



# THE UNITED NATIONS

**Establishment:** October 24, 1945

**Secretary General:** Ban-Ki Moon, inaugurated on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007

**Member States:** 192 countries

**Areas of Work:** Peace and Security, Development, Human Rights, Humanitarian Affairs, and International law.

**Areas of Cooperation with the OAS:** human rights, democracy strengthening, integral development, public health, security, drugs, gender issues and education.

**Headquarters:** 3 United Nations Plaza New York, NY 10017

**Website:** <http://www.un.org>

## BACKGROUND

The United Nations is a multilateral organization of universal membership established following World War II on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1945 by 51 countries as part of the Bretton Woods Agreements. Currently, the United Nations has a membership of 192 countries.

The objectives of the United Nations, as set forth in its founding Charter (1945), are to maintain international peace and security; to develop friendly relations among nations; to cooperate in solving international economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems and in promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; and to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in attaining these ends

The United Nations conducts work in the following areas:

- Peace and Security
- Development
- Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs
- International law

The United Nations is funded by its member states. Countries are assessed an amount to pay biennially to certain budgets while other contributions to the UN system are considered voluntary. The quota for each Member State is determined by the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly every third year. Assessments are based on each member's ability to pay, taking into account factors such as national income, population and level of debt. The top nine contributors to the UN as of June 2009 provide 75% of the entire UN regular budget and are the following: United States (22%); Japan (16.6%); Germany (8.6%); United Kingdom (6.6%); France (6.3%); Italy (5%); Canada (3%); Spain (3%); and the People's Republic of China (2.7%).

The Secretary-General of the United Nations is elected for a five-year, renewable term by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council.

## SECRETARY GENERAL



Mr. Ban-Ki Moon took office as Secretary-General of the United Nations on January first, 2007. Then, he was unanimously re-elected by the General Assembly on 21 June 2011 for another five year term, that will come to an end on 31 December 2016. Prior to being appointed Secretary-General, Mr. Ban-Ki Moon was the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade from the Republic of Korea government. He holds 37 years of service with the Ministry, which led him to be posted in New Delhi, Washington D.C. and Vienna. Throughout his career at the Ministry he occupied various portfolios, including Foreign Policy Adviser to the President, Chief National Security Adviser to the President, Deputy Minister for Policy Planning and Director-General of American Affairs.

Mr. Ban-Ki Moon has been involved with the United Nations since 1975, when he served in the Foreign Ministry's United Nations Division. Then, Mr. Ban-Ki Moon became Chairman of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization and Chef de Cabinet during the Republic of Korea's 2001-2002 presidency of the UN General Assembly. Also, Mr. Ban was implicated in issues regarding the inter-Korean relations.

Mr. Ban-Ki Moon obtained a bachelor's degree in international relations from Seoul National University in 1970. He then received a master's degree in public administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, in 1985.

## NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE OAS

In an ever-growing and complex globalized world, international relations encompass not only States but also several regional organizations such as the European Union, the African Union, the Organization of American States, or the League of Arab States. In this context, the United Nations strives to maintain effective cooperation with regional and international organizations on a wide range of subjects, such as regional security, regional cooperation and dialogue, promotion of peace and democracy. It is widely acknowledged that the United Nations and regional organizations have incomparable and complementary capacities in the prevention of armed conflict if aptly coordinated.

The relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations is recognized in Chapter VIII of the UN Charter as well as in several resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

For instance, on January 28, 1993 the Security Council called upon regional organizations –based on Chapter VIII of the UN Charter- to examine *“ways and means to strengthen their functions to maintain international peace and security within their areas of competence, paying due regard to the characteristics of their respective regions.”*

Article 1 of the OAS Charter states that “*within the United Nations, the Organization of American States is a regional agency*”.

## GOVERNING BODIES

### The General Assembly

The General Assembly is composed of all 193 Members of the United Nations and it is the central deliberative and representative organ of the Organization. The General Assembly has the mandate to vote policies within the Charter’s framework and it offers the opportunity for all States to express their views and opinions on various international issues. The Assembly is required, accordingly to the Charter, to meet in regular session from September to December of each year and subsequently if necessary.

The General Assembly’s responsibilities and duties include:

- Considering and making recommendations on the general principles of cooperation for maintaining international peace and security, including disarmament
- Discussing any question relating to international peace and security and, except where a dispute or situation is currently being discussed by the Security Council
- Discussing and making recommendations on any questions within the scope of the Charter or affecting the powers and functions of any organ of the United Nations
- Initiating studies and making recommendations to promote international political cooperation, the development and codification of international law, the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and international collaboration in the economic, social, humanitarian, cultural, educational and health fields
- Making recommendations for the peaceful settlement of any situation that might impair friendly relations among nations
- Considering and approving the United Nations budget
- Electing the non-permanent members of the Security Council and the members of other United Nations councils and organs and, on the recommendation of the Security Council, appoint the Secretary-General.

### Security Council

The Security Council has a foremost responsibility within the UN Charter’s framework. It is important to point out that the members of the Council must always have a representative at the UN Headquarters in order for this body to be able to function at all times.

The structure of the UN enables the Security Council to undertake the following actions<sup>1</sup>:

- Maintain international peace and security in accordance with the principles and purposes of the United Nations
- Investigate any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction
- Recommend methods of adjusting such disputes or the terms of settlement
- Formulate plans for the establishment of a system to regulate armaments

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc\\_functions.html](http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_functions.html)

- Determine the existence of a threat to the peace or act of aggression and to recommend what action should be taken
- Call on Members to apply economic sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force to prevent or stop aggression
- Take military action against an aggressor

## 67<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

On June 8<sup>th</sup> 2012, the United Nations General Assembly elected Serbia's Foreign Minister, Vuk Jeremic, as the President of the 67th session of the Assembly, which opened on September 18, 2012, focused on adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations by peaceful means.

Priorities for the session include giving the General Assembly a more prominent role in discussions on global economic governance, devising sustainable development goals, incorporating civil society representatives in the deliberations of the Assembly and enhancing the role of the UN-backed Alliance of Civilizations and strengthening cooperation between the Alliance and the Assembly.

## COOPERATION AGREEMENTS

The Organization of the American States and the United Nations adopted a Cooperation Agreement on April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1995, which includes commitments for the two organizations to work together on matters of common interest such as human rights, fundamental freedoms, security and peace, and economic, social and cultural development.

### COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN OAS AND UNITED NATIONS<sup>2</sup>

Over the past decade, we have signed more than 20 cooperation agreement with the different agencies of the United Nations, among them, the United Nation Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), The United Nations Development Program (UNDP), United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNWOMEN), United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research (UNICRI), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

## MAIN AREAS OF COOPERATION

The United Nations, like to the OAS, aims to promote human rights, democracy and fundamental freedoms as well as to maintain friendly relations among its members and promote social progress and better living standards. The following is an illustrative –but not comprehensive- overview of current and recent instances of cooperation between the OAS and the agencies of the United Nations System.

On June 4, 2013, the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), José Miguel Insulza, met with the President of the 46<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN), Vuk Jeremic, with whom he spoke about the role of international agencies in promoting sustainable development.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.oas.org/DIL/AgreementsPDF/14-1995\\_%20Acuerdo\\_de\\_Cooperación\\_fulltext\\_eng.pdf](http://www.oas.org/DIL/AgreementsPDF/14-1995_%20Acuerdo_de_Cooperación_fulltext_eng.pdf)

At the meeting, which took place during the 43 OAS General Assembly, in Antigua, Guatemala, Secretary General Insulza thanked former minister Jeremic for the commitment he had shown toward supporting the activities of the OAS through his uninterrupted attendance at the last seven meetings of the hemispheric body.

In turn, the Serbian diplomat extended an invitation for Secretary General Insulza "to provide a Latin American perspective" during the debate on sustainable development that is to take place at the UN General Assembly in New York City next September. The former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia also used the occasion to reiterate his country's interest in forging ties with the countries of the Americas through the OAS.

## Democracy Strengthening

- **Electoral Cooperation and Observation**

The project entitled "Methodology to Monitor the Role of the Media in Electoral Processes", which received funding from the United Nations Democracy Fund, is intended to systematize and standardize the OAS election observation procedures so as to better ensure their objectivity.

Furthermore, the OAS works frequently with the UN Electoral Assistance Division to coordinate specific matters prior to the deployment of electoral observation missions.

- **Haiti**

The task of supporting Haiti has provided ample opportunities for the OAS to cooperate with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the joint International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH) supporting the efforts to strengthen Haiti's institutional capacity.

Further areas of recent cooperation include stabilization efforts as well as efforts in the areas of electoral observation, civil registry, e-Government, enhanced transparency in governance and public administration, as well as other areas of economic and social development

- **Mediation and Conflict Management**

In cooperation with the UN Department of Political Affairs' Mediation Support Unit (MSU), the OAS developed a work plan in 2011 to increase the latter's institutional capacity in areas pertaining to mediation, allowing it to provide more comprehensive support to its Member States. Other instances of recent cooperation between the OAS and the MSU include the development and implementation of training sessions in mediation for officials from OAS Member States.

Following the aforementioned capacity-building cooperation activities, in 2012 the OAS developed its own mediation tools, which included a roster of experts, and briefing packages for representatives of the OAS General Secretariat in its Member States.

The OAS and the UNDP jointly developed a Practical Guide for Democratic Dialogue, a tool for sectors involved in social conflict, which will be released in late February 2013.

In January 2010, the OAS participated in the UN Secretary General's High-Level Retreat with Heads of Regional and Other Organizations, under the theme "Global Realities and Regional Changes", which focused on roles, responsibilities and capacities in times of conflict, as well as managing transitions from conflict.

## Human Rights

- **HIV/AIDS**

With UNAIDS, the CIM has cooperated on developing policies for comprehensive HIV care for women in Central America and the Caribbean, as well as training with key partners from several countries in the region (Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras and Panama) on the handling of HIV and violence against women.

- **Human Rights**

The OAS has worked closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in the development of training seminars on international refugee law and international humanitarian law.

In December 2012 the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), call on all Member States of the Organization of American States (OAS) to respect and guarantee the rights of persons living with HIV and to adopt the measures necessary to eradicate all forms of stigma and discrimination against key populations at risk of and all those persons affected by HIV in the Americas.

The Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) has been cooperating with UNAIDS in the promotion and protection of human rights of women living with HIV, including a series of events and an analysis of the legal framework and the regional situation in the exercise of these rights.

On June 25, 2012 the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression; the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) of the Organization of American States (OAS); the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Representative on Freedom of the Media; and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression issued a joint declaration in which they state their abhorrence over the unacceptable rate of crimes against freedom of expression, including killings, death threats, disappearances, prosecutions, and imprisonments, which target the media and individuals who play a crucial role in informing society.

In May 2012, a working level meeting was held between officials from the OAS General Secretariat, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and a Member of the Working Group on Human Rights and Transnational Corporations and other Business Enterprises in order to discuss the "Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United

Nations 'Protect, Respect and Remedy' Framework", developed by the United Nations Human Rights agency.

On June 1, 2011 the United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression; the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) of the Organization of American States (OAS); the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Representative on Freedom of the Media; and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression; issued a joint declaration establishing guidelines to protect freedom of expression on the Internet.

Close contact with UN offices and rapporteurs on different issues of common interest has continued over the last years,

- **Women's Rights**

The Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), the General Secretariat of the OAS, and the the ILO, have been working together to help develop institutional capacity in the Ministries of Labor and National Mechanisms for Women Americas.

The CIM and the UNESCO Chair on Women, Science and Technology have been cooperating on the promotion of the strategic use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) by young women.

The CIM, in collaboration with UN Women, has organized two Hemispheric Forums on Women and Democracy (April 2011 and July 2012), which sought to identify specific public policies to strengthen the participation and representation of women in leadership systems democratic. These Forums generated two publications on women and democracy. As a result of this collaboration, the CIM and UN Women also established the Regional Working Group on Citizenship of Women for Democracy, which has produced an analysis of the situation of women in democratic systems in Latin America, the Anglophone Caribbean and Canada, as a key indicator of the quality and effectiveness of democracy and governance in the Western Hemisphere.

The OAS has further collaborated with UN Women in the launch and implementation of the UN Secretary General's Campaign "UNiTE to end violence against women," and the launch of the Second Hemispheric Forum on the Implementation of the Convention Belém do Pará.

## Integral Development

- **Economic Development**

The OAS and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) have jointly organized a number of capacity building activities for Latin American and Caribbean government officials and representatives of their private sector in the area of investment rules.

Other UN organs and agencies that the OAS has engaged with and continues to cooperate with are, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Bank, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The Organization of American States participated in the twenty-third session of the Working Group VI (Security Interests) of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) held at the UN headquarters from 8 to 12 April 2013. As part of the OAS/CIDA Cooperation Plan for 2012-2015, the Department of International Law is in charge of the OAS Secured Transactions Project aimed at implementing secured transactions reform, based on the Model Inter-American Law on Secured Transactions, its Model Registry Regulations and other international instruments on the topic.

The participation of the OAS in these meetings built on increased awareness of the crucial role played by secured transactions reform in the promotion of equitable access to credit in Latin American and Caribbean countries and to address the need for building capacity in OAS Member States to adopt and implement international instruments on the topic

- **Social Development**

The OAS has worked with the U.N. Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization's Regional Office for Education (UNESCO/OREALC) and UNESCO Statistics Institute (UIS) on the Regional Education Indicators Project (PRIE) an important mechanism for monitoring countries' progress toward meeting the education goals of the Summit of the Americas.

There is also a valuable partnership with the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNESCO/OREALC for the implementation of the "Hemispheric Commitment to Early Childhood Education;" and partnership with UNESCO IESALC (Institute for Higher Education) on the Inter-American Teacher Educator Network.

Through PAHO/WHO, the United Nations participates in the Group of Friends of Haiti, an OAS-coordinated gathering of Nations and institutions working to support this country's development.

The Consumer Safety and Health Network, implemented jointly between the OAS and PAHO/WHO pursuant to the mandate of General Assembly Resolution AG/RES. 2494 (XXXIX-O/09) on Consumer Protection, recognizes consumption as one of the main factors that determine health. The Network allows consumers and authorities of the region to exchange information and experiences and disseminate information on these issues. It also stimulates education on product safety and their impact on consumer's health, and provides easy access to relevant information on products deemed unsafe by markets from different parts of the world that have advanced warning systems.

The OAS and PAHO/WHO also collaborated on the Regional Hemispheric Consultation on Social Determinants of Health from a Civil Society Perspective, which involved over 3,000 organizations and provided an important insight into the perspective of civil society in the Americas regarding the impact of economic, social and environmental determinants of health on the quality of life, the reduction of the gap in health access inequality, and the advancement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The results of this exercise also provided valuable inputs on the reflection process in the observance of the right to health within the framework of the Additional Protocol of the



American Convention on Human Rights on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, “The Protocol of San Salvador”.

- **Sustainable Development**

Late in 2012, the OAS and FAO held a working level meeting to discuss cooperation to disseminate the Voluntary Guidelines of Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Forestry and Fisheries and promote their understanding by civil society representatives and network leaders in the Americas. Plans are moving forward in early 2013 to combine efforts in the promotion of the Guidelines within the civil society networks that work with the OAS.

In 2012, the OAS assisted in the Implementation of international water projects funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), assisting countries in the development of policies, laws and regulations for integrated water management, promoting governance, capacity building, and strengthening the role of local communities in decision making related to water issues.

In December 2011, the OAS and PAHO established a joint program to promote peace and democracy in the Member States through the integrated management of water resources, which has resulted in the systematization of good practices at the local level in the basins of Central America.

The OAS and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization launched the “Internationally Shared Aquifer Resources Management - ISARM Programme” for the Americas, a regional initiative which aims to promote the recognition and understanding of transboundary groundwater resources, foster collaboration among the countries sharing the same resource to achieve consensus on legal, institutional, socio-economic, scientific, and environmental aspects, as well as to identify case-studies of particular interest for project implementation.

Furthermore, the OAS, the Inter-American Development Bank, and ECLAC integrate the Tripartite Cooperation Committee, charged with promoting coordination, cooperation and agreements among the institutions in their efforts on issues of common interest. These three institutions are strategic partners in the Pathways to Prosperity in the Americas Initiative. Through both of the above mechanisms, these organizations provide joint support to the governments of the Caribbean in the preparation of their national energy policy.

Over the last decade, the OAS and the UN Agencies have worked together on a variety of projects, such as: (1) UNEP for the management of *Water Resource Management Programs*, in the Bermejo River Basin, the Artibonito Aquifer and Masacre Costal Aquifer System, the Chaco Region and Ecosystem, the Rio Bravo Basin, and the Rio Plata Basin; (2) UNIDO for the implementation of the Solar Energy Finance Program for the Caribbean; (3) UNEP for the implementation of the Eastern Caribbean Geothermal Development Program; and (4) UN/ISDR to manage the Central American Small Valleys Flood Alert and Vulnerability Reduction Program.

## Security

- **Fight against Drugs**

At the VI Summit of the Americas held in 2012 in Cartagena, Colombia, the OAS received a mandate to study the results of existing drug policy in the Americas and explore new and more effective ways to approach this problem.

In response to this mandate, the OAS, supported by other institutions including PAHO/WHO and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), is preparing a Report on the Drug Problem in the Americas, which will include an assessment of current policies, best practices and challenges, in addition to a report on potential scenarios to consider a future-oriented perspective.

Previously in 2006, PAHO/WHO and the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD/OAS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the subject of Drugs and Public Health in Latin America, in which the two organizations pledge to cooperate in establishing the Network on Education and Public Health for sharing information on drugs and international public health in Latin America.

The OAS Inter-American Drug Control Commission (CICAD) has worked closely with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to strengthen their various programs in the region related to drug abuse. The Demand Reduction Section of CICAD has been working jointly with the UNODC on the issues of alternative sentencing and drug abuse prevention programs in Colombia. The Supply Reduction Section of CICAD is carrying out a joint initiative in Central America with the UNODC office in Mexico City for implementation of a national drug control system (NDS) that facilitates the control of chemicals and/or pharmaceutical drugs. The Section is also contributing to the Global SMART Programme, a UNODC-sponsored global monitoring system for synthetic drugs.

The different components of CICAD also collaborate with the UNODC on projects for training judges, prosecutors, police investigators, and financial analysts through mock trials and investigations of money laundering cases. Other collaborative work consists in working closely with the UNODC Office in Colombia to expand the impact of the CICAD program on strengthening the decentralization of national drug policies.

- **Security**

On June 9, 2012 The United Nations Secretary-General held a high-level retreat with heads of regional and other organizations at Greentree Estate in New York, providing an opportunity for the heads of organizations such as, the United Nations, the League of Arab States, the African Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Commonwealth, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Organization of American States (OAS) to discuss and exchange views on two critical topics: conflict prevention and transnational and emerging challenges to peace and security.

The OAS has worked with the UN Peacekeeping Operation office in the implementation of capacity-building seminars for training of "anti trafficking in persons for peace-keeping" project in Uruguay and in different countries of the Americas.

The OAS has also participated in numerous seminars and workshops with the UN related to panel discussions on Armed Violence and the Illicit Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), and the Implementation of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and

Trade Illicit SALW. It also took part in the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Weapons in All Its Aspects. The OAS has also continued collaboration with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) to combat firearms trafficking in the region, particularly with regard to legislative assistance and capacity-building for law enforcement.

- **Anti-Terrorism**

The Secretariat of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism (CICTE) has developed strategic partnerships with the United Nations, particularly with the Executive Direction of the UN Security Council's Committee against Terrorism (CTED) for training and technical assistance activities.

Likewise, there is also a general cooperation with the Task Force on the Implementation of the Combating Terrorism (CTITF) of the UN General Secretariat and there is cooperation of a more technical and specific nature with: (i) the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in legislation and criminal justice, and combating terrorist financing, (ii) the Office of the United Nations Disarmament (UNODA) and the Group of Experts of the 1540 Security Council of the UN, in supporting the implementation of Resolution 1540 of the Security Council, (iii) the Institute United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), security for major events, (iv) the International Maritime Organization (IMO) maritime security, (v) the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), on aviation safety and security of documents, and (vi) the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Pan American Health Organization (OPS) on tourism security and combating emerging threats such as bioterrorism.

The above partnerships focus primarily on general harmonization of objectives and strategies, information exchange, training and technical assistance, as well as joint projects, all with the aim of avoiding duplication and increasing the impact and quality of care provided to our Member States.

- **Demining**

On April 16, 2013 the Organization of American States (OAS), through its Secretariat for Multidimensional Security, this week signed a cooperation agreement with the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), regarding humanitarian mine action activities in Colombia. This agreement is based on the sharing of experiences and expertise, and seeks to benefit Colombia, as well as both organizations at the strategic and technical levels. It constitutes a supplementary agreement settled under the general framework of the Cooperation Agreement of the Secretariat of the United Nations and the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, dated 17 April 1995.

## Other Initiatives

- **Alliance of Civilizations**

In 2009, the OAS joined the Group of Friends of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, an initiative of the governments of Spain and Turkey under the auspices of the United Nations (UN) that seeks to advance and improve understanding and cooperation between nations of different

cultures and religions (particularly Western and Muslim societies). Its four fields of action are youth, education, media and migration.

- **Group of Friends of Mediation**

The OAS has been an active member of this initiative launched by the Governments of Turkey and Finland, participating in the Third Ministerial Meeting held in New York in September, 2012 within the framework of the United Nations' General Assembly, as well as in the Focal Points' meeting held in Helsinki, Finland on 17-18 January 2013 to discuss the role of religious and traditional leaders in mediation, as well as analyze second track mediation strategies.

- **Address to Permanent Council**

On February 13, 2013, the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), Ban Ki-Moon paid a visit to the headquarters of the OAS to meet with OAS Secretary General José Miguel Insulza and address the Permanent Council of the OAS.

During the meeting, the two leaders discussed the political context in Latin America and the Caribbean, with special emphasis on the situation in Haiti, where the OAS, through its representative, and the UN, through the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), work closely. The two leaders also spoke about the role of the OAS in Colombia through the Mission to Support the Peace Process (MAPP/OEA), integration policies in the different sub-regions of the hemisphere, and issues related to hemispheric migration.

The meeting was followed by a Protocolary Meeting of the OAS Permanent Council, where he addressed the Permanent Representatives from OAS Member States, as well as OAS Officials and special guests from the diplomatic community. In his welcoming remarks, Secretary General Insulza recalled that the Americas and the United Nations have “forged deep and broad cooperation ties, an unparalleled level of collaboration that dates from its creation. Our region, a pioneer of multilateralism, did not hesitate in supporting the new international system that came into being at the San Francisco Conference in 1945. Of the 50 founding member states of the United Nations, 22 are from the Americas and are members of this Organization”.

For his part, the UN Secretary-General recognized the OAS as the world's oldest regional organization and stressed the importance of an even deeper strategic partnership among us, declaring himself convinced “that the United Nations can play a greater role in your region — just as your region can play an ever more important role in the UN. The time is right. You have experiences to share ... ideas to spread ... energy to help fuel global solutions”.

### **Joint Summits Working Group**

Through Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations participates in the process of the Summits of the Americas by working in the OAS-coordinated Joint Summits Working Group, providing technical support in the process of the most important political dialogue in the region.

## **SOURCES**

[The UN Website](#)  
[OAS Website](#)

Updated: June 6, 2013