

CONSEJO PERMANENTE



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ACTA
DE LA SESIÓN PROTOCOLAR
CELEBRADA
EL 25 DE ABRIL DE 2012

Para recibir al excelentísimo señor
Freundel Stuart, Q.C.,M.P., Primer Ministro de Barbados

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CONSEJO PERMANENTE DE LA ORGANIZACIÓN DE LOS ESTADOS AMERICANOS

ACTA DE LA SESIÓN PROTOCOLAR CELEBRADA EL 25 DE ABRIL DE 2012

En la ciudad de Washington, a las diez de la mañana del miércoles 25 de abril de 2012, celebró sesión protocolar el Consejo Permanente de la Organización de los Estados Americanos para recibir al excelentísimo señor Freundel Stuart, Q.C., M.P., Primer Ministro de Barbados. Presidió la sesión el Embajador Leonidas Rosa Bautista, Representante Permanente de Honduras y Presidente del Consejo Permanente. Asistieron los siguientes miembros:

Embajador Bayney R. Karran, Representante Permanente de Guyana
Embajadora Deborah-Mae Lovell, Representante Permanente de Antigua y Barbuda
Embajador Duly Brutus, Representante Permanente de Haití
Embajador Denis Ronaldo Moncada Colindres, Representante Permanente de Nicaragua
Embajadora La Celia A. Prince, Representante Permanente de San Vicente y las Granadinas
Embajador Nestor Mendez, Representante Permanente de Belize
Embajador Roy Chaderton Matos, Representante Permanente de Venezuela
Embajador John E. Beale, Representante Permanente de Barbados
Embajador Guillermo Cochez, Representante Permanente de Panamá
Embajador Darío Paya, Representante Permanente de Chile
Embajador Bernadino Hugo Saguier, Representante Permanente del Paraguay
Embajador Hubert J. Charles, Representante Permanente del Commonwealth de Dominica
Embajador Allan Culham, Representante Permanente del Canadá
Embajadora Jacinth Lorna Henry-Martin, Representante Permanente de Saint Kitts y Nevis
Embajador Neil Parsan, Representante Permanente de Trinidad y Tobago
Embajador Roberto Bernardo Saladín Selin, Representante Permanente de la República Dominicana
Embajador Edgar Ugalde Álvarez, Representante Permanente de Costa Rica
Embajador Andrés González Díaz, Representante Permanente de Colombia
Ministro Martín Gómez Bustillo, Representante Interino de la Argentina
Embajador Luis Menéndez-Castro, Representante Interino de El Salvador
Ministro Consejero Jorge Collazo Uboldi, Representante Interino del Uruguay
Ministro Consejero Breno de Souza Brasil Dias da Costa, Representante Interino del Brasil
Consejero Freddie Cleveland Tucker, Representante Interino del Commonwealth de las Bahamas
Ministra Dolores Jiménez, Representante Interina de México
Consejera Patricia D. M. Clarke, Representante Alterna de Grenada
Lynen Ann Scott, Representante Alterna de Jamaica
Ministro Consejero Jorge Eduardo Contreras, Representante Alterno de Guatemala
Ministro Raúl Salazar Cosío, Representante Alterno del Perú
Ministro Fernando Augusto Suárez Moreno, Representante Alterno del Ecuador
Primera Secretaria Kimari Amanda Shenelle Storey, Representante Alterna de Santa Lucía
William McGlynn, Representante Alterno de los Estados Unidos
Embajador Jorge Alberto Milla Reyes, Representante Alterno de Honduras
Consejero Kenneth J. Amoksi, Representante Alterno de Suriname

También estuvieron presentes el Secretario General de la Organización, doctor José Miguel Insulza, y el Secretario General Adjunto, Embajador Albert R. Ramdin, Secretario del Consejo Permanente.

El PRESIDENTE: Declaro abierta esta sesión protocolar del Consejo Permanente, convocada para recibir al honorable señor Freundel Jerome Stuart, Primer Ministro de Barbados.

Señor Secretario General, doctor José Miguel Insulza; señor Secretario General Adjunto, Embajador Albert Ramdin; distinguidos Representantes Permanentes y Representantes Alternos; señores Observadores Permanentes; señoras y señores:

Permítanme extender, en nombre del Consejo Permanente y en el mío propio, una muy cálida bienvenida a Su Excelencia, el Primer Ministro de Barbados, el honorable señor Freundel Jerome Stuart y agradecerle su visita a esta histórica Casa de las Américas. Me complace también ofrecer una cordial bienvenida a todos los honorables miembros de su delegación que le acompañan. Sean ustedes, distinguidos invitados, muy bienvenidos.

PALABRAS DEL SECRETARIO GENERAL

El PRESIDENTE: A continuación, doy la palabra al señor Secretario General, doctor José Miguel Insulza, quien se dirigirá a la sala.

El SECRETARIO GENERAL: The Honorable Freundel Stuart, Prime Minister of Barbados; members of his official delegation; Ambassador Leonidas Rosa Bautista, Chair of the Permanent Council and Permanent Representatives of Honduras to the Organization of American States; Ambassador Albert Ramdin, Assistant Secretary General; ambassadors, permanent representatives; permanent observers; ladies and gentlemen:

It is a distinct honor and pleasure to extend a very warm welcome to Prime Minister Freundel Stuart on this, his first visit to the house of the Americas. Prime Minister, this is your home, and we hope that this will be the first of many visits to come!

As is well known, the Honorable Freundel Stuart assumed the high office of Prime Minister of Barbados in October 2010, following the sad passing earlier that month of Prime Minister David Thompson, whom we'll always remember. The seamless transition of power that occurred after that sad occasion attests to the strength of Barbados's governance and institutions and strong democratic traditions. Of course, it was made less daunting in view of Prime Minister Stuart's many years of experience in public service, which will be presented by the Chair of the Council in a moment.

Honorable Prime Minister, there has been no better training ground for the position you now hold than the positions you previously held. Barbados, like other countries in the Hemisphere, has had to confront the challenges resulting from the global economic and financial difficulties experienced in the last few years. These have not been easy times but with your experienced leadership, we hope that in the very near future, your country, along with all states in the Caribbean, should be able to record meaningful economic progress.

Barbados and the OAS have had a long and enduring relationship. Barbados was the second Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member state to join the OAS. Your country became a member in 1967, just one year after achieving political independence. Since that time, Barbados has always been active in the work of the Organization with a strong and vibrant delegation.

Barbados was the first Caribbean country to occupy the position of Assistant Secretary General, in the person of the late Ambassador Valerie McComie, from 1980 to 1990. Nationals of Barbados have served on the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR), the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the Inter-American Juridical Committee (CJI), and on other OAS committees.

Currently, Barbados's Permanent Representative, Ambassador John Beale, chairs the very important Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs (CAAP) of the Permanent Council, in which his leadership role has been significant. Two of the country's native sons have led other inter-American entities: Sir George Alleyne was Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) from 1995 to 2003, and Dr. Chelston Brathwaite was the Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) from 2002 to 2010.

You have projected, therefore, both a hemispheric and regional vision in which Barbados has sought strong and respectful relations with other OAS member states and associated entities. The country's leadership role in CARICOM is evident by its responsibility within the region's quasi-cabinet system for issues relating to the Caribbean Single Market and Economy. You are also home to the Regional Security System (RSS) of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

One reason for Barbados's strong commitment to democracy is the fact that the country has had one of the longest—if not the longest—uninterrupted parliamentary system in the Hemisphere, which dates back several centuries. Representative democracy with a vibrant Parliament has been the bane of the country's existence.

Among the sectors in which the OAS has cooperated with the Government of Barbados over the last several years, one should mention the country's unwavering focus on education, which has resulted in it being ranked with a very high literacy rate, one of the highest in the Hemisphere. I believe that this is also a contributing factor to your robust and strong parliamentary system of governmental institutions.

We are also working with your government in the elaboration of an anti-drug plan, the establishment of drug treatment courts, and improvements in the quality of national reports submitted to the Multilateral Evaluation Mechanism (MEM). And let's not forget the Bridge Caribbean Program of the Inter-American Social Protection Network (IASPN). The *punte* seeks to enhance social protection strategies for the most disadvantaged in our societies through the transfer of knowledge and lessons learned from other member states.

Honorable Prime Minister, I could say much more, but let me finish by assuring you of the OAS's continuing support for Barbados and expressing once again how grateful we are for the support you have given to the Organization.

We give you a hearty welcome to the House of the Americas.

Thank you very much.

[Aplausos.]

El PRESIDENTE: Gracias, señor Secretario.

PALABRAS DEL PRESIDENTE DEL CONSEJO PERMANENTE

El PRESIDENTE: Señoras y señores, nuestro ilustre visitante, el Primer Ministro de Barbados, Freundel Jerome Stuart, es Licenciado en Derecho de la Universidad de las Indias Orientales. Obtuvo también, una maestría en Derecho Internacional Público con especializaciones en la Naturaleza y las Fuentes del Derecho Internacional, el Derecho del Mar y el Derecho Internacional en su relación con la Inversión Extranjera Privada y el Nuevo Orden Económico Internacional.

El Honorable señor Freundel Jerome Stuart pasó a ser miembro del Parlamento de su país en enero de 2008 y sirvió como Viceprimer Ministro, Procurador General y Ministro de Asuntos Internos hasta su nombramiento como Primer Ministro en octubre del 2010. Fue, además, Senador del 2003 a 2007 y miembro del Parlamento previamente hasta 1999.

El Primer Ministro Stuart es miembro del Grupo de Alto Nivel del Secretario General de las Naciones Unidas sobre la Sostenibilidad Mundial, el cual se estableció en el año 2010 con el fin de formular un nuevo proyecto para un futuro sostenible.

Como uno de los Jefes de Gobierno de la Comunidad del Caribe (CARICOM), el Primer Ministro Stuart tiene bajo su responsabilidad la puesta en práctica del Mercado y Economía Únicos de la CARICOM, incluyendo la unión monetaria.

Mr. Prime Minister, you have an enviable history of long and honorable service to your country, and for this, we salute you. As we welcome you, we are delighted to have among us a representative of the Caribbean and of the Barbadian people, people who are larger than life, people who fill our minds with their colorful speech, their engaging energy, their warmth, and their love of life.

Señor Primer Ministro, su tierra y hermosa isla, con su arrecife de corales y clima cálido, es una tierra de ensueño; país caribeño, americano, con el que compartimos una geografía común desde las Antillas y el Mar Caribe, de norte a sur, por todo el Continente.

Señor Primer Ministro, sea este un saludo a su presencia en esta casa y un homenaje al pueblo de Barbados que usted representa.

PALABRAS DEL PRIMER MINISTRO DE BARBADOS

El PRESIDENTE: Señor Primer Ministro, le doy la palabra. Mr. Prime Minister, you have the floor.

[Aplausos.]

El PRIMER MINISTRO DE BARBADOS: Mr. Chairman of the Permanent Council, Mr. Secretary General, Mr. Assistant Secretary General, members of the Permanent Council, permanent observers, members of the General Secretariat, ladies and gentlemen:

Today presents a treasured opportunity for us to reflect on the many ways in which we have come together as governments and as people of the Americas over the years.

Few, if any, of the delegates who attended the First International Conference of American States here in Washington, D.C. in 1890 would have imagined at that time that the English-speaking territories of the Caribbean would later join them in their pursuit of regional solidarity and cooperation.

In 1948, in Colombia, at the Ninth International Conference of American States, as the transition was made from the Pan American Union to the modern Organization of American States, most of the founding members of the present Organization likewise would not have foreseen that their efforts would be strengthened by the influx of newly independent states from the Caribbean.

When Barbados achieved its independence on November 30, 1966, its first act as a sovereign nation was to seek membership of the United Nations, where it declared the founding tenet of its foreign policy to be: "Friends of all, satellites of none." The next step that it took was to join the Organization of American States, which had become known for its stated commitment to achieving peace, justice, solidarity, and collaboration, and for defending the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of its members.

Given the provisions of the Charter of the Organization, our participation was inevitable. We were buoyed by our belief in its principles and the recognition that our different ethnic, cultural, and historic experiences could only enrich the already vibrant culture of this organization.

We felt that even micro island states, such as Barbados, had a constructive role to play, especially in this organization where small size and lack of power have never been barriers to either aspiration or achievement. We believed that Barbados had something to contribute, however modest, to the inter-American system.

Mr. Chairman, we also saw that centuries of colonialism in our region had created a chasm of sorts at the institutional and governmental levels between Latin America and the English-speaking Caribbean. We believed that membership in this organization would assist in breaking down the barriers that separated us and allow for the cross-fertilization of ideas and the growth of mutually enriching bonds of friendship.

The participation of Barbados and the other former British colonies in the OAS since the 1960s has undoubtedly been an opportunity for us to open and enhance the space for discussion, collaboration, and mutual understanding among the governments and peoples of the Hemisphere, breaking down old barriers.

The participation of Suriname, with its Dutch antecedents, produced another positive influence that has enriched our organization. The current Assistant Secretary General is, undoubtedly, a testimony to that fact.

Haiti, which at present is the sole Francophone member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), was waiting, as a signatory to the OAS Charter, to welcome each of us when we arrived.

What a rich heritage we have in this organization!

Mr. Chairman, in 1967, Barbados' representatives to the OAS brought with them the tried traditions of parliamentary practice that were strengthened over the course of centuries. On June 26, 2009, we celebrated the 370th anniversary of the first session of our local Parliament.

That a small country such as ours commands such an impressive record of political and parliamentary achievement is to be commended, although this has not been without considerable effort. Barbadians, since the birth of Parliament in 1639, have consistently been challenged to modify and improve the system of government to ensure that each individual is able to live in a manner that enriches both body and mind. This is our continuing struggle. In the last century, we have been able to deepen our democracy by introducing universal adult suffrage where, formerly, there was a limited franchise based on gender and wealth.

Thus, with its long history of parliamentary democracy, Barbados came to the Organization of American States, not as an empty vessel needing to be filled, but as a new state that was ready and willing to be a pragmatic partner in the building of a better hemisphere. As such, we were early advocates for free and fair elections, and for the securing and fortification of rights for the historically disadvantaged.

We consistently called for improvement and change in policies affecting women, persons of African descent, and those of indigenous communities, as these have been subjected to institutionalized, socially ingrained, and systematically practiced forms of maltreatment and discrimination. We placed a high store on the promotion and protection of human rights.

Indeed, one of the more striking changes since the 1960s, for which we must pay tribute to the Organization of American States, is the fact that all of the governments represented here are democratic governments. Countries of Latin American and Caribbean extraction have all agreed to abide by the will of our respective electorates.

We have come very far in these areas. Like Bunyan's travelers on the King's Highway, we must, however, be wary of staying on Enchanted Ground, inhaling an air of supposed optimism that may just as soon be replaced by that of slumber. Sleeping on the grand projects of democracy and development is, for us, simply not an option.

It is our view that governments do well when all of their people are given opportunities that are conceived, born, cradled, and nourished in conditions of security. Fortunately, this view is widely shared and entrenched in the Organization's Charter.

The OAS's commitment, in the framework of multilateralism, "to promote, by cooperative action, the economic, social, and cultural development" of its members and "to eradicate extreme poverty, which constitutes an obstacle to the full democratic development of the peoples of the hemisphere" is therefore to be lauded.

Several Barbadian and Caribbean nationals have poured their time and talents into the transformation of the OAS and the wider inter-American system. We remember today, with profound gratitude, the late Valerie T. McComie, who served as the first Assistant Secretary General elected from an English-speaking state, and Christopher Thomas from Trinidad and Tobago; the late Oliver Hamlet Jackman, who served on the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR) and

then as a judge on the Inter-American Court of Human Rights; and the Honorable Maizie Barker-Welch, who served as President of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM).

I take also this opportunity to recognize the sterling service performed by Sir George Alleyne and Dr. Chelston Brathwaite, who both worked for two consecutive terms as the heads of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), respectively.

The contributions of these international civil servants and many others in diverse fields, as well as past and present staff members who have served the inter-American community in varied capacities, demonstrate the breadth and depth of Barbados', and, indeed, the Caribbean's commitment to the holistic development of the people of this hemisphere.

Mr. Chairman, clearly, the present global economic downturn has left no area of our national life unscathed. It has had implications for Barbados' economic and public policies, as well as the allocation of its scarce financial resources. Yet, we will not renege on our promise, as elected officials, to pursue pathways to progress for our people.

Our commitment to safeguarding the ability of individuals to pursue their personal development through the provision of essential education, health, and other social services is irrevocable. Indeed, this is also a regional obligation, as we have assured our citizens of the importance of democracy and development through our participation in the six Summits of the Americas.

The challenge in this environment has been to preserve our democratic societies from being eroded as the global economy continues to deteriorate. While there is no fixed law that determines the response of individuals to the onset of adversity, there is general agreement that those who are economically and socially marginalized are often seduced by the attractions of drugs, alcohol, and crime. The overall knock-on effect of economic recession on societies, therefore, is sobering. The challenge for us is that this economic crisis has created greater demand for social spending while putting pressure on our national budget.

Discussions held since the onset of recent financial problems point to a critical conclusion, which is that, notwithstanding individual national efforts, the pervasive effects of the crisis require a concerted and coordinated hemispheric response. The need for greater economic and commercial ties among the countries of the Americas cannot be overlooked. We must not lose sight of the essential role the OAS plays on matters related to development, and the vital importance of development to both multidimensional security and the maintenance of democracy.

Mr. Chairman, the hemispheric focus of the Organization of American States has been strengthened by the parallel process of the Summits of the Americas, starting in 1994. I had the distinct honor of attending the recently concluded Sixth Summit of the Americas in the beautiful, historic Caribbean city of Cartagena in Colombia. I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate President Juan Manuel Santos and the Government and people of Colombia for so successfully hosting this important meeting, for the sterling efforts of the Colombian officials who made the meeting possible, and for the warm hospitality extended to the members of the Barbadian Delegation.

In the view of my government, the Summit process provides a valuable occasion for the heads of state and government of the countries of the Americas to meet to discuss the challenges facing our region and our peoples. It is an occasion, too, for us to foster closer cooperation among our countries and to coordinate policies and strategies to improve the well-being and standard of living of our citizens.

The theme of the Summit, "Connecting the Americas: Partners for Prosperity," was apt, and, together with the five subthemes, provided a positive platform for discussion on the challenges that threaten our economies, our security, our infrastructure, and the rights of our youth, women, and the most marginalized in our societies. Heads of state and government present highlighted the many trying situations facing the citizens of the Americas and the struggles they face to survive on a daily basis.

It is clear that our principal goal as leaders is to improve the quality of life of our people and to provide them with opportunities that will enable them to live prosperous, fulfilled lives, fully enjoying their rights and freedoms as citizens.

There were also many appeals for unity in the Americas and for putting our people at the center of democratic governance. In calling for unity in the Americas, the focus fell squarely on the omission of one of our sister nations from the Summit. As I said then, I say now again: surely, we should be able to count on the presence of Cuba at our next Summit of the Americas.

We were able to adopt specific mandates in the five thematic areas which can lead to significant improvements in the lives and well-being of the peoples of the Americas as we commit to implementing them in the coming years. As President Santos said in his presidential statement at the conclusion of the Summit, and I fully agree with him, "We want one America, an America more united and more prosperous." He also called for the establishment of new paradigms, and Barbados supports him in this call.

The Summit recognized the growing prosperity of Latin American nations and their increasing importance in the world economy. The foundation has therefore been laid for the stronger countries of the region to assist those that are weaker. Cycles of boom and bust perennially afflict the economies of smaller states and render large portions of our populations unable to thrive. This demonstrates the need for concerted action; therefore, I contend that the OAS still has a role to play in assisting members to adequately address this challenge. These considerations should be integral to any process of reflection on the vision and future work of the Organization.

The OAS was initially conceived as a place mainly for political dialogue. However, four protocols to the OAS Charter have changed that focus the Protocol of Buenos Aires in 1967, the Protocol of Cartagena de Indias in 1985, the Protocol of Washington in 1992, and the Protocol of Managua in 1993. These protocols converted the OAS into a forum for cooperative action in the promotion of development.

The services that this organization has delivered to member states, directly and indirectly, in the area of building human and institutional capacity throughout the Hemisphere are second to none.

Barbados is currently carrying out an ambitious social development program based on the Chile Bridge (*Puente*) model, through assistance provided to Caribbean countries by means of

triangular cooperation, with the participation of Canada, Chile, and the OAS in the initial stages, and now through the Inter-American Social Protection Network (IASPN). If successful, this method will provide a paradigm shift in the provision of personal social care in Barbados.

The activities carried out through OAS technical cooperation programs are not the type that will be funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) or by other subregional banking institutions. They have their own unique stamp.

These changes were accompanied by the deepening of the OAS's role in the strengthening of democracy through the adoption of the Inter-American Democratic Charter in 2001. Barbados is hopeful that the current work on the draft Social Charter of the Americas will not come to naught.

Mr. Chairman, we continue to view the OAS as a forum for the improvement of conditions for our peoples throughout the Americas. Barbados remains convinced that the OAS continues to be relevant to the lives of people in its member states, even if it may from time to time need to introduce necessary reforms. It is for this reason that I am pleased to be here with you in this hall, the central site in this great House of the Americas.

I am aware that we have some difficulties to face with respect to the bases of financing and overall vision for the Organization. Without adequate resources, it will be impossible for this institution to carry out the mandates given to it by the heads of state and government. It is therefore necessary for there to be a recapitalization of the Regular Fund and, with it, a recommitment to the development agenda. This will only be possible when those with the capacity to pay contribute more, as each member gives according to its ability for the improvement of all.

Be assured, Mr. Chairman, that Barbados will strive, through its active participation in the deliberations of the many and varied organs that comprise the inter-American system, to make the system better and to promote the upliftment of the people whom it was designed to serve.

We carefully noted the speech of the Secretary General to the Summit of the Americas, in which he acknowledged that the Americas is a hemisphere of regions and that, therefore, hemispheric action will be more realistic if it takes account of regional realities. He also stated that "the OAS and the inter-American system are not in competition with regional organizations or with any of the forums that have emerged to give voice to our growing desire for integration; on the contrary, it welcomes them."

Our own regional organization, CARICOM, has worked closely with the OAS, wherever possible, and I know that CARICOM countries treasure the relationship between the two institutions.

Mr. Chairman, the need for a multidimensional approach to the issues of common concern to our countries bears repetition. With the end of the Cold War, governments have increasingly embraced a multidimensional concept of security. Indeed, in 2002, in adopting the Declaration of Bridgetown, this organization took cognizance of this need.

This approach takes social, economic, environmental, and cultural considerations into account when assessing the factors that weigh on the peace and stability of states. From this vantage point, the real threats posed to our countries by natural disasters, drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, terrorism, and the transshipment of nuclear waste are better analyzed. These issues

pose potential threats to human lives, to the overall economy of the region, and to the fragile ecosystems of the Caribbean Sea.

The Caribbean Sea embraces the states of the greater Caribbean and beautifully combines Dutch, Spanish, French, and English territories and traditions. It is, arguably, the most important and impactful natural resource in the lives and livelihoods of the people of the wider Caribbean. Sustainable use of the Caribbean Sea is therefore fundamental to the social and economic fabric of Caribbean countries. In most islands and countries, more than 60 percent of the population lives on or near the coast. Many people derive their livelihoods from the sea in wide-ranging activities that include fishing, marine transport, and, especially, tourism.

Coming, as I am, from the United Nations Secretary General's High-level Panel on Global Sustainability (GSP), which has just presented its report, and standing, as we are, on the threshold of Rio+20, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, I crave your indulgence in raising a matter that is critical to the future of our region and in which I am convinced the OAS has an important role to play.

Improved ocean governance is a sine qua non to sustainable use of all seas, and not just the Caribbean Sea. For centuries, we have taken for granted the resources in the marine environment. It has now become patently clear that these resources are nonrenewable. Around the world, including the Caribbean, there is widespread evidence of depleted fisheries, degraded ecosystems, and threatened biodiversity. Most fisheries are overexploited, coral reef ecosystems are being stressed to extinction, and coastal habitats are being polluted or destroyed by inappropriate development and unmanaged use.

Yet, we are not devoid of hope. The countries of the wider Caribbean region—nearly all members of the OAS—have been vigorously seeking to strengthen regional ocean governance through several avenues. The most important of these is the Caribbean Sea Initiative, which was started in 1998 and resulted in the UN General Assembly resolution “Towards the sustainable Development of the Caribbean Sea for Present and Future Generations.”

Another outcome of this process was the establishment in 2006 of the Caribbean Sea Commission (CSC) to promote and oversee the sustainable use of the living and nonliving resources of the Caribbean Sea. The countries of our region are fully committed to making the Commission operational, and it is in this context that we have invited the support of the member states of the OAS.

Those states that are not physically connected by the Caribbean Sea are joined to us by bonds of solidarity. This support is most readily seen in resolution AG/RES. 2691 (XLI-O/11), entitled “Support for the Work of the Caribbean Sea Commission”, which was adopted in San Salvador, El Salvador, at the forty-first regular session of the General Assembly in 2011. The resolution is evidence of the scope for collaboration between the OAS and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) as the Caribbean Sea Commission seeks to mobilize financial resources, build capacity, enhance technical and technological cooperation, and engage in the exchange of experiences.

We are convinced, Mr. Chairman, that the sustainable use of the Caribbean Sea cannot be achieved by countries working separately. Sustainable use will require strategic and sustained collaboration and cooperation.

Barbados has been Chair of the Caribbean Sea Commission since its establishment in 2006. During that time, progress has been steady but slow. Ours is a large, complex region, with many countries and organizations whose needs and roles must be considered in building an effective architecture for regional ocean governance. We believe that a solid foundation of consensus and cooperation has been laid, and this will serve us in good stead as we move forward to establish the secretariat responsible for coordinating regional policy development.

Mr. Chairman, I wish to record my appreciation for the work done by the Department of Sustainable Development (DSD), as it has sought to assist countries of the Caribbean in anticipating and/or mitigating potential threats to our social, economic, and environmental security.

Obviously, the OAS must continue to consider the Caribbean Sea in its multidimensional context. We have already committed our governments to strengthening environmental protection and the sustainable use of natural resources, with a view to ensuring a balance between economic and social development and the protection of the environment. We cannot slacken on our promises to the people of the Hemisphere, so it is clear that the OAS has much work to do in contributing to good governance of the environment.

History summons us, members of this venerable organization, the OAS, to come together in reinvigorated efforts to build and improve the policies and institutions that strengthen the foundation for sustainable development in the region, under the leadership of the Secretary General and his staff. I appeal to the organs of the OAS, especially the Permanent Council, led by the ambassadors of member states, and representatives of observer states, to associate themselves with this call to hemispheric duty.

I take this opportunity to thank the Organization for its valued assistance to Barbados over the years. I know that this organization will go on to achieve even greater things than it has in the past.

Thank you very much.

[Aplausos.]

El PRESIDENTE: La presidencia del Consejo Permanente de la OEA, en nombre de los Representantes, agradece al señor Primer Ministro de Barbados, Freundel Jerome Stuart, por sus conceptuosas palabras. El señor Primer Ministro, acompañado del Secretario General pasará por sus puestos para saludarles.

[El Primer Ministro de Barbados, acompañado por el Secretario General, saluda a los Representantes Permanentes.]

