



Organization of
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**FORTY-FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES**

**SUMMARY OF THE DIALOGUE OF HEADS OF DELEGATION AND THE SECRETARY GENERAL WITH
REPRESENTATIVES OF CIVIL SOCIETY ON THE THEME OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

“CITIZEN SECURITY IN THE AMERICAS”

San Salvador, El Salvador – June 5, 2011

The Dialogue of Heads of Delegation with Civil Society Representatives, held in the framework of the XLI OAS General Assembly, allowed representatives of networks of civil society organizations to present their recommendations to the Heads of Delegation of the Member States and the OAS Secretary General on the central theme of the General Assembly, "Security in the Americas," and other topics on the inter-American agenda, as well as to hear the perspectives and policies being implemented by Member States and the OAS regarding those issues. The Dialogue was chaired by Mr. Hugo Martínez, Minister of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador, in his capacity as representative of the host country of the forty-first General Assembly.

Minister Martínez welcomed the Heads of Delegation, the OAS Secretary General, and the representatives of civil society, noting that the meeting was taking place in the context of Article 6 of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, which states that "[i]t is the right and responsibility of all citizens to participate in decisions relating to their own development. This is also a necessary condition for the full and effective exercise of democracy. Promoting and fostering diverse forms of participation strengthens democracy." He referred to the Eighth Hemispheric Forum on Civil Society, held at OAS Headquarters from April 25-26, 2011, at which civil society representatives presented recommendations on human rights, integral development, and democracy and on their relationship to the central theme of the General Assembly, "Citizen Security in the Americas."

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador underscored the importance his government placed on security policy, a transnational issue that seeks to facilitate the wellbeing of citizens by promoting effective action for job creation, poverty reduction, access to and quality in basic services, stronger citizen participation, education, health, housing, integral development, and, in particular, elimination of all forms of discrimination against young people, women, persons with disabilities, and indigenous people. He further emphasized the importance of promoting technical and financial cooperation at the hemispheric level to tackle problems affecting development in the states of the Americas, so as to ensure sustainable hemispheric security policy, a goal articulated in the Declaration of San Salvador on Security in the Americas, which was to be adopted at the General Assembly. After his welcoming remarks, he offered the floor to the representatives of civil society.

Camilo Labarces presented the conclusions reached by more than 400 university students who participated in the **Model OAS General Assembly (MOAS)**, held from May 18 to 21 in San Salvador, where issues discussed included the promotion of democratic values and citizen participation, protecting the human rights of migrant children and youth, preventing and dealing with violence, and

strengthening democratic processes. He noted that in the Declaration they adopted, the MOAS participants proposed education on democratic values, ethics, and dialogue as a tool to prevent youth violence and promote social inclusion, as well as the use of technology and social networks to increase citizen participation in government decision-making processes, in order to ensure transparency in social and economic public policies. He also remarked that the MOAS had passed a resolution for the reincorporation of Honduras into the OAS before the OAS Member States did so, and this reaffirmed the importance of respect for the constitutional order, the democratic institutional system, and democratic values in the Hemisphere. Model OAS General Assemblies, he explained, teach the youth civic principles and policy dialogue, and allows them to build networks with other young leaders. He said the dream of young people is for the Member States to consider their ideas, and he reiterated the young people's commitment to adding their voices in order to improve living conditions for the citizens of the Americas. After his remarks, he presented the Foreign Minister of El Salvador with a publication of resolutions adopted by the MOAS, for his consideration.

Speaking **on behalf of young entrepreneurs**, **Mr. Mauricio Rivas** said that in the Dialogue with Youth, organized by Young Americas Business Trust (YABT), the young people agreed with the Member States on the impact of violence and insecurity on their countries. He stressed the need for moral values as well as mental and physical health to be taught, with monitoring by government authorities and civil society, and for greater regulation of media content. He also spoke about the lack of job opportunities for young people, and proposed the inclusion of entrepreneurship, innovation, and social and environmental responsibility from early childhood. In addition, he proposed the creation of technical and professional institutions to promote practical skills to prepare young people to enter the labor market. He emphasized the right to equal education, especially for persons with disabilities, and access to technology for all. He further recommended the creation of sources of funding for projects by young entrepreneurs. He noted young people's willingness to partner with governments to implement their proposals, and asked the Member States for their support to continue creating opportunities for young people to participate in the OAS and in the Summits of the Americas process.

Representing civil society organizations working in the field of public security, **Ms. Monica Zalaquett, of the *Centro de Prevención de la Violencia (CEPREV)***, recommended that Member States take into account specific national and subregional characteristics in the definition security policies. She cited the "Report on Citizen Security and Human Rights," prepared by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) in 2009, which could serve as input with basic and critical standards for mainstreaming a human rights perspective in citizen security policies. Stressing the need for effective, constructive, and crucial participation by civil society in formulating policies to prevent violence, she urged governments to create permanent bodies for consultation with civil society. She also emphasized the need for prison reform; modernization and professionalization of the security forces; separation of the justice and defense branches; transparency; civil control; and accountability with an effective rehabilitation system. She proposed regulating, supervising, and monitoring private security firms, in addition.

Ms. Zalaquett stressed the importance of enhancing criminal investigations with a gender perspective to tackle femicide. With respect to violence prevention, she urged governments to allocate sufficient funds to implement programs on strengthening the family, education, and gender mainstreaming, as well as on discrimination, and creation of opportunities, with emphasis on populations vulnerable youth. She stressed the need to craft policies to dismantle support, recruitment, and financing networks related to organized crime and smuggling of and trafficking in persons, and their ties to state institutions. With respect to arms trafficking and terrorism, she recommended setting up regional, national, and local level campaigns on disarmament and against financing and recruitment.

Representing civil society organizations engaged in democracy and citizen participation, **Ms. Karen Mejia, of CARE El Salvador, and Ms. Dora Martins, of *Asociación de Jueces para la Democracia (Association of Judges for Democracy)***, reaffirmed civil society's commitment to democracy; proposed the creation of a special rapporteurship on democracy; and encouraged the Member States to adopt the draft resolution on "Promotion of the Rights of Freedom of Assembly and Association in the Americas." They also proposed that mechanisms be established for accountability and transparency in OAS programs in the area of citizen security, administration of police forces, and prison systems. Among other proposals, they recommended creating a system for access to public information within the OAS, with civil society participation. Both representatives stressed the importance of ensuring the independence of the judiciary to defend democratic rule of law, free from pressure from other branches of government. They also proposed the creation of a special rapporteurship on the independence of the judiciary, within the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR).

For her part, **Ms. Marcia Aguiluz, of CEJIL Foundation/Mesoamerica**, representing civil society organizations working in the Inter-American Human Rights System, focused her remarks on the rule of law as vital to promoting security. She called for a strong inter-American human rights system that is independent and able to respond effectively to challenges threatening democracy. She highlighted recent trends that undermine the protection of human rights in the region: 1) the questioning of the obligation to apply IACHR precautionary measures; and 2) the restriction on precautionary measures, to the detriment of the individual petition system. She asked Member States to cease restricting the inter-American human rights; respect resolutions and precautionary measures from its organs; and strengthen the IACHR's individual petitions system.

Representing civil society organizations of people of African descent, **Mr. Sidney Francis, of the *Organización Negra Centroamericana (ONECA)***, spoke about the International Year of People of African Descent in 2011, recognized by the United Nations and the OAS. He noted that most people of African descent live under conditions of poverty, inequality, and insecurity. He argued that the states and civil society together should more urgently develop programs and policies with a differentiated approach, so as to facilitate affirmative action for the most vulnerable populations such as people of African descent, indigenous peoples, women, young people, and children. He recommended creating public policies that ensure access to education, with programs for inter-cultural education, health from the perspective of African descendants, support for the campaign for a convention on sexual and reproductive rights, the implementation of measures to control the alcohol trade, drug trafficking, and the bearing of arms. He also suggested the need for public policies aimed at strengthening law enforcement and reducing impunity. Mr. Francis urged the governments of Guatemala, Honduras, and Chile to incorporate a category for people of African descent into the next census exercise. The representative of organizations of people of African descent also encouraged Member States to speed up negotiations and adopt the Draft Inter-American Convention against Racism and All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance, and to allocate the funds needed by the IACHR's Rapporteurship on the Rights of Persons of African Descent and against Racial Discrimination to operate effectively.

Ms. Elisa Schuster, of the *Foro de Mujeres del MERCOSUR*, referred to the recommendations by civil society organizations working in the area of integral development: 1) That OAS Member States fulfill their role to formulate public policies on administrative management to bring about conditions to foster integral development of citizens; 2) that integral development take an inter-sectoral and cross-cutting approach in which health, education, jobs, productivity and the economy, and gender equity are accorded priority attention by the states and are vital factors in the welfare of the population; 3) that maternal and child health be linked to sustainable development with an equal opportunity focus; 4) that investment in children and adolescents be made a priority; 5) that the Member States create conditions that are conducive to social mobility, job creation, and equitable access to education and health as

factors that contribute to crime reduction; 6) that prevention and equal opportunity programs be implemented for people with HIV/AIDS and the LGBTTTI community; 7) that social protection systems be strengthened and public policies formulated and implemented to reduce poverty; 8) that initiatives such as mutualism be promoted as a mechanism to provide service and facilitate access to education and health in under-served communities; 9) that a gender perspective be included and national and regional rules be amended to promote more equitable participation of men and women in the political, social, and economic arenas.

Ms. Haydee Cartagena, of *Aldeas Infantiles SOS El Salvador*, representing the civil society organizations engaged in children's and youth issues, stressed the importance of promoting integral development programs with a focus on the rights of children and adolescents, as well as on investing in education and health programs and implementing initiatives for primary and secondary prevention, integration and reintegration into society and into the work force, in order to contribute to their integral development. She stressed as well the urgent need to eliminate repressive measures targeting children and adolescents, such as forced recruitment and militarization. As well, she suggested creating disaggregated and reliable indicators on the situation of children and youth, to facilitate information about their status and to guide policies, programs, and strategies to improve their condition. Finally, she encouraged the Member States to consider migration as a contributing factor in insecurity related to child and adolescent victims of trafficking, abuse, and exploitation.

Mr. Amado de Jesús Ramos, a representative of indigenous peoples, stated that indigenous peoples do not consider themselves part of civil society, because they have their own life systems and social organization in harmony with nature, which allow participation of the entire community: children, youth, women and men, and the elderly. Mr. Ramos asked the Member States' Heads of Delegation to really consider the problem of climate change and defilement of Mother Earth from the perspective of the aboriginal peoples, taking into account their knowledge and practices that foster development in harmony with nature. He reiterated indigenous peoples' wish to be recognized as distinct from civil society and for mechanisms to be created for indigenous people's participation in the OAS system, as recommended by the second and third Inter-American Summit of Indigenous Peoples. He urged the states to continue negotiating and to approve the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

For his part, **Mr. Facundo Chávez, of the Latin American Network of Non-Governmental Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and their Families (RIADIS)**, said the focus of the main theme of the General Assembly must be comprehensive. He asked the OAS to adopt physical accessibility and communication measures to facilitate participation by persons with disabilities in its activities. He added that violence involved excluding persons with disabilities from employment and education and caused citizen insecurity, and thus required the OAS and its Member States to invest more in ensuring their inclusion in the workforce. Mr. Chavez said that states should change the medical-oriented concept underlying the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, to remove provisions on the prevention of disability and the non-discriminatory nature of interdiction. He also called on the states to implement formal mechanisms for selecting members of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, to ensure that they are independent and are not members of government, and to review the status of experts. Mr. Chavez appealed to the countries' representatives to allocate the necessary resources to the Technical Secretariat for the Decade of the Americas for the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities (SEDISCAP) and to adopt measures to include the mainstreaming of the issue of disability in all areas of the OAS.

Ms. Monica Hernandez Linares, of *Asociación Líderes en Acción*, representing the Coalition of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transvestites, Transsexuals, Transgender and Intersexuals, expressed her Coalition's concern relating to the issue of citizen security with full respect for human rights. Ms. Hernandez said that LGBTI individuals were victims of aggression from state security bodies or from individuals, and were excluded from the education system, from access to decent work, health, and social security, and from the most basic rights of citizens, particularly sexual and reproductive rights. The most serious issue affecting citizen security concerned the population of transsexual, transvestite, and transgender men and women. She called for clearly defined provisions for hate crimes to be punished effectively and for the abolition of laws criminalizing same sex relations. As well, she urged states to establish mechanisms to recognize the legal identity of transsexual, transgender, transvestite, and intersex persons according to their name and perceived gender identity, gender, without the need for genital reassignment or for pathologizing requirements. She also recommended implementing adequate, comprehensive policies to combat stigma, exclusion, violence, and segregation of that population because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Ms. Hernandez encouraged the adoption of the draft resolution on "Human Rights, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity."

Representing civil society organizations working on gender and sexual and reproductive rights issues, **Ms. Mirta Moragas of *AIREANA Grupo por los Derechos de las Lesbianas***, described citizen violence as a function of ethnic and racial, sexual, gender, or other forms of discrimination. She recommended that public security policies include a gender perspective and consider violence against women, as well as its causes and means of prevention. She called on states to investigate acts of violence against women by state agents and suggested that governments produce and provide access to sex-disaggregated data on all issues related to violence, in order to contribute to the crafting of public policies. Ms. Moragas further recommended putting an end to impunity and strengthening access to justice for women who are victims of violence; sex education and information; and access to health services and contraception. She called for laws guaranteeing women sexual and reproductive rights, and reiterated that citizen security required that Member States commit to ensuring an end to gender-based violence and to adopting a convention on sexual and reproductive rights.

Following the statements by the representatives of civil society organizations, Minister Hugo Martínez offered the floor to the member state representatives to the OAS.

Ambassador Carmen Lomellin, Permanent Representative of the United States to the OAS, thanked the representatives of civil society for their presentations, and commented that the Dialogue serves as an important opportunity to hear the thoughts and views of civil society in advance of the tenth anniversary of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, stating that "Democracy can only thrive when an active citizenry provides a constant flow of ideas, demands, suggestions and recommendations to our governments." Ambassador Lomellin reiterated the importance that the United States affords to the role of civil society and international cooperation through multilateral mechanisms to strengthen human rights and democratic governance. The Representative of the United States stressed the need for countries to constantly review their own performance in these areas and respond proactively to human rights violations, especially to protect human rights defenders, journalists and LGBTTTI individuals from threats and violence, thereby strengthening freedom of expression and association, the rule of law and addressing impunity. Ambassador Lomellin said that the United States supports greater cooperation between governments to bolster the role civil society plays in building free societies in the Western Hemisphere and around the world.

Mr. Pierre Giroux, Alternate Representative of the Permanent Mission of Canada to the OAS, thanked the civil society representatives for their contributions in the Dialogue and confirmed that his Delegation, as well as all of the delegations of the Member States, will take them into consideration as

they continue their negotiations during the General Assembly. Mr. Giroux underscored that Canada places special emphasis on civil society participation in the OAS and the Inter-American System for their contributions in relation to strengthening democracy and human rights, enhancing and increasing security. The Canadian Representative reiterated that his Government will continue to support civil society organizations as partners to improving the lives of the citizens of the region, and will strongly resist any efforts to restrict civil society participation in OAS activities.

The **Representative of the Delegation of Guatemala, Ms. Helen Mack**, said her government had decided to embark on an initiative to modernize Guatemala's security forces, taking into consideration the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) report on citizen security in the region. She added that her government was not opposed to the civil society recommendation to establish a rapporteurship on citizen security within the IACHR. Ms. Mack said the Central American Integration System (SICA) was also considering an initiative to establish a school for senior police officers to tackle the challenges of insecurity. She underscored the Guatemalan government's willingness to create forums for confidence-building and dialogue between government and civil society, for more collaboration on security issues. With respect to people of African descent, she said President Colom had visited Livingston to see how the participation of this group could be increased. In terms of persons with disabilities, Ms. Mack noted that the National Commission on Persons with Disabilities handled public policies related to disability.

Meanwhile, **Mr. Oscar Alcamán, Representative of the Delegation of Chile**, reaffirmed his government's support for strengthening civil society participation, which gives the OAS legitimacy. He cited the work of civil society as crucial to stimulating political, social, and cultural processes, adding that this work had contributed to the enjoyment of more and better democracy. Noting that it was important to continue facilitating access to information, he acknowledged that thousands of civil society organizations in the Hemisphere lacked the means and capability to express themselves. The Government of Chile viewed the contributions of civil society as useful not only in terms of crafting public policies but also in helping states stay in tune with the citizenry. The Government therefore appreciated this Dialogue, and reaffirmed respect for the right to dissent as facilitating valuable progress to benefit our societies.

Ambassador Hugo Saguier Bernardino, Permanent Representative of Paraguay to the OAS, said he felt privileged to be able to participate in this Dialogue, which reflected the great strides made in terms of the issues presented by the civil society representatives. He reiterated his government's commitment to surmounting differences that had arisen over the years. Today, civil society has to be heard, he argued, adding that governments had a responsibility to find ways to address their concerns. In noting that government representatives were also members of civil society, he said they could always count on government support because overcoming the serious problems that are yet to be resolved was a common desire shared by all.

Referring to the recommendations presented, **Mr. José de Jesús Martínez, Alternate Representative of the Permanent Mission of Panama to the OAS**, underscored the proposals to establish better coordination with civil society organizations in order to implement programs to prevent violence, strengthen the family, and the culture of lawfulness and peace, as well as policies aimed at disarming armed gangs, and illicit trafficking in migrant in particular. He spoke about his government's support for people of African descent and for indigenous peoples, as well as its commitment to designing and implementing policies to combat violence against women. With regard to disability, he reaffirmed the priority that Panama accorded the issue, and reiterated his country's commitment to continue hosting the Technical Secretariat for the Implementation of the Program of Action for the Decade of the

Americas for the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities (SEDISCAP). He said that Panama will continue to support civil society participation in all OAS activities.

Mr. Gerard Greene, Representative of the Delegation of Trinidad and Tobago, expressed his government's appreciation to the members of civil society for their recommendations related to the theme of the General Assembly, as well as strengthening human rights, democracy and integral development in the region, themes that all affect the prosperity of our nations and citizens. Mr. Greene recognized the role civil society organizations play in the negotiations process of the OAS and their positive contribution in the development of programs and projects, which serve to underscore the collective commitment of the OAS Member States to preserving and promoting the tenets of the OAS Charter and the Inter-American Democratic Charter. The Representative of Trinidad and Tobago commented that there are approximately 1,500 civil society organizations registered in his country, and that his government believes that the right policies are those that incorporate the views of an active and vibrant civil society. He stated that his country has designed a framework for guiding its development and democracy around seven pillars, including people-centered development, poverty eradication and social justice, national and personal security, information and communication technologies, a more diversified knowledge-intensive economy, good governance, and foreign policy. He highlighted that his country has adopted a multi-pronged approach to address citizen insecurity that seeks to strengthen the political, economic, social, technological and managerial dimensions through greater cooperation between the government, civil society organizations and the private sector to increase the effectiveness of the delivery of public services.

The **Representative of the Delegation of Mexico, Mr. José Antonio Zabalgaitia**, thanked civil society for its presentations, noting that it was only the "tip of the iceberg" in terms of the many ideas from the diversity of citizens of the Hemisphere. He said that the Mexican Secretariat of Foreign Affairs was in ongoing dialogue with civil society organizations in that country. He commented that "Citizen Security in the Americas," is a key issue for the countries of the region since insecurity represents a risk to state institutions, democracy, and fundamental rights. He said that transnational organized crime and delinquency affect all citizens, regardless of segment of the population, social status, ethnic origin, gender, age, or sexual preference. He reiterated that combating transnational organized crime and promoting public security called for joint effort between the society and government.

The **Alternate Representative of the Delegation of Argentina, Mr. Ricardo Massot**, joined the delegations in expressing pleasure at participating in the Dialogue with civil society, where the valuable ideas, experiences, and contributions of the organizations represented can be heard. He said the work carried out by civil society was vital to the development and success of free societies.

At the end of the Dialogue, the Chair thanked the civil society representatives for attending the General Assembly, and congratulated all the participants on the conduct of the Dialogue.