente de Colombia
Embajador Stephen C. Vasciannie, Representante Permanente de Jamaica
Embajador Emilio Rabasa Gamboa, Representante Permanente de México
Embajadora Elisa Ruiz Díaz Bareiro, Representante Permanente del Paraguay
Embajador Juan Federico Jiménez Mayor, Representante Permanente del Perú
Embajador Bocchit Edmond, Representante Permanente de Haití
Embajador Jorge Hernán Miranda Corona, Representante Permanente de Panamá
Embajador Pablo Barahona Kruger, Representante Permanente de Costa Rica
Embajador Hugo Cayrús Maurin, Representante Permanente del Uruguay
Embajador Francisco Esteban Laínez, Representante Permanente de El Salvador
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Chet Donovan Neymour, Representante Interino del Commonwealth de las Bahamas
Ministro Consejero Breno Dias da Costa, Representante Interino del Brasil
Ministra Consejera Ellen Josefina Martínez de Cooreman, Representante Interina de la República Dominicana
Ministro Consejero Forbes July, Representante Alterno de Guyana
Embajadora Carmen Luisa Velásquez de Visbal, Representante Alterna de Venezuela
Primera Secretaria Kimari Amanda Shenelle Storey, Representante Alterna de Santa Lucía
Primera Secretaria Fiorella Caldera Gutiérrez, Representante Alterna de Bolivia
Consejero Frank Tressler, Representante Alterno de Chile
Consejero Kenneth J. Amoksi, Representante Alterno de Suriname
Ministro Consejero Luis Carranza Cifuentes, Representante Alterno de Guatemala
Ministro Julio César Ayala, Representante Alterno de la Argentina
Embajador Marcelo Vázquez Bermúdez, Representante Alterno del Ecuador
Primera Secretaria Larissa Karina Pineda Díaz, Representante Alterna de Honduras

PALABRAS DE LA PRESIDENTA DEL CONSEJO PERMANENTE

La PRESIDENTA: Distinguished permanent and alternate representatives to the Organization of American States, distinguished permanent observers, representatives of civil society, special guests, ladies and gentlemen: Good morning and welcome!

I am pleased to call to order this special meeting of the Permanent Council, which has been convened in pursuance of resolution AG/RES. 2103 (XXXV-O/05) in preparation for the special session of the General Assembly to be held on March 18, 2015. On that occasion, we will elect the new Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States.

Delegations are reminded of the provision in resolution AG/RES. 2103, which instructs the Permanent Council to:

...invite the candidates put forward by member states for the positions of Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General to give a public presentation to this Organization prior to the elections, in order to describe in greater detail the proposals and the initiatives they would undertake should they be elected.

The same resolution states that “the presentations shall be made to the Permanent Council on a date to be set by said Council.”

Esteemed colleagues, it is in this context that the presentations by the candidates for the position of Assistant Secretary General of our Organization will take place today.

The position of Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States is of high importance to our Organization, especially to this Council, from various perspectives. Apart from being the Secretary of the Permanent Council, the Assistant Secretary General shall serve as the advisory officer to the Secretary General and shall act as his delegate regarding all matters that the Secretary General may entrust to him. It is important to highlight that, according to the Charter of the Organization, “during the temporary absence or disability of the Secretary General, the Assistant Secretary General shall perform his functions.”

Dear colleagues, today’s order of business is based on the procedural guidelines for the presentations of the candidates for the positions of Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General of the OAS, adopted on January 20, 2015, and contained in document CP/INF.7076/15. In accordance with these procedural guidelines, this meeting of the Permanent Council will start in the morning and continue in the afternoon. This morning’s part of the meeting will be devoted to the presentation of the candidate nominated by the Government of Guyana; namely, His Excellency Bayney Karran. Then, at 2:30 p.m., the Council will receive the presentation by His Excellency Ambassador Nestor Mendez, Permanent Representative of Belize and the candidate nominated by the Government of Belize.

In accordance with the order of business, there will be a question-and-answer session after each candidate’s presentation.

Distinguished permanent representatives, I request the cooperation of all delegations in following the procedural guidelines as much as possible in order to make the most of the time allotted for this special meeting of the Permanent Council.

In accordance with resolution AG/RES.2103, a dialogue between the candidates and representatives of civil society organizations that are duly accredited to the Organization will be held tomorrow in this room at 10:00 a.m.

PRESENTACIÓN A CARGO DEL EMBAJADOR BAYNEY KARRAN,
REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA, CANDIDATO AL CARGO DE
SECRETARIO GENERAL ADJUNTO DE LA OEA

La PRESIDENTA: Esteemed colleagues, we will now proceed with the the presentation by His Excellency Ambassador Bayney Karran.

Last July, Ambassador Karran was nominated for the position of Assistant Secretary General by the Government of Guyana, as reflected in the diplomatic note published as document AG/CP/INF.665/14.

Ambassador Karran is well known in this Council. He was appointed as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Guyana to the United States of America and as Permanent Representative of the OAS in December 2003.

During his tenure as Permanent Representative of Guyana to the OAS, Ambassador Karran has held the positions of Chair and Vice Chair of the Permanent Council, as well as Chair of the Committee on Hemispheric Security (CSH), and he has participated in OAS missions to Ecuador, Haiti, China, and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Ethiopia.

Before being posted in the United States and accredited to the OAS, Ambassador Karran served as Guyana's Ambassador to Venezuela and as non-resident Ambassador to Chile, Colombia, and Ecuador. He is currently accredited as Guyana's nonresident Ambassador to Mexico, Panama, and Costa Rica.

Over the past two decades, Ambassador Karran has participated as the head of Guyana's delegation or as senior delegate to numerous summits and ministerial meetings at important multilateral institutions, including the General Assembly of the United Nations and the General Assembly of the OAS. He has also participated in the Summit of the Americas and in meetings of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), the Rio Group, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO).

Ambassador Karran was born in 1957. He was educated at the University of Guyana, the University of West Indies in Barbados, and at the Sir Hugh Wooding Law School in Trinidad and Tobago. Prior to his diplomatic appointments, he provided legal advice and representation to the public and to private entities in civil and criminal proceedings, as well as pro bono legal services in the defense of human rights. Additionally, Ambassador Karran is a founder and director of the Guyana Legal Aid Clinic, a nonprofit organization founded in 1994 to provide free legal services to the poor.

Ambassador Karran, thank you for being with us today to share the proposals and initiatives that you would undertake, should you be elected Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States. I am very pleased to give you the floor to address us.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Madam Chair, distinguished colleagues of the Permanent Council, alternates, permanent observers, members of staff of the Organization of American States, members of the World Wide Web audience, ladies and gentlemen:

I am grateful for this opportunity to make this presentation to you on the proposals and initiatives I would undertake, if I should be accorded the honor to be elected Assistant Secretary General of the OAS.

First, I wish to acknowledge the valuable inputs and successes of Secretary General José Miguel Insulza and Assistant Secretary General Albert Ramdin over their two terms. Notwithstanding administrative and budgetary constraints, as well as political challenges, their deep commitment and their strength of purpose have advanced the work of the OAS in all areas.

Second, it gives me pride that the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) caucus of ambassadors has been able to produce not one but two worthy candidates for the position of Assistant Secretary General. His Excellency Ambassador Nestor Mendez has always been a respected CARICOM colleague. As we commence this phase of the quest upon which our two countries have embarked, I extend to him the same collegiality, comradery, and consideration that have characterized our numerous previous collaborations.

Madam Chair, the OAS is indispensable to the integration process in our hemisphere. It is an institution that is vested with incomparable political, legal, and moral authority. In order for this Organization to maintain its stature, it has to create incentives for member states to feel ownership, to appreciate its worth, and to achieve valuable results. Otherwise, member states will renege on their political commitments to this Organization.

In addition to these imperatives, the OAS faces challenges in the areas of management and modernization, many of which require prompt attention. Important as these may be, the issues related to budget administration and efficiency of the Organization are not its only problem. The political and ideological rifts within the Hemisphere are an equally difficult challenge.

Chair, in this presentation, I will consider the main areas of activity, with a view to examining how, collectively, the member states and the General Secretariat should respond to the OAS's needs and challenges. In so doing, I shall be ever mindful of the key proposals contained in the Strategic Plan for Management Modernization (SPMM), which has been proposed by the Secretariat. I also wish to elaborate, for your consideration, a set of management proposals of my own, which I believe would expand and improve upon those already proposed.

But first, let us examine the condition of the four pillars of the Organization and then see what it is that member states would like the OAS to do.

The flourishing of national democracies has enabled substantial economic gains and opportunities for our countries and peoples. Democracy is indispensable for peace, social development, justice, and equity, and it requires perseverance in pursuing our collective commitments under the Inter-American Democratic Charter. It is equally vital to safeguard and strengthen the essential components of the exercise of democracy, even if significant sections of the population are disappointed that democracy has not delivered on their expectations.

I firmly believe that we must enhance the capacity of the General Secretariat to monitor, anticipate, and head off potential threats to constitutional order in our member states by refining early warning systems and promoting dialogue mechanisms among all national stakeholders. We need to support efforts in campaign finance reform, constitutional reform, and institutional strengthening, while at the same time increasing our assistance for election processes and for the promotion of good governance. In short, we have to make democracy sustainable.

Whereas upholding democratic norms has earned the OAS global recognition, the same cannot be said for the Organization's achievements when it comes to integral development. The OAS has a fundamental obligation to assist member states to overcome the scourges of poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment. Our smaller and more vulnerable states, which comprise a substantial component of our membership, are not satisfied with our level of accomplishment in this area, in spite of some significant successes. Most member states believe that we must be more proactive in addressing these challenges.

Among the many inequalities that exist, the gap in education is the one that most negatively affects the destiny of each person. If we are to make real progress in the area of integral development, member states will have to commit to invest more in that pillar, both politically and financially. If elected as Assistant Secretary General, I would work closely with member states to find ways to raise more resources and to channel them into low-cost, high-impact development programs, with a particular focus on education, to complement the larger programs of the multilateral development organizations.

Chair, inequality, inequity, lack of economic opportunity, and poverty all have a direct effect on political and social stability and citizen security. In this area, the OAS has made commendable strides. The creditable performance of the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security (SMS), through the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD), the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE), and the Department of Public Security (DPS) must be extended to ensure that public security is addressed more comprehensively.

In the meantime, the OAS must continue to build hemispheric networks of cooperation and share experiences and capacity-building in order to combat the scourge of transnational criminal organizations. Moreover, the OAS can still play a central role in moving the Hemisphere closer to consensus in the war on drugs and on immigration issues. The prioritization of security issues by member states would help lead to such consensus for action in the area of multidimensional security, if member states should so desire.

Notwithstanding recent advances in extending the promotion and protection of human rights, greater efforts are needed to combat injustices. Many member states wish to see far-reaching changes made to the institutions of the system, something that has caused much dissatisfaction. Should member states abandon the human rights system, it would be a major blow to that pillar of our Organization.

The new Secretary General should exert efforts to ensure that the system is improved and strengthened. This can commence with a renewed dialogue under the new OAS administration, starting with the human rights institutions of the member states. If elected, I would urge the new Secretary General to formulate proposals to ease the friction between member states and the inter-American human rights system. I would work accordingly with the new Secretary General and with member states in order to achieve this objective.

The historic initiative by the United States and Cuba to normalize relations has the potential to significantly improve the tenor of future political discourse in our hemisphere. This would be a positive development, considering that lack of consensus at the OAS often stems from political differences. Member states should be prepared to welcome the participation of the Government of Cuba in the councils of the Hemisphere eventually. This development could lead to a significant reduction of political tensions in the future, even though Cuba has shown little interest in rejoining the OAS. Time will tell whether greater trust would be engendered through dialogue and shared experiences. Until then, in our debates, the scars of history and the differences in political perspectives will continue to converge. They will continue to produce a lack of trust and a lack of consensus on political matters. I look forward, however, to positive developments from the process under way.

The year 2015 will mark a turning point for the OAS because the Organization finds itself at several junctions simultaneously.

1. Member states are determined that the Organization must now be reenergized, refocused, and relaunched on a new path, both strategically and operationally.
2. We shall soon decide on the establishment of new systems of management.
3. We're all agreed that the Organization must revise its operational and programmatic procedures in order to strengthen and improve accountability, austerity, efficiency, effectiveness, prudence, and transparency.
4. We need to resolve the question of mandate prioritization and the inadequacy of sustainable financing, and address the issues related to human resources.
5. In the space of a few months, we will be transitioning from an outgoing to an incoming administration. A similar combination of factors will not occur again for a long time to come. This unique situation presents a window of opportunity for the OAS. This opportunity must be firmly grasped; otherwise, it may turn out to be irretrievably lost. Fresh winds of change are blowing over the Organization, and we should take advantage of the moment and the momentum.

Over the past several months, I have had the pleasure of conducting extensive consultations with member states. Virtually every permanent representative to the OAS has been a part of these discussions. I wish to thank you for sharing with me your concerns and your vision for the Organization.

A clear picture of the conditions that member states wish to see prevailing at the OAS has emerged from those consultations. Member states would like the next OAS administration to breathe new life into the Organization. They are concerned that the influence and the authority of the OAS will diminish unless it is given fresh impetus.

Most member states are of the opinion that the Secretariat must strengthen collaboration with them through a more consultative and interactive relationship. Mandate prioritization, budgetary shortfalls, and management reform are the three key priorities to improve the functioning of the OAS. Moreover, the recurrent problem of quota payment arrears needs to be resolved. Member states ought to engage in a discussion over the collection of payments.

The paradox of the OAS is that member states insist that the General Secretariat must discharge its responsibilities more effectively, but the same member states are unwilling to raise quotas so that these responsibilities might be so discharged. In order to resolve this dilemma, they would like the Organization to better rationalize its resources. How the General Secretariat and, more specifically, the new leadership of the OAS, respond to this paradox could affect how firmly member states remain committed to the Organization.

Most member states are also quite concerned about what the nature of the relationship between the incoming Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General would be. As has been previously noted, countries wish to see a greater focus on development. Besides, the smaller and more vulnerable states wish to feel that they have an equal voice and an equal standing in the Americas. The OAS is the principal platform to give them that voice.

Member states also wish to see a greater synergy between the OAS and the other entities of the inter-American system. In particular, they would like the OAS to have a better relationship with international, financial, and development institutions.

Member states feel that some of these goals would be better achieved by closing the perceived separation—which they believe, rightly or wrongly, to exist—between the Permanent Council and the General Secretariat. Should I become the next Assistant Secretary General, I will do all in my power to ensure that this Permanent Council remains the center of gravity of the OAS, and that no other agency wields influence at the expense of this Council.

Member states are convinced that in order for the OAS to be a beacon in the Hemisphere for transparency and accountability in governance, we in the OAS must first put our own house in order by improving the procedures for our internal accountability, transparency, and efficiency.

Chair, I turn now to the management of the Organization. Concrete initiatives aimed at modernization and management reform have already been put in motion with the tabling of the Strategic Plan for Management Modernization (SPMM). However, this plan would not necessarily be adopted in its totality. I believe that implementing the following recommendations, which are contained in the SPMM, could bring about better financial management, increased resource mobilization, as well as increased efficiency and effectiveness, and should be seriously considered by member states:

- Capital investments;
- Indirect cost recovery;
- Information and records management;
- The costing of mandates;
- Reductions in the cost of ministerial meetings; and
- Voluntary contributions from permanent observers.

Taking the foregoing into account, I wish to put forward certain additional observations and recommendations for your consideration. If you consider them favorable, and if I have the honor to

be elected, I would seek to work with the incoming Secretary General on the implementation of these proposals for the improvement of the Organization. Some, but not all, have already been recommended in the Strategic Plan. In some cases, my recommendations go beyond what has been suggested in that plan because they are intended to give additional guarantees for improved transparency, accountability, efficiency, and austerity.

My recommendations relate to the following areas:

- The Summits process;
- Resource mobilization;
- Strengthening the Office of the Inspector General (OIG);
- Establishment of the Office of the Ombudsman;
- Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States [National Offices];
- Promotion of dialogue and consultation among subregional groups and countries;
- Institutionalizing the regional coordinators mechanisms;
- A more dynamic relationship with observer states and international organizations;
- Accountability for travel; and
- Initiatives for human resource management.

The implementation of Summit mandates is a major area of responsibility for the OAS and one that poses challenges to the Summits of the Americas Secretariat (SAS) and to the General Secretariat as a whole. There is need for a greater measure of coordination to ensure the effective and uniform implementation of Summit mandates among the agencies of the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG) and within member states.

In order to improve the implementation of Summit mandates, I propose that as part of the Plan of Action of the Summit of the Americas, member states should instruct the headL of the JSWG institutions to meet in a special post-Summit meeting to:

1. Lay out their individual plans for fulfilling mandates; and
2. Elaborate a coordinated strategy in which mandates overlap to capitalize on existing synergies, optimize resources, and reduce duplication of effort.

The OAS Secretary General, as Chair of the Joint Summit Working Group, should be charged with convening this high-level meeting within an appropriate time period after the Summit. In this manner, the OAS would better fulfill its responsibilities by helping to ensure that decisions adopted by the Hemisphere's presidents and prime ministers are being handled as action priorities at all levels with coordination, precision, and commitment.

To better ensure follow-up and continuity in the Summit implementation process, I would propose that following the Panama Summit, each Summit host country should second a senior staffer to the Summit Secretariat for a period of two years—the year prior to the Summit and a year after the Summit. Member states that volunteer to host a Summit of the Americas would accept the secondment of a staffer to the OAS as part of their obligations as host. This would help to create a stronger Summit Secretariat without increasing the cost to the General Secretariat budget; ensure that, post-Summit, there is dedicated attention to the work of implementation; and further support continuous and open communication among key stakeholders and host country planners.

In the years when Summits take place, the General Assembly usually follows soon after, resulting in an overlap of effort as well as resources. I wish to propose that in those years when a Summit of the Americas is held, the regular session of the General Assembly of the OAS should be held at OAS headquarters. This would be an opportunity to maintain continuity around the policy dialogue and the thematic focus of the Summit and further consolidate and emphasize Summit outcomes. It would also have the practical benefit of optimizing the personnel and financial resources of both member states and the Secretariat.

In order to assist in bridging the revenue gap, I propose that the Organization reinvent the idea of embarking on a program dedicated to increased revenue from sources additional to member state quotas. This program would aim to raise specific funds from member and observer states, financial institutions, development agencies, private entities, and other development partners. This scheme is already being practiced individually by multiple OAS departments in the case of specific projects. The Organization can consolidate these activities within a specific unit, suitably staffed, to be located within the Secretariat for External Relations (SER). Such a program is a more rational approach than the current system, in which multiple OAS departments raise funds separately, generally from the same sources. The current system signals to donors and other stakeholders that we are disorganized.

By putting more effective revenue collection systems in place and setting proper targets, this program should increase OAS specific funds by several million dollars per year. I propose that these funds should be spent on targeted needs of the Organization, which are to be decided upon by the member states. Such an initiative, if it is to be pursued, must follow international best practices.

The mobilization of resources should not be confined only to raising cash. The political credentials of the OAS can be a useful counterpart to the technical and financial resources of other institutions in devising solutions to problems in the Hemisphere in areas, such as climate change initiatives, education, developing energy security, improving disaster management, and strengthening democracy.

Member states wish for the Office of the Inspector General to be as effective as possible in terms of checks and balances, satisfactory managerial oversight, and increased independence. The Inspector General should be accountable to a higher authority, independent from the one that he is watching over, in order to avoid the appearance of conflicts of interest. I would invite you to consider that it would be better for the Inspector General to be accountable directly to member states, perhaps through the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP).

The proposal in the SPMM for the creation of the Office of the Ombudsman would further enhance the Organization's transparency and accountability, as well as the security of its employees, by fostering a nondiscriminatory environment. An ombudsman's office would also address

complaints, solve grievances, and foster better relations among member states, the Secretariat, and staff members. An ombudsman would reinforce rules and ethics in the workplace, provide for more checks and balances and adherence to proper rules and procedures, as well as lend further support to the management reform exercise. I would recommend to the incoming Secretary General to take steps expeditiously to create the Office of the Ombudsman.

The management plan envisages a reduction of expenditure on the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States [National Offices] by nearly one third and for the closure of certain National Offices in situations where the Organization's needs could be met through support from other National Offices. Rather than implement such a sweeping decision, I would recommend that there first be a reevaluation and rearticulation of the role of these Offices in order to bring them in line with the emerging needs and practices of the Organization and of member states.

The closure of National Offices is a matter that involves political as well as financial considerations, and they both must be addressed simultaneously. The issue is of significance to too many member states to be addressed solely from a financial perspective. Until the issue is further examined, substantial savings can be achieved through measures, such as the reduction of travel, the continued modernization of communications, and further collaboration by member states in operating National Offices in their territories.

It is the duty of the OAS to inspire greater dialogue and consultation among interested subregional groups and member states. In order to better provide for such opportunities, I would propose to the incoming Secretary General that a program of dialogue and consultation among the various subregional groupings of the Organization be established under the aegis of the General Secretariat. Such a program would serve to promote dialogue, understanding, and consensus on issues of common interest, as well as to enhance intraregional cooperation among subregional groups and member states of the OAS.

I would propose that consideration be given to institutionalizing the regional coordinators mechanism. This consultative mechanism has been a valuable tool to manage negotiations and to facilitate consensus-building but, often, it is not fully utilized by the Permanent Council. An amendment to the rules to require the Chair to consult with the regional coordinators on all vital matters to be brought before the Council should be considered by member states as a mechanism to help expedite the work of the Permanent Council.

If elected, I would encourage the Secretary General to create an initiative aimed at obtaining more fruitful and extensive engagements with the permanent observer states, beginning with wide-ranging consultations with them all. The OAS should take advantage of the willingness of observer states to be more engaged with the Organization. This initiative would seek to widen and deepen engagements, both with active and inactive observers, by exploring common agendas and areas of interest.

To further increase transparency and accountability and build confidence between member states and the Office of the Assistant Secretary General, I hereby undertake that, if elected, the travel schedule of the Assistant Secretary General and all members of that office would be submitted to the CAAP voluntarily for the prior information of that body. Furthermore, the nature and purpose of all travel undertaken by the Assistant Secretary General for which OAS funds have been expended would be fully reported to the member states through the Permanent Council. I would seek to

persuade the incoming Secretary General that this example of accountability should be extended to the entire Secretariat.

It is important for the incoming Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General, upon taking office, to immediately establish positive working relationships with Secretariat staff, particularly the senior management, and to provide inspiration to the entire labor force to work with complete enthusiasm for the common cause of the Organization. If I happen to be elected, I would wish to see the incoming administration convene a meeting, at the earliest opportunity after taking office, with the Department of Human Resources and the Staff Association in order to familiarize itself with outstanding issues and to assist the two sides in resolving any pending issues.

I intend to recommend to the incoming Secretary General that the Organization move as early as possible to address the question of human resources. Key objectives would be to improve perceptions or erase misperceptions about the fairness, transparency, and integrity of the current procedures. The incoming administration would expect to receive reports about low staff morale, incidents of harassment, and the fairness of performance appraisals, which would all need to be addressed.

Whistleblower protection, as in the case of the appointment of an ombudsman, promises to generate a higher level of confidence and security among employees because they would feel better protected. If I am elected, whistleblower protection is a measure that I would wish to see established, and I would take steps to ensure that it is adopted.

An important area of human resource management for any new OAS administration is ensuring that there is balance in the subregional and national origins of employees at the OAS. There are perceptions among some subregions and member states that their nationals are underrepresented in the workforce of this Organization. These perceptions affect the attitude and the commitment of member states to the Organization. Some member states would expect that these perceptions be addressed with urgency, particularly since His Excellency candidate Luis Almagro pledged during his campaign to address this issue. I am in support of measures to have this issue addressed to the satisfaction of member states.

The Assistant Secretary General must have an intimate working relationship with the Secretary General that is based on mutual trust, mutual cooperation, and mutual respect. The Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General must be at one with regard to the mission and strategic objectives of the Organization that they are elected to serve. Many member states are of the view that since both officials are elected as a team, there should be a political role for them both. All member states advocate a leading role for the Assistant Secretary General in managing the Secretariat, and most of them would like the Assistant Secretary General to also undertake political functions to complement the functions of the Secretary General. I am also of the view that it would benefit the Organization for the Assistant Secretary General to play a strong and well-defined political role when necessary.

The Organization would function best if the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General can complement each other's strengths and weaknesses. Most member states do not agree that the Secretary General should allocate responsibilities to the Assistant Secretary General based on his sole whim and fancy. Member states can, if they so wish, determine a role for the Assistant Secretary General within the policy framework of the Organization.

Madam Chair, distinguished colleagues, I am confident that the implementation of whatever management and modernization plan member states eventually decide upon, if combined with these initiatives that I have suggested, would help transform the Organization of American States into a more efficient, productive, and dynamic entity. I consider that the proposals that I have recommended would improve not only the performance of the Organization, but also its image and its esteem. Over time, this would translate into a more respected entity that generates deeper commitments on the part of its membership and its stakeholders.

I thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran, for your elaborate presentation in which you outlined proposals and initiatives that you would undertake if you were elected as the new Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States.

Esteemed colleagues, before starting the question-and-answer session of this portion of the meeting, I would like to remind delegations of the procedural guidelines that we adopted on January 20, 2015, to enable the smooth conduct of this meeting. I therefore would like to make a cordial request to delegations to keep their questions, as much as possible, to one minute or even less. I am aware that this was not an easy undertaking during the previous meeting of the same nature; nevertheless, I would like to ask delegations to raise specific questions based on the presentation of the candidate and to be mindful of the time in order to make the most of the time allotted for this meeting. The timely conduct of this portion of the meeting will allow us to start the second portion of the meeting on time at 2:30 p.m., at which time the candidate presented by the Government of Belize will make his presentation to the Council.

MÓDULO DE PREGUNTAS Y RESPUESTAS

La PRESIDENTA: I would now like to offer the floor to delegations that wish to pose questions to Ambassador Karran. I see there are already two member states—oh, some more!—but let's start with Ecuador. I give the floor to the Delegation of Ecuador.

El REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DEL ECUADOR: Gracias, señora Presidenta.

Expreso mi agradecimiento al Embajador Bayney Karran por su interesante y amplia presentación de sus propuestas para la Organización de los Estados Americanos, como candidato a la Secretaría General Adjunta.

Una organización internacional de las dimensiones y características de la OEA, para el cabal cumplimiento de sus funciones requiere, entre otras cosas, de una administración muy eficiente. El Canciller Luis Almagro manifestó que, en caso de ser elegido como Secretario General de la Organización trabajaría de la mano muy estrechamente con el Secretario General Adjunto, a quien lo concibe como un cosecretario general. En este sentido, deseo preguntar al Embajador Karran cuáles considera que son los principales elementos que deben ser tenidos en cuenta para garantizar una administración eficiente del talento humano y de los recursos de la Organización. ¿Qué falencias ha identificado y qué cambios considera necesarios con miras a lograr una cultura de gestión con base en los resultados, que responda a las prioridades identificados por los Estados Miembros?

Muchas gracias, señora Presidenta.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Delegation of Ecuador. I give the floor to Ambassador Karran to answer the questions raised by the Delegation of Ecuador.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Well, thank you, very much for that question, Ambassador. I think that it's a question that is on the minds of many representatives to the Organization of American States. In my consultations in preparing for presenting my candidature, it was certainly at the top of the list of questions of most of the representatives.

I think that I have pretty much answered the question in my presentation. I identified a number of areas in which management could be improved; for instance, adding the ombudsman, improving the work of the Inspector General, resource mobilization, and managing the Summits process and the mandates process better.

I think that the answer to your question really is the total package of management reforms that the Organization is going to undertake and which is going to be decided upon by member states and executed by the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General. This is going to lead to the kind of management improvement that I think you are asking to be addressed. I think the candidate for Secretary General made this clear in his presentation, and I think that member states like yours, who are concerned about this aspect, would definitely have something to look forward to in what's going to follow.

I don't know whether you want me to get into more specifics about managerial issues, but I do think that I did touch on them during my presentation. I would be very happy to go into more detail if you like. Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: I recognize the Delegation of Venezuela. You have the floor.

La REPRESENTANTE ALTERNA DE VENEZUELA: Buenos días. Gracias Presidenta.

Lo primero que nuestra Delegación quiere es dar gracias al Embajador Karran por su presentación y reconocer su amplia y exitosa experiencia profesional. Venezuela tuvo el privilegio de tenerlo como embajador y eso agradecemos a su país y a su Gobierno con habernos dado el honor de tenerlo en Venezuela.

Hay que destacar que el Embajador Karran a través de una radiografía de la Organización de los Estados Americanos ha hecho una mirada al futuro, pero una mirada sobre la base de la identificación de debilidades en la Organización, pero con un valor añadido y es que sobre la base de esas debilidades, propone una serie de acciones para fortalecerla. Agradecemos muchísimo su presentación y el documento que distribuyó que contiene muchos de los aspectos que han sido abordados en su presentación.

Sin embargo, nosotros quisiéramos saber, de resultar elegido como Secretario General Adjunto de la Organización y en el contexto de la visión estratégica la OEA ¿qué acciones o acciones específicas de lo que usted ha señalado implementaría o impulsaría para fortalecer el rol consultivo del Secretario General Adjunto y esto con miras a ayudar a la Organización a recuperar confianza por parte de los Estados Miembros?

Gracias, Presidenta.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Delegation of Venezuela. Ambassador Karran, I give the floor to you.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you very much for your kind comments. The question of trust by member states is going to be developed, first of all, from the approach to management. I have indicated that I'd be willing to perform my functions in a very open and transparent manner, and I have undertaken that all travel is going to be declared in advance, so I believe that this spirit of transparency and openness is going to lead to a change in perception. There are going to be concrete initiatives; for instance, putting in place measures for better transparency and accountability. I gave the examples of the ombudsman, the Inspector General, and so on.

As regards how things are going to proceed thereafter, you need to bear in mind that I'm not going to be the Secretary General. The Secretary General is going to have his own initiatives, and these are things that the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General would need to work out. What I can say is that, looking at the platform of the sole candidate so far for Secretary General, and looking at my platform that I have just outlined, member states would have some degree of optimism regarding what they perceive to be a relationship between member states and the Secretariat that needs repair, improvement, a bridging of a gap, better understanding, and more collaboration and cooperation. I think that it's fairly clear that that is going to happen when the time comes. Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran. I recognize the Delegation of El Salvador. Ambassador, you have the floor.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE EL SALVADOR: La Delegación de El Salvador se complace en participar en la presente sesión del Consejo Permanente en tateo y por cuanto las presentaciones de los candidatos al cargo de Secretario General Adjunto, se corresponden con la dinámica de los tiempos y la transformación de la Organización de los Estados Americanos.

Mi Delegación ha ponderado la presentación del Embajador Bayney Karran, Representante Permanente de Guyana, y quisiera felicitarlo por tan excelente presentación y al mismo tiempo nos permitimos solicitar sus comentarios respecto a un asunto que mencionó en su discurso sobre los Observadores Permanentes.

Nosotros consideramos que los nexos con estos Observadores son sumamente importantes, pero que todavía es una asignatura pendiente en la OEA, porque estos han sido evaluados puramente en términos financieros y consideramos que debe haber otro tipo de valoraciones para considerar la admisión de nuevos observadores en nuestra Organización.

La dinámica de triangulaciones, relacionamientos y diálogo que con ciertos Observadores existen, consideramos que puede amplificarse y profundizarse por parte de los Estados Miembros y órganos políticos de la OEA. Y los vemos ya en otros organismos como Naciones Unidas, que tienen Observadores Permanentes bajo diferentes categorías. Quisiera escuchar sus comentarios al respecto y entender qué es lo que buscaría ampliar con los Observadores Permanentes dentro de nuestra Organización.

Muchas gracias, señora Presidenta.

La PRESIDENTE: Thank you, Ambassador, for your comments and for your question. Ambassador Karran, I give the floor to you to respond to the comments and the question.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you so much, Ambassador, for your kind remarks and for your question.

I conceived the notion that the Organization of American States ought to do more with permanent observers because of two experiences that I had. I was part of a delegation of permanent representatives that was invited by the Government of China to visit that country in 2009, I believe it was. I was able to see the interest that certain permanent observer states have in this Organization as a conduit to the Americas, to gain access to member states, and to gain more knowledge about what is happening in the Americas.

I later accompanied the Secretary General on an official mission to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and I was able to see the value of collaborating with other international organizations and member states of those organizations.

During dialogues with permanent observer states right here in Washington, I sense that there is a desire on the part of permanent observers to do more with the Organization. I think that the OAS can be a platform for dialogue, especially with the smaller observer countries that don't have a large presence in the Americas and would like to explore cooperation programs collectively and bilaterally. Even with the more established observer states that have regular representation at our Council meetings, there is a sense that we could do more.

My idea is not only that we would be able to gain finances from them. Of course, if we get money, that's fine, but that's not the only objective or purpose. I believe that in diplomacy and in international relations, you can never have too little dialogue. There is always room for more dialogue, and in that spirit, we can have a more interactive, more dynamic, and a more mutually beneficial relationship with observer countries.

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you Ambassador Karran. I would like to give the floor to Ambassador Lira of Chile. You have the floor.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE CHILE: Muchísimas gracias, estimada Presidenta.

Deseo, en primer término, manifestar mis felicitaciones al Representante de Guyana, al Embajador Karran por su completa presentación. Usted, distinguido colega, representa al único país anglófono de Sudamérica que, además, tiene la característica de ser un país caribe-amazónico. Eso lo hace un país muy especial y el que en su capital se encuentre la sede de la Comunidad del Caribe (CARICOM) habla del interés de sus habitantes, de sus gobernantes por lo internacional.

Una muestra de ello es que ustedes ejercieron la presidencia *pro tempore* de la Unión de Naciones Suramericanas (UNASUR) hace muy pocos años, lo cual definitivamente los incorporó y los hizo visibles en Sudamérica. Deseo, además, felicitarlo por el esfuerzo que usted ha desplegado al entregarnos estos documentos gráficos, escritos, de lo que ha sido su presentación, de lo que es su programa, si acaso resulta electo Secretario General Adjunto.

Mi Delegación coincide con muchas de sus propuestas y con muchas de sus sugerencias, porque ellas son de sentido común, lo cual es complejo porque no siempre el sentido común es el más común de los sentidos. Dicho ello, sus propuestas, por ejemplo, sobre el rol del Consejo Permanente, son ampliamente compartidas. El Consejo Permanente debe recuperar un rol, o tener un rol distinto al que hoy día ejerce.

De la misma manera, estimamos que las Cumbres de las Américas deben tener un rol de mayor perfilamiento, para que los mandatos que de ellas emanan sean implementados de manera más efectiva. Coincidimos también con su propuesta en la creación de la figura del *Ombudsman*. También coincidimos con el tema relacionado con el rol que debe tener la Junta de Auditores Externos; pero en cambio nos es más difícil aproximarnos al tema de las Oficinas de la Secretaría General en los Estados Miembros y ello porque la existencia de más de veinticinco de estas Oficinas nos genera serias dudas sobre el valor y eficiencia de su desempeño, de su labor. Por ello, quisiera, si usted es tan amable, profundizar un poco más, cuál es su perspectiva, su mirada, para el rol de estas Oficinas Nacionales.

Quisiera, y con esto concluyo, solicitarle que nos explique con mayor detalle cómo entiende usted el mecanismo de coordinadores regionales.

Muchas gracias, señora Presidenta.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Lira. Ambassador Karran, I give you the floor.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you very much, Ambassador, for those very kind remarks. I think you asked two questions: the first pertaining to the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States [National Offices], and the other one on the regional coordinators mechanism.

With regard to the National Offices, what I was trying to explain in my presentation was that if one looks at the Strategic Plan for Management Modernization (SPMM) that has been proposed by the Secretariat, it seems to recommend that one third of the National Offices be cut, or that one third of the budget for them be cut. My reaction is that for many member states, the National Offices are a very important part of their attachment to the Organization of American States. Rather than implement such a sweeping proposal, I'm recommending that we reexamine the role of the National Offices vis-à-vis the member states and the Organization.

In all the years that we have debated what to do with the National Offices, and with all of the proposals to cut funding and to close National Offices, I'm not sure that we have examined the role, purpose, and function of the National Offices, their benefits to the member states, and their benefits to the Secretariat within the evolution of the Organization and in light of the hemispheric changes that are taking place. I don't believe that such a discussion has taken place very fruitfully, so my recommendation is: before we cut, let us look at the matter again.

National Offices do not only benefit member states; they also benefit the Secretariat and the Organization. I believe that there is much scope for the National Offices to play a part in developing individual member state strategies for the OAS. That potential exists, but we do not use it. We can use the country representatives in the National Offices to liaise with the various departments here in the Secretariat to come up with beneficial country strategies. That's one point.

Second, I believe that there was a study some time ago, either by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) group or by some of the members of the CARICOM group, that discovered that if you close the National Offices, you actually lose money in terms of payments that have to be made and so on. So, this is something else that we have to look at.

All I'm saying is: look, the management plan is saying close the National Offices, cut by one third. No, no, no; hold on! Let's take a step back and look at this again because we might be throwing the baby out with the bath water, as we say in English. So, I do not have a position; I am saying: let us look at the matter. We have to look at it before we know what the position is going to be.

The other point that is very important is that you cannot put a price on political value. Political value, political capital, political benefits are intangible, and National Offices are of great political benefit to too many member states in this Organization for us to look at the question only from a financial perspective. As I said in my presentation, we have to look at it simultaneously from the political as well as the financial angle. That is what I was trying to present, Ambassador.

On the question of regional coordinators, as you know, I recently had the honor of chairing the special meeting of the Permanent Council on the normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba. Those of us who were at that meeting would recall how protracted the meeting was and how difficult it was to arrive at consensus. As difficult as it might have seemed, it would have been a lot more difficult had we not had extensive consultations using the regional coordinators mechanism. In fact, we ended up unintentionally using an expanded format of the regional coordinators mechanism, but it had a lot of value.

In my experience as Chairman of the Permanent Council, the regional coordinators mechanism is a valuable tool. It helps the Council to iron out differences beforehand and gives the Chair and members of the Council an idea of how the dialogue is going to progress. Sometimes, you can even arrive at a predetermined conclusion using that mechanism. It expedites the work of the Council. That is really the goal.

Now, I have seen the other side of the coin. I have seen Permanent Council chairpersons who do not use that mechanism at all. They do not consult regional coordinators; they come to take the floor at Permanent Council meetings; and I think that that is really a lack of preparation.

So, I've explained what is behind my proposal that we should try to formalize this arrangement. I am not completely wedded to the idea; I mean, we might find some other means of getting it done without having to go through a rule change, which might be divisive. I think it is a recommendation that is well worth the paper it is written on because if we can find a way for the mechanism to be regularly used by chairpersons of the Permanent Council, it would certainly expedite the work of the Council.

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran. I give the floor to the Delegation of Brazil.

El REPRESENTANTE INTERINO DEL BRASIL: Obrigado, Senhora Presidente.

Antes de mais nada, gostaria de parabenizar o candidato pela completa apresentação que nos foi feita hoje. Também gostaria de expressar a minha satisfação com a abrangência e com a qualidade do material que nos foi distribuído hoje. Esse material demonstra, primeiro, que não é à toa que o candidato é o embaixador mais sênior deste Conselho. Isso se nota perfeitamente nos comentários feitos aqui. Ou seja, o Embaixador Karran é, sem dúvida, um homem que conhece em profundidade esta Organização.

Assim como mencionou o Embaixador do Chile, eu também fiquei impressionado com muitas das propostas que foram apresentadas aqui. Algumas propostas ousadas, inclusive, que certamente gerarão ou poderão gerar alguma polêmica, e por isso mesmo, me senti mais satisfeito por ver que o candidato não se limitou a defender apenas pontos que eram consenso nesta Organização; muito ao contrário, ele pôs o dedo na ferida de muitas questões que não são facilmente analisadas ou negociadas, talvez, nesta Organização. Por isso mesmo, quero parabenizar o Embaixador Karran pela sua coragem, inclusive, ao tocar nesses pontos.

Das propostas mencionadas, eu destacaria algumas que me pareceram muito interessantes, a começar com o papel e a relação entre o Secretário-Geral Adjunto e o Secretário-Geral.

Diferentemente de alguns aqui, não entendo a posição do Secretário-Geral Adjunto como estando no mesmo nível do Secretário-Geral, a despeito de os dois serem eleitos pelos Estados membros. Entendo que o Secretário-Geral é a figura de maior responsabilidade nesta Organização em termos da estrutura da Organização. Evidentemente, entendo, assim como o candidato já expressou, que cabe ao Conselho Permanente o papel preponderante nas decisões desta Organização.

Mas, voltando, eu não vejo o Secretário-Geral e o Secretário-Geral Adjunto no mesmo nível. Mas, isso não significa também que o Secretário Adjunto seja um mero subordinado do Secretário-Geral e que deva cumprir as tarefas que lhe sejam repassadas pelo Secretário-Geral. Muito ao contrário, acho que cabem ao Secretário Adjunto funções específicas. E o candidato mencionou, inclusive, que os Estados deveriam conversar ou discutir as funções que de fato queremos que o Secretário Adjunto assuma. O Embaixador Karran mencionou a questão da administração. Acho que sim. Acho que cabe fundamentalmente ao Secretário-Geral Adjunto um papel fundamental nessa questão da administração da OEA.

Mas, fiquei muito satisfeito também ao ouvir do candidato que o seu papel como Secretário Adjunto, caso seja eleito, não seria um de confronto com o Secretário-Geral. Ao contrário, eles precisam trabalhar de maneira coordenada e não estão aqui para um competir com o outro em termos de funções ou em termos de maior notoriedade, digamos assim.

Há outras questões que me parecem importante. Por exemplo, a ideia de um *follow-up* para as cúpulas, a questão do papel da Secretaria de Relações Exteriores que, de fato, tem nas suas funções um dos objetivos que é justamente a obtenção de recursos, e acho que essa função está um pouco perdida, a questão da independência do Inspetor-Geral, a criação do cargo de *ombudsman*, a atenção especial mencionada pelo candidato à questão dos recursos humanos – isso me parece fundamental, acho que isso está relegado a um segundo plano.

Enfim, pontos bastante positivos, e sobre um deles eu gostaria, para encerrar, de solicitar a sua avaliação. Mas, antes de encerrar, eu me esqueci de um outro ponto também: prestação de contas de viagens. Isso me parece fundamental, e não apenas uma listagem aqui dos países que foram

visitados pelo Secretário-Geral, ou pelo Secretário-Geral Adjunto. Acho que necessitamos de uma real prestação de contas dessas viagens.

Mas, por fim, para encerrar, apenas um dos pontos mencionados pelo candidato sobre o qual eu gostaria que ele elaborasse um pouco mais, me pareceu uma ideia muito interessante, a dos diálogos subregionais. Eu gostaria que o candidato elaborasse um pouco mais sobre essa proposta, essa recomendação feita.

Muito obrigado.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Delegation of Brazil. Ambassador Karran, I give the floor to you to respond to the comments and questions of the Delegation of Brazil.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you, my dear colleague from Brazil.

The leaders of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Central American Integration System (SICA) have held three summit meetings. In each of the communiqués that came out of those three meetings, they have spoken about forging a closer relationship between our two subregions. In fact, the list of intentions and plans is very long, and they have identified their representatives here to be the focal point for that interaction and to carry forward that agenda. There have been attempts in the recent past to have these subregional dialogues, but they have taken on a protocolary character, with not much substance being developed. So that is the genesis of my idea.

But why limit it to only CARICOM and SICA? We can have dialogues between CARICOM and the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), and SICA. In the Hemisphere today, we have convergences of so many different integration mechanisms, but the OAS is really the fulcrum. The OAS has universality of membership; therefore, we should be the point of convergence.

I believe that there is something to be gained if the subregional groups and member states wish for there to be that level of dialogue; I believe that it is not too difficult to arrive at agendas that would be of common interest to the subregional groupings; and I believe that if we have progress in such dialogues, it would assist our own discourses here in terms of being able to reach consensus on issues, to refine the hemispheric agenda, and to consider matters of that nature. I think it's worth a try. So that is my idea behind making that proposal.

If I may, I will respond briefly to the comment you made about the relationship between the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General. I do not want there to be any misunderstanding about what I was trying to suggest regarding the nature of that relationship, so I want to read to you from the brochure. Let me read the very first sentence under the role and functions of the Assistant Secretary General: "Let me state unequivocally that I recognize that the Secretary General is the official who is elected by member states to lead the OAS and to be the public persona of the Organization." Later in that section I say this:

Provided that the Assistant Secretary General's functions are exercised in such a way that the authority of the Secretary General is never undermined, in order to ensure stability at the head of the OAS, the Assistant Secretary General should not encroach upon the political authority and the leadership of the Organization by the Secretary General.

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran. I would now like to give the floor to the Ambassador of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Ambassador Prince, you have the floor.

La REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE SAN VICENTE Y LAS GRANADINAS: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Good morning to all!

Ambassador Karran, I wish to start by thanking and congratulating you for your very comprehensive presentation, which accurately captures the discourse that we've had here in the Council among member states. I have for you two questions—or one and one-half, if you want to consider it that way. You will see why I say one and one-half.

When you talked about the security pillar of the Organization of American States, you mentioned migration as one of the issues that the OAS needs to confront. You will recall that last year, the OAS received the presidents of three Central American countries to deal specifically with the subject of unaccompanied child migrants. There are several other elements of migration that many of the member states of the OAS confront, and these issues have been in the news for a long time now.

My question to you is: what role do you think the OAS can play in addressing the various elements of migration that confront us?

The second question, which I refer to somewhat as a half question, pertains to the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States [National Offices], and Chile raised this issue before. I was very pleased to read in your booklet that you consider the National Offices to be an underutilized asset of the Organization, and I was also pleased by the passion with which you responded to the questions that were raised by Ambassador Lira.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is a very strong supporter of the retention of the National Offices. We want for them to remain open, and I totally agree with you that they carry a significant political value that cannot be reduced to dollars and cents. We think it would be a mistake to confuse cost with value.

So, my question to you—and I think you alluded to it, but I would like to hear more concretely—is: how do you think the National Offices can be a fully utilized asset that is more productive, more dynamic, and worthy of the conviction by all member states that they should remain open?

Thank you very much.

La PRESIDENTA: Ambassador Prince, could you please repeat your question about the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States [National Offices]?

La REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE SAN VICENTE Y LAS GRANADINAS: Thank you. As I said, the booklet indicated that the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States [National Offices] are an underutilized asset, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines would not want to see the closure of National Offices. You have identified that they do carry significant

political value, and we're emphasizing that it is important that we not confuse cost with value regarding the National Offices.

So, in order to make them a fully utilized asset—because your statement is that they have been underutilized—what concretely do you propose to make them more dynamic, more productive, and worthy of the agreement of all member states that they do deserve to remain open and funded?

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Ambassador Karran, I give you the floor.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you. Thank you, Ambassador.

Your first question was related to migration, and I think that we all recognize that this is quite a hot topic and very complicated. It is an issue on which member states have different positions, and most of us here are both producers and recipients of migrants.

We have recognized not only the phenomena of where migration is occurring but why migration has occurred through the millennia: persons seeking to find a better existence. In the modern scenario, we can say that migration is driven by imbalances in labor markets, but as we all know, most recently in the Americas, migration is propelled by security considerations, not only by economic factors. We've seen both the sending states and the recipient states struggling to deal with this reality, trying to deal with this through their legal systems, and it is creating problems because security is also involved in migration.

We need to be very conscious that the elected officials of the Organization of American States are servants of the member states. In some instances, it would be presumptuous to propose solutions when there are areas of great difference of opinion among member states.

I think the role of the OAS and of its elected officials is to provide the scenario and the means to stimulate dialogue among member states so that they can make the decisions and come to their conclusions. It would then be the duty of the OAS to execute and to implement those decisions and conclusions.

So in my presentation, what I said is that the OAS can play a larger role in trying to encourage or facilitate consensus among member states. It is not that the elected officials of the OAS ought to be making any specific proposals. That is for member states to do. In fact, I think that there is progress being made in that direction at the moment.

Your second question was regarding the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States [National Offices]. Again, I think that member states need to have a full, frank dialogue and to try a little harder to take into account the considerations of everyone. Then let us see whether we can come up with a common solution.

As regards how to make the National Offices more effective and more useful, well, as I said, they could play a greater role in country strategies. There's probably scope for them to liaise with departments within the OAS in a more active posture in order to implement or develop more programs with member states.

I have to tell you that I have not gone around asking for meetings with any heads of departments or any high officials of the Organization in order to flesh out these ideas. I have not. I have consulted only member states, so there is a lot more that I could have said if I had gone through such an exercise, but I haven't. But that's basically how I see the National Offices.

Thank you. I hope I answered your question.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran. I would like to give the floor now to the Ambassador of Trinidad and Tobago.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE TRINIDAD Y TOBAGO; Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and good morning to all!

First of all, Madam Chair, let me say thank you very much for the leadership you have exercised thus far in this activity, which is so vital to the sustainability of the Organization of American States.

No less important, we thank and congratulate you, Ambassador Karran, for your presentation. I thought it was intellectually logical and temporally chronological. You went in a sequence, I think, that really covers the span of activities at the OAS. Also, let me thank you very much for affording us this opportunity to leave with your physical manifesto for future reference.

Ambassador, your presentation was filled with some long-standing issues, along with some fairly pragmatic solutions for these issues. I'm very much thrilled by the idea of an ombudsman. Do you wish to elaborate a bit more, within the framework of the OAS, on the reporting arrangements of such an office to the Organization?

Second, you appropriately identified the issue of enhanced organizational efficiency and effectiveness in view of the concerns of member states that do not wish to increase quotas, but that also needs to be balanced. You identified that with the urgency of the mandate prioritization exercise coming out of the General Assembly of the OAS. Additionally, you brought up the issue of post-Summit mandate reconciliation and the need for enhanced and increased specific funds, and you proposed to portal that through consolidated fundraising activities, I believe, through the Secretariat for External Relations (SER).

I'm wondering, how do you envision, if you are elected to the Assistant Secretary General, bringing these two activities together; that is, the mandate prioritization exercise coming out of the General Assembly and the post-Summit mandate reconciliation, and the funding of these exercises?

Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Before I depart, let me wish you all success in your election. Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Parsan. Ambassador Karran, you have the floor.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you, Ambassador, for your very kind remarks.

The whole notion behind establishing the position of ombudsman is that of independence. The ombudsman is supposed to be an arbiter, a referee, but with clout, and whose authority—if it does not extend to actual enforcement—and the weight of his or her decision are certainly so persuasive that they dare not be ignored by the entity that he or she is averse to.

I have not researched how ombudsmen function in international organizations; I am only familiar with the function of ombudsmen within national governments. So, I do not have a ready answer as to exactly how the ombudsman would execute his or her functions, but I'm pretty certain that it would be relatively easy to draw on the models that exist. We could take the model from within national governments, or that of ombudsmen in international organizations, and adapt them to suit our circumstances, all the while ensuring that the OAS follows international best practices. I think that would be the solution to your concern.

Regarding the question about mandates from the Summit of the Americas, OAS mandate prioritization, and the raising of additional funds, these are all separate initiatives. They're not interconnected. I was not making a proposal that in order to fund the Summit mandates, we should specifically raise additional funds.

My proposals regarding the Summit mandates exercise relate to the fact that there is some genuine concern that after a Summit takes place, there is some kind of lack of coherence in the implementation of the mandates and that the Summits of the Americas Secretariat (SAS) could become a little overwhelmed with the mandates. That may lead to some kind of selectivity as to which mandates are implemented and how they are implemented. So, I have tabled proposals to strengthen the Summits Secretariat and for the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG) to meet in order to avoid overlap, to streamline, and to add more coherence to the implementation of Summit mandates.

The question of raising specific funds was not related to that clutch of proposals. The question of raising additional funds was to cure revenue gaps that exist within the Organization of American States. What I am saying is that we probably have not been doing this as efficiently as we could. There is scope for us to do what we're doing now a little better. By raising additional funds, we will earn more revenue, and we will add to the stature of the Organization. How we spend that revenue is to be decided by the member states, because some member states are concerned that if we get money from all kinds of sources that we don't know about as yet, that could lead to a distortion of the agenda of the Organization. It could lead to money being given to us with conditionalities, so that only certain kinds of programs get implemented at the expense of others.

So, my proposal is that we can raise money. I believe it is relatively easy to get more money into the Organization, but the question is how that money is to be spent. My proposal is to let the member states decide, when we get the money, what to do with it.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran. I recognize the Delegation of Guatemala.

El REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DE GUATEMALA: Gracias, señora Presidenta.

Mi Delegación quisiera agradecer al Embajador Karran por esta presentación, la cual es bastante clara y precisa. De hecho, algunas de las dudas que yo tenía se han venido ya respondiendo conforme usted ha venido también respondiendo a las preguntas de los diferentes Estados Miembros.

Mi pregunta número uno tiene que ver con las funciones del Secretario General Adjunto y veo que en su documento usted indica bastante claramente que es muy pertinente definir que esas funciones pueden ser administrativas o políticas. Sin embargo, en condiciones normales, creemos nosotros que esto es bastante cierto, pero yo no sé si dado el esfuerzo en el cual nos hemos venido embarcando los Estados Miembros con respecto a la visión estratégica y la reforma de la Organización de los Estados Americanos, lo que necesitamos es quizás un *COO*, *chief operating officer*, un Administrador que se encargue de hacer realidad estas reformas de la Organización.

Mi pregunta es ¿cómo ve usted el rol del Secretario General Adjunto *vis a vis* esta realidad de búsqueda de estas reformas? ¿Cree usted también si es necesario tener solamente esa responsabilidad administrativa en este período tan crítico para la Organización o debemos buscar enfocarnos también en la parte política como Secretario General Adjunto? Entonces esa sería la primera pregunta.

La segunda, que va de alguna manera vinculada a esta primera pregunta, tiene que ver con sus impresiones con respecto a la reelección. Conocemos ya en la presentación del candidato Almagro que él renuncia a un segundo período. Mi pregunta va en esa misma línea ¿cómo considera usted este asunto de la reelección?

Muchas gracias.

LA PRESIDENTA: Thank you so much, Delegation of Guatemala. Ambassador Karran, you have the floor.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you for those two questions.

On the question of the functions of the Assistant Secretary General, first of all, I don't believe that it is for me to say, because the Assistant Secretary General is a creature of the Organization of American States, and, as we all know, the Charter leaves many things open for the Assistant Secretary General to do or not to do. So, basically, it's about what is allocated by the Secretary General.

In my process of consultations with member states, I have had extensive discussions with them on this matter. In fact, in many cases, I was not the one who raised the issue; it was the representatives of member states who had concerns about this matter. Based on my discourses with them, the majority of member states would like the Assistant Secretary General to play a political role as well as an administrative role. All member states would like the Assistant Secretary General to have major responsibility for administration. A very large majority would also like the Assistant Secretary General to have a political role. Some member states, as I said in my presentation, would not like for it to be left to the Secretary General to decide what he wants to allocate to the Assistant Secretary General. That being the case, I would be prepared to operate at whatever level and in whatever role that member states decide.

[Pausa.]

Sorry. I'd be prepared to function in either capacity.

The Strategic Plan for Management Modernization (SPMM) speaks about a mutual accountability agreement. If we do end up adopting a mutual accountability agreement, and if member states wish to lay out what kind of role they want for the Assistant Secretary General, that

could be a mechanism through which member states can state their preference. But, ultimately, it is for member states to decide.

Regarding the question of terms, I think that the primary consideration for any person running for office is the benefit he or she would bring to the Organization. That should be the primary consideration. At the end of my first term, I will be 62 years of age. I believe that for someone to be Assistant Secretary General of this Organization, you probably need a little more energy than a 62-year-old has. So, that is the mindset with which I am going into this election.

I hope that answers your question. Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran. I recognize the Ambassador of Mexico. Ambassador Rabasa, you have the floor.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE MÉXICO: *Thank you, Madam Chair.*

Ambassador Bayney Karran, I will ask my questions in Spanish since your knowledge of the language is very, very good, as I was able to testify recently while we were in Mexico.

Quiero comenzar por felicitarlo no solamente por la presentación que hizo esta mañana, sino también por el excelente documento que nos ha distribuido, tanto en español como en inglés. Es como dijo la Embajadora La Celia Prince, una presentación y un documento muy amplio, muy comprensivo de los principales asuntos o *issues*, como se le dice en inglés, que confronta actualmente la Organización de los Estados Americanos.

Lo felicito pues por la organización del material y la articulación del discurso, que son muy claros y que revelan la profundidad con la cual usted está abordando esta candidatura.

Al igual que lo dijo mi colega, el Embajador de Chile, la Delegación de México tiene muchas coincidencias con lo asentado en su documento y en su discurso.

Quisiera solamente destacar algunas, por ejemplo en la página 4, donde dice “la OEA ha sido y es la piedra angular del proceso de integración en nuestro hemisferio. Es una institución que cuenta con una autoridad política, legal y moral incomparable”. Totalmente de acuerdo.

Desde luego que no podemos dejar sentada nuestra democracia duramente ganada como algo ya adquirido y hay que seguir trabajando en ella, como lo asienta aquí y desde luego, para ello, la asistencia a los procesos electorales, a través de las Misiones de Observación Electoral (MOEs), son fundamentales. Coincidimos con usted que, entre las varias desigualdades que existen, la brecha educativa es la que afecta más negativamente el destino de cada persona y por eso acompañamos con interés la propuesta que ha hecho Colombia sobre este asunto de la educación, que nos parece interesante y que debe ser analizada a profundidad.

Desde luego que la seguridad pública debe ser abordada de forma integrada y no podemos menos que felicitarnos al leer lo que señaló usted sobre derechos humanos, que cito: “Si los Estados Miembros abandonan el sistema interamericano de derechos humanos, sería el fin de la OEA”, lo que no quiere decir que no debemos seguir perfeccionando el sistema interamericano de derechos humanos y revisando varias de sus prácticas, sobre todo con relación a su comunicación con los Estados Miembros.

Hay que fortalecer el multilateralismo y desde luego la conclusión que saca de los pilares que “debido a la universalidad de su composición, la OEA debe seguir siendo en el futuro previsible, el foro político principal del Hemisferio y el vehículo principal para la promoción y defensa colectiva de la democracia, derechos humanos, desarrollo integral y seguridad multidimensional”.

Y es por ello que coincidimos también con varias de sus perspectivas, sobre todo, la que se refiere al proceso de la visión estratégica. Nos da gusto haber leído el señalamiento que hace usted sobre esta paradoja de la OEA, en la que por un lado los Estados Miembros insistimos en que la Secretaría General debe cumplir con sus funciones de manera eficaz, pero los mismo Estados Miembros no estamos dispuestos a aumentar las cuotas para que esas responsabilidades se cumplan. Esa paradoja hay que resolverla y hay que resolverla ya. El problema recurrente de atraso en los pagos de cuotas se tiene que resolver.

Claro que requerimos una mejor administración y veo que usted dedica una buena parte de su documento y de su intervención a la administración. Los diez puntos que señala nos parecen acertados. Y todo esto, señor Embajador Karran, me llevan a un punto que considero esencial y que ya fue abordado por varios de mis colegas, destacadamente el Representante de Guatemala, y es el del papel y funciones del Secretario General Adjunto.

Aquí tenemos un problema que necesitamos resolver. El artículo 115 de la Carta de la OEA dice textualmente:

El Secretario General Adjunto es el Secretario del Conejo Permanente. Tiene el carácter de funcionario consultivo del Secretario General y actuará como delegado suyo en todo aquello que le encomendare. Durante la ausencia temporal o impedimento del Secretario General, desempeñará las funciones de este.

O sea que la Carta le otorga un carácter consultivo y delegado a un funcionario que estamos eligiendo los Estados Miembros.

Aquí tenemos el caso de una doble elección, la del Secretario General y del Secretario General Adjunto. Mi abuelo constitucionalista, al hablar de la doble elección del Congreso y el Presidente de los Estados Unidos hablaba de la doble soberanía del sistema presidencial, diferente de la única del sistema parlamentario. Aquí tenemos —toda proporción guardada— un caso similar. Elegimos a dos órganos los Estados Miembros, pero a uno la Carta lo hace de alguna manera, si estamos a la literalidad de este precepto, subordinado al otro, como un mero órgano consultivo.

Yo no comparto este punto de vista. Comparto el punto de vista que señala usted, de que el Secretario General Adjunto debe tener un papel político y administrativo significativo, no de competencia desde luego, con el Secretario General. Eso también ha quedado muy claro en su documento. Sabemos y no estamos cuestionando el rol del Secretario General, pero sí corresponde un papel mucho más activo dentro de la Organización al Secretario General Adjunto que no se limite a cuestiones protocolarias. De otra manera no se entiende para qué estamos eligiendo a una persona, a un órgano, para a fin de cuentas darle exclusivamente ese tipo de atribuciones.

Por lo cual, nosotros sí veríamos en la próxima administración un rol mucho más activo política y administrativamente del Secretario General Adjunto. Y en ese sentido, me gustaría que ampliara usted sus comentarios y, en particular, en relación con un tema que para la Delegación de México es de fundamental importancia.

Señala usted, en la página 9, sobre el papel multilateral de la OEA, que debido a la universalidad de su composición —perdón, perdón, es en la página 11— los Estados Miembros también desean ver una mayor sinergia entre la OEA y las otras entidades del sistema interamericano y en particular les gustaría que la OEA tenga una mejor relación con las instituciones financieras y de desarrollo internacionales. Esto nos parece clave, la integración del sistema interamericano que ahora está prácticamente desarticulado; es decir entre la OEA, el Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (BID), la Organización Panamericana de la Salud (OPS) y el Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación para la Agricultura (IICA).

Se nos presenta una gran ocasión ahora con las Cumbres de las Américas para que sean el cerebro que dicte las políticas generales a todos los elementos y se integre y yo creo que allí, el Secretario General Adjunto, como secretario ejecutivo de este conglomerado de órganos que deben estar funcionando con cierta regularidad, podría, entre otros, desempeñar un papel político activo e informar desde luego, al Consejo Permanente.

Me gustaría mucho sus comentarios sobre esta preocupación y de nuevo felicitaciones por su presentación y por su documento.

Muchas gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Rabasa. I'll give the floor to Ambassador Karran to respond to your comments.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Ambassador, thank you very much, I should say, for your presentation! [Risas.]

The question of the role and functions of the Assistant Secretary General is something that we addressed a little earlier. The ideal relationship, bearing in mind always what would be in the interest and benefit of the Organization of American States and the Hemisphere, would be for the Assistant Secretary General and the Secretary General to complement each other's strengths and weaknesses. I think that that balance would be the ideal and of the utmost benefit. This balance, of course, would be in both political and administrative matters.

I believe there is a clear understanding and belief among member states that the Secretary General ought to be relieved of much of the daily administrative burden in order for him to be able to execute his political duties in an unfettered manner. Therefore, the larger share of that work should fall to the Assistant Secretary General.

That having been said, most member states—almost all, I think—would like the Assistant Secretary General to play a substantial political role. I think this makes sense. Let's say that the Secretary General is on travel somewhere very far and a political crisis arises in some member state nearby, and there's a need for the political actors in that country to speak to each other. That is something that the Assistant Secretary General can do. That's a simple example of how the Assistant Secretary General can assist the Secretary General in fulfilling the political functions and objectives of the Organization.

From that example, there is little question about the desirability of the Assistant Secretary General performing such a role. That is the way I would prefer the Office of the Assistant Secretary General to function—to also have political responsibilities attached to it—but I would hasten to say

that I do not consider that that decision is mine. I consider that that decision is for the member states, or at least for the member states to inform the Secretary General that this is what they would like to see.

I am very confident that, if I were called upon to perform political functions, I would be able to do so in a capable manner, and this would be ultimately to the benefit of the Organization and of the incoming Secretary General. But I would add one word of caution. The first word in the title “Assistant Secretary General” is “Assistant.” One should not take the initiative away from the Secretary General in the execution of his functions.

We have a meeting of minds, Ambassador. I hope that this meets with your approval. I don't know whether there were any other questions you wanted me to address. Was that the only question?

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE MÉXICO: La sinergia entre las partes del sistema y por cierto ya que me da la oportunidad, lo único con lo que no coincido es con lo que respondió usted sobre la edad, de los sesenta y dos años; yo tengo sesenta y seis y entonces ya debiera estar retirándome.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Yes, Ambassador, I think that there is a perception among many of the representatives here that the organizations within the Joint Summit Working Group (JSWG), particularly the organizations in the inter-American system, are not as well coordinated as they should be. I have not spoken to these other organizations, so I do not know what level of cooperation exists, but I coincide in the perception—if it is a perception or if it's a misperception, I don't know—that there is more that can be done. I would be very pleased and very eager, if I happen to be elected, to play a role, with the blessing of the Secretary General, in trying to generate more coordination, more coherence, and more activity among the organizations of the inter-American system.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran. Esteemed colleagues, I have on my list nine more requests for the floor. I would like to make a very cordial appeal to delegations, in the interest of time and in order to start on time this afternoon, to be succinct in your questions so that we can finish this morning's portion of the meeting around 1:00 p.m. or 1:15 p.m., so that we can start at 2:30 with our second presentation.

I would now like to give the floor to the Delegation of Suriname. Thank you.

El REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DE SURINAME: Thank you, Madam Chair. Good afternoon!

On behalf of the Delegation of Suriname, I want to thank Ambassador Karran for his presentation. We would like to seek the views of Ambassador Karran with regard to the following: In light of the goals of the Organization of American States to intensify cooperation with multilateral, regional, and subregional organizations, what role do you envision for the Office of the Assistant Secretary General in contributing to the advancement of this type of convergence and complementarily? Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Ambassador Karran, you have the floor.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you, Suriname. In the last few decades, we have seen a phenomenon in the Hemisphere in which countries at a subregional level are finding more and more reasons to come together in groupings to further their multilateral objectives. We've seen the formation of a number of very important groupings in the last few decades, and this development has been welcomed by the Organization of American States, as you know.

What distinguishes our Organization from the others is that we have universality of membership. We're the only organization in which all the countries of the Hemisphere are members, and so this right away gives us a point of convergence. This immediately makes us the go-to organization, if I can put it in such colloquial terms. This Organization is more of an umbrella than any other organization, and we probably have the broadest agenda. So many issues can be accommodated within the four pillars; indeed, there are so many issues on which we are very active.

I believe that it is our duty to play a role in coordinating the hemispheric agenda. We are the Organization through which the summits of the heads of all our countries meet and pronounce their mandates. Some of the other organizations are very important and vital; otherwise, our member states would not be members, and they have their own specific, dynamic agendas. I believe, however, that our Organization has an overarching vision, reach, and programmatic agenda that give it status and the possibility of playing a role of coherence and cooperation at that higher level.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary General is a cog in the wheel of the OAS. I don't see that that there should be any specific responsibility attached to the Office with respect to what you asked. It is a responsibility of the Organization as a whole but, of course, whatever duties fall to the Office of the Assistant Secretary General ought to be executed in that area in order to achieve those objectives.

[Ocupa la presidencia la Representante Permanente de San Vicente y las Granadinas.]

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you very much, Ambassador. The Chair is pleased to recognize the Ambassador of Nicaragua. Ambassador Moncada, you have the floor.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE NICARAGUA: Muchas gracias, señora Presidenta.

Señora Presidenta, la Delegación de Nicaragua desea agradecer al Embajador Karran por su exposición y por la distribución del documento que contiene los planes, proyectos y programas que implementaría en caso de ser electo Secretario General Adjunto de la Organización de los Estados Americanos.

Embajador Karran, en las normativas generales que regulan el funcionamiento de la OEA se establece que el Secretario General y el Secretario General Adjunto no solicitarán ni recibirán instrucciones de ningún Gobierno ni de ninguna autoridad ajena a la Organización y también que se abstendrán de actuar en forma alguna que sea incompatible con su condición de funcionarios internacionales responsables únicamente ante la Organización. Le agradecería si usted hace sus comentarios sobre cuál sería su actitud y su posición ante una situación que tendiera a transgredir esta norma interna de funcionamiento.

Muchas gracias, Embajador Karran.

La PRESIDENTA: Ambassador Karran, you have the floor, please.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you very much, Ambassador, for that question.

Well, obviously before my candidature was put forward by the Government of Guyana, I looked at the rules, and, as a candidate, and if I happen to be elected, I intend to obey all the rules of the Organization of American States. Obviously, therefore, as is stated in the rules, if a foreign government or any other entity would try to importune my office in order to act in a manner that is in conflict with the rules, I would refuse to do so.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you very much for your reply, Ambassador Karran. Nicaragua, you are finished with your questions? The Ambassador has indicated that he has no further questions, so I am pleased to give the floor to Colombia. Ambassador González, please take the floor.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE COLOMBIA: Gracias, Presidenta. Celebro estos espacios que además de la presentación de plataformas, de ideas, nos permiten tener este diálogo profundo, serio, sobre la Organización de los Estados Americanos.

Comenzaría Colombia por agradecer la exposición. El cuidado, la seriedad contenida en los documentos que se han distribuido son bastante elocuentes y registramos con mucha satisfacción este punto que nos deja una impresión de seriedad, experiencia, de claridad. Incluso me llama mucho la atención, colegas, que sobre temas —sin duda controversiales— el candidato se atreve a hablar con mucha claridad aun a riesgo de generar distintas reacciones sobre el tema. Pero creo que esa manera de abordar de manera clara los distintos aspectos es muy saludable para la buena marcha de la Organización.

Nuestra reflexión, que aquí se han tratado ya la mayoría de los temas, giraría sobre dos aspectos: el primero, político. Y realmente consideramos que en la OEA se requiere, sin duda alguna —como en la mayoría de organizaciones importantes— liderazgo; y liderazgo significa capacidad para conducir y capacidad para remontar, para superar los obstáculos; para vencer las resistencias del cambio. Pero también en lo político menciona usted, además, unos instrumentos bien interesantes: la capacidad de la Organización para tener alertas tempranas, para prevenir conflictos, y subraya la importancia del diálogo y la comunicación con los actores en cada contexto para adentrarse en esa tarea.

La primera pregunta sería, entonces si pudiera profundizar un poco esa percepción, esa visión de un instrumento preventivo de alertas tempranas, de solución, de anticiparse al conflicto, como lo demanda una buena política.

Segundo aspecto, ya es de orden económico y social. Coincidimos con usted en la importancia de la meta de la lucha contra la pobreza y la búsqueda de inclusión e igualdad —como aquí tantas veces hemos señalado— y sobre ese tema subraya usted, igualmente, a la educación como el camino más corto para superar esa brecha, como la palanca más robusta para lograr igualdad y el papel que puede tener la OEA en este tema. Desde luego, aparecen siempre las preguntas del cómo y ahí la capacidad del líder para encontrar los objetivos es muy importante.

Segunda pregunta entonces, ¿cómo vería usted —en el campo del cómo— la instrumentalización, la materialización de ese gran propósito, cómo lo vería? Y desde luego aquí tiene

una gran importancia la sinergia, la interacción con las demás entidades del sistema interamericano y de los organismos multilaterales a nivel global. Pero desde luego lo más importante es el liderazgo para superar las crisis, el liderazgo para remontar los obstáculos.

Gracias, Presidenta.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you for your question, Ambassador González. I'm pleased to give the floor to Ambassador Karran.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you, Ambassador.

With respect to your question about preventing crises, I think that one of the key aspects is the need for dialogue. I assume that by crises, you mean crises that are internal to specific countries, not crises among countries. In either case, dialogue is the answer.

I think that the Organization of American States, if it is not doing all it can already, ought to find ways to bring sectors together to facilitate dialogue and understanding, because what prevents crises and conflicts is the ability to pull contending parties back from the brink. I don't know whether there is more that can be done to develop early warning systems, but that would definitely be one way to go. The other possibility would be to cultivate a presence and a level of trust, understanding, and readiness so that the OAS can play the necessary role in fostering dialogue and pulling parties back from the brink. That would go a long way in addressing the concern you identified.

After the new leadership team is elected, this question probably needs greater examination as to what systems are there, how they can be improved, what the Organization has been doing, and what it can do better. I think that this is an active area, but I think that there is general agreement that we ought to be doing more, and I certainly think that the new leadership team should try to exert efforts to accomplish more.

As I said, I have not gone to the different departments of the Organization to find out what has been happening and what they've been doing, but when the new team is elected, if I happen to be on that team, that would certainly be a high priority.

I know that Colombia had come with a very firm proposal regarding the question of education. That proposal has not been accepted quite in the way that Colombia had formulated it at the last meeting of ministers of education. That does not mean that the concept should die. I think that we all recognize how absolutely vital it is to be doing more work in the area of education. If we identify inequality as one of the biggest scourges in the Hemisphere right now, obviously, if that's the diagnosis, then the prescription and the cure is education. That's the only thing.

I think that Colombia's proposal could be reexamined in light of comments that were made at the meeting of ministers of education so that we can reformulate a proposal that would be acceptable to member states. I certainly agree that in the area of education, we need to be doing more in terms of coordinating national policies at the regional level in order to improve the delivery of education, particularly to the disadvantaged sectors in our societies.

La PRESIDENTA: We appreciate the elaboration of your answers to those questions, Ambassador Karran. I'm pleased to give the floor to the Ambassador of Dominica. Ambassador Charles, please go ahead.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE DOMINICA: Thank you, Madam Chair, and I would like to join others in congratulating Ambassador Karran on an excellent and comprehensive presentation. I think we should also congratulate him on committing some of his recommendations to paper because, as Ambassador Parsan has suggested, once those are committed to paper, it is always possible to go back and to find out whether you have been faithful to some of the things to which you have committed.

We have heard before of some of the recommendations made by Ambassador Karran, but it is nice that he has committed to them and has made some new proposals.

I like very much the idea of a regional dialogue. Of course, we've heard before of the importance of maintaining the integrity of the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States [National Offices], and Ambassador Karran has made several recommendations, such as the special observers' initiative. All of those, I think, are rather interesting.

The question really has to do with the ability—and we're going back to what I think is the main issue at this meeting—of the Assistant Secretary General to implement those ideas. At the same time, we are accepting that the real responsibility for implementing them does not reside with the Assistant Secretary General.

First, I think we need to get a sense as to some of the strategies that Ambassador Karran proposes to use in order to have those innovative ideas considered, rather than shunted to the side. That is number one. What are some of the things that you think that you would need to do in order to have those ideas considered?

My second question remains on that same issue and asks whether there is an opportunity to elaborate on the interpretation that we have given to the term "Secretary to the Council" up to now. The Assistant Secretary General is the Secretary to the Permanent Council, and I think that the Charter must have had an intention for the ASG, other than preparing for and reporting on the meetings of the Council. For me, there is an opportunity for us to help with a new interpretation, because I suspect that the Secretary to the Council has to bear the opinions of the Council. The Secretary to the Council has to be the *porte-parole* of the Council and to advocate for those views in instances where the Council is not necessarily present through its representatives. In other words, in the interaction with the Secretary General, I suspect there is an opportunity to interpret the role of the Secretary to the Council in a stronger term. Some of us have used the term "political." I suspect that that political thing may already be built in, so I would like to get your views on the possibility that the powers that we seek for the Assistant Secretary General have already been granted in the Charter.

So, Madam Chair, just two issues: the first is the capacity and the strategies for advocating and for prioritizing some of those interesting issues that Ambassador Karran proposed. The second is the likelihood of giving a new interpretation to the Charter's description of the Assistant Secretary General as the Secretary to the Council, and whether that implies a certain amount of power to represent the Council in its interactions with the Secretary General and with others.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

[Vuelve a ocupar la presidencia la Representante Permanente de Suriname.]

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Charles. Ambassador Karran, you have the floor.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you, Ambassador.

We have gone on an excursion into a very grey area. I am not as certain as you are, Ambassador, that the Charter is unequivocal that the position of Assistant Secretary General has a political role built into what is formulated in the Charter. I would defer to your interpretation, but I am not too certain that that's the way I read it. As you know, I happen to be a lawyer by training, so I tend to take a more legalistic and a less pragmatic approach in some instances.

In the question of the Secretary to the Council and the role of the Assistant Secretary General in carrying out those functions, again, I think we can find interpretations and meanings in other organizations. There would be literature on the subject, and we can easily find the appropriate definition.

If the members of the Council feel—and I said this earlier—that we need a clearer, more ample definition, if we need to be more specific about the precise nature of the functions of the Assistant Secretary General, we can do so. We can do so in the agreement; we can change the rules. We can easily do that. But I am not certain that what exists now in the rules is definite enough for all of the interpretations that member states want to put into it.

Regarding your question about how I propose to implement, well, if I happen to be elected, the first thing I would do on day one would be to meet with the Secretary General. I would say: "Sir—or madam; we don't know yet—these are the plans that I laid out during my campaign. This is what I promised the Permanent Council I was going to do, so I need your help and cooperation to get it done. Please let me know how I can cooperate with you to get your plans put into place."

We would then have a common program that we would construct, I would imagine, with the blessing of member states, and that is the way we would proceed. If there is something that I feel strongly about in my program that the Secretary General does not want to take on board, well, we will have a discussion, as it should be, and see what we would need to adjust or readjust.

I hope I've answered your question, Ambassador.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran. I would like to give the floor to the Interim Representative of Canada. You have the floor.

La REPRESENTANTE INTERINA DEL CANADÁ: Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and thank you, Ambassador Karan, for your presentation with which we are certainly impressed. It's comprehensive and specific.

I would also like to congratulate you on what I see are the results of the careful consultations that you undertook over the past months. It's very clear from these documents that you spoke with a lot of member states, you listened to a lot of ideas, and you integrated them in very balanced ways in the documents that you've presented. I would suggest that that is a very strong job interview for the position for which you've put yourself forward, and I would congratulate you for that. I'm very grateful for these documents.

I have two very quick questions. The approach you've taken is prudent. It highlights a lot of the things that are important to Canada, such as finalizing the rationalization of mandates and implementing the management modernization initiative. It provides some very good answers to some difficult questions. It talks about what you will do and how you will do it, and that sits very well with us.

But some of the hardest questions are not about what you will do but how you will face things that you will not or cannot do. I would like to know a little bit more from you, if I could, and my question is as follows: What do you see as the Organization of American States' areas of greatest value-added, and where should this Organization do less? How do we make those choices? If we are going to focus and rationalize, what are the things that may fall outside of our scope, and how do we make those choices?

The best of plans need resources to carry them forward, and whoever forms the new leadership of the Organization will face a very difficult first few weeks. I don't think it's any surprise to anyone that the Organization is facing a financial challenge in the short and long terms. My second question is: what advice would you give to the new Secretary General as regards how this crisis should be faced in both the short and the long term? More importantly, how do you see the Office of the Assistant Secretary General supporting the Secretary General in addressing the financial status of the Organization?

Thank you very much.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you so much for your very concise questions. Ambassador Karran, I give the floor to you now.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you, Canada.

Regarding the question of what do we do less, well, the Organization of American States has four pillars, and we are always talking about balance among the pillars. From that point of view, I do not see how we can talk about doing less. All the dialogues that we have had are about doing more in all areas. It would hardly be within the purview of one of the public servants of the Organization to say, well, this is what I think that we should do less of, or more of. That remit lies with the member states, so I'm not sure that I should go out on a limb on that issue!

I think the key to that question lies in the mandate prioritization exercise. If we manage to accomplish it successfully, and we've made a great start in this round, it is going to make a lot of difficult issues, if not resolve themselves, at least a little easier to deal with.

There is no pillar in which I would like to see the Organization do less, but I would hazard, at the risk of alienating some support, that if we are to stick a pin in it, the pillar that more member states are more concerned about is integral development and how much we are doing in that regard. I think that would be a fair assessment. If we were to do it numerically, I think that that would be a fair assessment. However, I don't wish to advocate that we do integral development at the expense of any other pillar.

Hence, my proposal for raising revenue. I do not want to be presumptuous enough to say that when we raise revenue, it must go into the integral development pillar. That's a decision that must be made by member states, but I think that that's the natural place for it to go. Donors are not going to

give you money to repair your building. They're not going to give you money for your capital needs. I would expect that people would more easily give money to programs that would benefit societies. That is the thinking behind the resource mobilization proposal, but member states will ultimately decide, bearing in mind that member states have concerns about how those funds are applied.

Member states have to decide the level of financial commitment they wish to make to the Organization. We need to bear in mind that the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General are not going to have all of the solutions. They are not going to be able to solve the financial issues in the Organization by themselves. That speaks to the question of availability of funds, which again is within the purview of member states. The Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General cannot manage the entity in the way it ought to be managed without the full support of the member states, and this is especially true when we talk about the level of financing available to the Organization at any given time.

I think that member states need to have a dialogue and a discussion about the question of financing, quotas, and quota payments. To use a colloquial expression, "you get what you pay for." At the end of the day, the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General will have to manage as best they can. They are going to be put in very difficult situations.

You asked what would I do and what would I advise? Well, I would have to see what situation is there, and I would certainly try to give my best advice in terms of managing what we have in the most appropriate manner, with the least amount of discomfort to the Organization and the least amount of damage to projects, programs, and the administration of the entity. I think that would be my role, along with the Secretary General. Beyond that, it rests within the purview of member states.

You asked a lot of questions; I hope I've captured them all. Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran. The Delegation of Jamaica is recognized. Ambassador Vasciannie, you have the floor.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE JAMAICA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to thank Ambassador Karran for his excellent presentation, for the thought-provoking written material, and for his clear and thoughtful responses to the questions that have been posed.

I have two questions. I note, Ambassador Karran, that you are one of the founders of the Guyana Legal Aid Clinic, and you were the Chair of the Permanent Council when the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) was up for review. In light of that, my first question is: which measures concerning reform of the IACHR do you support, and which ones do you oppose?

Second, you mentioned the perception, Ambassador, that some states are underrepresented within the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States. You also note this on page 19 of your document in point 6: "Implement a balance in the national and subregional origins of employees." How would you work to bring about balance in terms of representation within the Secretariat?

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Vasciannie. Ambassador Karran, the floor is yours.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you, Ambassador.

Ambassador, the question of the representation by national origin of the members of staff of the Secretariat is of concern to many member states. When I prepared my proposals, I did not have in mind any hard and fast approach, just the intention of trying to deal with the issue. It is not only of concern to member states; in some instances, I do detect that it affects their attitude toward the Organization. It is something that they would like to see dealt with. Some member states feel pretty strongly about it; therefore, as part of a new administration serving the member states, I think that we ought to do something about it.

This brochure was prepared before I had the opportunity to listen to candidate Almagro's presentation, but I do recall that he indicated in his presentation that he would be prepared to implement an affirmative action kind of program to deal with this issue. So, if the Secretary General has an affirmative action program, I suppose that the Assistant Secretary General would have to take that on board in whatever proposals he is going to be formulating. We will have to look at it in that light.

The question of reform of the human rights system has to be determined by member states, Ambassador. I have to execute what member states decide. I think that, as a candidate, one has to make a very clear distinction between the areas that lie within the remit of member states and the areas that one would have to implement if one is elected. The debate, as you know, is very rigorous. There have been many high-level meetings. There have been many proposals. There are various issues in contention, but I am observing very keenly how that debate unfolds at the moment. We have in Guyana our own national process that is examining the issues. That process is not yet complete, and so I would be very happy to get back to you on that on a subsequent occasion.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran. I would now like to give the floor to Ambassador Barahona of Costa Rica. The floor is yours.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE COSTA RICA: Muchas gracias, señora Presidenta, y un saludo a todos los y las presentes.

Embajador Karran, señor candidato, yo quisiera primero, en nombre de la Delegación de Costa Rica, agradecerle a usted y a su Gobierno por decidirse a engalanar este proceso electivo como Decano de este Consejo que usted en su programa ha catalogado además como: "la mejor colección de diplomáticos que este hemisferio puede reunir" y le agradezco el cumplido.

La tarea que usted ha hecho transparentando su candidatura mediante una propuesta concreta, por escrito además, que lo compromete de resultar electo —como bien lo han dicho mi colega de Trinidad y Tobago y mi compañero aquí de Dominica— secunda ese esfuerzo que estamos haciendo en estas comparecencias del que usted como Embajador, además, ha sido parte, pues al comparecer hoy ante este colegiado, profundiza precisamente sobre esos compromisos de manera muy congruente, pues créame que estuve muy atento a pescarlo, a agarrarlo en algún descuido y me ha dejado usted con las ganas.

Y esa congruencia es sana, es muy sana. Habremos de coincidir y es sin duda un buen augurio de los vientos frescos de cambio que usted percibe y quiere aprovechar y, según dice incluso en la portada de su programa, son un poco su faro de guía y entiendo la motivación por la que ha asumido este encargo. Nos demuestra usted, Embajador Karran, que no solo es un gran locutor sino

también un gran interlocutor. Y eso lo digo por la presencia suya en su comparecencia inicial, unilateral y ahora en este intercambio.

Y ello porque le reconozco, a no dudarlo, la valentía además de pasarse usted, voluntariamente, de este lado del paredón a ese. Esta silla que usted ha ocupado mucho tiempo, mucho más cómoda que esa otra que usted está hoy ensayando pero pretendiendo ocupar permanentemente, lo cual yo en lo personal y como amigo no me explico mucho pero tengo que reconocerle la valentía. Y eso lo digo, desde luego, con honesto respeto y sincero aprecio.

Pero dicho esto, nos interesa profundizar en tres preguntas y quiero aclararle, partiendo de lo específico y hacia lo general, y he tenido que ir rearmando un poco esto para procurar que en este intercambio en donde lo más importante es escucharlo a usted y no caer en repitencia de las sanas e inteligentes preguntas que ya han hecho mis colegas que me han precedido en el uso de la palabra.

Entonces, la primera pregunta, específicamente va en este sentido: usted plantea en su propuesta —que como notará, correspondimos con una lectura atenta desde luego, como mínima consideración que le debemos a ese esfuerzo que usted ha hecho—informar a la Comisión de Asuntos Administrativos y Presupuestarios (CAAP) e incluso al Consejo Permanente de todos sus viajes como Secretario General Adjunto, en caso de ser electo, e incluso motivar al Secretario General, pues no puede usted hacer más que eso, que motivarlo, que procurar que lo secunde en ese ejemplo. Pero me quedaba un poco a mí la siguiente pregunta al hacer la lectura: ¿qué hay de los viajes del resto de las secretarías? Y también podría preguntar del resto de funcionarios, pero sobre todo a nivel de las Secretarías técnicas, ¿no considera usted que también deberían informar periódicamente, no solo en el ánimo de transparencia sino también de coordinación a lo interno de la Organización de los Estados Americanos?

Y en segundo término le agrego esta pregunta que es muy puntual: ¿si estaría usted de acuerdo en transferir a la Organización todas las millas que las aerolíneas le acrediten por resultancia de sus viajes en función, desde luego, para que con ellas la OEA pueda adquirir gratuitamente viajes futuros y con ello ahorrar así como a la vez promover esa política para el caso de todos los funcionarios que viajen con cargo a la Organización? Tal como, por ejemplo, sucede en el caso de mi Gobierno que con toda razón y como mensaje de austeridad y administración congruente de lo público, nos exige a los funcionarios públicos, en cuenta a los diplomáticos, acreditarle las millas a la institución para la que laboramos y financia nuestros viajes. Ese es un ejemplo que más allá del monto específico de ahorro que puede implicar, creo que podría dar un mensaje de absoluta congruencia y como decimos en Costa Rica “a pellizcos se mata un elefante”.

Así que posiblemente podamos nosotros, con estos pequeños gestos, algunos de los cuales ya mi Delegación ha iniciado —como todos sabrán— pues nos parece que podemos empezar a ir en la buena marcha y con ello sí tener también autoridad moral para ir a sugerir, para ir a solicitar aumentos de cuotas y pagos, digamos, que todavía se están debiendo a esta Organización por parte de algunos Estados.

Y, más en general, y aquí viene la segunda pregunta, y por eso decía que la otra era muy específica porque atiende a un punto presupuestal; pero quisiera yo aterrizar en el cómo, en señalamientos puntuales y no solo que nos quedemos en una aproximación general, porque al final todos estamos de acuerdo en el qué, Embajador Karran, pero cual palomitas de maíz, cuando empezamos a hablar del cómo empiezan a saltar fuera de la olla, con posiciones, en la mayoría de las veces, muy válidas.

Entonces —y es un poco de lo que he notado en la comparecencia del Canciller Almagro y hoy también— es mi voluntad que tratemos de aterrizar un poco más en el cómo; porque estamos muy claros cuando usted habla de fortalecer el sistema interamericano de derechos humanos, para poner un ejemplo que es quizás el más evidente, el asunto es como dicen “el diablo se esconde en los detalles” y en cómo vamos a hacer eso que entendemos por fortalecimiento; igual cuando hablamos de democracia, cuando hablamos de afrontar la pobreza, etcétera.

Porque en el cómo está la pregunta ideológica por lo general, pero entonces —aquí viene la tercera pregunta: ¿en qué consiste el servicio que podría prestarle la OEA al Hemisferio en materia de fortalecimiento democrático y, más puntualmente, con miras a la promoción y aseguramiento del pluralismo político, la libertad de expresión, la división de poderes y la probidad pública? E insisto, lo más importante ¿cómo se ocuparía usted de ello como Secretario General Adjunto para que ese servicio se concrete?

Termino nada más procurando que ese rol que usted se autoimpone, un poco de complemento del Secretario General titular, lo avizora a usted, esta es una pregunta repitente, es decir, en la que caigo desde luego en repitencia, pero me ha quedado la duda, ¿si el concepto suyo para un Secretario General Adjunto es de simple acompañante o simple ejecutor de las iniciativas del Secretario General o como colíder con iniciativa y peso autónomo? sobre lo cual también le pediría un poco ampliar en relación a ¿cómo entenderemos nosotros, digamos, esa complementariedad ante el titular y el adjunto? Si bien es cierto, eso es algo en lo que los Estados podemos eventualmente decidir, alimentar e ir en la ruta de reformas para aclarar un poco ese panorama en el que la Carta, muy somera, ciertamente nos parece importante, sobre todo partiendo de su experiencia, ¿cómo lo avizora usted de cara al futuro?

Muchas gracias, señora Presidenta, por la condescendencia, pero no quería dejar pasar la oportunidad sin preguntarle al Decano de este foro, con absoluta puntualidad, sobre estos temas que a mi Delegación le interesan. Adelante señor Karran y muchas gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Barahona. Ambassador Karran, do you have a record of all the questions of Ambassador Barahona?

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: I think so.

La PRESIDENTA: Okay, go ahead, please.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Ambassador, I would like to thank you very much for your very kind remarks. I would like to begin by observing that when I spoke to you yesterday, you told me you had one question. You told me you'd be asking a question. It's a good thing that only one night has elapsed from then to now!

You indicated that in the brochure, I had said that I would recommend to the Secretary General that his office also follow the example of declaring its travel to the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP). You asked why this practice should not be extended to the entire Secretariat. I actually stated in the brochure that this example should be followed by the entire Secretariat. It's there in the brochure.

I have heard that the frequent flyer miles of the employees of the Organization of American States are given to the Organization, so I was under the impression that that already occurs. If it doesn't, I'd be very happy to donate my miles to the Organization without question.

On the question of how to strengthen democracy, I think, Ambassador, that one strengthens democracy by strengthening the institutions of democracy. One strengthens democratic institutionality. My country can only strengthen democracy if we already have electoral democracy. To make democracy stronger, we have to strengthen the quota system, we have to strengthen the parliamentary system, we have to strengthen the basic institutions of democracy and make them work.

I believe that the OAS already does a great deal of work in that area, and if I happen to be elected, this is something that I would look at, along with the incoming Secretary General. Candidate Almagro has also declared what he intends to do in terms of strengthening democracy if he becomes the new Secretary General, so, if we both were elected, we would be already of the same mind on this matter. We will look at what the Organization is doing, what else we can do better, how we can get more external resources, how we can strengthen our internal systems, and how we can better relate to member states in order to accomplish those goals.

But we need to recognize, Ambassador, that at the end of the day, the OAS cannot do for a member state what a member state does not want the OAS to do for it. That's the bottom line. In my country, we've had cooperation programs run by external agencies. Some of them we have been in agreement with; some of them we've not been in agreement with because we don't agree that this is the way things should be done. This is the position that the OAS is going to find itself in from time to time. But to answer your question, I would certainly be very interested in strengthening democracy in the Hemisphere. I think it is key.

As to whether the Assistant Secretary General is autonomous or a co-leader, I think that we've already gone over this question in some respects. What I would say in answer to your question is that, in my view, the Assistant Secretary General is a co-leader, but not one with separate authority. I hope that answers your question.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran. I would now like to give the floor to the Ambassador of Peru.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DEL PERÚ: Muchas gracias, señora Presidenta.

También yo quisiera, en nombre de mi Delegación, enviarle un saludo al candidato Karran, al Embajador Karran, agradecerle su completa, estructurada exposición y los documentos que nos alcanza.

El énfasis de mi intervención para hacer las consultas correspondientes está en el ámbito de los pilares de democracia y derechos humanos. Nosotros quisiéramos saber la visión sobre democracia que tiene el Embajador Karran en el ámbito de la región.

La Organización de los Estados Americanos en los últimos tiempos viene a estar muy criticada en su papel regional; crítica fundada o infundada, dependiendo de las perspectivas que se quieran plantear, pero que han generado lo que muchos llamamos aquí "la crisis de la OEA", que también está en otros ámbitos como es el administrativo.

Pero hay que rescatar en realidad el papel que tiene la Organización en muchos aspectos. En el aspecto de la democracia, evidentemente el consenso que tenemos hoy día en América está relacionado a democracias que están sustentadas en el voto popular; tenemos el día de hoy, por una serie de influencias que se ha ejercido a partir de esta Organización, organismos electorales muy sólidos que no generan en un plano global —digamos— cuestionamientos al origen de la democracia. Y en esta perspectiva el papel que ha tenido la OEA ha sido muy importante, además las Misiones de Observación Electoral (MOEs) que se realizan hasta el día de hoy con éxito, que marcan pautas y por supuesto también recomendaciones a los Estados para mejorar los sistemas electorales.

Tenemos todavía debates y discusiones internas a partir de escenarios que tenemos en América, relacionados con la verificación del contenido de las democracias, de cómo esta legitimidad de ejercicio de la democracia también tiene que ser de una manera valorada y no solamente la legitimidad de origen. Desde esta perspectiva, evidentemente, respetamos todos —el Perú en primer lugar— el principio de autonomía de cada uno de los Estados, de la no intervención y quisiéramos saber su perspectiva sobre el particular.

Y en segundo lugar, señora Presidenta, quisiéramos solicitar, por su intermedio, que el Embajador Karran nos diga con respecto al pilar de derechos humanos algunos aspectos que están contenidos en el documento que nos ha presentado y que me parecen de la mayor importancia. Él ha dicho que: “Ningún sector ganaría nada si los Estados Miembros pierden la confianza en el sistema” —se está refiriendo al sistema interamericano de derechos humanos— “si los Estados Miembros abandonan el sistema interamericano de derechos humanos sería el fin de la OEA”.

La visión que tiene el candidato sobre el aspecto de derechos humanos es central por lo que estamos viendo de acuerdo a su filosofía, aspecto que compartimos por supuesto. Y en esta perspectiva que usted ha señalado al responder la pregunta del Representante de Jamaica con relación a cuál va a ser el papel que, de alguna manera, usted puede desempeñar en esta materia debido a estas divergencias y debido a esta falta de comprensión —y quiero ser muy claro en esto— que muchas veces se tiene de las situaciones políticas de los Estados respecto al propio sistema. Esta posición de controversia, esta posición en donde no tenemos una cooperación para poder mejorar los estándares en los países, para poder avanzar en una relación en positivo que estamos reclamando los Estados al sistema.

Esto se ha venido hablando en el proceso de reflexión que ha habido en estos últimos tres años, pero creo que el resultado no ha sido lo más auspicioso que se podría lograr. Ahora tenemos un proceso de elección de miembros de la Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos y de la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (CIDH), seguramente eso también será materia de debates internos. Y yo quisiera que nos dé su visión con relación a este tema y también conocer cómo, por ejemplo, podemos avanzar en una mejor comprensión en esta tarea; y por supuesto, uno de los temas que se han hablado mucho, que es el aspecto de universalización de los derechos humanos.

Gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador. Ambassador Karran, the floor is yours.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you. Thank you, Ambassador, for your questions and comments.

Ambassador, as you have pointed out, there is no doubt that there is a great deal of disappointment on the part of many member states regarding the functioning of the inter-American human rights system. There is no doubt that there is a great deal of disapproval on the part of many of the member states about the functioning of that system. There's a great deal of dissatisfaction, and this is what has led to the situation that we are in. I have indicated that it would be very damaging for member states to leave the human rights system.

I am not sure that any one of us has all the answers; certainly, I don't. But I propose, and I believe I've mentioned that in my brochure, that the incoming Secretary General try to formulate proposals that would ease the friction between member states and the human rights system. I do not have in my head at the moment what those proposals should be. I think this exercise has to be of a consultative nature between the Secretary General and the member states, on the one hand, and the human rights system, on the other. But there is the possibility of some progress through dialogue because I think that there is a need for the concerns of member states to be taken on board by the system, and some benefit can accrue if the protagonists were to have some kind of meeting of the minds. That would be a first step, and from there, we can develop how to resolve some of the thorniest issues. We may not be able to resolve them all, but we can certainly try to decrease the tension and determine some of the areas in which we can make progress.

You asked about universality. I think that that is under national consideration, certainly in the case of my country and, I would imagine, in the case of many other countries. This is a sovereign decision that member states will have to take at the appropriate time. Member states' views, their eventual opinions on that, will be determined or can be facilitated precisely by the kind of dialogue that I have been suggesting.

Thank you.

Was there another question, Ambassador?

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DEL PERÚ: El aspecto democrático, señor Embajador.

La PRESIDENTA: Can you please repeat the question that you had on democracy, Ambassador?

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DEL PERÚ: Sí, quería conocer la perspectiva o la visión sobre el pilar de democracia que el candidato tiene con relación a cómo mantenemos los aspectos de observación electoral; el ámbito vinculado a representaciones diplomáticas electorales; sobre los aspectos de legitimidad de ejercicio democrático en la región.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you, Ambassador. I'm sorry I missed that question in your earlier intervention.

Ambassador, I think it is by now a cliché in the Organization of American States that our electoral observation activity is one of the OAS's areas of greatest success. Obviously, member states place a very high value on this activity; they would not be requesting the participation of electoral observation missions (EOMs) if this were not the case. So, there is a demand on the part of member states, and since there is a demand, the Organization ought to try to meet that demand. We therefore ought to try to be more proactive and more effective, and we ought to try to mount larger, better,

longer missions to meet the needs of member states. As we all know, strengthening democracy, particularly electoral democracy, is fundamental to the other pillars. This is the way that I think we should proceed with the electoral observation missions.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran. Ambassador Beale, I give you the floor.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BARBADOS: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would very much like to congratulate Ambassador Karran for a fine presentation. I only have one point of disagreement with his comments, which is related to energy level and age. You said you will be 62 in five years; I am 68 today, and I don't feel one day older than 50! [Aplausos.]

I have a quick comment on this issue of the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States [National Offices]. There's a simple solution, as far as I am concerned; it may not be total, but I think it would go a long way. It's simply to put the right kind of persons to lead the Offices. They have to have initiative, commitment, and ideas. If you do that, a lot of these problems will be solved.

I do have one question related to the role of the youth of our region. I think it is important for us to consider because that that's where the focus should be. So, can you give us a few ideas on your vision on how we can interact with youth?

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Beale, and on behalf of the Permanent Council, let me extend warmest congratulations on your 68th birthday. Ambassador Karran, you have the floor.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you, Ambassador. Let me join the Chair in wishing you many happy returns and a very happy day today. I'm sorry that today, on your birthday, this is what you have to be subjected to, but I'm sure that you'll make the most of the rest of the day.

Ambassador, I want to thank you for posing that question because it is very near and dear to my heart. I believe that, to the extent that the Organization of American States does not embrace youth or alienates itself from youth, we are moving away from the future, standing still, and not making ourselves relevant in the future.

There are probably many ways in which we can seek to engage the youth. I have not dealt with that in my brochure, but it certainly is not far from my mind.

First of all, we can interact through social media. We can expand the range of social media, which is where you find youth. It's probably about time that we have an OAS app, for example, as well as other social media platforms where young people nowadays interact. We have to get our messages that are relevant to youth resonating among them, and we have to find ways to do so. It's about communication. It's about mobilizing involvement.

If I happen to be elected, I would certainly have quite a few initiatives in that area, but I take your point: it is a very important area on which we need to focus a lot, if we are not already doing so.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran. I recognize the Delegation of the United States of America.

EI REPRESENTANTE INTERINO DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Let me add my voice to those my colleagues here today to congratulate Ambassador Karran for an extremely thorough presentation, the prepared materials, the formal presentation here this morning, and the dialogue that we are participating in now. I congratulate you, sir, on your thoughtfulness, your thoroughness, and, indeed, on your stamina.

I will be brief; I only have eight questions. Oh, that's right; at least seven of them have already been discussed by others, so, in fact, I only have one question because we've already heard about relations between the Assistant Secretary General and the Secretary General, between the Secretariat and the member states, relations with other international organizations, the approach to the pillars, the approach to the Permanent Council, finances, quotas, and the Strategic Vision.

I would like to ask about the human element in all of this, and your role within the Organization of American States, should you be elected. There are issues, as you've noted in your prepared materials and as you briefly referenced today, related to staff morale within the superb work force that is already employed by the Organization. In addition to strengthening the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and establishing the office of an ombudsman, as you proposed, how would you best use your advisory role to improve staff morale, to empower existing management structures and positions, and otherwise advocate for best management practices within the Organization moving forward?

Thank you very much.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you so much, Delegation of the United States. Ambassador Karran, you have the floor.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you, United States.

I think that if you total all of my proposals, they would paint a picture of an atmosphere within the Organization that is going to improve staff morale. In a work environment where people feel they're better protected and have recourse to solve perceived problems, there's more transparency, and there's more openness. That in itself will do a lot to lift morale. There are perceptions, allegations, that these are problems that exist now. I do not know; if and when I get in there, I will find out. But if that's the case, these proposals will solve a lot of those problems, just by changing the atmosphere, and that changed atmosphere would have a spinoff factor in people's attitudes in their approach to their work.

As I've proposed, I would recommend to the incoming Secretary General that we need to move very quickly on this matter. We need to listen to the concerns of staff; we need to have the requisite meetings with the Department of Human Resources and the Staff Association. As a new administration, you would want to apprise yourself of what the issues are, so let's bring them together, let's see what those issues are and see how we can put systems in place or utilize the existing systems to solve whatever problems there are.

I don't really believe that it's a very difficult task, to be honest with you. I feel that with a new administration—whatever administration it would be, whether I'm elected or not—it's not a difficult thing to solve if you just put the right steps in place. Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran. The last speaker on my list is the Delegation of Bolivia. I give you the floor.

La REPRESENTANTE ALTERNA DE BOLIVIA: Gracias, Presidenta, y muy buenas tardes a todas y todos.

En principio quisiéramos agradecer la presentación realizada por el Embajador Karran, y atendiendo a la solicitud realizada por la Presidencia seré muy breve en la consulta. Permítanme dar lectura al artículo 70 de la Carta de la Organización de los Estados Americanos que señala:

El Consejo Permanente de la Organización y el Consejo Interamericano para el Desarrollo Integral, dependen directamente de la Asamblea General y tienen la competencia que a cada uno de ellos asigna la Carta y otros instrumentos interamericanos, así como las funciones que les encomienden la Asamblea General y la Reunión de Consulta de Ministros de Relaciones Exteriores.

Como señala el artículo 70, a pesar de ser dos órganos que están en la misma jerarquía, es evidente que el Consejo Interamericano para el Desarrollo Integral (CIDI) no funciona como el Consejo Permanente. Coincidimos con su afirmación cuando señala que la OEA puede y debe hacer más en el área de desarrollo integral. Los temas sociales deben ser prioritarios, principalmente en la lucha contra la pobreza.

Embajador Karran, mi pregunta es: desde la Secretaría General Adjunta ¿cómo mejoraría y fortalecería el rol del CIDI?

Gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Delegation of Bolivia, for your question. Ambassador Karran, the floor is yours.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: Thank you, Bolivia.

Well, this question has been asked by many delegations for quite a few years now. I believe that, at one time, Ambassador Ramdin had a proposal for a new formulation to make this an additional structure within the Organization of American States. I think that, given the sentiment among member states about the need to do more in the area of integral development, we have to try to make the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) more effective in terms of solving the development needs of member states.

I recall that, in his presentation, the candidate for Secretary General did say that he had certain initiatives in mind when it comes to the integral development pillar. In fact, my question to him on that occasion was: where are we going to get the funding? His response was that he has been in dialogue with development institutions and so on.

I'm not sure whether the issue of CIDI is one only of structure or whether it is of effectiveness. They are probably two sides of the same coin, and the effectiveness improves when you get more financing to do more programs. So these are two aspects that need to be tackled as a whole, as one.

As regards the weight and the authority that is going to be given to CIDI, obviously, if both the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General are supportive of this notion, and you have the backing of member states to do it, then that will become a reality; it's going to happen.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Karran.

COMENTARIOS FINALES DEL EMBAJADOR BAYNEY KARRAN,
REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA, CANDIDATO AL CARGO DE
SECRETARIO GENERAL ADJUNTO DE LA OEA

La PRESIDENTA: There are no more requests for the floor, so I would now like to give you the opportunity to present your concluding remarks, Ambassador Karran. Go ahead, please.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE GUYANA: It is better to stand and deliver remarks because then one has a more strategic vision.

Chair, I'd like to thank you, and I wish to thank the representatives of the member states for the rich and frank discussions in which we have just engaged.

There are some important conclusions we can draw from the discourse we have just had. It has come across clearly that member states are deeply concerned. They're concerned about the future and the capacity of this institution. At the technical level, they're concerned about the managerial capability of the Organization of American States to function effectively, efficiently, and economically, in order to fulfill its mandate. At the political level, they're skeptical about how much more the OAS would be able to accomplish in critical areas of democracy, human rights, development, and security.

The political decisions of the OAS will always be taken by member states, and it will be for the Organization to implement them. A major area of focus for the incoming Assistant Secretary General will be effective management, in order to ensure that the machinery is efficient and that there is effective implementation of the political decisions. That is why, in my presentation, I placed emphasize on improvements of the management of the OAS.

In closing, I wish to say a few words about Guyana and the regional integration process. Guyana, whose physical location straddles the Atlantic coast of South America to the north and the Amazon rainforest to the south, is geographically, culturally, and politically a nation with dual Caribbean and Amazonian identities. From its inception as a nation, Guyana has maintained an unswerving commitment to the principles of regional integration, both within the nations of the Caribbean and among the wider Hemisphere.

Bilaterally and multilaterally, bonds of friendship and cooperation among Guyana and the countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and of Latin America are getting ever stronger,

while the country has earned a reputation as the bridge between the English-speaking Caribbean and Latin America.

Guyana is a small nation with wide ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity, and it's the only English-speaking country in South America. Its political history is a microcosm of the evolution of many of the societies of the Americas, ranging from the colonial past to Cold War intervention, left-wing dictatorship, democratic transition, and economic growth, coupled with free market policies. Arising from its ideal geographic setting and rich cultural and political backgrounds, Guyana has developed balanced perspectives and approaches to the political, economic, and social questions facing the Hemisphere today.

The country's vision for the political, economic, and social progress of the Americas matches squarely with the ideals and programs of the Organization of American States. Guyana's resolve to work for joint solutions to common challenges lies at the heart of its commitment to the process of hemispheric integration. Guyana wishes to continue to contribute actively to this process.

It is with these considerations in mind that Guyana has put forward this candidature. Evaluating the candidates for their suitability for leadership is an important exercise because that factor bears on many of the concerns that member states have displayed. Member states need to consider carefully what it is that the OAS needs at this time in terms of leadership. No organization can have effective management without effective leadership.

The OAS needs leadership that would generate trust and confidence among permanent representatives and within their capitals that the incoming leadership team can advance the Hemisphere's interests. The Organization will need a new leadership team with a bold and fresh commitment that has experience and competence in managing institutions.

The next Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General must command the respect and loyalty of the staff. They must select a dynamic and effective management team and inspire them to perform at their best.

The OAS will go adrift unless its leadership applies the vision, experience, and determination to initiate the necessary reforms and see them through to their completion. Trustworthiness, confidence, adherence to ethical standards, and demeanor are relevant considerations also. The Government of Guyana has put forward this candidature because it is aware of these requirements, and it is convinced that Guyana can make a positive contribution to this Organization and to the Hemisphere.

To hold high office in the OAS is a great honor and privilege, but anyone who seeks to hold such office must be under no illusion about what the job would entail. He or she would have to reconcile the competing interests of member states and assist them in the complex task of finding common solutions to challenges that they are seeing from different perspectives. Such a person would be working for an entity that is overburdened and underappreciated. He or she would face difficult decisions at every turn, and their skills and patience would be severely tested.

But that person would have the gratification of playing a part in realizing the most cherished aspirations of the peoples of the Americas through this institution whose very existence is symbolic of their ideals. In helping to fulfill these aspirations, that individual would have the honor of working for and with the finest collection of diplomats that this hemisphere can assemble.

I would be honored for the opportunity to put at your disposal the skills, capacity, and experience to make this vision a reality.

Thank you.

[Aplausos.]

La PRESIDENTA: Colleagues, this brings to an end the consideration of the items that have been scheduled in our order of business for this morning. On behalf of the Permanent Council, I would like to thank Ambassador Karran for sharing his ideas, proposals, and initiatives.

We will now break for lunch. I would like to make an appeal that everyone returns at 2:45 p.m. so that we can continue with the remaining items on our order of business. Thank you so much.

[Receso]

PRESENTACIÓN A CARGO DEL EMBAJADOR NESTOR MENDEZ,
REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE, CANDIDATO AL CARGO DE
SECRETARIO GENERAL ADJUNTO DE LA OEA

La PRESIDENTA: Good afternoon, esteemed colleagues! We will continue with the next item on today's order of business, which is the presentation of the candidate nominated by the Government of Belize for the position of Assistant Secretary General, His Excellency Ambassador Nestor Mendez. The diplomatic note advising of the Government of Belize's decision to nominate Ambassador Mendez was published as document AG/CP/INF.669/14.

Ambassador Mendez is well known to us; he is the Ambassador of Belize to the United States of America, Belize's Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States, and Belize's High Commissioner to Canada.

Ambassador Mendez has represented his country in the OAS since 1999, first as Deputy Chief of Mission from September 1999 to June 2007 and then as Permanent Representative of his country. Before his appointment to the Permanent Mission of the OAS, he served at the High Commission of Belize to the United Kingdom and at the Embassy of Belize in Guatemala. Prior to his posting abroad, he worked as a Foreign Service Officer at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belize, where he was responsible for bilateral relations with the countries of the Caribbean and Asia.

At the OAS, Ambassador Mendez has served as Chair and Vice Chair of the Permanent Council, Chair of the Special Committee on Migration Issues (CE/AM), and Chair of the Committee on Hemispheric Security (CSH). He has served as a member of the Management Board of the Inter-American Agency for Cooperation and Development (IACD), and as Chair of the General Committee of the fortieth regular session of the General Assembly and of the General Committee of the Twenty-sixth Meeting of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

In addition, Ambassador Mendez has been the coordinator of the caucus of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) ambassadors in Washington, D.C., coordinator of the Central American countries at the OAS, as well as the coordinator of the Central American ambassadors accredited to the White House.

Ambassador Mendez holds a master's degree in international policy and practice from the George Washington University in Washington, D.C. He also holds a graduate level certificate in diplomatic studies from Oxford University and a bachelor's degree in administration from the University College of Belize.

Ambassador Mendez, thank you for being with us today to share with us the proposals and initiatives that you would undertake, should you be elected as the new Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States. It is a pleasure for me to give the floor to you. The rostrum is all yours.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Good afternoon, colleagues!

It's always difficult to speak after lunch; I hope nobody falls asleep! Anyway, you know, this morning, I was getting ready to come to work and my wife asked me: "How do you feel about the presentation you have to give this afternoon?" I told her: "Well, how would you feel if you had to give the most important speech of your life?" So she tells me, I thought that was when you proposed to me! [Risas.] I realized I was in trouble! I told her: "You know what? When I proposed to you, I had to convince one person. Today, I have to convince 33 delegations that I am the one for this job!" So, here I am, ready to give it a go!

Colleagues, the Organization of American States today is faced with a golden opportunity, a unique moment, one that comes only every decade, a moment when we will be ushering in a new leadership, when we will be finishing a strategic plan, when we will be transitioning into a new administration. It is a moment, an opportunity, for change. I want to invite you to seize the moment with me.

Your Excellency Niermala Badrising, Chair of the Permanent Council; distinguished ambassadors, permanent representatives; alternate representatives; officials of the General Secretariat; esteemed colleagues; dear friends:

I count it a distinct honor to stand before you in my capacity as the candidate of Belize for the post of Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States and to discuss with you my thoughts and ideas on how I propose to undertake the responsibilities of the Office of Assistant Secretary General, while working clearly and closely with all of you, in the Permanent Council to seize the opportunity that is upon us to transform the Organization into the OAS that we all want.

For me, it is a significant moment because I have spent nine years sitting around that table as an Alternate Representative. After that, I have spent six years sitting around that table as an Ambassador. And over the last 15 years, I have seen a lot of things. I have seen this Organization evolve into what it is today. I have been involved in many of the big issues that have come before this Organization in the last 15 years.

In this context, I wish to underscore that all my proposals are anchored in the recognition that we can only move forward successfully if we do it in a transparent, respectful, and strategic partnership among the Permanent Council, the offices of the Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General, and the staff of the OAS. I want to remind you that we are in this together!

Before I continue, I wish to express a heartfelt “thank you” to all my colleague ambassadors, alternate representatives, and members of the OAS staff, who have been kind enough to share with me their views on how we can turn the OAS around. The input of everyone will be required for us to really transform this Organization and to build around the consensus that we have secured with the Strategic Vision. This joint-undertaking approach, this collective ownership of the inter-American system, cannot be overemphasized. We are all here, all member states, because we want to be here, because we see value in this Organization, which binds our membership and anchors our relations in the founding principles and purposes of the OAS.

I emphasize this collective ownership because, like all of you, I am acutely aware that the OAS, despite the tremendous work it continues to deliver on a daily basis, is much criticized—and sometimes for good reason. And, like you, I want to promote actions that will change the Organization and the conversation about the OAS from the perception that it is a slow, cumbersome, political apparatus to one that profiles an agile, efficient, modern Organization that functions well in the 21st century and preoccupies itself with the new age manifestations and challenges of poverty, crime, the erosion of faith in the democratic creed, and in the arena of human rights. Like all of you, I want to transform this Organization in the OAS that we need, and I am convinced that together, we can do exactly that!

Estimados colegas, ¿cómo vamos a transformar la Organización de los Estados Americanos? Para empezar, me queda muy claro que no será una tarea fácil ni rápida ni exenta de muchos sacrificios por parte de todos. También me queda bien claro que cualquier cambio, profundo o no tan profundo que se haga, tiene que estar basado en la Carta de la OEA, la Carta Democrática Interamericana y la Carta Social de las Américas. Y para empezar necesita de un compromiso por parte del nuevo liderazgo en cuanto a que se va a administrar la Organización en forma transparente, equitativa, predecible y basada en políticas claras que tomen en cuenta la equidad de género, que sean ampliamente conocidas por todas y que sean aplicadas de manera imparcial

Necesitamos en esta Organización un liderazgo que genere confianza, que genere esa paz, esa confianza entre el Consejo Permanente y la Secretaría. Un liderazgo que cree confianza en el personal porque ellos trabajan para nosotros. Esa confianza tiene que generarse con base en un diálogo continuo y respetuoso.

También tenemos que preocuparnos por el reposicionamiento de la Organización desde la perspectiva regional. Necesitamos actuar de manera decisiva, pero también tenemos que actuar como Organización, con un tacto político que esté acorde con la misión de la OEA de ayudar a resolver conflictos entre y dentro de los Estados Miembros.

Yo estoy comprometido en este sentido.

My dear colleagues, let me tell you what I see as the role of the Assistant Secretary General. We have to be very clear about this: it is not that of the Secretary General. The Assistant Secretary General is somebody who has to work very, very closely with the Secretary General. You must have a very good working relationship. You cannot have a competing vision or a competing agenda. It must be complementary. You have to share the vision. Remember that a ship cannot sail in two directions at the same time because it will go nowhere.

In my view, the Office of the Assistant Secretary General occupies a very important and a very strategic position in the architecture of the OAS. It is a strategic hub of convergence that lies in

a certain position, and it is the first point of contact between the Permanent Council and the Secretariat. Remember that the Assistant Secretary General is the Secretary of the Permanent Council.

Also, the Office of the ASG is the daily point of contact with the Office of the Secretary General, and it is the point where personnel have direct access to the leadership of the General Secretariat. So, it is an office that is filled with very serious responsibilities, and you need in that post somebody who can communicate effectively in all of these directions and generate the dynamics to create trust, to move the Organization forward, and to put us into the 21st century. The person who is elected Assistant Secretary General must know this Organization intimately and generate that trust and confidence in the Permanent Council and among the staff of the Secretariat.

I want to touch now on an issue that will be a very big responsibility of the new Assistant Secretary General, and it has to do with the new management of the OAS. We all know that the process of management modernization has begun, and it is based largely on the Murray report. This is a very good guide that has taken into account long-held concerns and previous recommendations. The new management of the Organization must undertake these recommendations and base them on the principles of transparency, accountability, equality of treatment, fairness, respect. Also, any changes or implementation of recommendations must rest on clear policies that are widely known and applied across the board.

If I am elected Assistant Secretary General, I intend to work along with the Secretary General to continue, as soon as possible, the implementation of the recommendations of the Murray report, especially those that require only executive action. I would also be very pleased to work with the Permanent Council to carefully and responsibly engineer the implementation of those recommendations that will require the political mandate of the Permanent Council.

However, in addition to the administrative structures that need to be put into place, what this Organization needs above all at this moment is a dynamic leadership that inspires confidence and pride in the personnel. We have to change the institutional culture. Our staff works for the oldest multilateral organization in the world, one that touches the lives of people on a daily basis, and they should be proud of this. This pride starts with the leadership and the instilment of confidence.

To the staff of the OAS, I want to tell you: I believe in effective rules-based management with a human touch, and one that prioritizes results and accountability. To the Permanent Council, I want to tell you that we should practice what we preach on a daily basis. When we talk to the Hemisphere about inclusion, we need to start practicing it with our personnel here in the Secretariat. When we talk about transparency, we need to manage this Organization in a way that is transparent and so that everybody understands that it is done in the best interests of the countries. When we talk about good governance, when we talk about empowering people, we need to start with our own people here at home.

My dear colleagues, the revitalization of the General Secretariat and moving the Organization forward require a great degree of trust. We cannot go anywhere unless there is trust between the Permanent Council, the Secretary General, the Assistant Secretary General, and the Secretariat.

How will we engineer this trust? How will we get to that point where we can work together in a transparent and trusting manner? We can start with better reporting. We can start with instilling processes of transparency in all the activities of the Organization.

A very important function that needs to be taken into account on the issue of transparency is the recruitment process. When we recruit personnel, it has to be done in a manner that is transparent and fair. This also applies to trust positions. We must ensure that we get only the very best to work in our Organization.

There is a concern in many countries about the issue of proportional representation in the staff composition. All of you know that I represent the Government of Belize, and as a member of both the Central American Integration System (SICA) and CARICOM, I am very familiar with the persistent clamor that we have to do more to ensure a wider and fairer geographic representation in the staff of the OAS. If I am elected as Assistant Secretary General, I will give this matter the attention that it clearly deserves.

I also want to tell you that I don't believe in shock therapy. I know that we have to make changes in the Organization, but these changes cannot be done from day into the night. They must be incremental, because whatever changes you make will affect peoples' lives. The changes must take place on the basis of an intimate knowledge of the inner workings of the Organization. You cannot come with a magic wand and change everything.

One issue that we will have to touch—and one that everybody is concerned about—is budgeting and funding. I don't think that it is best to start talking about budgets and quota adjustments until there is an environment of trust and until people are satisfied that the resources that go into the Organization are utilized in a way that satisfies everybody. We also have to be creative about resource mobilization. That is clearly an issue that will absolutely always be needed in our Organization.

I don't want to get into the specifics of the Murray report, but I do want to touch on three issues that are mentioned there. The first one is the ombudsman—sorry, to be politically correct, the ombudsperson. The ombudsperson is a post that is absolutely essential and that will ensure that the rights of our staff members are represented, recognized, and protected. This gives me the opportunity to say very clearly that I believe in a policy of zero tolerance when it comes to harassment in the workplace, or in any place for that matter. That does not have a place in an organization like our OAS.

I also want to talk about the Inspector General (IG), who occupies such an important position. It may be time to initiate a discussion about whether the IG should be elected instead of being appointed by anyone, so that the IG is not beholden to whoever appoints him or her and can report in a manner that is in the best interests of the Organization.

There is another controversial issue that I want to address: the Offices of the General Secretariat in the Member States [National Offices]. These Offices have been criticized, and some people believe that they should be closed down.

I don't think that we can apply an across-the-board policy to the matter of the National Offices. For one, I think that the National Offices are largely underutilized and that they are a valuable asset. I also think that we have to give them clear direction on what it is that we want them to do. If they don't know what we expect from them, how can they do it? If we charge them with specific responsibilities and then assess their performance and realize that they don't add value, then there is no question whether they should stay or not, but we cannot decide across the board to close all of the National Offices.

In addition, there are many political sensitivities associated with a lot of the National Offices. So, it is a matter that bears study on an individual basis, but it's also a matter that requires us to get out of thinking the way we have been thinking and to start thinking outside of the box. Let us give them work to do. They should be the first point of contact in changing the conversation about the OAS in our countries.

In terms of revitalizing the Organization, one important thing that we have to address is the issue of efficient communication and coordinating structures within the Secretariat. I think there is a perception out there that, right now, the OAS does not operate as a cohesive institution. Some people think that the Secretariats operate as if they are independent agencies.

If I'm elected as the Assistant Secretary General, one of the things I will do is institute a coordinating structure that would bring together all the Secretaries in a periodic fashion, at least once every two weeks. Once every month, we would convene an expanded cabinet with not only the Secretaries but the principal heads of department and any technical staff that need to be there.

And what is the purpose of this? To coordinate, to share information, but, above all, to start looking at problems and issues together. We have to be looking at the same frame, at the same picture so that when we take decisions and assign responsibilities, we do so on the basis of which department or secretariat is best able to contribute, and in what way, according to their mandates. It's an all-of-the-Organization approach to solving the big problems of our hemisphere. In addition to better coordination, this approach would avoid duplication of efforts, reduce waste, limit the competition between the departments for funds, and enable vital information-sharing that would enhance efficiency.

Coordination and integration are key to efficiency. There are several issues that this Organization handles that only can be managed from a cross-cutting, interdisciplinary perspective and include very important matters, like migration. Migration has elements of development, yes, but also poverty alleviation, security, human rights, and access to democratic rights. Migration is a very complex issue that requires an integral approach.

The issue of youth is a cross-cutting issue of our Organization that requires attention from all secretariats, units, and departments.

Gender issues are very important. Somebody once told me that if you say anything about women, be very careful, because all of them are either the mother or the daughter of somebody, and you could get in trouble. We have to empower all of our people, and women have such a tremendous contribution to make.

Issues of poverty do require a cross-cutting approach. Climate change is the big issue of our times. You cannot address climate change only from the perspective of development; it has a lot to do also with security.

One of the big elements that we will have to address, moving forward, is the issue of cooperation.

Colegas, nuestra Organización necesita fortalecer la cooperación solidaria, con una dosis de pragmatismo, más uso de tecnología y privilegiando operaciones estratégicas de alto rendimiento y así convertirla en cooperación inteligente (*smart cooperation*). Yo pienso que la cooperación sigue

siendo una tarea esencial y transversal de la Organización y tenemos que hacer todo lo posible para hacerlo más eficiente, más moderno y con más valor agregado.

Tenemos que reconocer también que al aplicar la cooperación, al implementar la cooperación, tenemos que estar bien conscientes de las realidades en nuestra Organización y en nuestro hemisferio. Dentro de la Organización hay diferentes *constituencies* que traducido al español es algo como “distrito electoral”. Pero lo que realmente significa es que hay diferentes grupos que tienen intereses muy particulares.

Por ejemplo, las prioridades y necesidades de un país pequeño del Caribe no serían las mismas que un país grande de Sudamérica. Esto lo que nos ilustra es que no podemos aplicar un modelo a todos de la misma forma porque no va a funcionar. En la cooperación tenemos que ser pragmáticos, tenemos que ser creativos y tenemos que esperar que la demanda venga de los Estados. No podemos ir a ofrecerles algo que no necesitan, o que te aceptan porque lo estás ofreciendo.

Tenemos que tener claro también que los pilares se interrelacionan y en el ámbito de la cooperación, tenemos que ir buscando fórmulas que complementen y se refuercen.

Dear colleagues, we must always bear in mind that without development, we cannot enjoy our human rights or claim to have a good democracy, and none of these can occur in an environment that lacks safety, security, and stability.

Tenemos que ser más creativos en la cooperación. Si vemos el Hemisferio en el 2015, marzo del 2015, el día de hoy, en el Hemisferio hay muchísima inversión en muchos de los Estados Miembros en temas de innovación, de investigación, en ofertas en las universidades, de cooperantes no tradicionales que ahora están dispuestos a compartir estos modelos, a compartir esta información. Y tenemos que usar estos recursos que están disponibles.

También sabemos que en las Américas hay excelentes ejemplos de iniciativas público-privadas que han dado muy buenos resultados; tenemos que aprender de ellas. Y qué mejor institución que la OEA para canalizar todas estas ofertas de cooperación, para canalizar estos recursos, para ayudarnos a implementar nuestros mandatos.

I want to talk now about the pillars of the OAS. To begin, I want to make it very clear: the Strategic Vision points the way.

Todos reconocemos que no podemos seguir como estamos, no podemos seguir actuando de la forma en que lo estamos haciendo y esperar que los resultados sean diferentes. Eso no funciona. Una organización renovada requiere un enfoque renovado en los pilares de la Organización.

Let me talk first of all about integral development. I believe that the average citizen in our hemisphere wants a good job, a good income, a safe and secure environment for his or her family, access to quality education and public services, a voice regarding his or her future, and a good government. So, we ask ourselves: what are the unique strengths of the OAS in the area of development to address the needs of our citizens, and how do they complement and not duplicate the work of other organizations in the inter-American system?

To start with, the OAS is the only inter-American institution that has this offering of the ministerial and high-level meetings. It is the only institution that operates these sectoral meetings at the level of policymakers. This is clearly an important competitive advantage that we can utilize.

The challenges our countries face are complex and require cross-disciplinary interventions. For example, quality education, as well as technical and vocational education, are essential elements to reduce the skill and competency gaps, to meet our country's labor market needs, and to boost productivity. A rich and vibrant exchange on lessons learned among labor and education ministers, competitiveness councils, as well as small and medium enterprises (SME), authorities would help our countries address these challenges in a more holistic and coordinated manner.

We also have the concept of partnership for development. We are the only institution that utilizes this very valuable concept. It brings together policymakers in a very meaningful way.

But we need to strengthen these partnerships. We need to expand their impact by opening them up to the participation of the other agencies of the inter-American system, such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and the other institutional partners.

And then, how can we improve on the way we respond to the needs of our citizens and member states in the area of development? To start, a more integrated approach. I can give you a couple of examples. As I said before, climate change is an issue that requires input from several fields, and it is a very important issue. As a matter of fact, some people have said it is the defining issue of our times. United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has been known to say that when it comes to climate change, there is no plan B for action as there is no planet B. We either get it right or we get it right. Climate change needs one of the integrated approach elements.

Another important example is the capacity-building that we offer, for example, in strengthening small and medium enterprise (SME) institutions. The OAS has operated a very successful model, and it is creating impressive opportunities throughout the Americas, but I think that we need to go a little further. What is offered at the moment addresses the needs of small businesses. As we evolve as an organization and take into account the other issues that are clearly being demanded in our societies, we should add issues of social responsibility to the curriculum of the SME initiative. The young entrepreneurs should understand from the beginning that you cannot grow your business at the expense of the environment; you have a role as a social actor, as a responsible small business owner in a democratic society and in a community. These elements must be added to that curriculum.

Our work on social inclusion should be truly inclusive. Inclusion applies not only to social development but, more broadly, to all dimensions of integral development: human, economic, sustainable, and social.

The big question is, however: how will we fund all of these initiatives if we start to create new ones? Well, we have to be proactive. We have to reach out and seek strategic partnerships with institutional partners, as well as with other OAS-affiliated agencies. The strength of the OAS will be highly improved if we increase and develop further those linkages within the inter-American system.

The other pillar that I want to touch on is multidimensional security.

Queridos colegas, en el área de seguridad multidimensional tenemos que reconocer el gran trabajo que la OEA ha hecho. A través de los años el trabajo ha sido realmente beneficioso para nuestros países. El desempeño de la Comisión Interamericana para el Control del Abuso de Drogas (CICAD), del Comité Interamericano contra el Terrorismo (CICTE) y del Departamento de Seguridad Pública en todas sus actividades, en términos de elaboración de leyes modelo, de compartimiento de mejores prácticas, es algo que realmente es beneficioso y debe continuar.

Sin embargo, tenemos que mejorar la coordinación entre estas unidades y también buscar las áreas donde sus trabajos se complementan es aún más importante. Yo creo que mientras estos trabajos deben de continuar, tenemos que ponerle más énfasis también a los temas de prevención. Nos preocupa mucho el problema de seguridad, pero tenemos que empezar a prevenir los problemas.

Por ejemplo, no debemos esperar que el joven o la joven se vuelva miembro de una pandilla para intervenir. Tenemos que intervenir antes, ofreciéndoles las oportunidades de educación, de empleo, de expresión artística, y de otras oportunidades para que unirse a una pandilla no sea la única ni la mejor alternativa.

La prevención vale mucho más que la no prevención.

I want to touch briefly on the pillar of human rights. We all recognize that the inter-American system of human rights is an invaluable mechanism for the promotion and protection of human rights. We also have to recognize that it has come under severe criticism from several member states, and this is not an issue that we should ignore. In this context, I think that it is only logical that we create more spaces for frank and respectful dialogue—both formal and informal—between the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the member states. We should not wait for an issue to become a problem before we start talking about it and trying to resolve it.

I also think that the Commission on Human Rights should put a little more emphasis on promotion of human rights and making human rights more accessible. There are several ways to do this, but perhaps we can start with working with the educational centers in our countries. I also think that in several jurisdictions, in addition to teaching about human rights, we need to teach our people about civic responsibilities and civic duties in a democratic country. They go hand in hand.

On the matter of democracy and governance, nobody questions that when it comes to electoral observation, the OAS is the gold standard. Effective public management and good governance is a relatively new area, and the work that the OAS is doing across our countries in that regard has to be strengthened tremendously.

I want to underscore that democracy is not a destination. It is a process that needs to be nurtured and strengthened and carefully guarded on a daily basis.

The strength of a new OAS will depend a lot on its place in the inter-American system and on its institutional outreach. We have to work towards improving the relations of the OAS with the governments of our member states. We need to make an effort to reach out to those governments and those congresses and parliaments with which we do not at the moment enjoy the best relations and work to mend and improve those relations.

The OAS should also have an important role in complementing the work done in the regional integration systems. There is no reason why the OAS should not be a full partner of CARICOM. CARICOM as a region has prepared and agreed on a strategic plan that points out the needs of this subregional grouping. Several of the issues that have been pointed out are areas in which the OAS is actively involved. We have to find these synergies and complement the work of these organizations. The same thing can be said for SICA and the Central American Security Strategy. These strategies point to a lot of elements in which the OAS is involved and which really offer great complementarities.

For example, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) is a budding institution, but it has promise. It is not in competition; it is a partner. It's complementary. The new proposals in the ambit of CELAC for the creation of a scholarship fund should not be seen as competition for the Capital Fund for the OAS Scholarship and Training Programs; rather, it is complementary because it is offering more opportunities to the citizens of this hemisphere.

In the same way, we have to reach out in a more coordinated way to our observers. If I am elected Assistant Secretary General, I propose to institute a coordinating structure with the units of the inter-American system and bring them all together on a regular basis to work on specific projects. When I talk about the units of the system, I'm talking, of course, about PAHO, IICA, and the IDB.

There is something that I must mention regarding the IDB. Not all members of the OAS are members of the IDB. Several of the smaller countries of the Caribbean are not members, and sometimes this is seen as an obstacle for that strengthening of the relation and the coordination and the working together with the IDB. I think that this is a matter that we have to start discussing. We need to find a way to overcome the obstacle. The IDB is an offspring of the OAS. It is an important element of the inter-American system, and we have to find a way to work closer with the Bank. I am pretty much familiar with the IDB, and I think that we can do great things together.

In addition to these institutions, we have the World Bank, but we also have the nontraditional partners in Washington, D.C. We have several international conservation nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that do a lot of work in areas where the OAS works, and we would benefit from joining forces with them.

There is also another important institution that has quite a bit of prominence in South America, *el Banco Andino de Fomento* (CAF). We have to find a way of strengthening relations with them and working on those areas in which we share interests.

I want to touch very briefly on a couple of other issues. Some people say that the OAS has lost its relevance. I don't agree. I think that the OAS keeps doing tremendous things in our hemisphere; we have not found a way to communicate it in a way that grabs peoples' interest and imagination. I think that what we need to do is to position our Organization at the center of the big discussions of our time—issues like energy, energy security, energy integration, migration, interconnectivity. The best news is that we have the institutional infrastructure to make it happen.

We have to rationalize our relationship with the Summits of the Americas. It is extremely important, especially in light of the upcoming, very important, and very historic Summit in Panama. We need to focus on what we agree on and what unites us, instead of on what does not unite us.

Ladies and gentlemen, I stand before you convinced that here, in this room, today, we really have everything that we need to transform our Organization into the OAS that we need, the OAS that we want, and the OAS that our people deserve.

Señoras y señores, queridos colegas, amigos, yo les pido que me den la oportunidad de trabajar con ustedes para transformar esta Organización en lo que puede ser y lo que nuestra gente se merece.

Muchas gracias.

[Aplausos.]

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Mendez, for your very interesting presentation.

MÓDULO DE PREGUNTAS Y RESPUESTAS

La PRESIDENTA: Distinguished representatives, before offering the floor to the delegations for the question-and-answer session of this portion of our meeting today, I would make an urgent appeal to delegations to try to make your questions as concise as possible so as to enrich our discussions.

I now offer the floor delegations that wish to pose questions to the candidate. I see that there are a whole lot here. I recognize the Delegation of El Salvador. Ambassador, you have the floor.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE EL SALVADOR: *Thank you very much, Madam Chair.*

Quisiera felicitar al Embajador de Belize por esta excelente presentación, muy clara y muy convincente. Y quizás, regresando un poco a su introducción, cuando decía que este era uno de los momentos más importantes de su vida después de proponerle a su esposa, después de oírlo como orador, no creo que se debería preocupar, porque fácilmente la debe haber convencido de que estaba enamorada de él y le deba haber respondido que sí inmediatamente.

Bueno, pasando a algo más serio, es motivo de particular complacencia para mi Delegación haber escuchado la presentación del Embajador Nestor Mendez, Representante Permanente de Belize, en su calidad de candidato al cargo de Secretario General Adjunto de la Organización de los Estados Americanos, y ha quedado evidenciado que conoce la Organización, que conoce los temas y, especialmente, que escuchó al *staff*, a los embajadores, a los representantes alternos para crear esta nueva visión.

Hay un tema que aquí no me queda totalmente claro y quisiera que pudiera ampliarlo y tiene que ver con un tema transversal porque incluye niños, niñas, mujeres, grupos vulnerables, y muchas veces es un tema de tensión entre los Estados Miembros, ya que todos los Estados aquí tienen que ver de alguna manera con el tema de la migración, porque o son países de origen, o países de destino o países de tránsito.

Entonces, quisiera que por favor explicara un poco mejor qué tipo de involucramiento está visualizando para la OEA, qué tipo de visión tiene sobre este tema y qué considera que, como

Organización, podemos hacer para que el diálogo sea constructivo y de cooperación mutua para que se reduzcan las tensiones debido a este tema, a su más mínima expresión.

Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador. Ambassador Mendez, I give you the floor.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Muchas gracias, distinguido Embajador de El Salvador y querido colega del grupo centroamericano.

Embajador, el tema de la migración es algo que para mí resulta especialmente importante y quizás hasta un poco nostálgico. Las delegaciones que han estado acá en la Organización, los Representantes que han estado acá por suficiente tiempo, recordarán que fue precisamente la Delegación de Belize la que hace muchos años introdujo el tema de migración en la Organización y propuso la resolución mediante la cual se estableció un grupo de trabajo sobre migración.

El tema de migración entonces era algo similar a lo que es ahora, pero el contexto era diferente y siempre lo vimos como un tema de extrema importancia para la Organización, que requiere insumos de la Organización en su totalidad.

Ahora, usted hablaba específicamente del tema de los niños no acompañados, los menores no acompañados, y el tema que nos ocupó el año pasado sobre esta crisis, por falta de otra palabra. Yo creo que esto nos da una oportunidad como Organización para empezar a enfocar y a distribuir las responsabilidades dentro de la Organización para enfrentar un problema que compete a muchos, y eso se puede hacer de manera no tan complicada, empezando la coordinación a nivel de las secretarías y de manera rápida.

Pero hay otro elemento que me llama mucho la atención sobre este tema, y es el hecho de que los países —Honduras, Guatemala y El Salvador— están diseñando un programa, una iniciativa, creo que le llaman Triángulo Norte, y con ayuda del Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (BID) están desarrollando un número de programas y proyectos en estos tres países en temas de desarrollo, seguridad, enriquecimiento comunitario y capacitación.

Yo creo que como la OEA es una institución que tiene experiencia en este tema, sería un buen momento para explorar con el BID cómo podemos nosotros traer el peso institucional para colaborar en la resolución de una situación que les está afectando a tres países miembros, pero que también nos puede afectar a muchos otros. Creo que es un buen momento para explorar estas nuevas alternativas y ver si funcionan. Yo creo que sí funcionan. Como mencioné antes, conozco el BID bastante bien y creo que podemos hacer algo con ellos. Es cosa de decidir y explorar lo que se puede hacer.

Gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador. The Delegation of Panama is recognized. Ambassador, you have the floor.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE PANAMÁ: Muchísimas gracias, señora Presidenta.

Señor Embajador Mendez y candidato a Secretario General Adjunto, nuestra delegación escuchó con sumo interés su presentación tan entusiasta y su programa de trabajo.

Una pregunta muy sencilla, de ser electo usted Secretario General Adjunto ¿qué canales propondría —basado en su experiencia como Representante Permanente de Belize y teniendo un pie en el Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana (SICA) y teniendo un pie en la Comunidad del Caribe (CARICOM)— para que estos dos grupos subregionales pudieran continuar desarrollando sus intereses dentro de la agenda interamericana?

Gracias.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Gracias Embajador Miranda; nuevamente un hermano de Centroamérica.

Embajador usted tiene razón, Belize tiene dos familias, la familia caribeña y la familia centroamericana y muchas veces uno piensa que esto te da una familia muy grande, que tienes muchos amigos, pero también te pone en una situación muy sensible porque tienes más amigos que puedes ofender si no tienes mucho cuidado. Entonces, algo que me ha enseñado este lugar especial de Belize, es tener mucho cuidado y tener siempre en cuenta que hay cosas que tenemos muy en común pero que también hay temas en los que no estamos de acuerdo y siempre tenemos que tratar de hacer lo mejor para todos.

Ahora, al pertenecer a estos dos grupos regionales, como política exterior de Belize hemos tratado de manera muy fuerte, muy seria, de fortalecer los vínculos en todos los aspectos entre la región del Caribe y Centroamérica y creo que, hasta cierto punto, hemos logrado lo que buscábamos.

También lo que me ha ayudado es tener muy claro cuáles son las necesidades de los pequeños Estados en la Organización de los Estados Americanos. Tengo quince años en la OEA, trabajando en los temas que le afectan a Belize, al Caribe, a Centroamérica y a todos los miembros de la Organización.

Entonces, creo que al tener ese punto de ventaja, de vista, que estás viendo a tus dos familias, los temas que nos interesan, los que tenemos en común y los que no tenemos en común, creo que me ha dado una oportunidad única de entender que para avanzar tenemos que avanzar juntos, porque entre Centroamérica y el Caribe realmente son la mayoría de Estados en esta Organización y tenemos que tener cuidado y proteger los intereses de todos.

Gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you. I would like to give the floor now to the Ambassador of Haiti.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE HAITÍ: Merci Madame la Présidente.

Madame la Présidente, tout d'abord je voulais féliciter mon collègue et ami l'Ambassadeur Nestor Mendez pour sa présentation, ou du moins je dirais, aujourd'hui, cette journée, va à mon humble avis être une journée assez historique parce que nous avons pu assister et écouter à deux (2) brillants orateurs, deux (2) brillants diplomates qui connaissent vraiment l'Organisation et qui nous ont offert cette radiographie, je dirais, de notre Organisation et quand nous avons avec nous ces (2)

documents, il y a une seule chose qui vient à mon esprit, et ce matin nous avons amplement débattu ce sujet, cet aspect, c'est le rôle du Secrétaire général adjoint.

Après avoir écouté ces brillants orateurs, ces deux (2) diplomates, la facture de leur présentation, on se demande à quoi cela sert ? Si le Secrétaire général adjoint est peut-être considéré comme l'a si bien décrit mon collègue de la Dominique ce matin, comme le décrit aussi la Charte de l'Organisation, comme le Secrétaire du Conseil permanent, mais quel est son rôle exact ? Quel est son rôle ? Que doit être son rôle politique parce que ce que nous cherchons, ce que nous recherchons dans le poste à travers cette personnalité, c'est la complémentarité de ces deux fonctions, mais laquelle, j'ai l'impression personnellement que cela n'a pas été le cas et nous voulons cette fois-ci que ce soit une réalité, c'est pourquoi je veux y croire. Il est extrêmement, il est absolument important que le Conseil permanent se penche sur cette question. La question du rôle effectif du Secrétaire général adjoint.

L'article de la Charte que nous avons lu, que l'Ambassadeur du Mexique a lu ce matin, je pense, je veux y croire que cet article ou du moins cette question doit être abordée par le Conseil permanent pour qu'enfin on ait une définition claire des responsabilités exactes du Secrétaire général adjoint.

Et je veux y croire en l'ouverture d'esprit du candidat de l'Uruguay, le Ministre des relations extérieures, qui a fait preuve d'une certaine ouverture extraordinaire en ce qui a trait à la volonté de collaborer, de travailler d'un commun accord avec le Secrétaire général adjoint.

Et probablement que ce sera le moment d'avoir si possible un débat préliminaire à la Commission des affaires juridiques et politiques sur cette question. Je veux y croire ou tout au moins j'aurais suggéré le Secrétaire général une fois élu et le Secrétaire général adjoint une fois élu, pour qu'il y ait entre eux, entre les trois une rencontre, une réunion, un déjeuner de travail, pour qu'ils puissent discuter de l'avenir de cette Organisation.

Je voulais vous assurer, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, comme je l'avais fait ce matin à l'Ambassadeur Karran, même quand la CARICOM a deux (2) candidats, mais je suis sûr qu'il n'y aura pas un perdant. Malheureusement il y a un seul poste, nous avons deux brillants candidats, mais il n'y aura pas de perdant. Celui qui ne sera pas choisi lors de ces élections, je souhaiterais que toute sa vision, tout ce qu'il avait proposé doit être considéré. Ceci si nous voulons nous référer à ce débat que nous avons eu dans le cadre de la vision stratégique, ces candidats nous ont offert cette formule qui pourrait faire renaître l'Organisation.

Et ma Délégation d'ores et déjà est prête à participer à ce débat important. Nous devons redéfinir le rôle du Secrétaire général adjoint. Pour finir je vous poserais une seule question. Je ne sais pas si vous l'avez mentionné et je n'avais pas porté attention, c'est comment, si j'en tiens compte de vos quinze (15) années d'expérience à l'intérieur de l'Organisation, comment par vos expériences vous pourrait être utile au Secrétaire général, en tenant compte de la situation financière que va faire face l'Organisation dans si peu de temps et probablement sous l'administration du Secrétaire général élu et du Secrétaire général adjoint élu ? Comment vous pensez apporter votre contribution ou vos expériences au Secrétaire général en vue de trouver une solution durable face à cette crise financière ?

Merci, Madame la Présidente.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador, for your observations and your questions. I would like to give the floor to Ambassador Mendez.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you very much, my dear brother from the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

The issue of the budget, financing, and the financial resources of the Organization of American States is one of the most difficult problems that we have been dealing with in this Organization since before I got here. It is a long-standing problem, and it needs to be addressed.

I started off my presentation by talking about a moment of opportunity for renewal and repositioning that can only be achieved if we take into account all the issues that we have on the table. I also mentioned that perhaps the best moment to start looking at quotas and funding will be after the new leadership has shown clear results, after an element of trust has been developed with the new leadership.

How do my 15 years at the OAS help me to overcome these problems? I have learned to understand the extreme value of very close coordination and cooperation with the Permanent Council. This is where the decisions are made—all the decisions. This is where the decision will be taken about funding, or not.

And so, if I have learned anything, it is that this is a problem that we are facing together. It is not only a problem of the Secretariat. It is not a problem only of the member states. It is a problem that all of us are facing together, and it's only by working together that we will be able to overcome it. Serious, hard decisions will have to be taken, but they can only be taken if we operate on the basis of trust.

I know that there are other opportunities for exploring resource mobilization, but I don't think any of these sources of financing can take the place of what comes to our Organization from the quotas paid by member states into the Regular Fund. That is what gives ownership in the Organization. In addition to the financial resources that come with the money, quotas demonstrate the ownership of the member states in this Organization that we consider important, so that cannot be replaced. We have to look at it and decide how we are going to resolve those problems and we can only do it by working together.

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you so much, Ambassador Mendez. I would like to give the floor now to the Delegation of Chile.

El REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DE CHILE: Muchas gracias, señora Presidenta.

Y, en primer lugar, deseo felicitar al distinguido Embajador Nestor Mendez por su excelente y muy completa presentación, además de que siempre es un gran agrado tenerlo al frente y poder interactuar con usted.

De alguna manera, el Embajador de Haití me robó la pregunta, atendiendo que mi país está a cargo de la Comisión de Asuntos Administrativos y Presupuestarios (CAAP), tenía dos preguntas, una de ellas era precisamente sobre el tema presupuestario. Yo creo que, de alguna manera, podemos

profundizar en ese tema y me gustaría conocer su opinión o por lo menos que nos pueda dar algunos antecedentes mayores.

En la situación hipotética que fuera electo Secretario General Adjunto, todos sabemos que se va a encontrar con una situación financiera complicada, compleja por decirlo suavemente, existe una grave falta de liquidez en la Organización de los Estados Americanos, situación que se va a ir incrementando a medida que pasan los días y los meses.

En junio, de alguna manera, va a tener sus primeras reuniones de gabinete o de coordinación con el Secretario General. En ese sentido, mi pregunta específica es la siguiente en materia presupuestaria: ¿cuál sería su principal propuesta en el corto plazo para enfrentar este problema de liquidez, qué sugerencia concreta haría usted a efectos de ahorrar recursos a la Organización para poder enfrentar esa crisis en el corto plazo? Y, en una segunda etapa ¿qué propuesta a largo plazo o más de fondo haría para poder enfrentar esta situación? Esa es la primera pregunta.

Y la segunda está referida a un elemento que usted señaló —que comparto plenamente— que es un poco la falta de visibilidad de lo que hace la OEA. La OEA hace mucho más de lo que la gente sabe o conoce y, de alguna manera, falta una especie de política de *marketing* respecto de lo que es la OEA y la importancia que tiene para la región. ¿Qué medidas propondría usted para poder incrementar la visibilidad de la Organización? Son básicamente esas dos áreas de preguntas.

Gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you so much, Delegation of Chile. Ambassador Mendez, the floor is yours.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

All the issues that have to do with financing are quite complex and very difficult. In the short term, the recommendations contained in the Murray report already have some very specific suggestions that can be implemented and that will yield some savings. In addition to those immediate recommendations that can be implemented, we will need to have un acercamiento con los Estados Miembros, especialmente con aquellos que han contribuido de manera más consecuente a través de los años. Tenemos que acercarnos a los dueños de la Organización de los Estados Americanos. Entonces, a corto plazo, las recomendaciones específicas contenidas en el Murray *report*, un acercamiento con los Estados y tenemos que ver dentro de la Organización cómo logramos más ahorros.

Sin embargo, no podemos ahorrar hasta salirnos de la crisis, o sea, que no podemos ahorrar la solución para salir de la crisis, porque tenemos que también incrementar los insumos de la Organización. Hay que recordar que la posición financiera de la Organización no es algo que se dio el año pasado, es algo que se venido empeorando de manera crónica, año tras año. Entonces, ya no estamos en el punto de que solo con unos ahorros a corto plazo podemos salir adelante. Tenemos que tomar algunas medidas. Y las medidas a largo plazo, creo que esas van a venir.

El análisis, el estudio, las decisiones de cómo vamos a hacer con las cuotas, creo que es algo que va a venir a medida que el liderazgo nuevo empiece a ofrecer resultados concretos, que se vea que la administración realmente está trabajando de una forma que beneficia a los miembros,

utilizando los recursos de mejor manera, reportando sobre la utilización de estos recursos a la satisfacción de los Estados Miembros.

No creo que haya soluciones sencillas ni preguntas en blanco y negro, creo que tenemos que intentar muchas soluciones para que entre todos estos pocos de ahorros e insumos podamos salir adelante.

Con respecto a cómo posicionar mejor a la OEA para que los pueblos de las Américas conozcan a la Organización y lo que hace la Organización, mencioné antes que podemos empezar utilizando las Oficinas de la Secretaría General en los Estados Miembros, indicándoles exactamente qué es lo que deben hacer. Los contactos con las universidades, dar publicidad a lo que está haciendo la OEA en los diferentes países, un acercamiento tipo *marketing* que se haga a través de los países. Creo que podemos utilizar mucho la red; en estos días poner algo que es muy visible no es tan difícil ni tan caro.

Lo otro es que creo que el *OAS brand* es extremadamente valioso y no creo que lo hemos utilizado de la mejor forma. La OEA tiene un *convening power*, un poder de convocatoria que lo hemos visto cómo funciona en muchas ocasiones. Tenemos que buscar la forma de utilizar eso. No solamente para recaudar recursos sino para expandir la influencia de la Organización, para posicionarnos mejor en el entorno interamericano, para darle más visibilidad.

Pero creo que también darle la visibilidad a la OEA no es un trabajo solamente de la Secretaría General, yo creo que estamos en esto juntos y entre los Estados Miembros y la Secretaría General, tenemos que buscar la forma de elevar la visibilidad de la Organización, especialmente de dar crédito cuando se merece el crédito. Creo que empezando por ahí estaríamos en el buen camino.

Gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you. The Delegation of Ecuador is recognized.

El REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DEL ECUADOR: Gracias, señora Presidenta.

Agradezco al Embajador Nestor Mendez de Belize la muy interesante y amplia presentación de sus propuestas para la Organización de los Estados Americanos como candidato a la Secretaría General Adjunta. Me permitiré formular una pregunta similar a la que ya efectué esta mañana.

En este sentido, Embajador Mendez, cuáles considera usted que son los principales factores que deben ser tenidos en cuenta para garantizar una administración eficiente del talento humano y de los recursos de la Organización, qué falencias ha identificado y qué cambios considera necesarios, con miras a lograr una cultura de gestión basada en los resultados, que responda con eficacia a las prioridades identificadas por los Estados y para que finalmente haya lo que usted ya ha mencionado, esto es, una mayor confianza entre los Estados Miembros y la Secretaría.

Muchas gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you so much. Ambassador Mendez, you have the floor.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Muchas gracias al distinguido Representante del Ecuador.

En términos de los factores para garantizar la permanencia de los mejores recursos humanos, para ser muy sincero, creo que en este momento dentro de la Organización de los Estados Americanos existe un espíritu de espera, de incertidumbre. Creo que por el momento lo que tiene que hacer el nuevo liderazgo es traer un poco de calma y certidumbre. Si las personas, si un funcionario se siente inseguro y está desmoralizado no funciona de la mejor forma; tampoco puedes atraer al mejor personal que está disponible en el mercado porque nadie quiere trabajar en un ambiente de incertidumbre.

Entonces, creo que la aplicación de políticas de personal que son claras, que son justas, que todos las conocen y que se le aplican a todos de una manera imparcial, creo que eso traería un grado de certidumbre, de estabilidad, que realmente nos ayudaría con los recursos humanos. Nadie opera bien en la incertidumbre.

¿Qué deficiencias he encontrado? Creo que a través de los años hemos ido perdiendo mucho talento y se debe a muchísimas cosas. Uno de los temas es ciertamente el tema presupuestario y de recursos, porque para atraer los mejores talentos cuesta más en algunas ocasiones, de lo que la Organización tiene la capacidad de pagar.

Entonces, ciertamente el tema de los recursos es un tema que tenemos que ver, que ha tenido un impacto en la deficiencia de cierto personal.

¿Qué cambios promovería para incrementar la eficiencia? Nuevamente, las recomendaciones del reporte del consultor Murray, son una guía excelente para ir viendo cómo mejoramos las eficiencias, modernizando los procesos de negocios en todos los ambientes, a todos los niveles de la Secretaría. Creo que eso traería verdaderos ahorros y también incrementaría la eficiencia de manera muy consecuente.

Perdón, la última pregunta no estoy seguro si la entendí muy bien.

El REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DEL ECUADOR: Como resultado de todos estos elementos que usted acaba de mencionar, redundaba decía —precisamente citando a usted mismo— en una mayor confianza entre los Estados Miembros y la Secretaría.

Gracias.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Gracias. Bueno. Un ambiente de confianza es imprescindible. Eso se tiene que generar en base de la comunicación.

Por eso decía yo que tenemos un momento único, un período de transición, un liderazgo nuevo, un liderazgo fresco que tiene la oportunidad de empezar de nuevo con el Consejo Permanente para ir generando esos espacios de diálogo y crear la confianza.

También la confianza del personal de la Secretaría es muy importante. No podemos solamente enfocarnos en la confianza en el Consejo o la Secretaría tiene que ser de manera general. Yo, por lo general, veo las cosas de una forma muy integral; no hay respuestas sencillas porque todo impacta todo.

Creo que al transicionar en el liderazgo nuevo, aplicar las políticas de personal, crear esa confianza entre los Estados Miembros va a ir mejorando mucho el ambiente de la Organización.

Muchas gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Mendez. I would like to give the floor now to the Delegation of Guatemala.

EL REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DE GUATEMALA: Gracias, señora Presidenta.

Mi Delegación quiere agradecer al Embajador Nestor Mendez por la presentación de su plan de trabajo, el cual consideramos abarca una infinidad de puntos muy importantes para los Estados Miembros, y creemos que esta aproximación que usted nos hace hacia los problemas y la propuesta de soluciones a muchos de ellos, evidentemente, redundarán en beneficio de la Organización de los Estados Americanos.

Yo quería ser justo y hacer la misma pregunta que hice en la mañana al candidato Karran. En efecto, para muchos Estados un Secretario General Adjunto debiera ser un administrador, un *chief operating officer (COO)*, para otros debería ser un Secretario General Adjunto robusto, políticamente hablando, con capacidades de aproximaciones políticas a los problemas de la región.

Sin embargo, dada la coyuntura que actualmente vivimos nosotros en esta Organización, se nota que necesitamos empezar a entrarle de lleno, en los próximos meses, a los procesos de reforma y de reestructuración sobre el cual —de hecho lo menciona usted en su presentación— el informe del consultor Murray es un claro ejemplo sobre cómo tenemos ya algún norte y que podamos seguir.

Pero mi pregunta es ¿cuál es su opinión con respecto al rol del Secretario General Adjunto, un *COO* o un oficial político robusto?

Y, la segunda pregunta: tomando en cuenta que el candidato, el Canciller Almagro, mencionaba en su presentación que él estaría solamente trabajando o dispuesto a estar un período, le hago la misma pregunta que hice por la mañana al Embajador Karran ¿cuál es su opinión con respecto a la reelección?

Gracias.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Muchas gracias al distinguido colega de Guatemala, otro hermano centroamericano.

Mire, yo pienso que, en la coyuntura en que se encuentra la Organización de los Estados Americanos, tratar de definir o construir un marco inflexible alrededor de las funciones del Secretario General Adjunto no será la mejor respuesta. Creo que el Secretario General Adjunto tendrá un peso administrativo, unas responsabilidades muy serias en el ámbito administrativo, pero también tiene que tener la flexibilidad de un desempeño político, porque el puesto es un puesto político. Es una posición que se llena con base en una elección. No se puede segregar nada más un tipo de responsabilidades. Creo que tiene que haber la flexibilidad de responder a las necesidades inmediatas de la Organización.

Usted muy correctamente mencionó —y yo estoy de acuerdo— de que dada la situación en la que nos encontramos ahora, vamos a tener que entrar de lleno a los temas de administración, de reestructuración; pero creo que tenemos que hacer eso en el corto plazo. Más adelante tenemos que ver cuáles son las necesidades de la Organización, si hay un rol político más elevado para el Secretario

General Adjunto, debe haber esa flexibilidad, porque después de todo también es un funcionario electo.

Con respecto a la reelección, yo creo que hablar de la reelección es más apropiado después de ser electo la primera vez [risas.], entonces, es un poco prematuro para hablar de ser reelegido y preferiría no comentar al respecto.

Muchas gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Mendez. I wish to give the floor to Ambassador Parsan of Trinidad and Tobago.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE TRINIDAD Y TOBAGO: Muchísimas gracias, señora Presidenta.

Señor Embajador, felicitaciones por su presentación. Ambassador, I must congratulate you. Having listened to your presentation, your overall tone, posture, and pragmatic approach very much reflected you as an individual in terms of your energy and experience, and I appreciated how you really broadcast your expectation management in the public domain in terms of what you expect, should you be able to secure the position. I congratulate you for that.

My question—well, it has two parts—is pretty simple. I really like the term “smart cooperation”; I’ve heard it used before in a very strategic way. I appreciate the “what,” but I was wondering whether you may wish to elaborate a bit in terms of the “how” you may want to operationalize the concept of smart cooperation that you raised in your presentation.

Also, it was mentioned this morning, and I think you touched on it very briefly, but if you were elected Assistant Secretary General, what would be your vision in terms of strengthening and harmonizing the good work coming out of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) with that of the development pillar and the development agenda of the OAS as an entity?

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Parsan. Ambassador Mendez, the floor is yours.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you very much, Ambassador, for your very kind words.

On the issue of smart cooperation, we have operated under the concept of partnership for development—*cooperación solidaria*—for a long period of time, and it is still very valid. But as we move ahead, we have to recognize that the Organization of American States cannot do everything for everybody.

In terms of development, we have to focus on those initiatives in which we can bring high impact and real value-added in order to create a definitive effect on the lives of people. That includes additional use of technology. There is technology out there to make our work a lot easier. But in terms of smart cooperation, we will need strategic interventions.

Let me be very specific. We were talking earlier about the migration issue with Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador. In the whole panorama of what they're trying to do, what is it that the OAS can do that will have strategic, high-value impact? It calls for looking for deliberate results very quickly, and even if they don't occur very quickly, the results must be visible and high impact. So that is the concept: strategic interventions, use of technology, and being very practical. Above all, pragmatism.

You asked about how to strengthen the role of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI). CIDI is such an important organ of this Organization of American States. Over the last couple of years, it has reemerged and regained the level of visibility that it deserves. Again, it calls for an integrated approach, because CIDI covers a number of areas of critical importance for our countries, and, as I said, we cannot be everything to everybody. We are limited in terms of how much time we can dedicate to anything. If you have 10 kids, you only have 24 hours in a day; if you have two kids, you still have the same number of hours in a day to pay attention to the kids. So, we have to look for those areas in cooperation in which we can integrate what the OAS can do.

Take, for instance, the whole issue of Internet connectivity. It's a big deal right now and a big topic in all of the Americas. In the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Strategic Plan, it has been acknowledged that we have to find a way to connect our countries and to bring them access to the Internet. It's the same all over the Hemisphere where, in very creative ways, they're trying to address Internet connectivity.

How can the OAS assist? Well, several member states sitting around this table have come to the Permanent Council and said: "Listen, I have developed all of this technology, and it's there, and I can help you if you're prepared to accept it and want it." So, we have these offers of assistance. We also have some level of expertise in the Organization. We have that network of agencies outside of the OAS that can be called upon.

I think that stopping to think of an issue in a silo is critical. We have to look at all the points of convergence, all the inputs. How do we bring them all together? I think that is the only way to really strengthen CIDI and improve the results.

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Mendez. I would now like to give the floor to the Delegation of Canada.

La REPRESENTANTE ALTERNA DEL CANADÁ: Thank you.

On behalf of Canada, I'd like to congratulate you, Ambassador Mendez, and thank you for this dynamic and inspiring presentation. You clearly have a wealth of experience in the inter-American system, in building meaningful relationships, and in collaborating with our inter-American partners. We think this is a very valuable asset in an Assistant Secretary General. It's also refreshing to hear such a positive and optimistic outlook and vision of the Organization of American States, so thank you for that.

At the same time, we'd like to seek further information on the nuts and bolts of your presentation. I know that some of our colleagues around the table have already asked questions in regards to management modernization, but we would like to hear something more specific.

First, what concrete steps do you propose to take to address the root causes of the reoccurring financial shortfalls in this Organization; specifically, the proliferation of nonfunded mandates, and the lack of or delayed payments of assessed contributions?

Second, what initiatives do you consider particularly crucial in the management modernization initiative and the mandate-streamlining process?

Finally, we've heard you talk today quite a lot about your long-term vision for the OAS and your long-term approach to dealing with some of the issues at the OAS, but Canada would like to know: what would your first month in office look like if you're elected Assistant Secretary General? What will you do?

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you for your questions, Canada. Ambassador Mendez, you have the floor.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you very much, and thank you for your very kind words.

As you rightly point out, the Organization of American States has a number of unfunded mandates and it is an issue that, like the chronic financial situation, did not happen now; it's been accumulating.

So, what can be done in terms of management modernization? The issue of mandate proliferation did not start with the General Secretariat; it started with the Permanent Council. At some moment, the Council may need to consider applying a pause with respect to more mandates until we decide how we will fund them, or remove those that simply won't be funded. Let's be realistic: some of them simply will not be funded because we do not have inexhaustible resources. The OAS already has several initiatives under way for the prioritization of these mandates, and we have to see the exercise through to its conclusion.

In addition to financial resources for the implementation of mandates, we can also look at what technical resources we can muster within the Organization to implement some of these mandates. We don't have to source the expertise from outside if we don't have to. We have to look clearly at what we have within the staff component of the Organization.

In the short-term, I think we have to look at the business modernization aspects of management modernization because that will unclog a level of resources. It will also make the Organization a little more efficient. These are very short-term steps. I'm very much aware of how much it would cost to buy the new software, so that is something that we also have to look at.

But regarding the proliferation of nonfunded mandates, we will have to think creatively, between the Secretariat and the Permanent Council, as to how to start to shed some of these mandates.

I'm sorry; I didn't take the second question down. Can you please remind me?

La REPRESENTANTE ALTERNA DEL CANADÁ: Delayed payments or nonpayment of assessed contributions.

El REPRESENTATIVE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: There are reasons why countries don't pay, and we will have to look at these reasons and see how we can overcome these obstacles, but it is not something that can be managed overnight. It is a process of building trust, of getting closer, of finding ways to assure those who have not been forthcoming with their payments that these payments will be well spent, and we have to look in depth at whatever issues led to the decision not to pay or the inability to pay. So, there are no very simple answers to that question.

I think the new leadership will have to make a real effort to address these issues, to resolve them, and to convince the member states that we have a stake in this Organization. It belongs to all of us. We're in this together.

You asked about the first month in office. I think that will be some time in the last week of July. How will it be? I think it will be crazy! It will be quite hectic, but I think it will be an incredible opportunity to become more familiar with the inner workings of the Organization. I also think that it won't be a matter of jumping into it cold because there will be a transition process, so the first month in office will be a continuation of the transition. During that period, there will be an opportunity to understand certain things that, sitting around this table in the Permanent Council, regardless of how long you sit here, you just don't know. You have to sit on the other side of the table to see how the room looks from there and to understand why certain things happen the way they happen.

I think it will be an incredible learning opportunity. I intend to make the most of it, and I hope that it will give me enough of an appreciation of the Organization that I will be able to apply some of the things that I have learned sitting here in the Permanent Council to try to resolve some of the problems we have. Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you so much, Ambassador. The Ambassador of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is recognized. Go ahead, Ambassador Prince.

La REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE SAN VICENTE Y LAS GRANADINAS: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I'd like to begin by congratulating you, Ambassador Mendez, for a very spirited presentation. I know that in the afternoon, it's usually very difficult to engage people's attention, but you've put a lot of energy into your presentation, and the sheer number of requests for the floor indicates that you have had our rapt attention.

Ambassador, I'd also like to commend you for the human touch you have injected into your intervention. I was particularly drawn by your discussion of the need to have mechanisms in place to empower and to protect the staff of the Organization of American States. Our delegation would be very keen to see the incoming administration prioritize this issue very early in its mandate because we have to protect our most valuable asset, our human resources.

I also listened keenly when you spoke about partnership for development and the need for the OAS to forge greater collaboration with other institutions of the inter-American system so that we can have greater impact. I certainly agree with you on this, especially for cross-cutting matters, such as climate change, migration, and poverty.

As you already identified, not all members of the OAS are members of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is one such country, along with the other members of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). Of course, whether a country joins the IDB or not is a sovereign matter. In our case, it was really a question of affordability of the membership.

How do you envisage that the OAS can play a role in forging a stronger partnership for development with the IDB in a manner that does not cause the smallest and most vulnerable member states of the OAS, who are not IDB members, to be excluded from deriving benefits therefrom?

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Prince. Ambassador Mendez, the floor is yours.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you very much, Ambassador, my dear sister from my Caribbean family. I thank you for your kind remarks.

On the matter of empowering staff, I truly believe that we have to provide our people with training and capacity if we are expecting them to deliver. That is an absolute essential.

We need to look carefully at strengthening our collaboration and coordination and partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The fact that some members of the Caribbean family are not members of the Bank is, as you rightly pointed out, due to several reasons, and clearly, it is a sovereign decision to join or not to join. But I don't think that that should be an obstacle to the IDB being able to partner with the Organization of American States to fund regional projects for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

There are so many areas in which the IDB already engages—climate change, development, indigenous people—and in which the OAS is also involved. In some instances, the OAS has more technical know-how, because this is more of a political institution; the IDB is a bank. I think that we have to be creative and look at those areas in which the IDB is already operating and promote the idea of regional projects. The majority of CARICOM member states are already members of the IDB, and it is not the CARICOM tradition to leave any of our brothers and sisters behind. This should not be an obstacle, and we have to find a way to resolve this problem, whether by eventually engaging in a discussion on how these states can become members of the IDB, or simply looking only at regional projects. But it is an area that has potential, that we should not ignore, and that should cause us to be creative.

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Mendez. The Delegation of Venezuela has the floor.

La REPRESENTANTE ALTERNA DE VENEZUELA: Gracias, Presidenta. Y en nombre de mi Delegación queremos también sumarnos a las felicitaciones que se han hecho al Embajador Nestor Mendez, quien ha hecho una excelente presentación. Coincidimos con el Embajador de Haití que obviamente ha sido un gustazo poder escuchar a dos compañeros de trabajo con muchas potencialidades y con mucha capacidad.

En el Embajador Mendez además de sus méritos profesionales, hay que rescatar y subrayar su don de saber escuchar y esa prudencia que tiene y también ese amor que siente por la familia, el significado que tiene para él la familia. Y por eso, expresiones como el tema de darle a una gestión un toque más humano, el de practicar la inclusión, no son frases frías porque el hecho de que hayamos estado trabajando con él durante muchos años dan fe de esa intencionalidad.

Embajador Mendez, un tema que se ha estado repitiendo durante el día es el tema de la confianza en la Organización de los Estados Americanos. Y la confianza en la OEA del futuro es una responsabilidad de todos. Sin embargo, el manejo político y diplomático que realicen sus autoridades marcará la diferencia.

En ese sentido y de resultar elegido Secretario General Adjunto, cómo podría apoyar o qué acciones podría impulsar para que efectivamente los funcionarios de la OEA —especialmente los directivos como funcionarios internacionales— ayuden a practicar la prudencia y ayudar también en ese sentido a rescatar la confianza en la Organización.

Gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador. Ambassador Mendez, you have the floor.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Mi querida colega, Embajadora de Venezuela, muchas gracias por lo que ha dicho acerca de mi persona.

El tema de generación de confianza es algo que toqué en varias partes de mi presentación, porque creo que es algo clave que tiene un valor muy importante en una organización como la Organización de los Estados Americanos. Es tan importante que tenemos que trabajar en mejorarlo a todos los niveles. Yo pienso que empieza con un diálogo respetuoso, continuo y transparente. En primer lugar, entre el liderazgo de la Organización y el Consejo Permanente, pero también pasa por la Secretaría.

Usted preguntaba, cómo hacemos para que el personal sea más prudente al ejercer sus responsabilidades, y yo lo interpretaría como un mejor tacto en ciertos temas sensibles.

Dos cosas. Hablé primero que tenemos que tener políticas de personal que son justas, que son transparentes, que son equitativas y que todo el mundo las conoce. Creo que eso le dará un nivel de confianza al personal respecto a su empleo, a su estabilidad dentro de la Organización.

Pero acerca de la prudencia, creo que hay que clarificar el rol, el papel de los funcionarios de la Organización y de la misma forma como tenemos claro las políticas que se aplican al personal, también tenemos que ser claros cuáles son las funciones del personal de la Secretaría. Creo que empezando por ahí, poniendo las cosas muy en claro, empezaremos a generar esa transparencia y a

delimitar los ámbitos del funcionar del personal y se irá generando esa confianza que se necesita. Es decir, definir hasta dónde puede llegar o no.

Creo que empieza con la comunicación, con un diálogo y con poner todo sobre la mesa desde el principio.

Muchas gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you so much, Ambassador. The Delegation of Uruguay is recognized.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DEL URUGUAY: Gracias, señora Presidenta.

Muchas gracias, Embajador Nestor Mendez, por su muy completa presentación en la tarde de hoy.

Nuestra pregunta va en la línea de lo indicado ya por otras delegaciones que se nos han adelantado en el día de hoy, pero queríamos transmitirla porque nos parece importante. La pregunta es la siguiente: dada su experiencia en la Organización de los Estados Americanos, Embajador Mendez, nos gustaría escuchar los comentarios adicionales que usted desee transmitir sobre el tema de la modernización en la gestión de la OEA y, en particular, la importancia que usted le asigna a este tema.

Gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Cayrús. Ambassador Mendez, the floor is yours.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Gracias, Embajador Cayrús.

Pienso que después de muchos años, el reporte Murray realmente nos ha ofrecido una excelente guía en cosas específicas que tenemos que hacer para modernizar la Organización de los Estados Americanos, para adecuarla, para traerla al año 2015, para adecuarla al día de hoy.

Creo que la mayoría de las recomendaciones sobre la modernización de la gestión pueden ser implementadas sin tanta dificultad, especialmente aquellas que nada más requieren una orden ejecutiva. Hay otras de más peso que requerirá el mandato político de la Organización y tenemos que trabajar para que se puedan lograr.

Pero también, al ir avanzando en la implementación de este plan, tenemos que tener la plena coincidencia del personal y creo que un contacto muy próximo con la Asociación del Personal de la Organización, con el gabinete de secretarías, los líderes de departamentos, va a ser muy, muy necesario en toda etapa.

Una cosa que realmente para mí es muy importante es que estos funcionarios que trabajan para nosotros son personas y tienen derechos. Y, de la misma forma que nosotros queremos sacarle lo máximo en términos de servicio, de resultados a nuestro personal, también tenemos que velar por ellos. Entonces el toque humano creo que es muy importante, por supuesto, sin menospreciar la priorización en resultados, en transparencia, *accountability*, que creo que es muy importante.

El *management modernization* es un proceso que va a tomar algún tiempo. No puede darse de manera súbita, tiene que ser incremental, tiene que tener la colaboración y cooperación de todas las partes, del Consejo Permanente, del liderazgo de la Secretaría General, del personal. Porque acá todos tienen que resultar ganadores. Porque si hay algún sector que no resulta ganador, entonces todos perdemos. También pienso que algunas de las medidas tienen que darse con más precaución que otras. No puede haber medidas súbitas.

Muchas gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: I give the floor to Ambassador Rabasa of Mexico.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE MÉXICO: *Thank you, Madam Chair.*

Señor Embajador Nestor Mendez, voy a ser muy breve para que la señora Presidenta del Consejo —en términos futbolísticos— no me vaya a sacar una tarjeta amarilla o incluso roja pues ya me lo advirtió, por lo cual voy a hacer la misma pregunta que le hice a su contendiente, pero de manera más breve.

Pero antes quiero desde luego saludar también la presencia de la señora Elvira Mendez, aquí en sala, que le acompaña en esta comparecencia y nos da mucho gusto tenerla aquí con nosotros.

El Embajador Karran, en su intervención y en el documento que distribuyó, tiene una frase que dice:

Su Excelencia, el Embajador Nestor Mendez quien siempre ha sido un colega muy respetado en la Comunidad del Caribe (CARICOM), al comenzar esta fase de la misma en la que nuestros dos países se han embarcado, le expreso la misma colegialidad, consideración y camaradería que han caracterizado nuestras relaciones en nuestras numerosas colaboraciones anteriores.

Me gustaría saber de su parte, qué le merece este comentario y qué le respondería al Embajador Karran.

La segunda pregunta, bueno, mejor dicho el segundo comentario tiene que ver con lo que usted señaló hace un momento de que la Organización de los Estados Americanos, en efecto, es un *brand* muy poderoso en el Continente pero, lamentablemente, muy mal vendido. Debería tenerse una nueva estrategia y yo creo que esa podría ser una interesante función del Secretario General Adjunto, de mayor conocimiento de nuestra Organización en nuestras sociedades y en otras sociedades de otros continentes; pero, principalmente en las nuestras y precisamente para eso podrían ser muy útiles las Oficinas de la Secretaría General en los Estados Miembros.

Nosotros no estamos en contra de que se supriman, estamos en contra de que no hagan prácticamente nada o de que no hagan lo que deben hacer para, entre otras cosas difundir, por ejemplo ahora, el proceso electoral dentro de la OEA, en la academia, en la sociedad civil, en los grupos empresariales, con los estudiantes que están interesados en estos menesteres.

Y ahora sí voy a mi pregunta, le comentaba a su contendiente esta mañana que vivimos una contradicción. Por un lado, en efecto, como usted correctamente lo señaló, el puesto de Secretario General Adjunto es un puesto político dado que es electo por los Estados Miembros, por sus

Representantes; no podría ser un puesto no político si tiene una elección política y este proceso es un indicativo de eso.

Pero, por otro lado, la Carta de la OEA, en el artículo 115 señala que su función es consultiva y de realización de funciones que le delegue el Secretario General. Entonces, por un lado tenemos un cargo eminentemente político, sujeto a elección, pero por otro lado con facultades muy limitadas en la Carta. ¿Cómo superaría usted esta contradicción entre, por un lado un cargo electivo, que lo hace político, y por otro lado funciones expresamente señaladas como exclusivamente consultivas o de delegación de funciones?

Y, por último, ¿qué papel podría desempeñar el Secretario General Adjunto en la articulación de los componentes del sistema interamericano? Por ejemplo, entre la OEA con la Organización Panamericana de la Salud (OPS), con el Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (BID), con el Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación para la Agricultura (IICA), de tal manera que puedan sumarse y constituirse sinergias para enfrentar problemas que de otra manera no se pueden enfrentar, como, por ejemplo, el pilar del desarrollo integral.

Es imposible que la OEA lo enfrente por sí misma sin el concurso de estas otras agencias, pero estas otras agencias no están debidamente articuladas entre sí y con la OEA. ¿Qué papel podría desempeñar el Secretario General Adjunto en eso?

Gracias y espero, señora Presidenta, haberme mantenido dentro del tiempo.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Rabasa. Ambassador Mendez, you have the floor.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: I thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Distinguido Embajador Rabasa y querido amigo, Representante Permanente de México, muchas gracias por sus comentarios y sus preguntas.

La primera me parece muy interesante acerca del comentario de mi querido amigo y colega de la Comunidad del Caribe (CARICOM), el Embajador Bayney Karran. De hecho, lo que el Embajador Karran ha puesto en su folleto es exactamente el mismo sentir que siempre hemos compartido, no solo con él sino con todos dentro del CARICOM.

Somos hermanos caribeños. Resulta que ahora estamos compitiendo por el mismo puesto que para el Caribe y para la Organización de los Estados Americanos es muy importante, pero al final del día somos hermanos caribeños. El hecho de que vayamos a una elección, nada más indica que nosotros creemos en la democracia y vamos a resolver las diferencias con base en elecciones y, bueno, al final del día vamos a seguir siendo colegas y amigos. Siempre le he tenido mucho respeto al Embajador Karran y seguirá siendo así.

Ahora, estoy totalmente de acuerdo con usted que el *branding*, el valor del nombre, del logo de la Organización no lo hemos desarrollado de forma que nos traiga beneficios directos. Yo creo que tenemos que ser muy creativos en cómo desarrollamos ese producto, cómo utilizamos ese bien intangible de la Organización. Y no estoy seguro si sería posible venderlo, no creo que sería lo mejor tampoco, pero sí creo que se lo puede utilizar, porque eso en lo que se traduce es el *convening power*.

Cuando la OEA te dice, tenemos un proyecto y lo podemos hacer entre todos y si tú contribuyes esto, lo hace la OEA, entonces sí tiene atracción importante.

Estoy totalmente de acuerdo con usted que fue lo que dije acerca de las Oficinas de la Secretaría General en los Estados Miembros. Creo que pueden ser nuestro primer punto de presentación; pueden llegar a las universidades, a las escuelas, a las asociaciones, a las comunidades y hablar de la OEA, hablar de otras cosas que no solo son los temas que se publican de la OEA, porque la mayoría de lo que sale de la OEA son cosas que nadie quiere leer, que no pintan a la Organización de la mejor manera.

Hay tantas otras cosas que hace la Organización. Le doy un ejemplo. En el Caribe la Organización ha hecho unos trabajos muy, muy importantes. Y para entender lo que yo hablaba de los *constituencies*, los distritos electorales. Por ejemplo, hay algunos países, como el mío, como otros países del Caribe, donde un ejemplo bien específico es el relativo a la necesidad que tenemos de adecuar nuestras leyes para poder cumplir en nuestras obligaciones con cierto tratado o cierta agrupación y a veces simplemente no tenemos la persona que pueda escribir las leyes. Estas son realidades. Y la OEA ayuda con estos temas de forma muy específica. O sea que si no puedes articular tu ley, no puedes entrar en el cumplimiento de compromisos que te has hecho. Hay muchas cosas que hace la OEA, muy específicas, que tienen un valor que nunca se nota. Creo que tenemos que hacer un mejor trabajo para presentar lo bueno que hace la Organización.

Ahora, qué rol puede jugar el Secretario General Adjunto en la articulación, en la organización, coordinación de la OEA con las otras unidades del sistema interamericano. Yo creo que tiene el potencial de un rol bastante importante, porque la fuerza de la OEA no solo está en la Secretaría General y en el Consejo Permanente, la OEA realmente está en el centro del sistema interamericano que incluye todas estas unidades. Desafortunadamente operamos, en muchas instancias, como una isla institucional, asunto que tenemos que resolver y se resuelve el problema de una isla tendiendo puentes y empezando por hablarnos.

Creo que la estructura que ya viene con la Cumbre de las Américas nos da una buena oportunidad para empezar a construir sobre estas estructuras que existen, pero dándoles mandatos más periódicos y que no tengamos que esperar la celebración de Cumbre para que nos reunamos para empezar a trabajar. Creo que el Secretario General Adjunto puede hacer un trabajo muy importante en ese aspecto.

Ahora, ¿cómo uno resuelve la contradicción entre una posición de elección a la cual la Carta le otorga capacidad puramente consultiva? También dice que le toca las responsabilidades que le asigne el Secretario General. Al final del día sigue siendo un tema político porque la asignación de responsabilidades es el resultado de una negociación, una visión compartida entre el Secretario General y el Secretario General Adjunto. Y una decisión sobre qué puedes cooperar más o cómo unimos nuestras fuerzas, qué es lo que te delego a ti que le de mayor rendimiento a la Organización y qué es lo que tú representas, qué es lo que tú traes que nos puede ayudar a salir adelante.

Al final del día, estas dos personas tienen que trabajar de manera muy estrecha. Tienen que llevarse bien y tienen que tener la misma visión porque si no, no vamos a ninguna parte.

Gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Mendez. I would like to give the floor now to the Delegation of Brazil.

El REPRESENTANTE INTERINO DEL BRASIL: Obrigado, Senhora Presidente.

Gostaria também de parabenizar o Embaixador Nestor Mendez pela excelente apresentação feita hoje. Acho que ela só ficaria ainda mais perfeita se ele tivesse falado um pouquinho em português e em francês também, dado os seus dons linguísticos [risos]. Isto é brincadeira, evidentemente.

Gostaria de sugerir à Senhora Presidente que nós tivéssemos eleições todos os anos porque só assim teríamos uma cesta de boas ideias e de boas propostas como as que nós ouvimos hoje dos dois candidatos.

Gostaria também de pedir desculpas aos candidatos, porque acho que algumas das perguntas feitas deveriam ser dirigidas ao Secretário-Geral e não ao Adjunto; outras, eu considero que, se os dois candidatos tivessem condições de responder algumas das perguntas aqui feitas, eles poderiam se candidatar ao cargo não de Secretário-Geral Adjunto, mas ao cargo de Deus, porque só Deus para ter a resposta para essas perguntas.

Mas, enfim, falando sério agora, evidentemente acho que a apresentação do Embaixador Mendez foi bastante completa. Gostaria também, antes de continuar, gostaria de secundar o Embaixador do México e também saudar a presença da Senhora Elvira Mendez que nos honra com a sua participação aqui hoje.

Voltando à apresentação do Embaixador, fico muito feliz com vários consensos que vi nas duas apresentações hoje, ou seja, a questão da transparência, a questão do *ombudsman*, enfim, de maior cooperação e integração. Isso tudo me pareceu muito interessante e a ideia apresentada pelo Embaixador Mendez de que a Secretaria-Geral Adjunta é um *hub* de convergências me parece muito interessante. De fato, vejo esse escritório justamente com essa função.

Há algumas propostas muito interessantes, como as reuniões de coordenação interna entre os secretários, os diretores de áreas. Acho que é uma ideia que poderia nos ajudar muito a fazer esta Organização funcionar melhor.

Também a questão da marca OEA, que é um ponto muito interessante. De fato, é pouquíssimo explorada. Aliás, eu tenho visto vários países comentarem a sua preocupação com atrasos de pagamento, o problema de quotas, enfim, até compartilho essa preocupação, mas acho que se nós nos preocupássemos mais em fazer com que a OEA fosse, de fato, vista como uma organização útil, que tem muito a contribuir, nós teríamos mais condições de convencer as nossas sociedades do valor agregado desta Organização. E devo dizer que mesmo que todos os pagamentos estivessem em dia, isso certamente não faria com que esta Organização funcionasse melhor, ou contasse com uma melhor avaliação por parte dos nossos cidadãos.

Mas, com relação às propostas feitas também, e já encerrando, achei interessante a questão do que o candidato chamou de *"institutional outreach"*. Vejo isso como importante, e me parece que essa ideia espelha a ideia apresentada pelo Embaixador Karran também dos diálogos sub-regionais. Parece-me muito interessante.

E só discordaria do Embaixador Mendez em uma menção que ele fez, e isso tem a ver com o fato das vantagens comparativas da OEA, que acho uma ideia perfeita e que devemos levar em consideração, mas não sei se esta Organização seria o melhor fórum para discutirmos energia e meio ambiente, temas que talvez sejam mais bem levados e conduzidos por outras instituições. Entendo a sua proposta no sentido de cooperação, e aí, sim, acho uma boa proposta. Tratar de energia e meio ambiente no âmbito da cooperação regional, acho perfeito.

Só para encerrar, então, gostaria de saber a sua opinião sobre por que será que esta Organização usa tão pouco, ou tem uma relação tão fraca com o Banco Interamericano de Desenvolvimento (BID), que como o senhor disse, é um órgão do Sistema Interamericano? Eu não vejo nós aproveitarmos essa interlocução com o BID da maneira como deveríamos fazer.

Obrigado e desculpe pelo tempo.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you so much, Mr. Dias da Costa. Ambassador Mendez, you have the floor.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Muito obrigado, Senhor Embaixador. [Risadas.] That is as far as I would dare to go right now. I could try some more, you know, but I would risk saying something inappropriate. But thank you very much for your kind remarks and your very frank perspective on the position of the Organization of American States in terms of these topical issues and big discussions. I will touch on it very briefly because I think you make an important point, and perhaps I didn't illustrate well what I was trying to say.

Our countries are all concerned with the big issues of our time. In the Caribbean, we are looking for ways to ensure energy security, whether geothermal, solar, or wind; in Central America, we're working on the Central American Electrical Interconnection System (SIEPAC), the Central America Clean Energy Corridor; and in South America, you have these very big initiatives of cross-border sharing and selling and cooperation on energy generation. So, clearly, it is a big issue and very topical in our hemisphere.

In Central America, for instance, if you talk about SIEPAC and energy integration, the conversation does not end with the ministers of energy. Yes, they are there, but the conversation also includes the ministry of foreign affairs, because you are talking about cross-border relationships. You're talking about the ministries of finance, because somebody has to make the decisions about money. You're talking about matters of the environment, and, at some point or another, all of these cross-cutting issues converge.

The OAS has the institutional infrastructure, with all of the sectoral meetings, to contribute to the discussion. The Organization may not be the protagonist in the energy sector, but it certainly can provide some avenues for advancing discussions. The OAS alone has that facility to bring together the ministries of energy, environment, sustainable development, and foreign affairs in a room.

Now, why is it that the OAS and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) have such a weak relationship? It is a very important question, and I'm not sure if there is a short answer. I know that efforts have been made in the past. I remember when one of the chairpersons of the Permanent

Council arranged a lunch between the permanent representatives and the Board of Directors of the IDB. I think it was a good initiative, but it didn't continue.

I think we're simply not talking to each other. That is the problem, and I don't think that it requires a magic wand to fix. The IDB is seven blocks away from here. We know the people there. I certainly know somebody who works at the IDB [risas.], and I think that we have to make the effort. We have to start somewhere. The new leadership of the OAS will have to seek that strength the Organization has—but doesn't use—as the center of the inter-American system. That linkage with the IDB is critical.

I think also that, in some instances, there has been some reticence to advance in that direction because, as I mentioned, not all OAS members are members of the IDB. There is the perception that the IDB may be reluctant to get involved in projects or in funding matters for which not all the beneficiaries are member states. I don't know, but we have to ask.

We have to talk to them; we have to talk to the management; we have to talk to the Board of Directors. We need to start. But when we go to them, we have to go with something very concrete. We can go and tell them: "You know, we want to work with you on poverty alleviation," and they will look at you and say: "Yes, so what do you want to do? We want to work on poverty alleviation, but tell me what you want to do." You know, we're talking to a set of bankers who look at things in a very specific way, and we can, too, if we prepare ourselves properly, formulate a project or an initiative that has cross-cutting appeal, and try to see how we can strengthen that weak relationship.

Thank you very much.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Mendez. Ambassador Moncada of Nicaragua, you have the floor.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE NICARAGUA: Muchas gracias, señora Presidenta.

Señora Presidenta, la Delegación de Nicaragua también quiere felicitar y agradecer por sus entusiastas planteamientos al estimado Embajador Nestor Mendez.

Embajador Mendez, teniendo en cuenta la experiencia acumulada en quince años en la Organización de los Estados Americanos, si es electo, una de sus actividades principales será la de actuar como Secretario del Consejo Permanente. Para cumplir sus funciones con eficiencia, qué haría y qué no haría como Secretario del Consejo Permanente; teniendo en cuenta, precisamente, las experiencias acumuladas. Por otro lado, también en el caso de que se dé la ausencia temporal o impedimento del Secretario General, el Secretario General Adjunto desempeñará las funciones del Secretario General.

Le agradecería sus comentarios sobre las dos hipotéticas situaciones. Una, cómo actuaría como Secretario del Consejo Permanente y qué no haría y también, en el hipotético caso de asumir el cargo de Secretario General temporalmente, de acuerdo con la posibilidad que plantea en la normativa.

Muchas gracias y le agradezco desde ya sus comentarios, Embajador Mendez.

Gracias.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Gracias, distinguido colega y querido hermano centroamericano.

Embajador Moncada, yo creo que usted es uno de los embajadores que comparten el nivel de antigüedad. No, creo que usted tiene un par de años más que yo en este Consejo. Y entonces, su pregunta es muy atinada: qué haría o no haría como Secretario del Consejo. Lo primero que haría es asegurarme de atender lo más posible las reuniones del Consejo Permanente porque, como Secretario, tienes que estar presente.

La otra cosa que haría es no dejar que la relación que como una bendición ahora tengo con los colegas del Consejo Permanente, deje de ser esa relación de respeto que valoro muchísimo. Entonces, necesitamos mantener una relación muy estrecha entre la Secretaría y el Consejo y como había mencionado, entre la Secretaría y el Consejo, el primer punto de enlace es a través de la persona del Secretario del Consejo. Mantendríamos esa relación muy estrecha, muy transparente y siempre a la orden del Consejo porque, al final del día, el Consejo es el que toma las decisiones. Nosotros implementamos, sugerimos, contribuimos con ideas, pero las decisiones las toma el órgano principal que es el Consejo Permanente.

Acerca de cómo desempeñaría yo el rol de Secretario General sea en la ausencia o en la partida del Secretario General, pienso que estar bastante integrado en todos los temas de la Organización, el trabajar muy, muy de cerca con el Secretario General en los temas, cualesquiera que estos sea, pondría al Secretario General Adjunto en un buen lugar para poder asumir las responsabilidades en la ausencia del Secretario General. Al compartir una visión vamos a saber qué es lo que queremos lograr. Y no se trata de que una persona vaya a actuar de una forma si no está el jefe; si compartimos la visión, actuaremos de la misma forma esté o no esté. Y al tomar las decisiones juntos, implementamos las decisiones esté o no esté el Secretario General.

Yo realmente creo en las relaciones de trabajo que son productivas y respetuosas. Y de ser elegido, realmente trataré de mantener una relación muy estrecha, muy seria y muy productiva con el Secretario General.

Gracias, Embajador Moncada.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Mendez. The Ambassador of Dominica has the floor.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE DOMINICA: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Madam Chair, I wish to express my delegation's thanks and congratulations to Ambassador Mendez for a comprehensive and spirited presentation.

Ambassador, you covered a range of issues that are all important to the transformation of the Organization of American States into an effective vehicle in the delivery of its core mandate. You described, and I firmly agree with you, the OAS as being uniquely suited for conducting policy dialogue on what you describe as the big issues of our hemisphere, and I certainly agree that energy and migration and education are appropriately described in that fashion.

You also spoke about several actions that you would take to improve the functioning and the motivation of the Secretariat. I very much like the idea of a coordinating structure within the Secretariat. Over the years, we have made that Secretariat very complex, and I am sure that it could do with some coordination.

I certainly support your views on the imperative of deeper collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). I certainly over the years have heard quite a few excuses as to why the small states of the Caribbean are not members of the IDB. I think all of these excuses are inadequate, since it is an organization that has to fashion the conditions for membership of its members appropriately, rather than the members fitting into a frame, certainly when it comes to size within our Organization. Our Organization has to be flexible enough to embrace the fundamental difference that our membership implies.

A key assumption, Ambassador, behind your presentation and that of Ambassador Karran this morning, is the capacity of the Office of the Assistant Secretary General to implement the reforms being proposed. In fact, I wonder how you would react to the suggestion that, given the relative powerlessness of the Office of the Assistant Secretary General, it would have been more effective to have made those presentations to the Secretary General in Council. Certainly, I hope that the agents around the table representing the potential Secretaries General are taking note, because it would really be a pity if some of the excellent suggestions coming from the candidates for the position of Assistant Secretary General were not taken on board when it comes to implementation.

My question has to do with what you see as the avenues open to the Assistant Secretary General in this context of relative powerlessness, given the fact that not many people expect that you would have—and, certainly, the Charter does not give you—an implementation responsibility.

The second question that I would like to ask—and I think you hinted at it—is: how do you interpret the term “Secretary”? The Assistant Secretary General is the Secretary of the Permanent Council, but in the context of our reform agenda, are there avenues for a more progressive interpretation that could allow us to take forward many of the suggestions that have emerged in your presentation and in the presentation of Ambassador Karran? In other words, is the Assistant Secretary General simply an independent actor, or in what ways can he—she if one emerges—be an independent actor? Or is the Assistant Secretary General fundamentally a tool of the Secretary General?

Thanks, Madam Chair.

La PRESIDENTA: Than you, Ambassador Charles. Ambassador Mendez, you have the floor.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you, Madam Chair. Ambassador, as usual, it's good to hear from you, another esteemed brother from the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Ambassador, I have had the opportunity to observe the workings of several administrations of the Organization of American States. We have also had the benefit of the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico reminding us of what it is that the Charter establishes as the role of the Assistant Secretary General.

What the Charter says is “duties that are assigned by the Secretary General.” Now, as I mentioned earlier, the duties that are assigned are as a result of a discussion between the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General. If you recall, a couple of weeks ago, the only candidate for Secretary General mentioned that, in his view, the Assistant Secretary General would have an enhanced role, more akin to that of a co-Secretary General than an Assistant per se.

So, taking all of this into account, I go back to where I started. I have had the opportunity to observe several administrations and in each one of these administrations, the levels of substantive delegation of responsibilities to the Assistant Secretary General have all been very different. So, I certainly don’t understand fully the idea that the Assistant Secretary General is powerless. I think that the Office of the Assistant Secretary General is an important post to which an individual is elected, and it has the level of power that comes to it through engagement with the Secretary General. In this case, if the only candidate for the post of Secretary General remains the only candidate, that engagement of the ASG will be very strong as a co-Secretary General.

In terms of the interpretation of what it means to be the Secretary of the Permanent Council, again I have seen varying levels of engagement, services, contacts, and proactivity on behalf of the person sitting at the end of this table with the rest of the semicircle. I think that, as we move forward in the restructuring and renovation of the Organization, the needs of the Organization will dictate what the Secretary General has to do to move the Organization forward. Remember what I said at the beginning? We are in this together—the Permanent Council, the Secretariat—and with all of us pointing in the same direction, I think it will become clear what the Assistant Secretary General has to do.

Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Mendez. The Ambassador of Paraguay has requested the floor. You have the floor, Ambassador.

La REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DEL PARAGUAY: Gracias, señora Presidenta. Gracias, Embajador Mendez, por su presentación.

Y quiero hacer más las palabras expresadas por la Embajadora Carmen Velásquez, de Venezuela, cuando que se refirió a su persona y a sus dotes personales. Para acortar el tiempo de mi exposición, no más.

Usted habló en algún momento sobre la ampliación de la membresía de los Estados Miembros del Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (BID). Esa medida estaría un poco relacionada, o en el camino, de lo que es el desarrollo integral dentro de la Organización de los Estados Americanos, lo cual creo que va a facilitar muchísimo el acceso a créditos y líneas no reembolsables, que tiene el BID para los Estados. Más o menos en esa línea, cuál sería su visión sobre cómo podemos potenciar el tema de inclusión social desde la Organización, Embajador Mendez.

Gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador. Ambassador Mendez, please go ahead.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Muchas gracias, Embajadora Elisa Ruiz Díaz y querida amiga.

El relacionamiento del Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (BID) con la Organización de los Estados Americanos, como se ha dicho, es un poco tenue, es un poco débil; en lugares, no existe. Tenemos que ver la forma de que se mejore.

Ahora, con respecto al tema exacto de la inclusión social, yo lo veo como un tema que es muy amplio y que impacta en todos los ambientes de nuestra vida. Los temas de desarrollo, de educación, de acceso a bienes del Estado, son todos componentes del mismo.

Como ejemplo, recuerdo las palabras de mi Canciller precisamente durante el período de sesiones de la Asamblea General realizado en Asunción, cuando él decía que el tema de la inclusión social requiere un cambio de pensamiento, un enfoque nuevo de cómo vemos a nuestra sociedad y cómo se reparten los bienes dentro de la sociedad, porque al final del día los que son excluidos son los que tienen menos capacidad de organizarse y hacer representación adecuada para asegurar que les lleguen los bienes que les corresponden como ciudadanos dentro de un Estado. Entonces es un tema bastante amplio.

¿Cómo la OEA podría contribuir a ello? No creo que sea un tema que se pueda tratar únicamente bajo el ámbito de desarrollo. Ese es un aspecto, un aspecto muy importante —la educación, la capacitación, oportunidades de empleo, acceso a la salud, acceso a los servicios sociales— y la OEA ya trabaja en estos temas. La Secretaría de la OEA tiene ahora una dependencia nueva sobre inclusión social y creo que nos va a ir ayudando a definir cómo abrimos el *smart cooperation* en el área de inclusión social.

¿Cuáles son las operaciones estratégicas claras que podemos hacer desde las diferentes secretarías de la OEA y cómo nos vamos vinculando con el BID, por ejemplo, para ver que los proyectos que vayan saliendo de la OEA puedan ser financiados? O cómo colaboramos con la Organización Panamericana de la Salud (PAHO), porque el tema de inclusión en el ámbito de la salud pública es un tema de mucha preocupación en muchos países. Cómo trabajamos con el Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación para la Agricultura (IICA), porque el tema de la seguridad alimentaria también es un tema que tiene que ver con la inclusión social.

Entonces creo que podemos esperar que de la unidad nueva vayan saliendo ciertas sugerencias que los Estados podrían considerar. Y podemos ver la forma de hacer operativas intervenciones específicas en el tema. Necesita definitivamente una aproximación integral porque es un tema que concierne a todos.

Gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Mendez. I would like to give the floor now to the Delegation of the United States of America.

El REPRESENTANTE INTERINO DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Ambassador Mendez for your very thoughtful, spirited, honest, passionate, and, indeed, compassionate presentation here this afternoon. I congratulate you and I thank you, as well as I do again to Ambassador Karran for his presentation this morning.

I don't know if I would go as far as Brazil in recommending that we do this annually, but if the two of you are interested in coming back and doing this again next year, it would certainly aid us all in this thoughtful dialoguing process that we're undertaking. So again, thank you very much for the seriousness of purpose displayed here.

I listened very closely to a number of the discussions with Mexico, Nicaragua, Dominica, and others on the issue of the relationship between the Assistant Secretary General and the Secretary General and, indeed, with the member states.

There's been much discussion of the development pillar today, either through the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) or otherwise, as one of the core four pillars. I'd like to ask a question about two of the other pillars: human rights and democracy. It is a very sensitive and highly political element of what we all do here, but, as was noted by Mexico, the position of Assistant Secretary General is an elected political position. How might you make recommendations to the Secretary General as to how to ensure that all member states are able to adhere to their very clear commitments in support of democracy and human rights?

Electoral observation missions (EOMs) are clearly critical to the Organization of American States brand, as has been discussed today. That is necessary but, obviously, in and of itself, not sufficient. In what other ways might you suggest that the OAS accompany all of us in deepening and strengthening our commitments in our exercise of both democracy and human rights?

As you suggested earlier today in your presentation, democracy is a process; it's a journey, if you will, and not just a destination. As we all seek ways to accompany each other through this process, I would appreciate your views on this. As you said, we're all in this together.

Thank you again very much.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you so much, Delegation of the United States. Ambassador Mendez, you have the floor.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you very much to the Delegation of the United States.

Yes, democracy and human rights are two of the pillars that we have not touched on this afternoon in too much detail. With respect to the pillar of human rights, I think that additional emphasis must be placed on promoting human rights. I think it is very important to make the issue of human rights more accessible to more people. Teaching them about their rights is very important, and utilizing the learning institutions in our countries is a very valuable asset that perhaps we are not using to its fullest.

I also think, as I said earlier, that in many jurisdictions, it would be a good thing, in addition to teaching about human rights, to expand such teaching to civic duties in a democratic society, because you have rights and responsibilities in a democratic country.

So, how can we increase our commitments to both pillars? I think they go hand in hand. At the bottom line is an honest, frank dialogue because while it is politically charged and while it is linked to several instances that we may view as unpleasant or a crisis, the truth is that if we have an honest dialogue up front, with everybody knowing what their roles are, some of the issues that become crises could be prevented from the beginning. I think it starts with an honest dialogue, honest communication between the Secretariat and the member states. Clearly, the relationship between the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General must also be extremely reflective of the need for this dialogue and this constant communication.

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador. I wish to give the floor now to the Delegation of Colombia. Ambassador, you have the floor.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE COLOMBIA: Muchas gracias, señora Presidenta.

Apreciado Embajador Mendez, mi país se une a las muchas voces aquí expresadas para manifestar la satisfacción por la importancia de su presentación. Y al mismo tiempo por el perfil: experiencia, condición humana. Creo que la Embajadora de San Vicente y las Granadinas hablaba que le ha impreso usted alma a su exposición y sin duda alguna trasciende el afecto por nuestra América; por todos nuestros países.

Y a estas alturas de la reflexión, pues sobresale igualmente la importancia de algo que constituye uno de los grandes patrimonios de la Organización de los Estados Americanos y es el Caribe. Cómo encontrar los mejores caminos para unir, integrar, para sacar el mejor provecho de ese valor tan importante —cultural, humano, geográfico— y entre otras cosas porque en la medida en que logremos unidad de todas nuestras Américas pues será más grande la OEA. Usted, que conoce el alma profunda del Caribe y del resto de nuestro continente, ¿qué haría, además de lo que ya ha expuesto, para aproximar, para integrar esos elementos sustanciales de nuestro hemisferio?

Y comparto con muchos de quienes aquí han expresado que si bien el desarrollo a veces tiene aspectos económicos que pudieran hacer muchas otras entidades, es desde lo político —con la orientación fundamental de las políticas públicas— que se puede integrar aquello que los simplemente banqueros no podrían hacer. Para eso son los Jefes de Estado y los embajadores plenipotenciarios quienes pueden unir a través de todos los lazos históricos, culturales; además de los tan importantes que son los de la economía.

De manera que preguntaría sustancialmente: ¿cómo contribuir a la grandeza de la OEA ahondando en la integración de nuestro Caribe con las otras regiones del Hemisferio?

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you Ambassador. Ambassador Mendez, please go ahead.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Querido Embajador de Colombia, muchas gracias por sus palabras. Para empezar a hablar del Caribe, necesitaría un par de días. Y, cómo integrar a la Organización de los Estados Americanos ha sido parte de la política exterior de mi país por mucho tiempo: la integración del

Caribe y Centroamérica. Nosotros somos la familia que une a las dos regiones y nos vemos como los primos en común de las dos regiones, entonces es un tema que vemos con el interés más más profundo.

Ahora, ¿cómo integrar más al Caribe dentro de la Organización? Hay muchas formas. Para empezar, podemos hacer caso de ese clamor que ha estado viniendo del Caribe por mucho tiempo de obtener mayor representatividad dentro de la Secretaría, porque la contribución de talento, la diversificación cultural dentro del personal de la OEA es algo que tiene valor. También hablaba yo antes de los *constituencies*, de los distritos electorales, ciertos temas que al Caribe le interesan, que se ven reflejados aquí en la Organización, creo que se pueden ir correlacionando de mejor manera, vinculándolos con temas similares que son de interés de miembros de otras regiones. Se me ocurre el área de cultura.

Ciertamente Colombia, como un país caribeño, conoce la profundidad del valor de la cultura. Y, por ejemplo, tuve la dicha de estar la semana pasada en las Bahamas —un lugar muy lindo por cierto— en una reunión de los Jefes de Gobierno de la Comunidad del Caribe (CARICOM) donde presentaba una iniciativa nueva, o no tan nueva, pero presentada de manera más integrada. Y se trata de cómo desarrollar los valores culturales de nuestras naciones del Caribe para darle un vínculo económico, cómo capitalizar la creatividad de nuestra juventud, expresada a través de la cultura para crear un bien económico para nuestros países.

Es una iniciativa que creo que tiene mucho valor y ciertamente con países como Colombia, países de Centroamérica que tienen mar Caribe. Es un área en la que podemos ir desarrollando y cooperando en la cultura que tenemos en común los de las playas bañadas por el mar Caribe. Es algo muy valioso y que el Caribe ha visto como algo que realmente le interesa desarrollar. Enfocando en esos temas específicos creo que podemos ir creando esas instancias para expandir la colaboración.

También conozco que hay algunos países en Suramérica y en el Caribe que tienen unos vínculos muy estrechos en términos de intercambio de docentes, de maestros de inglés y maestros de español. Creo que es un área que aunque ahora se maneja de manera puramente bilateral, es un área en que la OEA realmente puede ayudar a facilitar este tipo de intercambio, porque si nos conocemos mejor, nos llevamos mejor, cooperamos mejor y ultimadamente es para el beneficio de todos nuestros países.

Gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador. I wish to give the floor now to the Delegation of Costa Rica. Ambassador Barahona, please go ahead.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE COSTA RICA: Gracias, señora Presidenta.

Buenas tardes colega Embajador Nestor Mendez. Mi Delegación le extiende un respetuoso agradecimiento a usted, Embajador Mendez, y a su Gobierno por enriquecer con su candidatura este proceso con ideas, con posturas que reflejan, sin duda, un cúmulo de experiencia apreciable en el marco de la Organización de los Estados Americanos y más allá.

Puntualmente usted afirma y traduzco del inglés —pues no me llegó en español su presentación; pero como dice el Representante del Brasil, Dias da Costa, nadie es perfecto— me

excusa por la traducción que usted podrá corregir. Dice “no podemos seguir el mismo patrón, con las mismas acciones y esperando resultados diferentes”, con lo que coincido plenamente. Y de ello derivó dos posturas, dos tesis de principio.

Una, que usted tiene una visión crítica del curso actual de la Organización de los Estados Americanos, lo cual creo que es necesario, y esa es tesis de esta Delegación, para aspirar al cargo al que usted está aspirando. Y segundo, también coligo de esa afirmación que usted está dispuesto a explorar y transitar de alguna manera nuevos terrenos con tal de llegar a nuevos lugares comunes y consensuados, desde luego.

Y siendo así, y dado que usted mismo lo menciona, entonces aprovechamos para preguntarle precisamente: ¿qué haría diferente? Pero, sobre todo, y ojo aquí, ¿cómo lo haría? Y le agradecería especial mención a lo que refiere a lograr incidir desde su eventual rol como Secretario General Adjunto —con las limitaciones pero también con las capacidades que ello implica, desde luego— le agradecería especial mención en el ámbito del fortalecimiento y la promoción de los derechos humanos. Primera área en la que le pido concretar.

Y segundo, en la recarga democrática me atrevo a afirmar, en el Hemisferio, que hoy sin duda exige una participación ciudadana informada y consecuencia de ello —porque hay una relación aquí causa y efecto, en doble vía— mucho más beligerante y por tanto una conciencia democrática-institucional mucho más madura también. Y así entonces viene la pregunta más concreta derivada de este preámbulo. Y es: ¿cómo considera usted se puede potenciar a la OEA como foro político hemisférico por excelencia, tomando en cuenta que en política no hay sillas vacías? Y si la OEA va abandonando espacios de liderazgo en el camino, esos espacios igual se irán llenando tarde o temprano.

En tercer término quisiera preguntarle, y también valiéndome de este documento-resumen que usted nos ha distribuido esta tarde, y a su vez partiendo también del compromiso que han adquirido en esta Sala los dos candidatos que le han precedido a usted en estas comparecencias, de no reelegirse. Curiosamente, los dos alegando condiciones etarias, que por cierto no todos compartimos y ello en vista de que los adultos mayores tienen tanto que dar como los jóvenes, y la Organización de las Naciones Unidas ha hablado de adultocentrismo, pero también de que una forma de exclusión y de marginación es también el pensar que hay generaciones de abajo o de arriba que no pueden aportar en igualdad de condiciones, de su experiencia, de sus capacidades, potencialidades y limitaciones.

Pero digo que tienen tanto que dar los jóvenes, incluso los que estamos en medio de ese puente generacional, ya dejamos de ser jóvenes hace unos diez años, pero ciertamente nos faltan unos veinte o treinta para alcanzar también esa categoría tan respetable de la tercera edad, o de los adultos mayores. Y estando, por tanto lejos de eso todavía, quisiera repetirle la pregunta que usted, permítame decirle, evitó en una lección de muy buena diplomacia cuando se la hicieron más temprano aquí.

Pero quisiera preguntarle en términos muy concretos. Es decir, asumiendo —y colóquese en ese escenario, ese es el encuadre que le doy para que no se me salga tan fácil esta vez— asumiendo que usted resulte electo, ¿tiene usted interés de ser reelegido o no, hoy? Usted me puede decir que en cinco años cambia posición es entendible; pero hoy, cuál sería su tesis y a responder. Yo parto de lo que usted dice en el documento distribuido “la OEA tiene la oportunidad única de renovarse una vez cada década; una vez...” Entonces, le pediría referirse a esta que es mi segunda pregunta.

Y cierro finalmente aclarando que, y esto ya no es una pregunta, yo no quisiera cargarle a usted sobre los hombros, menos a estas horas ingratas ya donde todos estamos cansados; pero usted sobre todo porque ha tenido que resistir aquí este bombardeo y lo ha hecho muy bien, por cierto, lo que bien han incluido otros colegas esta tarde en el sentido de que nos corresponde a los Estados — y ahí el colega Arrighi, entiendo que quizás tendrá una lectura similar— fijar con mayor precisión cuál es el rol del Secretario General Adjunto; si esa fuera la tesis mayoritaria, es decir de fijar mayor precisión.

Pero yo no quisiera soslayar, y eso con esto cierro, que la omisión histórica de mantener desregulado ese aspecto, salvo lo mínimo, que es lo que sí está establecido, sea una decisión más bien voluntaria. Es decir, que por cierto esa omisión expresa mucho de por sí, que podríamos colegir en términos de que precisamente al omitir una regulación más específica sobre lo que tiene que hacer o cuáles son los encargos del Secretario General; al evitar esa especificidad lo que han buscado los Estados más bien es dejar que el Secretario General Adjunto se dedique al final a lo que el Secretario General titular piense y decida como lo más congruente con su agenda e intención, siendo él el líder, en consecuencia el responsable ejecutivo de la Organización ante los Estados — por algo es el Secretario General— y el otro tiene el encargo, bien lo decía usted en una respuesta, de esa primera palabra, de adjunto, nada más. Y por qué no decirlo entonces también, el primer responsable no solo ante los Estados sino ante la sociedad civil.

Esto lo comento, pero desde luego se lo dejo servido por si usted tiene algún comentario, una visión distinta porque me parece que dicen tanto los Estados al regular como al no regular y me gustaría también eventualmente si usted encuentra espacio y quiere abonar a esto también por si alguna tesis o alguna lectura de su parte.

Muchas gracias, candidato Embajador Nestor Mendez.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Barahona. Ambassador Mendez, you have the floor.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Gracias a nuestro distinguido colega de Costa Rica y hermano centroamericano. Siempre es interesante escucharlo Embajador Barahona, la forma como analiza una perspectiva y lo va reduciendo hasta lo más básico y a analizarlo ya de forma más científica desde un punto de vista legal. Me parece siempre muy interesante escucharlo.

Su pregunta respecto a qué haría yo diferente para fortalecer el tema de promoción, protección de derechos humanos. En primer lugar, la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (CIDH) tiene cierto nivel de autonomía, lo que no la insula totalmente del actuar de la Organización de los Estados Americanos. Yo pienso que para promover la promoción y el fortalecimiento del sistema de derechos tenemos que buscar las avenidas que quizás no hemos explorado. Porque como usted decía, no podemos seguir haciendo lo mismo de la misma forma y esperar un resultado diferente. Yo pienso que al intentar con más énfasis la avenida de la promoción, de la utilización de centros de educación para ir generando concientización, para ir creando la discusión en los países para que eventualmente haya una discusión más generalizada acerca de esos temas. Creo que tenemos que empezar por ahí en ciertos países.

Ahora, nos queda bien claro que hay muchas críticas al sistema y es un tema que no podemos ni debemos evitar. Creo que para fortalecer el sistema necesitamos más diálogo; pero diálogo verdadero, formal o informal, y no un diálogo donde nos sentamos alrededor de una mesa, como estamos ahora, porque es muy difícil que se pueda avanzar más allá de las posiciones que hechas públicas. Cuando hablamos de diálogo abierto y sincero hablamos de un espíritu de acercamiento, de buscar una solución. Y eso no siempre pasa en una mesa muy formal. Lo conocemos. Acá en el Consejo sabemos que cuando estamos negociando un proyecto de resolución, la mejor forma de llegar a texto de consenso no es detrás de los micrófonos en un ambiente formal. Nos separamos en una reunión informal, empezamos a hablar entre nosotros directamente e ir bajando de tono y entrando a los temas técnicos para ver cómo llegamos a algo que podamos ponernos de acuerdo.

Necesitamos más instancias de ese tipo de diálogo entre los Estados pero también entre la CIDH y los Estados. Como Secretario General Adjunto a mí me gustaría mucho trabajar para crear esos espacios porque también yo pienso que muchas veces los problemas que se generan pueden ser evitados o contenidos, o que sean menores, si empezamos a dialogar y a tratarlos de antemano, desde que empiezan a surgir.

Ahora, preguntaba acerca de la reelección y yo le contesté anteriormente al colega de Guatemala que es un poco prematuro hablar de reelección y todavía no he sido electo por primera vez. Y usted me pregunta de manera muy directa si el día de hoy a mí me interesaría la reelección. Y realmente me pone en una situación un poco extraña para mí porque no conozco la respuesta. Creo en el sistema interamericano. Creo en la OEA. Creo que la Organización puede ser robustecida, puede ser moldeada, renovada para dar rendimiento concreto y beneficioso a nuestros países. Y creo que con empeño en esa dirección y teniendo bien claro a dónde se toman las decisiones y pero cómo se puede contribuir a esas decisiones, creo que se puede ir logrando cosas que no hemos hecho hasta ahora.

Entonces, nada más le digo que creo en el sistema. No sé si resultaré electo y ojala que sí; por eso estoy acá, porque quiero ser electo. Si resulto electo, quizás en dos años estaría en mucha mejor posición para decirle sí sigo, o no sigo. Por ahora le digo vamos a esperar al 18 de marzo y a ver qué pasa.

Gracias.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Mendez. I wish to give the floor to Ambassador Vasciannie of Jamaica.

El REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE JAMAICA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would like to thank Ambassador Mendez for his excellent presentation, for the clear and concise documents setting out his perspectives, and for his precise responses to the questions that have been posed.

The hour is late, so I will be very brief. I have two questions.

The first one concerns the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). You have said that you would promote dialogue about reform of the Commission. I was wondering, in that dialogue, what are some of the issues that you would support and some of the issues that you would oppose, bearing in mind that we have had at least a three-year debate on the subject so far? What are

some of the things that appeal to you, and what are some of the things that you regard as not acceptable?

My second question is, what specific efforts should the OAS put in place in order to bring about increased participation of under-represented countries within the staff of the Secretariat?

Thank you, Madam Chair.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Vasciannie. Ambassador Mendez, you have the floor.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and thank you, Ambassador, my dear friend and Caribbean Community (CARICOM) brother. Thank you for your question.

It is true that we have had an extended period of dialogue and consultations among the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the member states. It is also true that the Permanent Council has gone to great lengths to work on this dialogue. I think we have to take more creative approaches, not necessarily a change of issues, because the preoccupations and concerns of member states with regard to the Commission and its functioning are varied. We have to look for those places of informal dialogue where you can actually speak to the core issues at hand. I am not sure whether we have given enough time to this kind of dialogue that could help us to arrive at some modicum of, maybe not consensus, but general agreement on certain issues.

I would not want to go further than that because the range of issues under the Inter-American Commission is so varied. I would not want to comment on issues that could be potentially sensitive for certain countries, but I do believe that the dialogue is absolutely essential. We have to stop problems before they become crises. We have to deal with them beforehand.

On the matter of increasing the number of staff members from member states that are under-represented, I think that increased transparency and fairness, as well as well publicized and articulated criteria for recruitment at the Organization of American States, is key. I also think that we cannot continue doing what we are doing right now and expect a different result. There must be a reason why some countries—and I certainly count Belize among them—are under-represented in the Organization.

Perhaps, thinking ahead and thinking creatively, we may have to do what other organizations like the United Nations or the World Bank do: every year, you assign a certain priority or additional weight to applicants from a region or a number of countries that are under-represented. These kinds of models have been attempted. I don't see why we can't try it at the OAS. I think we have to be creative, and I think we really have to look at the matter of having a more diverse representation in the Secretariat.

Having said all that, this does not mean that we will compromise on the quality of the candidates because we need to have the best people for the jobs. Yes, we need representatives from all regions and all countries, and yes, we have to find ways of getting in here, but I don't think it should be at the cost of sacrificing the quality of the employees. In my estimation, that includes people in trust positions. They have to meet the criteria and the profile, and they must be able to contribute.

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you Ambassador Mendez. I would like to give the floor to Barbados. Ambassador Beale, go ahead.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BARBADOS: Thank you, Madam Chair, and I'd like to congratulate Ambassador Mendez for his excellent presentation. It's obvious to me that he has read a lot about leadership because one thing about leadership is that no one—and, I repeat no one—follows any leader who is negative, and your presentation was very clear, dynamic, enthusiastic, and positive.

There were a number of comments on the issue of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). I know that you have some eyes and ears inside of the IDB. It is important that you mentioned that you were keen to do something to improve the relationship, and it's absolutely essential, given that the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) is not inside of the IDB. The Bahamas and Barbados are there, but we have graduated, so we also have a problem. I'd like to mention, too, that the United States Congress mentioned that it wants to see the OAS and the IDB get together a lot more, so I would encourage you to do that. If you need someone to help you in any way, I am certainly available.

I want to ask you a question that is somewhat related to what Guatemala and Cost Rica brought up, but I will not ask you to make a decision. One thing I found out today is that the candidate for Secretary General is only putting himself forward for one term, and the same applies to the other candidate for Assistant Secretary General. You seem to be indecisive, which is fine at this stage. I guess what he's thinking is that after five years, he might want to go after the Secretary General position. I only want to ask you one question, not whether you want to go after one or the other: do you think you have the energy and gas to go more than five years?

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Very clear questions, Ambassador Beale. Ambassador Mendez, you have the floor.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and thank you, too, Ambassador Beale.

You know, Ambassador Beale, I've listened to interventions around this table many, many, many times, and I can always count on you to cut to the chase and to be as brief as possible. That really is a virtue, especially, you know, when some of us don't have that virtue and become a little long-winded.

But to your specific question: do I have the energy and the gas? Yes! Absolutely! Would I want to do it? The answer, in truth: I don't know. But it doesn't take away from the capacity to do it if the occasion arose, and that I just want to make very clear. Yes, I do. Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Mendez. The last speaker on our list today is the Delegation of Suriname. Sir, go ahead please.

EI REPRESENTANTE ALTERNO DE SURINAME: Thank you, Madam Chair.

On behalf of the Delegation of Suriname, I want to thank Ambassador Mendez for his excellent presentation. I have one question, which I also asked this morning, and that is: in light of the goals of the Organization of American States to intensify cooperation with other regional and subregional organizations, what role do you envision for the Office of the Assistant Secretary General in advancing this type of convergence and complementarity?

Thank you.

EL REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you to the Representative of Suriname. To start with, I am very familiar with two regional organizations, the Central American Integration System (SICA) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). I know both of them fairly well. I know how they work, I've worked with them, I know their process for setting priorities, and I know their priorities at this moment. So, the complementary role of the Organization of American States would not take long to develop with these regional integration systems.

Earlier, I had mentioned that the CARICOM Strategic Plan, which was approved by the heads of government—I think it was last year—is a very clear blueprint and an extremely useful guide for what the CARICOM heads have decided that the region needs to develop. So, we don't have to be guessing what the area needs, and we shouldn't. We have CARICOM representatives around the table. But to start the conversation, we already know as a region what their priorities are.

The same applies to Central America, which has been working on a Central American Strategic Plan for some years now, and it has taken a lot of effort—I think it needs a lot more—because it is dealing with a serious issue that is absolutely important to the Central American region, and that is security. It impacts everything: development, human rights, and the ability of the state to exercise its full administrative jurisdiction. It is such a difficult question and so important for the region that I can see where the OAS can have an input in complementing some of the efforts.

But beyond that, as I said before, I think that the strength of the OAS not only relies on what we have here in this building or on F Street; it relies also on where the Organization lies at the center of the inter-American system. We have the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), which is the son or daughter of the OAS; we have the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO); we have the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA); we have the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF); we have the Young Americas Business Trust (YABT). A lot of these agencies have capacity to help us implement our mandates. I think that the Assistant Secretary General can play a very important role in these initiatives.

Going further south, I'm sure that what the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) is doing and what the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) is doing. . . . For instance; I spoke about CELAC's proposal for the scholarship program. I think it's a very good thing because it is expanding opportunities for our people, and that is what we are about. It's not a competition; it's a complement, and we have to build on these complements.

So, to round off the answer, I think the Assistant Secretary General, given the strategic positioning that I described earlier in the Organization, is uniquely positioned to help develop these synergies and complement the work of the regional organizations—clearly, after it has been agreed with the Secretary General that this is one of the things that he will be doing.

Thank you.

La PRESIDENTA: Thank you, Ambassador Mendez.

COMENTARIOS FINALES DEL EMBAJADOR NESTOR MENDEZ,
REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE, CANDIDATO AL CARGO DE
SECRETARIO GENERAL ADJUNTO DE LA OEA

La PRESIDENTA: There are no further requests for the floor, so we will now hear concluding remarks by Ambassador Mendez. You have the freedom to speak from the table or from the roster. It's up to you, Ambassador.

EI REPRESENTANTE PERMANENTE DE BELIZE: Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, sometimes the simplest decisions are the hardest ones. I like to stand up because of my height and I feel a little bigger so I would like to go there, but I also want to talk to my colleagues at the level of the table. So, I think I would rather do it from here.

After having spoken most of the afternoon and attempting to answer the very valid questions and concerns and trying to complement the points of view around the table, it really would be abusive on my part to try to extend myself. All I want to say is thank you very much for listening to me. When I said that it was an honor for me to have the opportunity to stand before you—to sit in this instance—as a candidate for the Government of Belize, it is something that my country holds very dear. We have never put forward a candidate for any position such as this, so, for us, it is extremely important. I would be very happy to continue discussing with any one of you, at your leisure, any points that you may want to further develop.

But what I want to tell you is that I believe in the system. I think we can change the Organization of American States, and I think we can do it together. Once we start talking in an open and frank manner, respectfully, and with the best intentions in the world, I think we can move ahead. I want to ask you for the opportunity to do that with you.

Thank you.

[Aplausos.]

COMENTARIOS FINALES DE LA PRESIDENTA DEL CONSEJO PERMANENTE

La PRESIDENTA: Esteemed colleagues, today, we had the opportunity to listen to the candidates nominated for the position of Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States. Each of the candidates has shared with us their visions, proposals, and initiatives for the revitalization of our Organization.

On behalf of the Permanent Council, I would like to thank Ambassador Karran and Ambassador Mendez for being with us in the morning and afternoon portions of our meeting. In their presentations, both candidates have highlighted the critical importance of dialogue, coordination, cooperation, communication, transparency, and trust in order to make the undertakings of our Organization more successful. To this end, they have demonstrated their commitment to inter-American solidarity and to furthering the work of our Organization.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is clear that we are all committed to initiatives to further strengthen the Organization. We are all committed to the furthering of dialogue, the upholding of democracy and democratic institutions, the consolidation of political consensus through hemispheric solidarity, and cooperation through subregional and regional integration mechanisms.

In closing, it is fair to indicate that we are looking forward to the election of the new Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General of the Organization during the special session of the General Assembly that will be held here in the Hall of the Americas on March 18, 2015.

Esteemed colleagues, this concludes the consideration of the items on our order of business. I would like to adjourn the meeting, and I thank you for your very fruitful and enlightening participation.

[Aplausos.]

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