The Dialogue of Heads of Delegations and the Secretary General with Representatives of Workers, the Private Sector, Civil Society, and other Social Actors, conducted in the framework of the forty-third regular session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS), afforded the representatives of networks of civil society and social actors, labor unions, and the private sector an opportunity to make recommendations to the Heads of Delegations of the Member States and the OAS Secretary General regarding the theme of the General Assembly session "For a Comprehensive Policy against the World Drug Problem in the Americas." It was also an opportunity to exchange points of view and discuss the policies being implemented by the Member States and the OAS on that subject. The Dialogue was moderated by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, Ambassador Luis Fernando Carrera Castro, and the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, Ambassador Carlos Raul Morales Moscoso, in their capacity as representatives of the host country of the forty-third regular session of the General Assembly.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala welcomed the Heads of Delegation, the OAS Secretary General, Jose Miguel Insulza, the Assistant Secretary General, Ambassador Albert Ramdin, and the representatives of social society, social actors, workers, and the private sector. Like the OAS Secretary General, he underscored the importance of the Dialogue and said that his government appreciated the civil society’s participation and its recommendations regarding the subject of the forty-third regular session of the General Assembly, particularly with respect to challenges in health, public security, access to justice, and human rights, put forward at the Tenth Hemispheric Forum with Civil Society and Social Actors, held on May 9-10, 2013 at OAS Headquarters in Washington, D.C. The Minister pointed out that the draft Declaration of Antigua contained two important paragraphs on civil society's contributions in this area. He said that the Preamble stressed the importance of civil society participation in confronting the drug problem, including its participation in the design and implementation of public policies reflecting its experience, while the operative part of the Declaration called for a broad and open debate enabling all sectors of society to participate and, where applicable, to continue providing their knowledge and experience in order to strengthen regional and national strategies in this field.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala said that this recognition of the part played by civil society afforded a great opportunity to continue supporting governments' efforts to attack the multiple roots of
the drug problem and the challenges associated with it, as well as to forge partnerships to ensure that
the policies pursued by the OAS Member States focused on damage control, prevention, and
rehabilitation. He then welcomed the participants once again, thanked Secretary General Insulza and his
team for their support in bringing about the forty-third regular session of the OAS General Assembly,
and explained how the meeting would proceed.

For his part, the OAS Secretary General underscored the importance and scope of the Dialogue with civil
society organizations. He said that there were more civil society organizations participating in the forty-
third session than in any other session in the history of the OAS General Assembly. He mentioned the
informal talks held with those organizations on the previous day and acknowledged their concern with
the drug problem in the Americas. He commended the respectful tone of their interventions and their
contributions to the work of the OAS. He said that the doors of the Organization of American States
were always open for the civil society organizations of the Americas.

The Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs then offered the floor to the civil society representatives.

YOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Wesley Gervais, Founder of the Hivesource project and representative of the Talent and
Innovation Competition of the Americas (TIC Americas), presented the recommendations of the young
people who took part in the TIC Americas 2013, held in Antigua, Guatemala, on June 2 and 3, 2013,
where they discussed matters relating to youth entrepreneurship and solutions to the socioeconomic
and environmental challenges facing the Americas from a youth perspective. Mr. Gervais spoke about
the need for governments in the region to establish Ministries of Entrepreneurship to support young
people's innovative ideas and their concerns at the lack of employment opportunities. He suggested that
the OAS Member States should implement public policies aimed at improving the conditions for youth
entrepreneurship and the establishment of businesses.

REMARKS BY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Ms. Carmen Rosa de Leon-Escribano of the Instituto de Enseñanza para el Desarrollo Sostenible
(IEPADES) spoke on behalf of civil society organizations engaged in the fight against drug problems and
acknowledged that the OAS General Secretariat and the Organization's Member States were making a
positive contribution to the discussion of a more humane and effective drug policy. She stressed the
need to distinguish between criminal, security, and personal narcotic drug use aspects and to consider
drug use a social health issue. She added that, given the association of firearms with drug trafficking,
states that have not yet done so should ratify the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit
Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials
(CIFTA). She expressed support for experimenting with regulatory models in respect of marijuana and
that states should foster open and ample debate in which civil society could support boosting national
strategies for combating drug trafficking.

Ms. Iduvina Hernandez of the Asociación para el Estudio y Promoción de la Seguridad en Democracia
(SEDEN), presented recommendations on behalf of civil society organizations working to promote and
protect human rights. Regarding the leitmotif of the forty-third regular session of the General Assembly,
she emphasized that drug policies should guarantee complete respect for human rights and be viewed
from a health perspective. She underscored the importance of states committing to finance social
inclusion projects aimed at adolescents and youth and to protect the rights of vulnerable groups
affected by drug trafficking. On the inter-American human rights system (IAHRS), she stressed the need to respect its autonomy and independence and called upon OAS Member States to support all the rapporteurships of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and to cooperate with that Commission during its on site visits.

Ms. Gloria Nunez of Afroamerica XXI spoke on behalf of the civil society organizations working to promote the rights of Afrodescendants and voiced their concern at the increase in insecurity, drug trafficking, and drug use among young people in those communities. She acknowledged the OAS Member States' work in presenting draft resolutions on the Inter-American Convention against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance and on the Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Related Forms of Intolerance for adoption by the OAS General Assembly. She emphasized that those states needed to lend effective support to the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Persons of African Descent and against Racial Discrimination and to adopt the measures needed to eliminate the vulnerability and lack of opportunities besetting that segment of the population.

REMARKS BY WORKERS' REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Francisco Quijano of the Trade Union Technical Advisory Council (COSATE)underscored the OAS Member States' responsibility for preventing the drug problem, which, he said, had a particularly harmful effect on workers in the Americas. He said that the main cause of drug-related violence and insecurity and systematic human rights violations had to do with the imposition of 30 years of neoliberal policies that weakened states and fostered social exclusion. He added that drug use was a social health issue and that more robust national health systems were needed. He also voiced concern for the gender-based intimidation, trafficking and violence to which women in the region are subjected.

Ms. Amanda Villatoro of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA/CSA) said she agreed with the COSATE representative that the drug problem should be addressed from a social health perspective mindful of human rights. She therefore called upon governments in the region to promote comprehensive strategies to foster social inclusion, education, and prevention. She mentioned the need for the OAS Member States to guarantee access to justice for all their citizens, promote decent work, and protect the environment. She asked the OAS General Secretariat to furnish technical support for the Member States so as to enable them to attain the objectives of the Declaration of Antigua Guatemala “For a Comprehensive Policy against the World Drug Problem in the Americas” and she reaffirmed the commitment of the workers of the Americas to participate proactively in the design and implementation of policies geared to guaranteeing peace and security for the population.

REMARKS BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Mr. Jose Santiago Molina of the Comite Coordinador de Asociaciones Agricolas, Comerciales, Industriales y Financieras (CACIF) presented the principal conclusions of the OAS Private Sector Forum held in Antigua, Guatemala on May 31, 2013, to discuss "Connecting Enterprises as Partners for Prosperity in the Americas." He argued that security and institution-building were prerequisites for business development in the region and pointed to the importance of promoting investment and respect for private property. He stressed that a public-private partnership on security should be promoted to foster the use of state-of-the-art technology for curbing violence and that the private sector was a strategic ally of the region's states and hemispheric organizations in the fight against corruption and insecurity.
Mr. John Craig of the Business Technical Advisory Committee on Labor Matters (CEATAL) expressed concern about the impact drugs were having on youth and at the negative effects of drug use not just on health but also on labor productivity and effectiveness. He emphasized that the attitude of many employers toward the drug problem had evolved from dissuasion, controls and penalties toward prevention and support. He suggested that today's fight against drugs and the policies currently deployed could be reinforced by a strategic partnership and greater cooperation between employers and employees, as well as the creation of better job opportunities for young people.

Following this first round of comments by the representatives of civil society, workers, the private sector, and other social actors, the floor was offered to the Heads of Delegation of the Member States, for them to comment on the recommendations put forward.

**COMMENTS BY MEMBER STATES**

Ms. Diane Ablonczy, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs (Americas and Consular Affairs) of Canada acknowledged the effort made by civil society to attend the Dialogue and the quality of its recommendations regarding the central theme of the forty-third regular session of the General Assembly. Minister Ablonczy reiterated her government's support for dialogues of this kind which, in this case, afforded it insight into civil society's perspectives on the drug problem.

Ambassador Neil Parsan, Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago to the OAS, acknowledged the active part played by civil society, workers, and the private sector in support of the Member States' efforts to combat the drug trade and implement public policies. He pointed out, in particular, that the diversity of civil society organizations meant that they can come up with solutions to a series of problems by taking into account the diverse needs and perspectives of different segments of society. He said his government was undertaking public consultations on setting up a Civil Society Board which would provide a forum for dialogue with CSOs and through which they could contribute to the economic decision-making process. Ambassador Parsan added that no government could function effectively without the support of civil society.

Counselor Frank Tressler, Alternate Representative of Chile to the OAS, thanked the civil society organizations for their participation and assured them that his government would take their recommendations into account. Referring to the presentations given by the civil society organizations, he said that his government shared the view that the inter-American human rights system needs boosting and confirmed Chile's commitment to that end. Referring to job opportunities for youth, he said it required cutting red tape and streamlining procedures for setting up businesses, more robust institutions in the region, and the implementation of drug abuse prevention policies, including the incorporation of prevention in school curricula, as ways to tackle the drug problem. He ended his remarks by reiterating Chile's commitment to promoting participation by civil society organizations and other social actors.

Ambassador Hubert J. Charles, Permanent Representative of Dominica to the OAS, underscored the importance his government attaches to dialogues with civil society. He asserted that, due to the negative effects of the policies pursued to combat drugs over the past 15 years, fresh perspectives were needed that took human rights and regional democracy into account. He stressed that competitiveness and viability were determined not just by resources and human creativity but also by equal opportunity. That was why it was important to ensure that Afro-descendants and indigenous peoples also enjoyed such opportunities for furthering their integral development.
Ambassador Pablo Tettamanti, Director of International Organizations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Argentine Republic, emphasized the importance of addressing the world drug problem as a social and health issue. He stressed that education and health were essential aspects in the design of effective, long-term public policies. He proposed a multidimensional approach to the problem that would look at demand-side causes from a human rights perspective and coordinate prevention, drug trafficking control, and aid-for-addicts policies, rather than focus exclusively on criminal aspects. Ambassador Tettamanti said that his government recognized the importance of citizen participation and of co-responsibility in joint work by the government and civil society to promote social inclusion and regional development.

Ambassador Deborah Mae Lovell, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the OAS, expressed her government’s support for the recommendations presented. With respect to those put forward by the young people’s representatives, she emphasized the need to support youth enterprises and to pay more heed to the cultural industries. Referring to the issue of Afro-descendants, the Ambassador said that her government had promoted the draft Inter-American Convention against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance and the draft Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance.

Ambassador Carmen Lomellin, Permanent Representative of the United States to the OAS, thanked the representatives of the civil society organizations for attending the Dialogue and said that her country acknowledges the recommendations made by those organizations during the Tenth Hemispheric Forum with Civil Society and Social Actors held on May 9 and 10, 2013 at OAS Headquarters in Washington, D.C. She referred to the drug problem as a global challenge, while acknowledging that previous distinctions between producing countries and consumer countries were becoming blurred. She said that all countries had to take their own circumstances into account and decide how to implement international law so as to protect victims of the drug problem. She reminded the participants that her government was not contemplating legalization as a solution because, although it would eliminate drug trafficking, it would have a negative impact on public health. She added that the term "war on drugs" was misleading and no longer defined the U.S. approach to drug trafficking. Ambassador Lomellin said that, together with civil society, governments had to continue analyzing policies to be designed and implemented with respect to prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation and that that debate had to be based on concrete facts and scientific evidence.

Ambassador Roy Chaderton Matos, Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the OAS, commended and thanked the Government of Guatemala, the OAS General Secretariat, civil society organizations, the private sector, the workers' representatives, and activists engaged in fighting the drug trade for attending the Dialogue. He stressed that the Dialogue had brought together people from different backgrounds in the quest for a common purpose, which was to enjoy a world free from drugs. He voiced his concern at the harm done by drug use to people's health and added that in the policies implemented to combat drug trafficking care had to be taken to protect the environment.

Following the first round of comments by the Member States, Vice Minister Morales of the Republic of Guatemala once again offered the floor to the representatives of the private sector, workers, and civil society, so that they could share their recommendations.

REMARKS BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR
Mr. Hernan Pitto of the Asociación de Industriales Latinoamericanas (AILA) pointed out that prevention and education should be the cornerstones of any strategy to combat drug trafficking. He expressed concern at the drop in productivity and performance triggered by drug use and at their impact on an employee’s family environment. He emphasized the link between workplace stress and drug use. He expressed the belief that science would come up with further insights into drug use issues and that the State and companies had to take preventive measures. He stressed that States needed to devote resources to finding pharmacological solutions to assist rehabilitation and prevention processes.

Mr. Cesar Zamora of the Association of American Chambers of Commerce in Latin America (AACCLA) said that economic growth was a key to solving the problems besetting society and those workers, the private sector, and the government had to work together to forge joint development policies capable of transforming society. He said that the rule of law was a setting in which all members of a society and the State could harmoniously seek solutions to the problems associated with drug-trafficking. He said that only robust and transparent institutions could attain those solutions. He maintained that OAS Member States had to include funds and mandates to protect children’s rights in their anti-drug strategies. He added that those states also had to foster employment and university-level technical training, as well as investment in public health and in assistance to victims of the drug trade.

REMARKS BY WORKERS’ REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Alberto Ramirez Ordonez of the Central General de Trabajadores de Guatemala (CGTG) voiced his concern at acts of violence against trade union leaders and their organizations in several countries in the Americas and at violations, in recent years, of trade union and collective bargaining rights. He said he was very much in favor of this opportunity for dialogue with the OAS Member States. He said he rejected the reversal of the judgment of the Constitutional Court of Guatemala against former President Efrain Rios Montt and argued that impunity, in any of its manifestations, triggered violence and insecurity in society.

Ms. Amanda Villatoro of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA) expressed concern at the threats to trade union freedoms and persecution of trade union leaders in Guatemala. She said the Confederation was holding talks with the government and the private sector on how to prevent impunity in that regard. She reiterated that the OAS Member States had to pursue a development model driven by the generation of decent work and she reminded her audience of the importance of the right to engage in collective bargaining when negotiating minimum wages, given their impact on poverty reduction. She underscored the importance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and of the State providing them with low-interest loans and payment facilities, while at the same time fostering youth enterprises, given that young people were bearing the brunt of the economic crisis. She acknowledged the effort that the OAS -- and, in particular, its Secretary General, Jose Miguel Insulza, and its Department of Social Development and Employment -- had gone to facilitate the sustained participation of workers’ representatives in this forum for debate and dialogue.

REMARKS BY CIVIL SOCIETY

Mr. Salam Gomez of Colombia Fundamental spoke on behalf of civil society organizations working to promote the rights of persons with disabilities. He expressed concern at the lack of progress made with implementing the 2006-2016 Decade of the Americas and the Inter-American Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities. He also pointed out that international human rights organizations had still not come up with a definition of psychosocial
disabilities. He said that OAS Member States had to support public policies that promote respect for the rights of persons with psychosocial disabilities and eradicate the stigmatization and discrimination they are subjected to. In that respect, the Member States also needed to bring the aforementioned Inter-American Convention into line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Speaking on behalf of the Coalition of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transvestites, transsexuals, transgender and intersex (LGBTTTTI) persons, Ms. Johana Ramirez of the Red Latinoamericana y el Caribe de Personas Trans (REDLACTRANS) said she was concerned at the increase in acts of violence and discrimination on account of sexual orientation and gender identity in the region and at the human rights violations triggered by security policies. She said that several Caribbean countries still had laws criminalizing and banning consensual sexual relations between persons of the same sex. She called upon the General Assembly to adopt -- and OAS Member States to then ratify --the Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Related Forms of Intolerance and the Inter-American Convention against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance. She added that the governments of the region had to adopt comprehensive health strategies for LGBTTTTI communities, with particular emphasis on transgender people, and to consider the proposed Inter-American Convention on Sexual and Reproductive Rights. She also referred to the need to ensure access to justice and due process without discrimination on account of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Speaking on behalf of the Campaign for Sexual and Reproductive Rights, Ms. Mirta Moraga of Aireana Grupo por los Derechos de las Lesbianas said that the OAS Member States needed to promote and implement comprehensive public policies addressing the impact that the marketing, criminalization and trafficking of narcotic drugs have on guarantees and respect for sexual and reproductive rights, especially those of women in vulnerable groups. She claimed there was no single notion of the family, such as that proclaimed by bodies in the inter-American human rights system (IAHRS). She advocated decriminalizing abortion, doing away with impunity for crimes of sexual violence committed inside detoxification centers, and non-criminalization of sex workers. She also proclaimed the need for governments in the region to adhere strictly to human rights in their discussion of drug issues. She reiterated that OAS Member States had to guarantee the sexual and reproductive rights of women and adopt an Inter-American Convention on the subject, as well as ratify the Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Related Forms of Intolerance and the Inter-American Convention against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance.

The Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala said no consensus had been reached on including the Grupo Provida position in the recommendations document. However, he said that for the sake of the spirit of inclusiveness inherent in dialogue, it was important to hear all actors' points of view. That being so, he offered the floor to the Group's representative.

Speaking on behalf of Grupo Provida, Ms. Alejandra Sol said that the OAS had to support life from conception until a natural death, on the grounds that life constitutes the fundamental right, and to promote the unity of the family. She said she was in favor of adoption as a way of continuing and forming family life and she declared that the State and the international community needed strong families. She also asked governments in the region to provide quality childbirth services. On marriage, Ms. Sol said it needed strengthening as a union between a man and a woman for the purpose of procreation and mutual support because she said it was the best way to educate a child since it lessened the likelihood that a child would succumb to a world of drugs and violence.
Following this second round of comments by the representatives of civil society, workers, and the private sector, the floor was again offered to the Heads of Delegation of the Member States, for them to comment on the recommendations put forward.

COMMENTS BY MEMBER STATES

Ambassador Andres Gonzalez, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the OAS, cited President Juan Manuel Santos' observation that it was time to pause and take stock of where we are and where we are heading in the fight against drugs, because the underlying problems are still there. According to the Ambassador, the drug trade was the chief source of financing for violence and terrorism. Ambassador Gonzalez said that the OAS played a vital role in confronting the problem and he reaffirmed his Government's support for fulfillment of the anti-drug mandates assigned to the OAS. He said the drug trade affected 5% of the world population, at a cost equivalent to 1% of global gross domestic product (GDP), and that it triggered high homicide rates. He said it was necessary to strengthen the State, combat impunity, and establish more correctional courts with a health-oriented approach. Ambassador Gonzalez said that services had to be provided to attend to victims of drug trafficking and different experiences had to be reviewed from a broader perspective. He stressed that civil society had a vital role to play in combating the drugs problem.

Ambassador Carlos Henrique Moojen de Abreu e Silva, Director of the United States, Canada, and International Affairs Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, proclaimed that civil society had become a key player in OAS General Assemblies and that he would relay its recommendations to his Government. He announced that, since 2006, Brazil had differentiated users from traffickers and that the difference was reflected in the sentences handed down by the authorities in that country. He said that a comprehensive approach to the drug problem required the effective inclusion of health and socio-economic factors, and for that he suggested pooling the experiences of Latin American countries in this field. He reaffirmed Brazil's ongoing commitment to the fight against intolerance and all forms of discrimination.

Mr. Miguel Diaz Reynoso, Director General of Liaison with Civil Society Organizations of Mexico's Secretariat for Foreign Affairs, affirmed the importance and usefulness of consultations with civil society on the different topics on the inter-American agenda. He reminded his audience that the Mexican Government conducted an ongoing dialogue with civil society organizations. He emphasized that the drug problem had social and security implications and that precisely this dialogue helped enrich the strategy for addressing crime and drugs. As an example, he cited the Mexican State's policy known as "Mexico in Peace," the chief goal of which is to prevent and reduce crime through joint actions by the government and civil society. He argued that the anti-drug strategy should be rooted in public health policies, and said he agreed with civil society's recommendations and with the Report on Drugs presented by the OAS Secretary General, Jose Miguel Insulza. He recalled that addiction needed to be treated as an illness and that it was of the utmost importance to support the rehabilitation of women and children. He also said it was right to link the drug problem with arms trafficking and that attention had to be paid to the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials (CIFTA).

Ambassador Fernando Suarez, Alternate Representative of Ecuador to the OAS, commended the participants in the dialogue for their opinions and reflections and said that the Presidents of the Hemisphere had been right to entrust the OAS with the compilation of the Report on Drugs. Ambassador Suarez stressed that that decision had provided participants with a discussion platform.
aimed at developing a different set of insights and new variants that could point the way toward a comprehensive solution to the drug problem. He underscored the importance of civil society in shaping public policies and mentioned the specific case of Ecuador, in which the new Constitution regards civil society as the fourth branch of government, represented in the National Council of Citizen Participation. Finally, Ambassador Suarez mentioned that his government had taken major steps forward in respect of its public and criminal policies by reducing sentences for victims of drug trafficking and drug users.

Ambassador Edgar Ugalde, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the OAS, said that the drugs issue was a major concern for the region and that poverty was at the root of most of the problems addressed in this dialogue. He referred, in particular, to a point made in the Report on Drugs regarding the huge difference between the number of deaths caused by related crimes and those caused by overdosing, which are far fewer. He said that ratio was important and would figure prominently in any debates on strategies for combating drugs.

Ambassador Alejandra Liriano, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic, underscored the significance of this dialogue with civil society. She pointed out that the drug problem posed a threat to security, democracy, and the economy, and a challenge to the State, which had to muster all the forces at its disposal to combat it. She underscored the contributions made by civil society to treatment and prevention policies for drug victims and said that the drug problem brought with it not only related crimes such as money laundering, trafficking in persons, and arms trafficking, but also the disruption of family life and of citizen security.

The Director-General of Multilateral Relations of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Jose Crespo, acknowledged that all OAS Member States were engaged in a day-to-day struggle to ensure protection for their citizens' rights. He then went on to describe the Bolivian Constitution as the most advanced in terms of human rights and mentioned the new laws embodied in his country's Constitution against violence against women and discrimination due to race or sexual orientation, against mistreatment of migrants, and in favor of workers. However, he stressed that none of those laws was of any use if the social cohesion needed to uphold it was lacking. He said that Bolivia shared the belief that it was the neoliberal policies of the past 30 years that had led our society to have the highest inequality ratios in the world. He also referred to the global drug problem and said it was necessary to combat all stages of it. Later, he emphasized that, in Bolivia's case, the problem mainly had to do with production, while in other states it was drug use or transit. To be successful, different public policies were needed for each possible scenario.

Ambassador Joaquin Maza, Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the OAS, emphasized that, although not all states saw eye to eye on all aspects of the drug problem, new proposals did enrich this dialogue. He said his country faced a multidimensional challenge that required a comprehensive approach taking into account issues relating to health, violence, crime, and harmonized public policies, within a framework of respect for human rights. He said he was pleased at the new approach being taken to the issue, which was based on knowledge and scientific evidence and the social impact on communities. He ended his remarks by saying that the recommendations put forward would be shared with the relevant public and private institutions in El Salvador and he urged that this debate continue within countries, among states, and among civil society.

Ambassador Milton Romani, Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the OAS, welcomed the beginning of this debate among states on the drug problem and underscored civil society's involvement in it. He also welcomed the recommendations presented by civil society at the Tenth Hemispheric Forum.
with Civil Society and Social Actors, held at OAS Headquarters in Washington, D.C., on May 9 and 10, 2013. Ambassador Romani underscored the first point made in those recommendations, which points out that the comprehensive policy to address the world drug problem includes a key factor that states often fail to comply with, namely human rights, because more people are dying from the war on drugs than from their use. He said that his government was committed to addressing the problem and added that, in his opinion, both society and states were afraid of a change in paradigm in the debate on drugs, whereas it was an obligation for all of us to debate the drug problem from a human rights and health perspective. He said that contributions by civil society to the formulation and implementation of public policies were very welcome. He commented that Uruguay had voted for an egalitarian marriage law, affirming that all citizens are equal before the law, regardless of their sexual orientation. He added that a debate was going on in his country about a law to regulate the marijuana market, offering an alternative to criminalization because it is considered that it will help diminish the consequences of drug trafficking and that it is necessary to develop a strategy of peace in order to combat the global drug problem.

At the end of the Dialogue, Vice Minister Morales of the Republic of Guatemala thanked the representatives of the Member States and of civil society organizations, the private sector, and the workers for participating in the event.