

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"

June 5, 2011

San Salvador, El Salvador

Permanent Observer Mission of Slovenia

Remarks delivered by:

Matjaž Šinkovec

Ambassador and Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Chairman – minister Castañeda, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In 3 weeks time Slovenia will be celebrating the 20th Anniveresary of its independence. Lately Slovenia has been shifting its foreign policy focus from basically a regional one to a more global one.

With a view to strengthening our presence in the Western Hemisphere, Slovenia, a small country of 2 million, opened its fourth resident Embassy in the Region last year. We have been a permanent observer in the OAS since 2003. Recently we have applied for observer status in the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) and initiated procedures to appoint an Ambassador to CARICOM.

We have also increased our presence in other world regions, such as Africa and the Pacific. We hope that we will be able to accept even more international responsibility as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council that Slovenia is a candidate for.

Your theme "Citizen Security in the Americas" concern us all and demonstrates that we have to act not only locally and regionally, but also more globally. I believe it is our common goal to achieve that citizens feel secure and protected in their daily lives. Many countries worldwide have confronted severe security challenges of organized crime in the last decade, which generates direct and indirect social, economic and political costs.

Slovenia as a permanent observer country of the OAS is becoming more actively involved in its work. For the first time we have now contributed to the OAS budget by supporting the OAS/CARICOM Electoral Observation Mission at the second round of elections in Haiti in March this year. We look forward to increasing cooperation with OAS:

Slovenia is also actively responding to humanitarian and reconstruction appeals following natural and humanitarian disasters in the region. Most recently our donations have gone to Haiti, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. We are embarking upon financing of small development projects in the Region.

Last but not least, congratulations on readmission of Honduras.

Thank you, Chairman.