
The Role of the Organization of American States in Conflict Prevention

Yadira A. Soto

In January 1991 a land dispute between residents in the rural communities of Gervais-Guitton (5th rural section of the Commune of St. Marc) . . . erupted in violence, resulting in the destruction of five hundred homes, the slaughter of several hundred livestock, and the death of one to two dozen peasants from the village of Gervais.¹

This citation from an internal field report by the OAS/UN International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH)² underscores a dilemma that international organizations involved in human rights and peacebuilding face regularly. In May 1995, almost six months after the return to constitutional order in Haiti, peasants from the Commune of Saint Marc, accompanied by a representative from the National Peace and Justice Commission, arrived at the field office to request international assistance to prevent renewed violence. Local leaders informed the MICIVIH that peasants from Gervais were preparing to attack peasants from Guitton. Familiar with MICIVIH's mandate to "observe and verify," these residents argued strenuously for "preventive action" to avert bloodshed *instead* of verifying acts *after* atrocities occur. This incident highlights a relevant issue: Should international organizations take action to prevent internal conflicts from escalating into violence, and, in particular, should such action require a specific mandate?

Although the above quotation describes an event in Haiti, similar dilemmas are faced elsewhere by other international missions. Such events make conflict prevention an issue of utmost concern to international institutions as well as to others who wish to contribute to a more sustainable peace in their own countries and communities. The effects of conflict on domestic stability, economic development, and human security are becoming increasingly clear. Recent increases in intra- and interstate conflict, particularly in certain regions of the world, underscore the fact that development without peace is not sustainable, and peace without development is not durable. However, what kind of development and what kind of peace are needed to reinforce and sustain both? Gay Rosenblum-Kumar of the Governance and Public Administrations Branch in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations³ has been working on the importance of the UN and regional bodies like the OAS to develop as she calls it "an international prevention system or infrastructure that promotes actions, norms, and institutions which strengthen local capacities to solve disputes at multiple levels of society and at all stages of democratic development." Additionally, she stresses that international organizations should place much more emphasis on "proactively building capacities, institutions, and infrastructures for the transformation of conflict-habituated systems, the equitable regulation of interests, participatory governance processes, and explicit promotion of tolerance, co-existence and peace." In this regard, as demonstrated in the case studies that follow, assistance provided by the Organization of American States (OAS) has focused on building capacity in conflict resolution, strengthening of democratic institutions, and promoting a culture of dialogue. These actions are premised on the notion that the ability to resolve and manage conflict constructively is an effective short-, medium- and long-term *strategy* for conflict prevention, and, thereby, should be a key component of development cooperation and good governance.

Today the importance and effectiveness of the role of international organizations, such as the OAS, is being analyzed at many levels within the international community. One significant example includes the United Nations efforts to spearhead an ongoing consultation process (1998–present) on cooperation between the United Nations' system and regional organizations in peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Specifically, this consultative process annually convenes regional bodies and their UN counterparts to discuss more effective forms of collaboration in the area of conflict prevention. One result of these meetings is the increasing realization that regional organizations, including the OAS, should focus on enhancing their own capacities and strategic impact in the interrelated fields of preventive diplomacy, democratic governance, conflict management and prevention, and post-conflict peacebuilding.

Efforts like the UN consultation process underscore a growing consensus that states and intergovernmental organizations are increasingly better suited

to garner the necessary resources to prepare and implement the full range of preventive actions. The rationale for this has been aptly stated by the government of Sweden:

Preventing the escalation of conflict often calls for coordinated efforts by States able to apply vigorous political pressure . . . for an action to be recognized as legitimate, the rules of international law may require that the external player be either an intergovernmental organization or a government. While NGOs clearly can play an important role in the scope of actions in preventing conflict to escalate into violence, these institutions are limited in the ability to exert political change.

This chapter outlines the work of one such international agency, the Organization of American States⁴ in four member states in Latin America.⁵ It presents four initiatives of the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD) and demonstrates *how* capacity-building in conflict resolution, consensus building, and dialogue facilitation can be an effective tool for preventing conflict within and among member states. The cases prove how peacebuilding missions and post-conflict activities, although not generally considered areas for early action by the international community, can contribute to long-term conflict prevention. Furthermore, these programs show how training in conflict analysis and resolution can contribute to fostering an appreciation for the value of dialogue as an effective tool for managing and resolving sociopolitical conflict, and supports the view that when domestic capacity to manage and resolve conflicts peacefully does not exist, creating that capacity, in and of itself, is a decisive tool for preventing violent conflict in the future.

Additionally, from a purely democratization approach, the strengthening or development of conflict resolution capabilities at all levels of society not only contributes to the prevention of conflict but also enhances the level and quality of participation and interaction between government and civil society. Governments are increasingly recognizing the need to broaden opportunities for citizen participation and promote dialogue between the state and civil society. Yet developing political consensus, as we have witnessed worldwide, is both a difficult and complex task, a task that requires the political will of all actors involved in a particular situation. Many international organizations and aid agencies are responding by incorporating training in consensus-building and conflict resolution into their technical assistance programs as a form of strengthening the democratic decision-making process in various member states.

Finally, the OAS's response through successive mandates, summit agreements, and, most recently, the adoption of the Inter-American Democratic Charter highlight the importance of adapting institutional initiatives to respond to the new needs and demands of its member states. At the crux of

this process is the need to develop new paradigms for a more advanced form of *collaborative* democracy—one that fosters the peaceful resolution of conflicts, consensus-building, and cross-sector collaboration in the formulation and implementation of public policies. To this end, the cases that follow will show how the OAS has moved in this direction, demonstrating its capacity and comparative advantage to insert itself at multiple levels of society and serve as a political agent for conflict prevention in the Western Hemisphere.

CONTEXT

The end of the Cold War and the replacement of authoritarian regimes with democratic systems have given rise to a different political scenario in Latin America and the Caribbean: several subregional conflicts, particularly in Central America, were resolved through political negotiations resulting in treaty agreements among countries and in several instances national peace accords; trade barriers are being lowered throughout the Western Hemisphere; a new agenda for hemispheric integration is being advanced; and a "Summit Process of the Americas" was initiated in 1994 to promote political action plans for cooperation and collaboration.

As a consequence, governments have begun to focus inward to address the deep-rooted social problems that for decades generated internal conflict. In doing so, governments have found that these problems require the active participation, expertise, and cooperation of civil society and an increase in the quality of dialogue between government and its citizens if lasting solutions are to be found. As the democratization process continues, a new group of civil society actors has emerged as strategic allies in advocating peaceful ways to effect social change and, in some instances, discrediting armed struggle as a means to achieve political power. Not surprisingly, many of the member states have stepped up efforts to establish new structures and mechanisms for building social and political consensus with these actors on critical issues affecting their societies.

Despite these advances, the OAS has learned that, although the establishment of new structures and mechanisms are clearly needed, it is not a guarantee for immediate success. Indeed, the impact of these new arrangements can be hampered by inexperience in collective decision making, by the absence of democratic traditions, by prevailing patterns of confrontation and exclusion, by fierce political rivalry and mutual distrust, and by a general lack of good negotiation and mediation skills. In addition, many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are faced with political crises as old forms of political organization are being contested and discredited, and other challenges emerge including corruption, juvenile delinquency, drug trafficking, unemployment, and extreme poverty—all of which threaten nascent and

fragile democracies across the region. Several member states, after costly civil wars, the death of thousands of their citizens, and damage to their economic infrastructure, clearly understand the need for peaceful mechanisms to address these problems. Yet in order for new structures and efforts to succeed, existing cultural patterns will need to be modified, and outdated judicial and political practices must be brought into keeping with democratic principles. Without changes in values, attitudes, and behavior, parties will be unable to constructively engage in dialogue and work collaboratively to address these highly contentious issues.

Democratic Governance and Conflict Prevention

Since it first appeared in the political literature in 1975, the concept of *democratic governance* continues to evolve, and its meaning and implication remain the topic of an ongoing debate.⁶ The definition employed in this chapter is based primarily on the experiences derived from the peace-building work the organization has accomplished to date and proposes that its sustainability depends on the ability of all sectors of society to engage in constructive dialogue, to peacefully manage economic, social, cultural, and political differences through formal and informal means, and simultaneously to possess the ability to channel citizens demands through public participation. Democratic governance, therefore, can best be described as a daily social construct, created and supported by the practices and interaction of the state and civil society institutions in pursuit of their collective, sectoral, and particular interests.

What this means in terms of conflict prevention is that incorporating conflict resolution capabilities and mechanisms into governance structures allows for a more collaborative form of democratic decision-making process, thus facilitating the resolution, or at best the management, of social and political differences.

However, the capacity of political leaders to govern and prevent democratic decay must be accompanied by the political will to establish and use mechanisms that allow for open communication (including access to information) with citizens, and if these prove to be ineffective, to implement and/or institutionalize processes to channel grievances and resolve conflicts. Technical support in establishing mechanisms for dialogue is part and parcel of strengthening democracy, although it is not in itself enough. It also requires deliberate and sustained efforts to promote the values, attitudes, and practices that foster inclusion, collaboration, and citizen participation through consensual decision making. Indeed, one of the fundamental requirements for transforming democratic institutions and processes in a nation is the active participation of a civil society that possesses the attitudes and abilities needed to initiate and sustain political dialogue. In order to establish a more

participatory and equitable democratic culture, a permanent space for the social and political interaction of all societal sectors must be created, one that deliberately includes those sectors that traditionally have been marginalized, that is, indigenous groups, social base organizations, unions, rural sectors, and so forth. It requires building trust and cooperation across sectors and greater public involvement in the discussion of issues of general interest.

Therefore, efforts to build capacity in conflict prevention in the Americas must go in tandem with a long-term commitment to sustainable development, the strengthening of a democratic political culture, respect for citizen's rights, and the rule of law. OAS peacebuilding and conflict resolution activities are premised on the notion that a country with functioning and accountable democratic institutions and a thriving democratic political culture is less vulnerable to debilitating external and internal conflicts or crises.⁷

The Institutional Basis for Conflict Prevention in the Inter-American System

Conflict prevention, although not expressly articulated in these words, is of fundamental interest to the organization. The OAS Charter and other regional instruments call for a large degree of preventive diplomacy and crisis management.⁸ Like that of the UN, the OAS Charter is dedicated primarily to disputes at the *interstate* level.⁹ Covenants to "prevent possible causes of difficulties," to "ensure the pacific settlement of disputes that may arise among the Member States," and to "strengthen the peace and security of the continent" are just a few of the references which directly support and encourage efforts to prevent conflict among its member states. At the intrastate level, the OAS Charter stresses the obligation of member states to promote democracy, human rights, social justice, and development within their country.¹⁰

More recently the OAS has developed new instruments and explicit forms of promoting democracy. In 1993 the OAS General Assembly adopted the Managua Declaration that directly called for a more explicit role in conflict prevention by the member states. Specifically, the declaration states the conviction that "the Organization's mission is not restricted to defending democracy wherever its fundamental values and principles have collapsed, but also calls for ongoing and creative work to consolidate democracy and a continuing effort to prevent and anticipate the very causes of the problems that work against democratic rule." Despite the very clear intentions of the declaration, the organization is only beginning to undertake more concrete steps for tracing out a more direct role for the OAS in anticipating and preventing crises or conflicts. One such measure includes a mechanism for preventive diplomacy. The OAS Permanent Council can convoke a special meeting of foreign ministers as a special session of the Permanent Council if a serious threat arises within or between the member states. Each of these

measures, including the meeting of foreign ministers at the General Assembly, aims at sustaining political dialogue among governments and providing member states with appropriate institutional instruments to reduce tensions and dissuade possible ruptures to democratic rule within the Americas.

In addition, OAS instruments repeatedly make the crucial link between democracy, peace, and development. In the Charter's preamble, representative democracy is described as "an indispensable condition for the stability, peace and development of the region," and, again in the Santiago Declaration of 1991, it is stated that "the promotion and protection of human rights and representative democracy [are] indispensable conditions for the stability, peace and development of the region." Like the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the OAS gives priority to peaceful hemispheric relations and attempts to ensure consensus on how to address complex interstate disputes. The Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (1948),¹¹ and the Protocol of Amendment to the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (1975)¹² constitute two such efforts. Although the amendment has not been ratified by the required two-thirds of the member states, its significance for conflict prevention in the region is real.

As required by the treaty, member states are to meet when any of them come under threats from within or from outside of the region. Specifically, Article 7 of the treaty states that "in the case of a conflict between two or more American States . . . the parties to the dispute will meet in consultation and shall call upon the contending states to suspend hostilities and resort matters to the *status quo ante bellum* and shall take all other measures to reestablish or maintain Inter-American peace and security and resolve the conflict by peaceful means." More recent instruments such as the 1985 Protocol of Cartagena¹³ and the 1998 Protocol of Washington¹⁴ also propose mechanisms to prevent or manage conflict in the Hemisphere.

The culmination of these important efforts to strengthen democracy, as well as initiatives for the prevention and resolution of conflicts occurred in September 2001 with the unanimous approval of the Inter-American Democratic Charter. The Democratic Charter systematizes and strengthens the aforementioned mandates into a single instrument that gives priority to the strengthening of democracy within countries of the hemisphere as a strategic component for the defense of security as well as the prevention of conflict, both at the inter and intrastate level.

The Inter-American Democratic Charter links the key concepts of democracy, human rights, and sustainable development, and makes democracy the articulating principle in the field of conflict prevention and resolution. The charter underscores "the participatory nature of democracy" and defines "the promotion and protection of human rights [as] a basic prerequisite for the existence of a democratic society." It also links conflict resolution to social and economic development by recognizing "that a safe environment is essential

to the integral development of the human being, which contributes to democracy and political stability." Programmatically, the charter emphasizes preventive action over the reactive responses that prevailed in many past OAS instruments to promote and defend democracy. While not stated explicitly, the Democratic Charter underscores the importance of developing early warning tools and systems to allow the organization to act before a conflict escalates into a political crisis. In this sense, the charter reorients the work of the OAS by calling for more flexible and adaptable responses to threats to democracy or democratic rule and provides a blueprint for future action in the region.

A New Agenda for Hemispheric Security and the Reduction of Conflict

In addition to the specific focus on democracy, the Organization of American States has also looked at the question of conflict prevention from the broader vantage point of hemispheric security.

As the political landscape continues to change in the hemisphere, the OAS has begun to define a broader conceptualization of hemispheric security, which has strong implications for conflict prevention between states. No longer can the territorial integrity of the region in the face of external military threats define the security agenda. On the contrary, it should be defined as the sum total of the region's efforts to guarantee security for all its nations.

At the Second Summit of the Americas held in Santiago, Chile, in 1998, in the Plan of Action agreed at that meeting, the heads of state and governments of the hemisphere decided to promote "regional dialogue with a view to revitalizing and strengthening the institutions of the Inter-American system, taking into account the new political, economic, social, and strategic-military factors in the Hemisphere and in its sub-regions." To that end, they instructed the Organization of American States, through the Committee on Hemispheric Security (CHS):

- To expand confidence- and security-building measures to address new areas such as drug trafficking and natural disaster prevention/management;
- To further cooperate in disarmament and arms control; and
- To strengthen the institutions of the Inter-American System related to the various aspects of hemispheric security.¹⁵

In response, the member states at the Santiago Conference approved an illustrative list of eleven confidence- and security-building measures and agreed to voluntarily implement these measures within their regional, sub-regional, and bilateral relations. Such measures include the exchange of information between states of arms inventories, budget, military doctrines, ad-

vance notification of military exercises, and joint action to prevent natural disasters. Efforts are being made to promote and facilitate full implementation of the measures that were agreed upon. The Committee on Hemispheric Security Issues, with the support of the General Secretariat, continues to be an essential instrument for the exchange of information regarding further development and implementation of these measures.

Conflict prevention between states has taken on new significance as the OAS in the recent years has been called upon to provide its good offices to facilitate negotiated agreements on latent territorial disputes through the use of confidence-building measures. One example was in November 1999 when tensions broke out between Honduras and Nicaragua over their unsettled maritime boundaries in the Caribbean Sea. The two countries requested the help of the OAS to prevent an escalation of tensions or incidents. The OAS Permanent Council approved a resolution calling for the Secretary General to designate a Special Representative to "evaluate the situation, facilitate dialogue, and formulate recommendations aimed at easing tension and preventing acts that could affect peace in the Hemisphere." Over the subsequent three months, and with the assistance of the Special Representative, Honduras and Nicaragua reached three agreements that instituted a set of confidence and security-building measures as well as an interim mechanism to ensure peaceful relations while the substance of their boundary dispute was decided upon by the International Court of Justice in The Hague. In March 2000, the parties agreed to specific measures that included maintaining communications between the two countries' armed forces, restricting military activities along the border, and conducting combined patrols in the Caribbean Sea and coordinated patrols in their respective jurisdictional waters in the Gulf of Fonseca.

The following year the parties, with the support of the OAS, signed a technical agreement for observation and verification by third parties on the compliance by Honduras and Nicaragua of the measures that had been previously agreed upon. In June 2001, the two countries signed an agreement at the OAS spelling out details of the Civilian Verification Mission. This mission's final report was presented in December of 2001 and it marked the conclusion of the Honduras-Nicaragua resolution process.¹⁶

Another example is the case of the territorial dispute between Guatemala and Belize. The two countries requested that the OAS Secretary General participate as a Witness of Honor in their bilateral meetings. A series of meetings at the technical and ministerial levels was held at OAS headquarters and a framework for negotiation was agreed upon on 20 July 2000. In August 2000, a Panel of Facilitators was installed to help guide the negotiation process. Belize and Guatemala also established a so-called Adjacency Zone between them and created a Mixed Commission to promote good relations among the communities in the area. In September 2002 the Panel of Facilitators presented to

the governments a document with a set of proposals for the "final, just and permanent solution to their territorial differendum," with the understanding that the proposals were to be adopted or rejected in both countries, by referendum. The consideration of these proposals by the people of both countries is expected to take place after the electoral political processes are held in Belize and Guatemala.

On 7 February 2003, the foreign ministers of Belize and Guatemala, along with the Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General of the OAS, signed an agreement to establish a transition process and a series of confidence-building measures between Belize and Guatemala. The agreement puts into practice a mechanism to manage the Belize-Guatemala relationship following the conclusion of the facilitation process, and the postponement of the referendum to consider the proposals for a permanent solution to the territorial differences between the two countries. Under this new agreement, the parties agree to continue to work constructively and in good faith to manage their relationship until they reach a final "just, equitable, honorable and permanent resolution of their territorial differendum." The framework outlines the responsibilities of the parties and also assigns duties and responsibilities to the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, and to the international community through the establishment of a "Group of Friends" to support the peaceful resolution of the Belize-Guatemala territorial dispute.¹⁷

Central to the agreement is the creation of an Office of the General Secretariat in the Adjacency Zone as of July 2003. The office's principal function is to monitor compliance by the parties of a series of confidence-building measures designed to lower tensions and manage the situation in the Adjacency Zone, particularly in regard to settlers in the zone.

While the mere existence of territorial or jurisdictional disputes does not, in itself, imply the existence of possible latent armed aggression, it does point out the need to create the conditions necessary to prevent such situations from developing into ones in which one state takes violent action against another. In sum, confidence- and security-building measures in the Americas are especially significant for building ties of friendship, trust, and cooperation.

Current discussions within the organization emphasize four levels of action necessary to promote trust and collaboration among countries in the hemisphere. First, a favorable environment for the peaceful resolution of conflicts must be provided, taking advantage of three of the existing pillars of the inter-American system: (1) greater cooperation and increased integration, both commercially and politically, in a context of justice and mutual benefit; (2) strengthening of democracy; and (3) strengthening of the rule of law. Second, and most concretely, the inter-American system's institutional capacity to deal with potential crises must be enhanced, with particular em-

phasis on preventive action. Third, the states' internal capacity for managing and preventing both inter- and intrastate conflicts must be reinforced.¹⁸

As the countries of the hemisphere continue to strengthen their institutional capacity to manage conflict, potential threats are being more closely analyzed within a new framework that broadens the concept of hemispheric security. This new conceptualization of hemispheric security is reflected in the Declaration of Bridgetown, adopted by the General Assembly in June 2002, which advances an updated definition of the concept of security, stating that "the threats, concerns and other challenges to security in the Hemisphere are by nature diverse and multi-dimensional in scope." The declaration further states that "traditional concepts and approaches must be broadened to include new and non-traditional threats, including political, economic, social, health and environmental realities."

The organization is also placing a special emphasis on the linkages between intra- and interstate conflict and the implications for more strategic responses by the inter-American system. The deepening, prolonging, and worsening of conflicts within states is related to the development of conflict between states (interstate conflict), and to the persistence of transnational threats to security. Hence, it is important to understand the relationship between interstate and intrastate and the implications for conflict prevention.

First, it is self-evident that, if intrastate conflicts escalate into situations of severe and sustained violent conflict, they can easily overflow borders and impact neighboring states. The consequences of sustained intrastate conflict can have serious repercussions on the political, economic, and social stability of an entire region or subregion.

Moreover, the existence of severe internal conflicts may weaken a country's commitment and ability to maintain democratic governance and stability, which can make governments more vulnerable to or increase the propensity for interstate conflict. Governments weakened as a result of internal crises tend to be less efficient in controlling or containing within their borders transnational threats to security, such as trafficking in illegal drugs and arms, organized crime, money laundering, and so forth. These threats not only cause enormous economic, social, and political upheaval for the countries of the hemisphere but also are considered a major contributing factor in both inter- and intrastate conflict.¹⁹

Given the growing awareness, within the inter-American system of the importance of interstate and intrastate conflict resolution, as well as of transnational threats, it becomes imperative to design concepts and practices to address the sources of these conflicts at the national, subregional, and hemispheric levels.

In this respect, the UPD was asked by the OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security to prepare a report on "Peace and Security in the Hemisphere" to serve as a discussion document for a Special Conference on Hemispheric

Security that took place in Mexico in October 2003. The study, which concentrates primarily on the issue of interstate conflict, reviews the conflict prevention and resolution instruments existing in other regional institutions and includes a broad reevaluation of existing inter-American conflict prevention and resolution capabilities, as well as recommendations to strengthen them. Additionally, the paper comments on the multidimensional concept of hemispheric security, which was debated at the General Assembly in Bridgetown, Barbados, and takes into account the dynamic between interstate, intrastate, and transnational sources of conflict.

Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD)

Over its long history, the OAS has accumulated a wealth of local knowledge and experience in democratic consolidation and post-conflict reconstruction. Within the General Secretariat, these activities now belong to the UPD (created in 1991). Through the four program areas of the UPD (Democratic Institution Building, Technical Assistance to Electoral Processes, Information and Dialogue, and Special Programs) UPD field missions have carried out a broad array of post-conflict activities encompassing many of the traditional functions associated with peacekeeping operations, including demobilization, disarmament, and repatriation of combatants.²⁰ For example, in Nicaragua, the UPD helped ex-combatants and their families reintegrate into civil society; in Guatemala, it helped government and civil society organizations to repatriate displaced communities; in Colombia, it developed mechanisms to address the land rights of indigenous peoples; in Nicaragua, it trained monitors of local Peace Commissions; and in Haiti, it actively promoted conflict resolution measures at the community level. Other UPD missions have acted as observers to protect human rights in Suriname and support the removal of anti-personnel mines in Nicaragua and Honduras.²¹

Building on this significant experience gained during the last eleven years, a new area was recently established within the UPD, referred to as the Special Program for the Promotion of Dialogue and Conflict Resolution.²² The new program builds on the technical and political expertise acquired through various OAS missions and its more recent efforts to address political crises in Peru, Haiti, Ecuador, and Venezuela. The decision to expand and institutionalize a specialized area in conflict resolution and dialogue promotion also responded to the growing number of requests by member states for assistance in these areas.

Through its Special Program for the Promotion of Dialogue and Conflict Resolution, the UPD is assisting governments and civil society organizations to develop and put into place mechanisms for conflict resolution; design long-term conflict prevention strategies within a state; support national and

local efforts to foster dialogue; and build consensus and develop joint solutions to important social and political problems. An integral part of the Special Program's efforts is its emphasis on strengthening intrasectoral and intersectoral relations through capacity-building activities. The focus aims at generating a process-oriented approach in all UPD initiatives in conflict resolution and dialogue promotion. This approach, or rather conceptual framework, places an emphasis on three important issues related to conflict transformation: (1) addressing the critical spheres of conflict between key sectors; (2) improving the interpersonal and institutional relationships among state and nonstate political actors; (3) addressing both the relational and the substantive aspects of the conflict.

PROMOTING CAPACITY BUILDING IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION, PEACEBUILDING AND HUMAN RIGHTS: A REVIEW OF UPD-OAS PROGRAMS IN GUATEMALA, NICARAGUA, HAITI, AND COLOMBIA

The following four programs are unique. Each will be discussed in some detail here: the specialized program "Culture of Dialogue: Developing Resources for Peacebuilding, OAS/PROPAZ" in Guatemala; the International Commission for Support and Verification (OAS-CIAV) in Nicaragua; the OAS/UN International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH); and the Samoré Project in Colombia. As outlined below, each of these countries has a history of intractable conflict and all of them remain immersed in a process of radical and complex change. In each case, the OAS provided assistance through an array of activities designed to meet the goals and objectives of the conflicting parties. While each of these OAS programs differs in mandate, content, and structure they share one aspect in common: each included a training and capacity building component in conflict resolution as a measure for preventing future conflict.

In line with these efforts, a fifth initiative of the UPD which emphasizes subregional training programs in conflict management is also included. All these case studies demonstrate how building national capacity within member states to manage conflict, promote dialogue, and build consensus is integral to strengthening governance and essential for the maintenance of peace and security and the prevention of violent sociopolitical conflict.

Case 1: Culture of Dialogue: Development of Resources for Peacebuilding in Guatemala (1996-2003)

Guatemala, with 12 million inhabitants, is the most populous country in Central America. More than half of its population are Ladinos; less than half are of Mayan descent and the remainder is composed of a small group of recent

European colonists and Afro-Americans who live along the Caribbean coast. While Spanish is the official language of Guatemala, twenty-three indigenous languages (mostly Mayan) are spoken there—sometimes exclusively.²³

Land tenure and racial differences remain the perennial roots of violent conflict in Guatemala. The thirty-six year period of armed confrontation has its roots in the latent socioeconomic imbalance stemming from Spanish colonial heritage, Guatemala's tradition as a provider of raw materials to its more developed northern neighbors, and the geopolitical rivalries of the Cold War. Chiefly due to the latter reason, but fueled by different factors, the 1954 CIA-supported coup was followed by a succession of military governments and political assassinations for more than three decades. Not only did hundreds of thousands of Mayans abandon their villages and seek refuge in southern Mexico but also more than 400 villages were destroyed and 250,000 persons lost their lives. The war²⁴ left an estimated 80,000 widows and 250,000 orphans.²⁵

In 1987, at the initiative of the civilian president of Guatemala, Vinicio Cerezo, the presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua met together in Esquipulas (Guatemala) and signed an agreement to search together for peace in the region.²⁶ The Esquipulas Accord spawned a series of complex peace negotiations throughout Central America. The accords provided for the establishment of a National Reconciliation Commission (CNR) and a language to support the subsequent convening of a National Dialogue in Guatemala in 1989. In the case of Guatemala, the efforts to design a national process and build a framework for peace lasted more than a decade.

In 1990 a series of meetings between a coalition of revolutionary groups, the Unidad Nacional Revolucionaria Guatemalteca (UNRG), and civil society organizations (Forum of Non-Governmental Organizations, Mayan People's Coordinating Council of Guatemala [COPMAGUA], National Coordinating Committee of Peasant Organizations) opened the way for direct talks between the government and the UNRG. Over a span of eleven years the government and the UNRG signed eleven separate agreements covering human rights, displaced persons, uprooted communities, the rights of indigenous peoples, social and economic issues, land tenure, and other related matters. As the peace negotiations progressed, mechanisms were established to allow civil society participation in the peace process. In 1994 civil society participation in the negotiation process was institutionalized through the establishment of an Assembly of Civil Society. The assembly allowed civil society to express opinions and participate indirectly in the peace process, setting an important precedent for the role of civil society in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding.

As a part of the process, to prepare for peace, the government of Guatemala requested OAS assistance in the design of a program and struc-

ture to resolve community conflicts and build local capacity in conflict resolution. In late 1995, after several visits and an independent needs assessment, the UPD/OAS initiated a pilot program. With the signing of the National Peace Accords in December 1996, the program was later expanded into a specialized program entitled "Culture of Dialogue: Development of Resources for Peace-Building, OAS/PROPAZ." The aim of the program was to enhance the capacity of both government institutions and civil society organizations to pursue dialogue and resolve conflicts peacefully. A primary objective of the PROPAZ Program has been to work directly with political and social actors in Guatemala engaged in addressing issues that have generated violent conflict in the past. By providing the necessary resources and training to create and institutionalize mechanisms for conflict management within their respective institutions, the OAS, through the PROPAZ program, contributed significantly to strengthening the institutional capacity of both government and civil society organizations to respond effectively and positively to actual and potential conflicts. OAS assistance contributed not only to preventing the further escalation of conflict at the national and community level but also generated conditions that enabled different sectors to identify legislative and other actions to address the structural causes of these conflicts.

During its initial phase (1996–2000) PROPAZ focused on providing support to the (National) Parity Commissions and other specialized bodies set up under the Peace Accords. PROPAZ provided spaces for informal dialogue between government and civil society independent and complimentary to ongoing formal negotiation processes supporting the forums established to examine educational reform, the participation of citizens, official recognition of native languages, and land rights of indigenous peoples. The primary goal of the Culture of Dialogue Program was to generate conditions for dialogue and build an infrastructure to move from a culture of confrontation toward a culture of dialogue. It stressed training at all societal levels in communication, conflict analysis, negotiation, mediation, and conciliation. The underlying objective being that building Guatemalan capacity in these areas would help address existing and emerging sociopolitical conflict.

To date PROPAZ has facilitated ongoing, constructive dialogue within various governmental institutions such as the Presidential Office for Legal Assistance and Resolution of Land Conflicts (CONTIERRA), the Land Trust Fund (FONTIERRA) and the Institutional Commission for the Development and Strengthening of Land Ownership (PROTIERRA). In addition, it has facilitated dialogue between these institutions and other governmental agencies and civil society organizations such as COPMAGUA and the National Coordinating Committee of Peasant Organizations (CNOC). Other achievements include training of labor inspectors, through the School for Conciliation and

Mediation of the Ministry of Labor, in negotiation and mediation, and assistance to help the school develop an in-house capacity to continue to offer additional training in these areas. PROPAZ also provided assistance to the Rafael Landívar University to develop training courses for university teachers and NGO representatives. A unique feature of the PROPAZ Program has been to build human resources in third party facilitation and design of inter or cross-sector dialogue processes.

During the last two years, the OAS/PROPAZ Program provided technical support to the Presidential Unit for Conflict Resolution (UPRECO), an intergovernmental commission established in 2001 to develop a coordinated, and more integral response by five key governmental agencies to local conflicts that pose a threat to democratic rule. At the departmental (provincial level), PROPAZ carried out innovative efforts to strengthen governmental capacity to manage and resolve local conflicts. The UPRECO experience is one that should be evaluated and systematized for its possible replication in other member states. Similarly, the OAS/Propaz Program has dedicated a great deal of its efforts to serving as a third party facilitator of an intersectoral dialogue process aimed at renewing discussion and implementation of the Agreement on the Identity of Indigenous Peoples (undertaken within the framework of the Consultative Group on Guatemala to design, facilitate, and implement *Las Mesas Intersectoriales*). The dialogue process, which includes indigenous, government, political party, and civil society representatives, has progressed despite a highly uncertain political context.

The conceptual framework of PROPAZ differs from many other capacity-building programs. It aims at developing a systematic approach to capacity building that goes beyond skills building and places emphasis on generating capacity in *process design*. The approach has enabled PROPAZ to have a more strategic impact on national and local peacebuilding initiatives by addressing the human, cultural, and structural dimensions of peacebuilding. This has allowed the OAS to contribute directly and indirectly to short-term conflict prevention and to strengthen national efforts to build a more durable peace.

In keeping with its commitment to build and enhance local capacity, stewardship of the OAS PROPAZ Program was transferred from an international director to a Guatemalan director in November 2000. The transfer process culminated in March 2003 when PROPAZ was converted to a national entity, the Fundación ProPaz. Today the foundation has an active board of directors that includes government, international cooperation agencies, and indigenous and civil society representatives. The ProPaz Foundation is committed to strengthening the public sector and encouraging cross-sector cooperation and better relations between government and civil society (including the private sector) as a strategy for conflict resolution and democratic consolida-

tion. It specializes in providing technical assistance in process design and conflict resolution.

Case 2: Nicaragua International Commission for Support and Verification OAS-CAIV (1990–1997)

Nicaragua is the largest country in Central America and has a population that is 69 percent mestizo, 17 percent white, 9 percent black, and 5 percent Amerindian.²⁷ The mestizo and white populations generally occupy central and western Nicaragua while the black and Amerindian populations live on the Atlantic coast. The latter have made repeated demands for political and economic autonomy. Since independence in 1838, Nicaragua has been the object of fierce internal and international competition for political control. Viewed as attractive and the potential site for a transoceanic canal, the actions of various *caudillos*, or military leaders, sometimes to defend national interests and at other times to instigate fierce internal rivalries, resulted in repeated “protectionist” interventions by the United States, thereby affecting the governability of the country.

In 1967, the most infamous dictator, General Anastasio Somoza Debayle became the third of the Somoza dynasty to become president. “Tachito” ruled the country with the support of a trained, loyal, and brutal National Guard. In contrast to Guatemala, in Nicaragua rebel groups were able to come into power through “armed revolution” in July 1979. The war against the Somozas cost the lives of 50,000 Nicaraguans and sent 150,000 Nicaraguans—including former members of the National Guard—into exile. Yet rather than end the internal strife, the Sandinistas rule marked a new phase in Nicaraguan history. Cast in the terms of Cold War geopolitics, the U.S. efforts to overthrow the Sandinistas included military assistance to the Nicaraguan Resistance or the “Contras,” led by ex-members of Somoza’s National Guard and indigenous leaders from the Atlantic coast. As a result of the escalating cost of the war effort, the Sandinista government took a harder line toward the United States and internal dissidents, and curtailed political freedoms.

As in Guatemala, the Esquipulas Accord contributed to openings in the political process. In 1988 the Sandinista government and the Contras began direct talks to end the war, and the government also agreed to forward the date for general elections. The presidents of Central America, through the Esquipulas II established the International Support and Verification Commission (CAIV) to oversee the demobilization, repatriation, and relocation of the Nicaraguan Resistance (the Contras). This commission was divided into two parts: the CAIV/UN, which was to demobilize the ex-combatants living in Honduras, and the CAIV/OAS, which was to undertake a similar task for the ex-combatants in Nicaragua. In 1990, Daniel Ortega lost to coalition candidate

Violeta Barrios de Chamorro.²⁸ Since then each succeeding president has been democratically elected.

During its initial phase, the CIAV/OAS Mission focused on the demobilization of 22,000 ex-combatants. Originally OAS support was limited to the Nicaraguan Resistance and their families, but the mission mandate was later broadened to offer more complete and integral support to the pacification process. In 1991, when dissident Nicaraguan Resistance fighters rearmed and threatened the continuation of the Nicaraguan pacification process, CIAV/OAS, at the request of both the government and armed combatants, assumed an important role in mediating an end to the conflict. Overtime the CIAV facilitated negotiations and monitored implementation of numerous succeeding conflicts and agreements involving central government authorities and rearmed combatants (including former Contras and army troops).

A unique contribution of the CIAV/OAS was to help establish a network of local "Peace Commissions" in areas where the reinsertion of ex-combatants took place. The Peace Commissions, established in 1994, are independent groups organized to spur civil society participation in promoting and protecting human rights and in the peaceful resolution of conflicts in conflict prone areas. The Commissions are made up of rural leaders, who work as community mediators and conciliators, investigate alleged violations, promote human rights, and facilitate community development projects. In particular these commissions are intended to resolve locally problems or conflicts arising from the reintegration process, filling a vacuum in areas where government presence is limited or nonexistent. They play a critical role in determining and implementing community development programs and facilitating dialogue among community members and local authorities.

To establish the Peace Commissions, the CIAV identified the localities in postwar Nicaragua that were the most prone to violence, military confrontations, and human rights violations, and then identified local leaders and invited them to attend training seminars on human rights, citizenship education, and alternative conflict resolution methods. Between 1994 and 1996, the OAS sponsored more than 852 training workshops. During the workshops CIAV/OAS staff served in an advisory capacity to help residents design the organization of future Peace Commissions, in accordance with the criteria and needs identified by each group or community. The commissions were thus tailored to the concerns of their members, the specific needs of their communities, and particular conflicts or concerns facing their communities. In general, the commissions consisted of a democratically elected coordinating committee and various working groups charged with carrying out specific tasks. To assure continuity of the Peace Commissions after the withdrawal of the CIAV mission, the OAS sought involvement of traditionally important and respected Nicaraguan institutions such as the Catholic Church. Today the Peace Commissions are an interlinked network covering all or

most of the areas previously affected by the war. They work in the following areas:

- *Mediation.* Local peace monitors provide residents living in some of the most isolated areas of the country with a local mechanism to settle disputes peacefully. Their physical presence is meant to "prevent" conflict escalation by acting as a deterrent to violence. They often act as intermediaries between disputing parties and local authorities, thereby slowly generating greater respect for state institutions. Peace monitors have intervened in a variety of conflicts, including those stemming from issues related to farming and land tenure, the presence of irregular armed groups, and politics and ideology. Peace commissions have repeatedly played a vital role in facilitating communication between irregular armed groups, the army, and government authorities. Moreover, they have contributed to the stability of communities that previously were subject to constant violence.
- *Investigation of Human Rights Complaints.* Peace monitors receive and investigate complaints by local residents of human rights violations. The commissions act as a link between the community and government authorities. Depending on the results of their initial investigation, monitors refer cases to the nearest judicial and law enforcement authorities.
- *Human Rights Promotion.* Peace Commissions play a fundamental role in disseminating information on, and familiarizing the local population with, fundamental human rights principles such as tolerance, respect for diversity, inclusion, and participation. This task is all the more important in areas that have a long history of warfare and thus still suffer from a culture of confrontation and intolerance.
- *Facilitation of State or NGO Projects.* The Peace Commissions also facilitate the execution of development projects that strengthen state and non-governmental institutions. This has become an especially significant part of their work, as it has allowed them to take on new functions related to community development. Given the grave economic and social needs of these communities, the Peace Commissions serve an important function in improving living conditions by assisting communities to identify needs and build consensus on community priorities, steps that facilitate the implementation of new projects.

At the local level, the work of the Peace Commissions in former conflict zones demonstrates that the use of arms is not the only way, much less the best way, to resolve community problems. Local participation in negotiations and mediation efforts has helped adapt the process to the specific realities on the ground. Although the initial purpose of the Peace Commissions was to safeguard human rights and mediate in conflicts, they have gradually

emerged as the most prominent community-based group for other tasks: these commissions have taken on new roles acting as intermediaries between local communities and national authorities and as promoters and facilitators for the successful implementation of local development projects.

The work of the commissions made demilitarization of former war zones possible, in turn facilitating a reduction in violent responses to situations of conflict in many municipalities. Actions initiated by the Peace Commissions have contributed to cease-fires, demobilization of various rearmed groups, and the safe release of hostages. By investigating more than 1,200 complaints concerning human rights violations and undertaking proceedings before the competent authorities, the Peace Commissions have contributed in a significant manner to a reduction of abuses. The Peace Commissions also provide support to the Supreme Electoral Council in voter registration campaigns in isolated parts of the country. As a result, 170,000 persons from twenty-six municipalities were added to the lists of registered voters in the 1996 general elections.

Peace Commissions have worked collaboratively with the army in the demining of remote areas and have helped to remove and destroy over 150 landmines. While perhaps few in number, many areas are significantly safer, removing a formidable barrier to healthier relations between the ex-combatants. In addition, peace commissions have helped local residents obtain land deeds for over 500 properties in some of the most remote areas of the country. They have provided support to both state institutions and NGOs to develop infrastructure, housing, and health and environmental projects in isolated, hard-stricken communities.

Over time, a national network of peace commissions has helped remote communities overcome their isolation. Today more than a thousand persons serve on 180 Peace Commissions and subcommissions comprising a network that covers the municipalities in the most conflict prone zones in Nicaragua. The commissions are linked by radio communication, which allows them to exchange information at any time. In more than ten years of existence, the OA, through its support to local Peace Commissions, has made significant contributions to the peaceful resolution of conflicts, the social reintegration of a significant part of the population (ex-Contra and former military alike), and the incremental strengthening of government institutions.

Case 3: OAS/UN International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH) (1992-1999)

Haiti has perhaps the longest history of protracted violence and repression in the Americas.²⁹ Haiti has a population of 6,888,000, distributed unevenly over 27,750 sq. km. While 66 percent of the population work in the agriculture sector, only 20 percent of land in Haiti is arable. A total of 95 percent of

this population is black and 5 percent is either mulatto or of European origin. Land tenure and race discrimination are just two of the underlying causes of violent conflict. Since the eighteenth century Haiti has suffered from wars, uprisings, poverty, revolutions, massacres, and dictatorships. The most recent dictatorships and coups stem from the election of François (Papa Doc) Duvalier in 1964. Duvalier held the reins of power until his death in 1971 through a large and brutal private army known as the *Tontons Macoutes*.

After the death of Papa Doc, the title of "President for Life" was passed to his nineteen-year-old son, Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier. Unrest and rioting brought on by rampant corruption, the murder of several hundred Haitians by Duvalier's henchmen (*Tontons Macoutes*), and the unpopular policies of the young Duvalier finally caused him to flee the country in 1986. Despite interim military-civilian governments, rigged elections, and a series of coups over the succeeding four years, general elections were held in 1990 (under international observation) and the charismatic people's priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected into office. Less than a year later, President Aristide was overthrown by a violent military coup in September 1991. Over the course of the next six months, two thousand Aristide supporters were murdered by the military and the *Tonton Macoutes*. The Organization of American States called for Aristide's reinstatement and imposed an economic embargo on the country in an effort to pressure the military to cooperate in finding a negotiated solution. The UN imposed an embargo on oil and trade with Haiti. Moreover, both the OAS and the UN undertook independent and joint actions to address the political crisis in Haiti, and they facilitated negotiations between the Haitian armed forces and Aristide. Despite these initiatives, the military refused to cooperate and efforts to secure a negotiated solution failed. In March 1994 the United States, followed by the UN, occupied Haiti and President Aristide was returned to power in October 1994. A year later 1995, fellow Lavalas Party member René Préval was elected to be his successor in 1995.

In February 1993, the OAS and the United Nations created the OAS/UN International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH) as part of an international effort to resolve the Haitian political crisis resulting from the 1991 coup.³⁰ The MICIVIH mandate focused on the defense and promotion of human rights, democracy assistance, and institutional strengthening of the new Haitian National Police, the judicial system, and local human rights organizations. In 1997 a program for the peaceful resolution of conflicts was initiated with the technical and financial support of the OAS/UPD. The program's principal goal was to build local and institutional capacity in conflict resolution (in particular within the judicial and police sectors) among key sectors, including human rights organizations in Haiti. By developing skills in conflict analysis, mediation, and negotiation, institutions and political actors would be better prepared to handle situations of real or potential conflict, and thereby reduce the likelihood of human rights abuses. The program's aim

went beyond human rights principles, training was aimed at helping individuals examine the attitudes, values, and behavior prevalent in their own spheres of action, and those necessary to foster respect for human rights. Ultimately, it was meant to aid and strengthen efforts by civil society actors (and the government) to effect peaceful and strategic social change. A key aspect of the program included the development of new techniques for institutionalizing communication between critical groups or sectors such as the police, youth, justices of the peace, judges, local leaders, peasants, and authorities at all levels.

The MICIVIH Pilot Conflict Resolution Program included four separate initiatives:

- *Training and dialogue facilitation in the Department of the Artibonite.* In 1996 the MICIVIH field office conducted a survey to monitor the impact of land disputes on the judiciary. The Artibonite Valley, the most extensively irrigated and fertile lands in Haiti, also has the highest incidence of violent land disputes in the country. In repeated instances, peasants have been incited, coerced, or paid to attack communities, occupy lands, or destroy crops. This recurring pattern not only disrupts the economic and communal life of these communities but also sets peasants against peasants in a struggle for survival. In 1996 and 1997 the MICIVIH, together with Peace Brigades International (PBI) and other international volunteers, worked with peasant and community leaders to increase their understanding of conflict, and to explore and develop peaceful alternatives or solutions to land disputes in their communities. Eventually the peasants, with technical and advisory support, established an informal forum known as the Land Conflict Working Group (LCWG). It provided community leaders in the several counties in the Artibonite with an informal forum in which to examine their role in fueling or abating conflict, to discuss community problems, and a neutral space to meet with government officials to discuss administrative and legal procedures for filing complaints, selling or buying land, etc. Several participants later became important resources for the National Institute of Agrarian Reform (INRA) when it began implementation of an ambitious (and controversial) agrarian reform program.
- *Training in conflict resolution for the Haitian National Police (HNP).* The aim of this program was to improve relations between the police and the community, which were often strained or hostile. The training, developed in several parts, combined elements of community policing, human rights, and conflict resolution training into a single, comprehensive program offered over the course of several months. Police examined their role as public servants in maintaining order, as well as the organizational and logistical constraints they faced in carrying out their

duties, and most importantly, the public perception and expectations of the police. The course aimed at providing police with a safe setting for examining the institutional and cultural factors that affect human rights, and for developing strategies for improved performance. Police were encouraged to be proactive, to anticipate the factors that contribute to crime and to develop strategies for enlisting public participation in crime prevention. Administration of the program was undertaken jointly by the MICIVIH, the National Police Academy (Direction d'Ecoles et de Formation Permanente) and the National Office of the Haitian National Police (Direction Générale de la Police Nationale de Haiti).

- *Training NGO representatives in alternative conflict resolution.* This component targeted civil society representatives, and in particular human rights activists, with a view towards establishing a network of individuals with knowledge and experience in conflict prevention and intervention in their respective fields of work.
- *Mediation for Judicial Authorities in the Department of the Artibonite.* This pilot program targeted judicial authorities in the Department of the Artibonite, particularly justices of the peace and public prosecutors, in the use of mediation and conciliation. The program was a joint project of the MICIVIH, the UPD, and the Ministry of Justice, offered and administered through the Training Office of the School of Magistrates (École de la Magistrature). One goal of the program was to increase the range of options or procedures available to residents and judicial authorities for effectively resolving civil, family law, and community disputes. The program was deliberately intended to field test a contextualized training program in mediation for judicial authorities, and to serve as a basis for incorporating a course on mediation into the curriculum of the National School of Magistrates. In addition, the MICIVIH worked with the Commission on Modernization of the Haitian Judicial System to incorporate mediation into the judicial system.

The MICIVIH also worked with NGO representatives and Haitian police to develop a Pilot Program for the Reduction of Urban Violence. This pilot project proposed to establish a local crime prevention committee to facilitate dialogue and develop partnerships between the police and the community aimed at reducing violence and preventing crime within a designated sector of Port-au-Prince. The program sought to increase citizens' awareness, participation, involvement, and responsibility in public issues, including matters relating to youth, access to justice and basic services, and crime prevention.

Participants in each of these programmatic initiatives were introduced to the basic concepts of conflict analysis; the various conflict resolution methods; the difference between constructive and destructive conflicts; and effective communication skills and techniques. Training sessions regularly

included practical exercises designed to introduce and familiarize trainees in negotiation.

These various programmatic initiatives allowed peasant leaders and local judicial authorities in violence prone areas of the Artibonite Valley to experience firsthand alternative and peaceful approaches for dealing with community and local land conflicts. Some even felt their status in the community increased as residents saw them willing to take proactive and preventive action. Similarly, police in various provinces in Haiti (and at the National Police Academy) were provided spaces to reflect upon their role in promoting positive societal change. The evident curiosity of many local residents and the openness of various Haitians to consider these new methods suggest that, culturally, entry is possible. In the future new opportunities should be explored to build upon and expand these early pilot efforts.

Case 4: The Samoré Case of Colombia (1997-1999)

Colombia is located on the north coast of South America. Three spurs of the Andes dominate Colombia and the north, west, and central parts of the nation are mountainous, making transportation and communication difficult. Despite this, a majority of the 39 million plus population of Colombia live there. By most measures, including a history of more than forty years of democratically elected governments, Colombia is a modern nation. Yet, Colombia has had a turbulent internal history—beginning from the 1840 civil war to the 1899 War of a Thousand Days to the insurrection of 1946, which cost hundreds of thousands of lives, to the military repression of 1956-1957, to ongoing guerrilla warfare, including the recent drug war that today permeates all of Colombian society.

Distinguished from but closely tied to these macro problems is the problem of the indigenous people living in eastern Colombia in the forested areas of the Orinoco and Amazon River basins. These lands contain largely untapped resources—including petroleum. Exploration and exploitation of oil has been a source of conflict in the neighboring countries of Ecuador and Peru. Colombia is no different.

In May 1997, the government of Colombia asked the OAS to study a conflict then existing in the so-called Bloque Samoré (located in northeast Colombia) between oil companies and the indigenous *U'wa* community.³¹ The request came directly from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Mines & Energy with the backing of Occidental Petroleum of Colombia (a subsidiary of Occidental Petroleum of the United States) and representatives of the *U'wa* community and the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC). Other interested parties included the National Office for Indigenous Affairs under the Ministry the Interior and the Colombian Institute of Agrarian Reform (INCORA) of the Ministry of Agriculture.

In response, the OAS organized a mission comprised of experts from the UPD, the General Secretariat, and the Center for Non-Violent Sanctions and Cultural Survival of Harvard University.³² Their goal was to seek out and record the multiple points of view regarding the situation and recommend ways to handle the conflict. The government agreed that if all the parties consented, a dialogue would be opened to facilitate mutual understanding with regard to the various aspects of the conflict, including cultural preservation and social, economic, and environmental issues. The intervention of the OAS/Harvard team in the Samoré case prompted the principal actors in the conflict to reduce their aggressive rhetorical attacks and to assess jointly where they stood in the conflict. It also provided an opportunity for the OAS/Harvard team to make a series of recommendations to the parties. One recommendation was to create, if and when the time came, a program for conflict prevention and resolution to operate through the Colombian Ombudsman's Office. It was clear that any petroleum operations outside or inside indigenous protected zones would likely result in situations similar to the Samoré case. In anticipation of such conflicts, the OAS/Harvard team stressed that every effort should be made to create a social mechanism to prevent disputes from escalating and/or leading to the violation of human rights and violence.

The OAS/Harvard team also made a number of recommendations designed to bring the parties closer together:

- *Dialogue.* As a first step toward creating conditions conducive to a dialogue, the team recommended that the oil companies declare a suspension of exploration and/or extraction of oil in Bloque Samoré.
- *More land.* A previous process to enlarge the *U'wa* reservation should be placed back on the government agenda.
- *Communication.* All parties should tone down their public statements.
- *Recognition.* The *U'wa* authority and leadership system should be recognized and shown respect.
- *Consultation.* A process of consultation should be put in place under the responsibility of the Colombian government.
- *Training.* The *U'wa* should receive training and assistance within the context of any consultation they were to be a part of.
- *Conflict prevention.* A conflict prevention and resolution program should be initiated.

The territorial dispute was resolved with the signing of an INCORA decree on 6 August 1999, through which the government of Colombia created the *U'wa* Preserve (Resguardo Único *U'wa*). The area assigned to the *U'wa* was increased from 61,000 to 220,000 hectares for a community of 707 families numbering 3,582 persons. The government made a commitment to earmark

several billion pesos for the purchase of land and other improvements for settlers and peasants living in the area who are not part of the U'wa tribe. The parties involved in the conflict stressed the importance of reservation borders being clearly defined, thus guaranteeing the U'wa the conditions they needed to assure the survival and protection of their culture. This specific problem was dealt with separately from other issues, as the OAS/Harvard report recommended. It was solved, therefore, without the U'wa being asked to concede oil exploration rights in return.

Although the problem of exploration rights has still not been satisfactorily resolved, there were some important accomplishments as a result of the OAS/Harvard intervention: the Colombian government was sensitized to the importance of addressing, in a timely fashion, indigenous issues, such as the cultural and land rights, and in particular the needs of the U'wa tribe; the petroleum companies, by the mere fact that they accepted temporarily the OAS/Harvard recommendations, saw the value of searching for innovative solutions to the type of community problems encountered in their oil exploration activities; and finally, the U'wa community and ONIC achieved their primary goal, which was to be heard by the government of Colombia in their quest to expand the U'wa reserve and to be treated with the respect and consideration that every Colombian citizen deserves.³³

Courses on Conflict Analysis and Management

Based on the training activities carried out within the context of these peacebuilding and conflict management missions, the UPD has developed an array of subregional training courses in conflict analysis, consensus-building, participatory decision making, facilitation of dialogue, mediation, and negotiation. Through these subregional training courses, individuals from key institutions within the Americas involved in developing dialogue processes, political negotiations, or policy reforms have the opportunity of acquiring and furthering their skills and knowledge in these areas.

While there has been a substantial increase in training opportunities throughout Latin America over the past two decades, many existing programs offer a standardized "one size fits all" conflict management package. Often lacking from these skills based approaches are the broader issues that put the new skills into context, draw linkages to the experience and needs of the course participants, and enable them as adult learners to critically examine and address the underlying norms and attitudes that impact efforts to achieve resolution and social peace.

What distinguishes UPD training programs from other programs is its integral approach to learning. By integrating cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral aspects of adult learning, they are intended to foster the attitudes, skills, and practices necessary to promote and sustain dialogue. The programs are

designed to teach participants about conflict and also about themselves. Government and civil society representatives in a UPD training course on political negotiation, for example, will master the steps and functions of the negotiation process and will also examine what contributes to making a "good negotiator." Moreover, they will examine the essential elements of design required to develop a specific negotiation process. In order to ensure that this process is both appropriate and feasible, participants are encouraged to observe and to critically engage in many topics. Participants should learn how national and local institutions function, determine their relative political strength, and also anticipate and develop strategies for dealing with potential spoilers or allies (in the military and media, or political and financial interest groups/individuals) whose influence is likely to impact the negotiation process. Participants learn how to determine if minimum conditions exist for initiating or participating in a given negotiation process and what steps they can take to *create* the necessary conditions if they do not exist. The training process allows actors to examine how attitudinal and cultural factors influence the way they and others interact during negotiations. They learn ways to structure a process that builds trust and increases an appreciation for and commitment to dialogue.

The courses aim at making explicit linkages between democratic governance and the field of conflict resolution. In several instances the courses have led to specific initiatives to institutionalize training programs within key government ministries, agencies, and civil society organizations.³⁴

LESSONS LEARNED

From a wider perspective, there are several important institutional lessons, which are separated under four headings: institutional, operational, technical, capacity building and sustainability. These provide practical suggestions and criteria that may be useful to other international and national actors undertaking conflict resolution initiatives at the local and national levels.

From an Institutional Perspective

Entry

How an intervention is initiated is extremely important, especially in terms of its support from an authoritative institution. The OAS acts on the basis of consensus and will only deploy assistance, including short- and long-term post-conflict programs and special missions, as a result of a direct request or invitation by the government of a member state. Each of the programs introduced in this chapter received strong backing from all thirty-four OAS

member states and the respective accomplishments of these missions underscore the value of unified support for the success of international peacebuilding initiatives.

Impartiality and Transparency

Peacebuilding and conflict resolution missions must work with all relevant actors. Whether or not the parties in conflict perceive the mission or the organization as an impartial third party can be pivotal to a mission's ability to promote constructive dialogue between civil society and governments. How parties view the organization can serve as an incentive or disincentive to participate. Impartiality and transparency not only of the organization in general but also of the individual staff members on the ground are vital to secure the support of all relevant parties and are critical for any mission's success.

From an Operational Perspective

Flexibility of Operations

With respect to program operation, the CIAV, PROPAZ, and, to a certain extent, the MICIVIH mission, all demonstrate that peacebuilding programs are by their very nature ever changing and often unpredictable. For these reasons, OAS field programs require a large degree of flexibility, sometimes difficult to achieve within a large bureaucracy. Each of these programs at some point in its life cycle was forced to adapt their mandate and operations to the changing realities on the ground. This requires political, administrative, and fiscal flexibility from both the OAS headquarters and the international donor community. In the case of OAS/PROPAZ in Guatemala, the UPD had to negotiate a decentralized administrative plan within the OAS administration in order to facilitate the use and flow of funds on the ground. These procedures allowed us to work on the basis of need. It was crucial to the program's success and required large, almost traumatic changes in a bureaucracy, whose financial and administrative procedures are regulated by a strict set of norms and regulations. Nonetheless, it helped ensure the success of PROPAZ field operations and served as a model for other OAS programs in the field. The OAS gave political and fiscal flexibility to other missions in Nicaragua, Haiti, and other countries. Yet this made the difference in ensuring the success of these field operations and this arrangement served as a model for other OAS programs in the field.

Listen and Support Your People in the Field

OAS technical cooperation tends to approve programs with very concrete objectives and specific expected outputs. Yet peacebuilding is a dynamic

process. All four cases underscore the need to ensure flexibility in program implementation. In the case of Haiti, the development of a conflict resolution capacity linked to the human rights monitoring work was achieved through the commitment and vision of people on the ground. With the support of the executive coordinator of MICIVIH and staff from the OAS, a human rights observer was able to introduce and develop a conflict resolution training component not originally contemplated in the mission's mandate. Although the joint OAS/UN mission is now over, the value of this component has not been lost by key actors from the international community, who are now suggesting that a new program be developed based upon this experience.

There Are Clear Advantages to a Multidisciplinary and Civilian Approach to Peacebuilding

In contrast to most UN missions, which have emphasized militarized approaches to peacekeeping and building, each of the programs presented in this article were civilian missions.⁵⁵ They clearly demonstrate that civilian missions can represent strategic and effective tools for peacebuilding in a post-conflict setting, even in high-risk security situations. From an OAS perspective, the civilian nature of its missions made it easier for international staff on the ground to build good relations with local residents and to gain the trust of those actors who need to participate and eventually continue the project. In cases such as PROPAZ and Samore, the OAS teamed up with academics, anthropologists, and indigenous experts in order to enhance the program's ability to design dialogue processes and other specialized training activities. In the case of the Samoré Project, the OAS worked in collaboration with Harvard University's Center for Non-Violent Sanctions and Cultural Survival. The collaboration of the center's experts was based on their expertise with the different indigenous movements throughout the region. In Guatemala, the OAS teamed up with international conflict training experts, the Mennonites and various well-known scholar-practitioners from the field of conflict resolution. The success of these programs or missions not only required good staffing and reliable expertise but also a readiness to work with other organizations or institutions capable of contributing specialized resources and expertise. It has the added advantage of maximizing the impact of such programs on the ground.

Although instances arise where there may be a need for particular technical expertise related to the demobilization of forces and the destruction of weapons, and so forth, this situation can easily be remedied by requesting support from the defense ministries of OAS member states. In the case of the CIAV, the mission received assistance from the Venezuelan military to demobilize the Contras, to destroy weapons, and to help repatriate combatants. Another important feature of these programs was their stability in terms of

both field and headquarters staff. Conflict intervention and resolution require continuity and the development of personal, informal, as well as professional relationships. In general, civilian staff members stay in the field for longer periods of time than militarized peacekeeping or peacebuilding missions as police and military personnel usually rotate on average every six to twelve months. This general continuity allowed the Program to prove itself and demonstrate its impartiality, facilitating their ability to establish good working relationships with different sectors of the population, including the heads of the secretariats and ministries through different administrations. Moreover, it also enabled staff to incorporate what it was learning on the ground (organizational learning) into new or existing programs, contributing to a high learning curve that enhanced the work of the missions.

From a Training Perspective

Reflection

Training programs provide a safe venue for critical reflection. Assisting and enabling parties to examine and reflect on difficult issues or conflicts in a constructive manner is a necessary part of training and capacity building in any conflict resolution program, but in post-conflict settings it is an absolute imperative. In the case of Haiti, police in MICIVIH training programs encouraged to reflect on their own occupational culture, the subculture of police that encourages agents not to *cross the line* [more colloquially summed up in the adage "Never rat on a fellow officer"], their corresponding duty to respect human right norms, and the public's perceptions and expectations of the police. Officers identified institutional constraints and personal dilemmas they face, and how competing or prevailing cultural patterns affect the performance of their duties. Moreover, it enabled them to discuss how, as young Haitian men, they too are influenced by engrained cultural patterns of behavior. For most police officers it was the first time they were able to discuss these issues openly. Being cognizant of the different behavioral patterns simultaneously at play is a first step in overcoming resistance to and generating support for institutional reform. The training programs in Haiti were deliberately intended to explore the linkages between conflict resolution, human rights, civic participation, and democracy building. Similarly PROPАЗ training programs, drawing on adult education and popular education techniques, consistently included spaces for participants to critically reflect on their context and their own role in continuing or resolving conflicts. Each time trainees developed a new skill; they were encouraged to discuss how it would fit with their own personal experience and what would be required to apply it in their setting. Although a different context than OAS field missions, in the Samoré case, actors from governmental and non-governmental

sectors were able to *tell their story*. The research and fact-finding phase of the Samoré Project allowed each party in the dispute to reflect upon and ask questions regarding the perspectives, interests, and positions of the others. This ability to view the conflict from the vantage point of others is a crucial step in developing capacities in conflict analysis.

Inclusivity

The programs outlined above show the importance of listening and of respecting the concerns expressed by various sectors of the population as well as of each of the disputing parties. In each of these programs, the field staff consistently worked to include not only the government officials or traditional leadership but also those directly affected by the sociopolitical conflict. In Nicaragua, CIAV staff on the ground worked with foot soldiers, displaced persons and communities, ex-Contra or Resistance fighters, former military and military personnel, among others. Although originally mandated to assist only members of the Nicaraguan Resistance and their families, staff recognized the need to involve all groups affected by the conflict, including the former Sandinista army if rural communities were to be able to adapt to changing realities and overcome the challenges (as well as conflicts) engendered by the reintegration and pacification process. They aptly recognized that limiting support to one side created problems in how the mission was perceived and accepted by the other side. Their assertiveness of the need for more inclusive approaches, particularly at the local level, contributed to the decision in 1993 of the member states to expand the OAS-CIAV mandate to include all sectors affected by the conflict.

Local Ownership

Conflict resolution and peacebuilding programs must be designed and developed to respond to objective needs of the target country, and equally or more importantly, these initiatives be perceived as relevant by their societies and local communities. As we all know, if a program is dictated more by the needs of the donor or international community, and lacks the interest and commitment of counterparts or beneficiaries on the ground, the project is bound to fail. Programs must be developed jointly by the agency providing the technical assistance and the intended beneficiaries. Implicit in this approach is the need to allow for more local autonomy, in regards to both the staff and the national or local authorities of the target country. It also takes time. The overarching mandate of the OAS/PROPАЗ program provided a large degree of technical and political autonomy for the program, and made explicit the need for broad participation by the different sectors of society. During the initial stages of the OAS/PROPАЗ program, many potential counterparts did not

immediately grasp the benefits that a program specializing in process assistance could contribute either to the overall peace process or to specific political negotiation processes. Yet over time, as PROPAZ's proved itself, different government agencies and civil society groups began to internalize the value of this type of program. Not only did the program help individual parties to develop better negotiating skills or to design better structured dialogue and negotiation processes, it also underscored the benefits, including its potential for conflict prevention, of working with a wide range of actors and practical steps on *how* to do it. The OAS/PROPAZ program worked with governmental and non-governmental actors and institutions (including the private sector) operating at multiple levels of Guatemalan society.

Capacity Building

Building installed or in-house capacity in conflict analysis and resolution methods is the cornerstone of any good training program. Training programs are often a catalyst for further steps to introduce and institutionalize conflict resolution mechanisms within government and civil society institutions. Aside from providing trainees with skills development, training methodologies, and techniques in conflict resolution, each of the programs mentioned above gave priority to enhancing participants' understanding of, and ability to develop and structure processes of negotiation, consensus building and dialogue. A primary objective of the PROPAZ training programs was and remains to help parties or sectors in conflict understand and recognize how *good process* can contribute to *better outcomes* in negotiations. Participants need to recognize their own needs and where they themselves are situated in any conflict or negotiation process before they can understand those of others. Trainees also examine the psychological dimensions of conflict and strategies to generate conditions propitious to dialogue, joint collaboration, and negotiation. As interveners and/or actors in conflict, it is important that trainees be cognizant of the need to design a process that generates minimal conditions of trust, interest in maintaining dialogue with the other parties, a safe space for disagreement and a commitment from all sides to the process in order for conflict resolution initiatives to be sustainable. As trainees discover for themselves the potentially transformative dimensions of conflict, they also learn to combine new behavior, conceptual skills, and proper process design to develop medium-term strategies for effecting peaceful social and political change.

Joint Design

The primary difference between UPD conflict resolution and dialogue programs and those offered by other international agencies, consulting firms, and

NGOs is the emphasis given to involving program counterparts in the design and implementation of training programs. UPD trainers work with counterparts, walking them through a series of questions to gain a more complete picture of their institutional context, local context, specific hurdles, and so forth, and posing open questions to identify key concerns and needs of the institutions and trainees. Allowing the time and resourcing of a process of joint design of program and strategy with counterparts can pose significant institutional challenges. It is time-consuming and often costly, particularly in those instances where there is no permanent field mission on the ground. In the case of regional training programs, for example, trainers often required repeated international travel for consultation. The UPD stands out in its institutional commitment to work collaboratively with its program counterparts before, during, and after capacity-building programs and is convinced that in the long run extensive program preparation significantly increases the impact and success of its programs. Moreover, when international organizations undertake capacity-building programs, they would be wise to ensure periodic "reality checks" to determine if the program being offered is really needed, and if it is effectively meeting those needs and if the organization is the able and best suited to provide the type of assistance a member state may need.

Context Is Everything

The way people deal with conflict is deeply rooted in their history and culture: International trainers and practitioners should never presume they "already know" the context. A general understanding of the politics, culture, and context of a country is essential, but not enough when developing conflict resolution and human rights training programs. One needs to know the specifics. Training should not be "adapted for" local capacities, but rather rooted in and built upon these capacities. Programs to promote conflict transformation, democracy, and human rights should not aim at transferring knowledge and skills. More often than not, individuals and groups are not conscious of how culture impacts their response and approach to conflict, and cultural values may differ significantly from region to region, particularly in multiethnic and multicultural countries. The training design should create spaces to elicit reflection so that local residents—political actors and the training-facilitation team—discover and make explicit cultural norms, patterns of behavior, and perceptions that operate in their particular context. This helps parties to develop more appropriate conflict resolution methods and initiatives. Learning to resolve and/or manage conflicts peacefully requires a will to change or to do things differently. An elicited approach is of particular importance when the content of the program includes the peaceful resolution of disputes, promotion of human rights principles, and respect for the rule of law. In short, context matters more than we think.

Low Profile Access

The comparative advantage of OAS access to almost all political levels and populations of a member state and its ability to work on a low-profile basis allows the organization to make a political contribution to the field of peace building. This was critical to working in a highly volatile conflict such as the Samoré Project.

From a Sustainability Perspective

One last lesson worthy of mention is the need for early development of an effective exit strategy—required if the program is to be sustainable. In the cases of Haiti and Nicaragua, an exit strategy consisted primarily in the strengthening of national institutions and civil society, especially at the local level, so that these institutions and actors could take over functions originally carried out by the missions. In the case of Guatemala, the UPD facilitated the institutionalization of the OAS/PROPAZ Program into a national entity, the ProPaz Foundation. The institutionalization process was planned two years prior to the closing of the program as an international project and was carefully designed to ensure the involvement of the government, the donor community, the civil society actors who participated over the life of the program, as well as the private sector. With the participation of all these representatives, the UPD facilitated the creation of a Board of Directors that guided and directed the new foundation. The exit strategy devised in the case of the OAS/PROPAZ program was able to incorporate most of the following criteria:

- Ensure that the capacity-building aspects of the programs not only contribute to development of individual skills but also create changes in structures and institutions;
- Include a “training of trainers” component so that each program can field a pool of qualified national staff to continue developing a local capacity in the area of conflict resolution training;
- Ensure that all training methods are validated and evaluated for their cultural appropriateness and that relevant training material is developed for participants’ needs rather than simply translated from elsewhere;
- Contribute to the theoretical underpinnings of the field of conflict resolution through action-research evaluation methods; and
- Develop criteria for measuring the social impact of these programs.

The lessons learned highlight a need to continue exploring questions regarding the changing role of regional organizations in conflict prevention. Some questions that need further consideration include:

- What are the new roles for international/regional organizations in conflict prevention and management? What steps are necessary to operationalize work in these new areas of action?
- In which ways can regional mechanisms, training, and technical assistance programs best contribute to medium and long-term conflict prevention and management?
- What are the comparative advantages and respective areas of competence of different actors in conflict prevention? (intergovernmental, regional, national, and NGO) Can the synergy between institutions or actors be enhanced? What steps can international organizations take to maximize the interaction and foster pooling of resources between them?
- What are the applications and limitations of Western-models of conflict management and prevention in other contexts and realities?
- How can local knowledge and expertise be better utilized in managing social and political conflict?

CONCLUSION

The work of the Committee of Hemispheric Security and the good offices of the General Secretariat, by promoting confidence building and other measures, have enhanced the bilateral relations between states and have both national and international implications for conflict prevention. The field experience of the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy attests to the value of developing this type of work further at the intrastate level, in particular when local capacities to manage and resolve conflicts peacefully are weak or non-existent. Establishing national capacities to engage in constructive dialogue, and to manage and diffuse conflicts, is inextricably linked to the establishment of more profound and democratic decision-making processes, whereby both civil society and government work together to develop more inclusive means for public participation. Moreover, the cases of Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Haiti illustrate how mainstreaming conflict management tools, techniques, and mechanisms into governance structures improve relations within government institutions, and between government and civil society.

Effective long-term conflict prevention will most likely require a combination of actions that include: building solid strategic and operational partnerships by enlisting the active participation, expertise, and cooperation of civil society actors in a joint search for solutions; building political consensus across sector and civil society lines; harnessing competing groups and interests into effective and complimentary processes through the promotion of new skills, attitudes, and behaviors.

The UPD programs outlined above demonstrate just some of the significant contributions the OAS has made to the field of peacebuilding and conflict prevention. They are indicative of the potential and real capabilities of a regional organization to support its member states in many of the actions outlined above. In addition to these programs, the OAS supports countless other projects in other member states in the areas of legislative assistance, education for peace, and electoral technical assistance and observation—all of which contribute directly or indirectly to the prevention of conflict.

During the past number of years, the issue has been raised repeatedly as to whether the OAS should review its existing mechanisms to deal with conflict, with a view to possibly strengthening or broadening them. In the opinion of the executive director of the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy, this evokes both opportunities as well as challenges for a regional organization such as the OAS, in terms of a future role that it can shape in the area of conflict prevention.

In a period when the specific threats to peace and democracy have an increasingly transnational dimension, the importance of collaboration and joint action among countries of a common region is vital. As Ms. Spehar has rightly pointed out, “ultimately, the OAS, as a regional political body of high-level dialogue, is in and of itself a prime tool for consensus-building and conflict prevention in the Hemisphere. It is the highest forum in the Americas for policy development, collective decision-making and sharing of information. It should be viewed as a mechanism through which the Member States, their institutions and societies, can work collectively inwardly and outwardly on common issues and concerns.”

NOTES

1. Colin Granderson, Sofia Clark D'Escoto, and Christine Loupforest, “The Haiti Challenge Following the Restoration of Constitutional Order in October 1994,” *Democracy* (1994), at www.oas.org/upcd/newsletter/thc.htm.

2. The OAS/UN International Civilian Mission in Haiti known by its French acronym MICIVIH (1993–2000) was the first joint mission between the UN and a regional organization. The original MICIVIH mandate focused on the protection of fundamental human rights, such as the right to life, physical integrity, and security of the person. After the return to constitutional order and the reinstatement of President Aristide, the mandate was expanded to actively promote the consolidation of democracy and the strengthening of democratic institutions. The MICIVIH focused on three areas: human rights monitoring, technical assistance to strengthen the police and the judiciary, and human rights promotion. The UPD provided technical assistance and additional funds to develop a pilot project in conflict resolution, in particular, a project with the Ministry of Justice to introduce mediation into the Haitian ju-

dicial system. The pilot project also included a conflict resolution training program for members of the Haitian National Police.

3. See Gay Rosenblum-Kumar, “Conflict Prevention and Good Governance for Durable Peace and Sustainable Development,” Discussion Paper (New York: UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs, 29 November 1998).

4. The Organization of American States is made up of thirty-four members: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, The Bahamas (Commonwealth of), Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica (Commonwealth of), Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

5. The ideas, thoughts, and opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of the OAS or of its member states.

6. UPD report on Democratic Governance in the Americas presented at the Thirty-third Regular Session of the General Assembly, 3 June 2003.

7. General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, Washington, DC, Second Summit of the Americas, Santiago de Chile, Chile, 18–19 April 1998.

8. With reference to these and other instruments, the OAS acts in three different ways to prevent and manage conflicts: through preventive diplomacy, crisis management, and post-conflict reconstruction. An extended discussion of “preventive diplomacy” and “crises management” is offered by Osvaldo Kreimer, in *Conflict Prevention: Path to Peace or Grand Illusion?* ed. David Carment and Albrecht Schnabel (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2003). The present chapter focuses primarily on post-conflict reconstruction.

9. Secretariat for Legal Affairs, Department of Legal Cooperation and Information, Charter of the Organization of American States (Washington, DC: OAS, 1948), at <http://www.oas.org/juridico/English/charter.html>.

10. Secretariat for Legal Affairs, Department of Legal Cooperation and Information, Charter of the Organization of American States.

11. The InterAmerican Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance, the so-called “Rio Treaty,” entered into force on 4 December 1948. See the InterAmerican Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty), Secretariat for Legal Affairs, Department of Legal Cooperation and Information at <http://oas.org/juridico/english/treaties/b-29.html>.

12. The “Protocol of Amendment to the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty)” was signed on 26 July 1975 but has not been ratified. See Secretariat for Legal Affairs, Department of Legal Cooperation and Information at [http://oas.org/juridico/english/treaties/b-29\(1\).html](http://oas.org/juridico/english/treaties/b-29(1).html).

13. Secretariat for Legal Affairs, Department of Legal Cooperation and Information, “Protocol of Cartagena de Indias,” Protocol of Amendment to the Charter of the Organization of American States (Washington, DC: OAS, 1985), at www.oas.org/juridico/english/A-50.html.

14. Secretariat for Legal Affairs, Department of Legal Cooperation and Information, “Protocol of Washington,” Protocol of Amendment to the Charter of the Organization of American States (Washington, DC: OAS, 1992), at www.oas.org/juridico/english/a-56.html.

15. Second Summit of the Americas, Santiago de Chile, Chile, 18–19 April 1998, General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, Washington, DC.
16. Committee on Hemispheric Security www.oas.org/csh/default.htm
17. Committee on Hemispheric Security www.oas.org/csh/default.htm
18. Draft Paper "Peace and Security in the Hemisphere: A Study on the Problems and Risks and on Conflict Prevention and Resolution," Permanent Council of the Organization of American States, OEA/Ser.G, CP/CSH-540/03 rev.1, 2003.
19. Draft Paper "Peace and Security in the Hemisphere: A Study on the Problems and Risks and on Conflict Prevention and Resolution," Permanent Council of the Organization of American States, OEA/Ser.G, CP/CSH-540/03 rev.1, 2003.
20. Draft Paper "Peace and Security in the Hemisphere: A Study on the Problems and Risks and on Conflict Prevention and Resolution," Permanent Council of the Organization of American States, OEA/Ser.G, CP/CSH-540/03 rev.1, 2003.
21. The reports of several of these missions appear on the UPD web site at www.oas.org/upd.htm.
22. See for example the many articles appearing in the electronic newsletter of the UPD (*Democracy*) at www.oas.org/upd/newsletter/news.htm.
23. The member states approved, within the framework of the UPD Work Plan for 2001, the establishment of a specialized program within the Unit.
24. "Guatemala-Maya Civil War," *ICE Case Studies* (ICE, 1999), at www.american.edu/projects/mandala/TED/ice/peten.htm.
25. CNN Interactive World News ("Central America's longest civil war comes to a close," 26 December, 1996) cited a figure of "more than 140,000 were massacred or disappeared," while ABC News in its *Country Profile: Guatemala* (and) states that "At least 400,000 people—mostly civilians suspected of leftist sympathizers—were killed in 36 years of civil war."
26. Linda Green, *Fear as a Way of Life: Mayan Widows in Rural Guatemala* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).
27. The accord was signed on 7 August 1987 and is known as the "Esquipulas II Agreement." For more details see chapter 4 by Dinorah Azpuro, "Peace and Democratization in Guatemala: Two Parallel Processes," in *Comparative Peace Processes in Latin America*, ed. Cynthia Arnson (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1999).
28. *The World Factbook, Nicaragua* (Washington, DC: CIA, 1999).
29. Observers from the OAS, the UN, and a delegation led by former president Jimmy Carter closely supervised the campaigns and election.
30. Haiti is a small densely populated country that makes up one-third of the island of Hispaniola. Columbus visited the island on 6 December 1492, and the native Arawaks immediately came under Spanish rule. The French invaded in 1697 and, based on slavery, the country became the richest colony in the hemisphere; a slave revolt in 1791 slaughtered thousands of whites and the revolt eventually turned into mutual hatred between the three groups, which continues to this day.
31. Granderson et al., "The Haiti Challenge."
32. Anon, "El Poso de la discordia," *Revista Cambio*, Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia, 20 September 1999, www.cambio.com.co/1999/sep20/economia.htm.

33. Ted Macdonald, James Anaya, and Yadira Soto, *The Samore Case: Observations and Recommendations* (Washington, DC: Organization of American States, General Secretariat, 1998).
34. Ricardo Ávila, "El caso de la comunidad U'wa: territorio y petróleo," in *Nuevos Caminos para la Resolución de Conflictos Experiencias Latinoamericanas* (Washington, DC: Organization of American States 2002).
35. 1999, 2000, 2001. Work Plan of the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy as adopted by the OAS Permanent Council.
36. Two exceptions to this general rule are the OAS-CLAV Mission in Nicaragua and the OAS Mission to support Democracy in Suriname. For brief periods the military of certain member states provided support in collection and destruction of weapons and removal of landmines.