

INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE AGAINST TERRORISM (CICTE)

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CLOSING ADDRESS BY THE COLOMBIAN VICE-MINISTER
FOR MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS, AMBASSADOR ALEJANDRO BORDA ROJAS,
CHAIR OF CICTE 2006 – 2007

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Mr. Steven Monblatt, Secretary of CICTE,

Distinguished Heads of Delegation,

Esteemed Delegates:

After three days of intense discussions, the time has come to bring our work to an end. I am pleased to note that the quality of those debates enabled us to make progress toward our common goal of eradicating terror from our hemisphere. The meeting's conclusions, set out in the documents adopted, provide us with a road map with which the Committee will be able to comply in full with the mandates handed down by the member states.

I should like to begin by noting the quality of the presentations given by the distinguished panelists during the plenary sessions, which fueled very sensible discussions and served to whet our appetites, enabling the heads of delegation of the member states to exchange opinions in an interactive and doubtless very productive, dialogue. The proof of this can be seen in the concrete proposals gathered together in the Rapporteur's report, all of which will be taken into due consideration.

The political declaration we have adopted is clearly based on the principles that the hemispheric community shares in its antiterrorism efforts; it also reflects the new trends in this constantly evolving phenomenon and, of course, contains proposals for action that will indeed bring us closer to our goals.

It is comforting to know that the member states' resolve for putting an end to terrorism is unshakable. Cooperation and technical assistance in this regard can continue under the aegis of this Committee, in the working areas identified in the Work Plan adopted at this regular session, and those efforts must be directed at supporting those states that ask for assistance in meeting their obligations under the various binding instruments that exist.

Measures for preventing, controlling, and punishing the funding of terrorism must be strengthened through training programs targeted at the judicial officials responsible for investigating and punishing those crimes. In the legislative arena, assistance must be given to ensure compliance with the Nine Special Recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

In our opinion, priority should be given to assistance for the creation and deployment of Computer Security Incident Response Teams (CSIRT) in those countries where they do not yet exist. The Chair will be working on a service model proposal applicable to countries with similar laws and investigation and control systems.

One topic of great concern is the improvement of security measures that apply to tourism. We believe that the adoption of a security program at tourist and recreational facilities is an important area for our attention and, consequently, based on the results of the pilot project to be put in place in Barbados, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago, this Committee will conduct a diagnostic of the member states' needs in order to provide them with support in this regard.

We must concentrate all our energies on preventing terrorist groups from obtaining biological, chemical, and nuclear materials; to this end, as set out in the Work Plan we adopted, we shall work in consultation and coordination with the Committee set up by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540, in order to avoid the duplication of efforts.

Our priority is the development and conclusion of the activities set out in the current work plan before we adopt a new one or embark on new areas of endeavor. The breadth of the plan has kept us from pursuing all its areas in the requisite detail, and so we shall concentrate on drawing up an annual schedule of activities for each of the working areas identified in the document.

At the same time, in order to make optimal use of the scarce resources available, we will promote coordinated teamwork between CICTE and other OAS bodies: with the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) on topics relating to port security, border controls, and the funding of terrorism, and, regarding the connections between organized crime and terrorism, with the Special Committee on Transnational Organized Crime (CEDOT), as stipulated in the recently adopted Declaration of San Carlos.

We shall follow this same approach in CICTE's relations with other international agencies. The Chair will continue to work with the ICAO to obtain the technical assistance needed to improve the quality of traveling documents and the security measures they incorporate, and to enable the member states to comply with the standards governing inspections of checked luggage. We shall do the same with the IMO to strengthen maritime and port security.

I would like to make particular mention of the laudable work carried out by the Secretariat and its entire staff, whom I thank for the care and dedication they have shown in their support for ensuring a fruitful end to this meeting. The Chair remains assured of the support and commitment that the Secretariat has displayed in the past in defining CICTE's programs and activities. At the risk of neglecting to mention someone, and offering my apologies in advance should I do so, I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to Mr. Steven Monblatt, Ms. Gillian Bristol, Ms. Henriette Lachimising, the interpreters and translators, and all the organizational and support staff provided by the Foreign Ministry.

My gratitude also goes to the Working Group charged with negotiating the Declaration of San Carlos, to its Chair, and to the delegations for the constructive attitude that enabled us to arrive at the consensus text that was adopted.

I also appreciate the work carried out by the Rapporteur and his dedication in collating, in what was a tour-de-force of synthesis, the vast number of proposals presented and preparing the thorough report he has just submitted to us. I personally witnessed how that required additional hours of effort, and for that the Chair extends its most heartfelt gratitude.

Esteemed Delegates:

Notwithstanding the different approaches that exist regarding this phenomenon, the delegations' proactive attitude enabled us to identify the common ground in our need to present a united front against terrorism.

This progress encourages us to continue with this dialogue in a constructive and pragmatic fashion, in order to identify strategies that reflect our common ground vis-à-vis security threats and how they should be tackled.

CICTE's agenda is extensive, as is Colombia's willingness and determination to pursue, from the Chair, the realization of the proposed activities.

I should like to use this opportunity to again note the vast amount of work done by Trinidad and Tobago during its period in the Chair and to extend a welcome to Panama as Vice Chair and as a country with which we will work together in pursuit of the goals and objectives we have set ourselves.

I would not wish to end this address without again expressing our gratitude for accepting the invitation extended by the Government of Colombia and my best wishes for your safe and happy return to your home countries.

Thank you all very much.