

**STATEMENT BY DIRECTOR OF THE OAS DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TO
PLENARY OF THE CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE
CARIBBEAN: FOLLOW-UP TO THE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA BEYOND 2015 AND TO RIO+20**

Madam Chairman, Excellences, distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

I bring greetings on behalf of Secretary-General Jose Miguel Insulza for a successful meeting.

Permit me to convey my thanks and those of the OAS delegation to the Government and people of Colombia for the many courtesies extended to us since our arrival. I thank also the Executive Director of ECLAC, Alicia Barcena and the Director of ECLAC's Regional Office, Diane Quarless, for making it possible for the OAS to be present at this important meeting.

The OAS is honored to be part of this meeting, the objectives of which go well beyond a timeframe to the very heart of the primary concerns of the OAS, which is sustaining the livelihoods of the peoples of the Americas.

The OAS Charter commits the OAS to remain engaged in all aspects of the development of the peoples of the Americas. Its work spans the gamut of issues being discussed at this meeting including sustainable development, social inclusion and social development, economic development, multidimensional security, and human rights.

Since the 1940s the Member states of the OAS have been working assiduously, both individually and collectively to address their shared environmental challenges in sustainable development in areas such as energy, water, biodiversity, risk management and environmental governance. In this regard, the OAS has adopted several hemispheric-wide, soft law and policy instruments that are increasingly being translated into national laws, policies and strategies that support good governance in its Member States.

Permit me in this regard to mention the Western Hemisphere Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation, which is the first global instrument of its type and which has served as the basis of legal regimes for the management of parks and protected areas in many OAS Member States. Another unique instrument is the Inter-American Strategy for the Promotion of Public Participation in Decision-making for Sustainable Development (IASP) which offers a concrete platform on which to build progress on Principle 10, - a stated priority of several Latin American states in the post-2015 process. This Strategy recognizes that meaningful public participation in decision-making processes depend on laws and regulations that ensure access to relevant and timely information, access to decision-making processes and access to the justice system. All of the evidence from our work in the region confirms that an informed civil

society can become an active partner in the development process and that partnerships based on shared goals and aspirations can produce multiple benefits for peoples, for their societies and the environment.

The Santa Cruz and Santo Domingo Declarations on Sustainable Development, the Inter-American Program on Sustainable Development, the OAS Social Charter and the Inter-American Competitiveness Network are just a few of the tools being used in the OAS to create an enduring framework for continuing interventions by the OAS in the pursuit of inclusive and sustainable development.

The OAS looks forward to contributing the lessons gleaned from its work in these and other areas of relevance to this meeting as together we design and implement the post-2015 development agenda.

Cletus I Springer

March 8, 2013