

Dialogue between Heads of Delegation, the Secretary General, and Heads of Delegation of the Permanent Observer Countries to the OAS on the theme of the XLI Regular Session of the General Assembly, "Citizen Security in the Americas"

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San Salvador, El Salvador

Permanent Observer Mission of Israel

Remarks delivered by:

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Deputy Foreign Minister

- I would like to begin by thanking you, Minister of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador, H.E. Hugo Martinez, for hosting the OAS General Assembly and today's Dialogue with the Permanent Observer Countries. We still remember fondly your most successful visit to Israel 3 months ago.
- Let me also congratulate the OAS General Secretary José Miguel Insulza on his re-election last year to this most important position.
- We also note with satisfaction the decision of the special session of the General assembly of the OAS in regards to paving the way to the return of Honduras as a full member.
- Today we mark the 10th anniversary of the Democratic Charter of the OAS. As a Permanent Observer Israel is not a side to the Charter, but as a thriving democracy we fully support its content and the values it espouses and promotes.
- I hope that the Democratic Charter of the OAS will serve as a powerful inspiration to the peoples of my region, the Middle East, as they struggle these days to achieve their rights.
- Only a true democratic region, just like Latin America, will be a peaceful region advancing H.R. peace and dialog.
- As we approach the United Nations General Assembly in September in New York, I trust that all responsible countries will support a respectful dialog between Israel and the Palestinians to the benefit and the interest of the region. I say yes to dialog and peace, no to unilateralism and confrontations.
- Israel is very proud of its observer status which we received almost 40 years ago, making us one of the first observer countries of the OAS.
- After many years of fruitful engagement, Israel signed last year a cooperation agreement with OAS, on the basis of which we have strengthened and deepened our cooperation with you.

A few examples of our activities include:

CICTE: The Inter-American Committee against Terrorism – In both 2009 and 2010 we held 5 seminars with the aim of helping to develop an integral structure for planning and decision making in times of emergency. In April 2011 a drill, in preparation for the Pan-American Games was held in Mexico and next month there will be a seminar on "National Preparedness for Emergencies and Multi-Casualty Events" for SICA states.

In addition Israel continues to host courses and educational programs in cooperation with the OAS in many fields. A course on education for sustainable development was held in Israel last March and in September there will be a course in "Social Integration of Marginalized Youth.

- We also increased our cooperation with YABT (Young Americas Business Trust), after a decade of cooperation we can proudly say that 22,000 people from 29 OAS member states have taken part in joint seminars and business labs that Israel set up in close cooperation with YABT.
- In the past years we have allocated a million dollars for 3 years of joint activities with YABT. We are now renewing this commitment – for another million dollars for the next 3 years.
- I would like to take this opportunity of mentioning Israeli aid to Haiti, following the terrible earthquake there Israel established a field hospital in Haiti only 80 hours after the quake which saved countless lives. I am particularly moved when I recall the treatment given to the famous Haitian dancer, Gheorghes Exantus, who lost both his legs yet due to the treatment he received in Israel he is already able to dance again.
- In addition, a special hospital, based on Israeli know-how and methods, to treat trauma victims is being built in Cape Haitian and there is a plan to build a school combined with a social center in Port-au-Prince, which will hopefully start soon.
- In Guatemala Israel is involved in a project establishing mobile medical units in cooperation with the presidential authority for emergencies - CONRED. We are also checking into the possibility of taking part in an integrated project that OAS is holding in Guatemala in cooperation with Germany and Spain.

I trust that our contributions and activities will be successful and will be expanded upon in the years to come. I am looking forward to the debates in the General Assembly on Citizen Security, and on my return to Israel I will explore the possibilities of promoting cooperation with the OAS on this most important issue.

Thank you.