

Ambassador Nestor Mendez
Assistant Secretary General, Organization of American States

Nestor Mendez was elected to be the ninth Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS) on March 18, 2015. He began serving his five-year term on July 13, 2015 with a commitment to work closely with the Secretary General and the member states to reinvigorate and modernize the institution.

The Assistant Secretary General based his platform on five main thematic areas: improving regional inter-connectivity; fostering economic growth, addressing the impacts of climate change and natural disasters; promoting partnerships for development, and working to empower and respond to the needs of the youth across the hemisphere.

Upon receiving the mandate from member states, he pledged his “unwavering commitment to seize the opportunity that is before us to work together to transform the OAS into the Organization that we want and that the people of the Americas deserve.”

Prior to his election, Nestor Mendez was a career diplomat in the Foreign Service of Belize. He served as the Ambassador to the United States of America, Permanent Representative to the OAS, and Non-Resident High Commissioner to Canada.

As Ambassador of Belize to the United States, he travelled throughout the country to engage with the Belizean Diaspora and to meet with prospective investors and companies interested in investing in Belize. He also focused on a wide range of development issues pertaining to the Caribbean and Central America such as alternative sources of energy, micro, small and medium sized enterprises, trade and investment promotion, and security.

During his tenure as Permanent Representative of Belize to the OAS, Ambassador Mendez chaired several Councils and Committees of the organization including the Permanent Council, the Committee on Hemispheric Security, the Special Committee for Migration Issues, and the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI) where he focused on matters related to innovation, competitiveness, and supporting micro, small and medium sized enterprises as engines for economic growth and development. As Chair of the OAS Permanent Council, he used this platform to focus attention on climate change and introduced several institutional initiatives to increase awareness of the impact of this phenomenon, especially on the smaller and more vulnerable states.

Ambassador Mendez previously held diplomatic posts at the High Commission for Belize in London, United Kingdom where he served as Counsellor and at the Embassy of Belize in Guatemala where served as First Secretary.

He holds a Master’s Degree in International Policy and Practice from George Washington University in Washington, D.C., a Graduate Level Certificate in Diplomatic Studies from Oxford University in Oxford, United Kingdom, and a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration from the University College of Belize in Belize City, Belize.

He is married and has two children.