

Press Release



Organization of
American States

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OAS and Belize Signed Agreement for Mission to Observe General and Municipal Elections

The Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), José Miguel Insulza, and the Permanent Representative of Belize to the hemispheric organization, Ambassador Nestor Mendez, today signed an agreement that establishes the conditions for the Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) that will accompany the general and municipal elections in the Central-American country on March 7.

The Secretary General stressed that this is the first EOM the OAS will deploy in Belize, which "follows the trend of the Caribbean countries to strengthen their electoral systems through electoral observation." He further recalled that 2012 is the fiftieth anniversary of the OAS Electoral Observation Missions and was pleased to "celebrate this important anniversary serving a democracy in the young and vibrant republic that is Belize."

At the ceremony, held at OAS headquarters in Washington, DC, Ambassador Mendez explained that the signing of the agreement on the privileges and immunities "is an important step in the formalization of the process for the observation mission to take place," and added that it is also "a clear demonstration of Belize's commitment to full participation in the Inter-American System, and to the values that anchor such a system."

"Throughout the Americas, indeed throughout the world, it is widely known that the election observer missions of the OAS are a hallmark of this institution, and that the presence of the missions has evolved into an acceptable imprimatur of a free, fair, and transparent exercise of democracy in the countries of the Americas," Ambassador Mendez affirmed.

The Secretary General has appointed as Head of Mission in Belize Ambassador Frank Almaguer, former U.S. Ambassador to Honduras, and former OAS Secretary for Administration and Finance, and he will lead the observer group arriving in the country a week before the elections.

The signing ceremony also was attended by the OAS Assistant Secretary General, Albert Ramdin, and by officials from the Permanent Mission of Belize to the OAS.

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