

TENTH MEETING OF MINISTERS OF JUSTICE OR
OTHER MINISTERS OR ATTORNEYS GENERAL
OF THE AMERICAS

REMJA X

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CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF REMJA X*

* This “Conclusions and Recommendations” were approved by consensus during the plenary session held on October 16, 2015, in the framework of the Tenth Meeting of Ministers of Justice or other Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA-X) held in Bogota, Colombia.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF REMJA X

The Tenth Meeting of Ministers of Justice or Other Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA X) was held in Bogotá, Colombia, on October 15 and 16, 2015, in accordance with the “Document of Washington,” resolution AG/RES. 2844 (XLIV-O/14) adopted by the OAS General Assembly, and resolution CP/RES. 1049 (2017/15) adopted by the Permanent Council of the OAS.

REMJA X underscores the consolidation of the REMJA process as the hemispheric forum in the area of justice and international legal cooperation and, in that respect, highlights the importance that, on this occasion, the dialogue of the heads of delegation focused on justice modernization policies and strengthening international legal cooperation in the Americas.

Bearing in mind the content and scope of the dialogue of the heads of delegation and the information received on developments between the previous and present REMJA, at the conclusion of its discussions REMJA X adopted by consensus the following conclusions and recommendations, which will be conveyed to the OAS General Assembly at its forty-sixth regular session:

I. JUSTICE MODERNIZATION POLICIES

REMJA X, bearing in mind the challenges that subsist in terms of consolidating justice modernization processes in the region that seek, not only to facilitate access to justice, but also that cases submitted for adjudication are disposed of promptly, effectively, and in accordance with the rules of due process; and taking account of the studies and programs that agencies of the inter-American system, such as the Justice Studies Center of the Americas (JSCA), have been advancing to assist the countries of the region to achieve those objectives, and of the recommendations of the REMJA Technical Meeting of National Authorities on Access to Justice held in Cartagena, Colombia, on December 10 and 11, 2014, as envisaged at REMJA IX, recommends:

1. That OAS member states consider implementing or continue to implement adversarial criminal justice systems, through oral hearings that offer safeguards to citizens against the punitive power of the State, protect victims, and ensure effectiveness in the criminal prosecution process.

2. To encourage OAS member states to evaluate the performance of their justice systems in areas where reforms have been introduced, such as in criminal, civil, labor and administrative law, in order to identify aspects to correct or improve, so as to safeguard the original objectives of the reforms.

3. That OAS member states consider implementing or continue to implement judicial management systems in keeping with the principles that underpin reforms introduced in the justice sector, so as to adapt the management of judicial offices to the new demands imposed by the changes brought about by those reforms, such as proceedings by hearing, and have in place tools to expedite processing of matters submitted for their adjudication, such as case distribution systems organized according to specialty fields and key work processes.

4. To encourage OAS member states to evaluate the suitability of their judicial management systems for achieving the objectives of the justice sector reforms, so that they may identify aspects that need to be changed in order to remain consistent with the principles of

inclusiveness, transparency, accessibility, efficiency and fairness, that underpin those reforms as well as to achieve awaited results.

5. To urge OAS member states to consider implementing or continue to implement training strategies and programs for those that form part of justice systems, so that they are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to perform their duties in the manner required by the changes originated by the application of justice modernization policies.

6. To encourage OAS member states to develop or continue implementing legal provisions and/or legal measures necessary to support or validate the use of new technologies for simplifying, facilitating, and expediting administration of justice, such as on-line legal services, connectivity tools for communication and conflict resolution between parties, the organization of on-line hearings, electronic notifications, and electronic case files.

7. To encourage OAS member states to consider using or continue to use new technologies to facilitate access to justice for the public, such as the formulation of complaints, lawsuits and petitions to the authorities responsible for administering justice through electronic media like the Internet, as well as for interacting with those authorities during these processes.

8. To urge OAS member states to use or continue using new technologies to disseminate the legal provisions and/or measures that serve as the basis for access to justice and to guide the public on their rights under those provisions and on the mechanisms available for putting them into effect.

9. To urge OAS member states to enact a policy of active transparency in their justice system in keeping with the parameters contained in the JSCA's Index of Online Access to Judicial Information, such as, for example, in terms of its organization, budgets, results, etc., so that the public has elements by which to objectively appraise how those services are managed.

10. To encourage OAS member states to adopt or continue adopting measures that bring justice closer to citizens, such as the establishment of public defender offices, justices of the peace, mobile courts, binding conciliation and judicial facilitators, and provide them with integrated legal services through bodies such as local justice centers, multidoor offices, and integrated centers for justice services and legal assistance, and urge them to expand the geographic coverage of justice services, especially in rural areas.

11. To urge OAS member states, as appropriate, to promote or continue promoting the use of alternative dispute settlement mechanisms, such as mediation, conciliation, arbitration, and other alternatives to judicial proceedings; to educate the public, paying particular attention to children and adolescents, so that they may take advantage of those mechanisms; and to interconnect those mechanisms with the judiciary.

12. To urge OAS member states to adopt or continue adopting measures to facilitate access to justice by individuals or groups of persons in vulnerable circumstances for reasons of geography, economic or social status, age, gender, physical or mental condition, migratory status, ethnic or linguistic origin, membership in indigenous or aboriginal peoples, or any other reason.

13. To encourage OAS member states to develop legal education programs to inform the public about the guarantees that exist for securing access to justice, including training in alternative dispute settlement mechanisms, and so that justice sector operators are aware of the best practices for

ensuring access to it by the general public, in particular, individuals and groups in vulnerable circumstances.

14. To encourage OAS member states to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of their programs to facilitate access to justice and to share, for that purpose, their evaluation parameters and standards for measuring conflicts.

15. To encourage OAS member states to take steps to ensure not only access to justice, but also prompt and effective adjudication, in accordance with the rules of due process.

16. To continue the progress made in terms of modernization of, and access to, justice within the framework of the organs, agencies, and entities of the inter-American system and in other organizations and international cooperation processes, as well as advances by civil society organizations, the private sector, academia and professional associations involved with the topic; and continue to foster collaboration among them and between them and OAS member states, so that the latter may benefit from strides made in those areas.

17. That the OAS General Secretariat continue to move forward with the Inter-American Judicial Facilitators Program in support of the courts and other institutions that administer justice in the OAS member states, in order to establish national judicial facilitators' services and train justice sector operators.

18. To support and encourage the work that the Justice Studies Center of the Americas (JSCA), an institution established within the framework of the REMJA process, has been undertaking to assist judicial modernization processes in the region, through measures such as the in-depth review of justice systems and support for innovative proposals in discussions on judicial reforms, encouragement of cooperation and exchanges of experience among key actors in the justice sector at the regional level, and development and dissemination of tools to improve information on justice in the Americas.

19. That among its actions in support of justice modernization in the region, the JSCA, within its available resources, consider implementing or continue to implement programs to help OAS member states to align their judicial management models with the principles and standards envisaged by the new judicial systems, and that it foster, to that end, discussion on the importance of such models in the framework of justice reforms.

20. That among its actions to foment cooperation and exchanges of experience among key actors in the justice sector at the regional level, the JSCA, within its available resources, consider promoting regular encounters among officials with responsibilities in the areas of modernization of, and access to, justice in the region, as well as promoting rapid and direct communication among those officials via its website, among other means.

21. That among its measures to generate and disseminate instruments that improve information on justice in the Americas, the JSCA, within its available resources, consider disseminating or continue to disseminate via its website information on progress and best practices with respect to modernization of, and access to, justice.

22. To support the work done by the JSCA on alternative mechanisms to judicial proceedings in order to encourage access to justice, in the course of which research has been done on significant experiences in implementing such mechanisms, a guide on strengthening public policies on access to justice will be published, recommendations for the design of such policies will be put forward, an international seminar will be held on alternative mechanisms to judicial proceedings which will serve to rekindle regional discussions on the subject, and the results of this work will be published via the JSCA website and the magazine *Sistemas Judiciales* (Judicial Systems).

23. To support and encourage the work that the JSCA has been doing to widen access to justice in the region, mindful of the need to address reforms on civil law matters and to include in their promotion standards similar to those employed in criminal law reforms, such as public and adversarial oral hearings and strategies for setting up mediation systems, establishing local justice centers, and creating justices of the peace and other similar organs. In that regard, REMJA X supports regional efforts by the JSCA to create and disseminate new mechanisms and strategies to broaden access to justice in areas in addition to that of criminal justice.

24. Encourage OAS member states to provide voluntary contributions to the JSCA in order to make the above-mentioned work of evaluation, training, and technical cooperation feasible and to facilitate the information and coordination needed for those activities.

II. INTERNATIONAL LEGAL COOPERATION IN THE AMERICAS

REMJA X reaffirms that international legal cooperation is essential for the development of justice systems and the consolidation of the rule of law in the region, and that it demands continued promotion of the effective enforcement of the valuable Inter-American legal heritage contained in the various treaties developed under the aegis of the OAS.

Moreover, REMJA X reiterates the usefulness and effectiveness in attaining this goal of, inter alia, the various practical cooperation mechanisms developed under the REMJA umbrella through meetings, networks, and other methods for exchanging information, experiences, training, and technical cooperation; of other numerous agreements set down in the recommendations of the REMJA process and its working groups and technical meetings and of the procedures created for following up on their implementation; and of strengthening cooperation with other regional, subregional, and international organizations and agencies on the various topics dealt with by the REMJA process and its working groups and technical meetings.

In order to continue strengthening international legal cooperation in the Americas, REMJA X recommends:

1. That the OAS member states that have not yet done so consider signing and ratifying or acceding to the following conventions, as appropriate and as soon as possible, in order to facilitate the efficient cooperation provided in these conventions:

- a) The Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters and its Optional Protocol;
- b) The Inter-American Convention on the Serving of Criminal Sentences Abroad;
- c) The Inter-American Convention on the Execution of Preventive Measures;

- d) The Inter-American Convention on Proof of and Information on Foreign Law; and
- e) The Inter-American Convention on the Taking of Evidence Abroad and its Additional Protocol.

2. That the OAS member states continue to give due consideration to proposals related to the development of legal instruments that complement the recommendations made by the REMJA working groups and technical meetings.

3. That the OAS member states that have not yet done so take the necessary measures to establish and ensure that the operations of the central authorities or those authorities responsible for reciprocal cooperation in mutual assistance in criminal, civil, labor and administrative law matters, as well as in procedural, commercial and family and children's law, have the human, material, and financial resources needed to perform their functions effectively, efficiently, and expeditiously.

4. That the OAS member states that have not yet done so, take the necessary measures to facilitate, under their constitutional systems, channels of direct communication and permanent contacts among the central authorities or those authorities responsible for reciprocal cooperation in mutual assistance in criminal, civil, labor, administrative law, procedural, and commercial matters, as well as in family and children's law, and to expedite proceedings and reduce or eliminate factors that contribute to delays in the transmission and execution of cooperation requests.

5. That OAS member states, in accordance with their domestic legal framework, promote the use of new information and communications technologies, such as electronic processing of requests for mutual legal assistance and videoconferencing, in a safe and responsible fashion, to increase the effectiveness, efficiency, and expeditiousness of international legal cooperation in the Americas.

6. That efforts be made for the continued promotion, support, and development of training programs for government authorities and experts, such as those already developed for the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of crimes involving computers and other electronic equipment, and for the Criminal Matters Network, to facilitate international legal cooperation in the corresponding areas.

7. That efforts be made for the continued strengthening of exchanges of information and cooperation between REMJA and other subregional, regional and international organizations, forums, mechanisms, or agencies, in the area of mutual assistance in criminal, civil, labor, administrative law, procedural, commercial matters, family and children's law, as well as in the recovery of assets.

8. That the OAS General Secretariat continue to support member states in the creation and improvement of specific products for strengthening international legal cooperation on criminal, civil, procedural, labor, administrative law, and commercial matters, as well as on family and children's law, such as agreements and model laws, good practice guides, databases, and internet sites with legal information.

A) LEGAL COOPERATION IN CRIMINAL MATTERS

1. To express its satisfaction at the holding of the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group on Legal Cooperation in Criminal Matters (hereinafter in this section, “REMJA Working Group”), held in Brasilia, Brazil on May 15 and 16, 2014, in keeping with the provisions contained in the “Document of Washington,” the Conclusions and Recommendations of REMJA IX, OAS General Assembly resolution AG/RES. 2783 (XL-O/13) and OAS Permanent Council resolution CP/RES. 1035 (1955/14).

2. Approve the recommendations adopted at the sixth meeting of the REMJA Working Group (PENAL/doc.40/14 rev. 1), and, in connection therewith, request that the Chair report to REMJA XI on the progress made with them.

3. To express its satisfaction with the conclusion by the REMJA Working Group of its consideration of the proposed “Protocol to the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Relative to the Use of New Communication Technologies and Hearings by Videoconference” (PENAL/doc.31/15 rev.3), to support it, and to recommend that the appropriate steps be taken so that the competent OAS bodies may consider its adoption as an inter-American legal instrument.

4. To direct the REMJA Working Group, bearing in mind the recommendations made at its sixth meeting, and with the support of the Department of Legal Cooperation of the Secretariat of Legal Affairs, in its capacity as Technical Secretariat of the REMJA, (hereinafter Technical Secretariat of the REMJA):

a) To continue preparing, through the group led by the Delegation of Chile, which also comprises the delegations of Brazil, Canada, and Peru, the proposed “Protocol to the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters on Joint Investigation Teams” (PENAL/doc.39/14) and, taking into account observations received from States, prepare a revised version of that draft for consideration at the seventh meeting.

b) To continue preparing, through the group led by the Delegation of Argentina, which also comprises the delegations of Brazil, Chile, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay, the proposed “Inter-American Legal Instrument on Extradition” (PENAL/doc.38/14) and, taking into account observations received from States, prepare a revised version of that draft for consideration at the seventh meeting.

c) To continue promoting, through its meetings, the sharing of information on subregional developments that have been taking place in arrest or apprehension warrants and simplified extradition, taking into account these and other related international developments such as the Central American Treaty on Arrest Warrants and Simplified Extradition Procedures in the framework of the Central American Integration System (SICA), the Treaty on the Arrest Warrant of CARICOM (“CARICOM Arrest Warrant Treaty”), the MERCOSUR Arrest Order (MMC), and the European Arrest Warrant (EAW).

5. That the member states consider promoting the effective use of the guides on “Best practices with respect to the gathering of statements, documents and physical evidence,” “Best practices with respect to mutual legal assistance in relation to the tracing, restraint (freezing), and forfeiture (confiscation) of assets which are the proceeds or instrumentalities of crime,” and “Forms

on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters” (PENAL/doc.19/07 rev. 1), as well as the “Model Law on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters” (PENAL/doc.20/07 rev. 1), and encourage the publication and dissemination thereof among their national authorities and other international organizations, ensuring that they are aware of them and can access them when necessary.

6. To continue to promote the development of training programs in areas related to legal cooperation in criminal matters, encouraging the exchange of information on the subject, *inter alia*, through workshops, the Criminal Matters Network and the Legal Cooperation Bulletin published and distributed by the REMJA Technical Secretariat, as well as facilitating the participation of governmental authorities and experts in those training programs.

7. To continue consolidating and strengthening coordination, exchanges of information, and cooperation between the REMJA Working Group and the OAS’s agencies, organs, entities, and mechanisms in their areas of common interest, and avoid any duplication of efforts in those areas.

8. That the REMJA Working Group convene prior to the next REMJA in order to consider, *inter alia*, the progress made with the implementation of the Sixth Meeting’s recommendations, and that it report to REMJA XI on the results obtained therewith.

9. To continue strengthening the exchange of information and collaboration among other international organizations or agencies in legal cooperation on criminal matters, promoting coordinated work that result in synergies that improve said cooperation.

10. To thank and accept the offer from the delegation of Trinidad and Tobago to host the Seventh Meeting of the Working Group on Legal Cooperation in Criminal Matters.

B) LEGAL COOPERATION ON CRIMES INVOLVING COMPUTERS AND OTHER ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

1. To express its satisfaction with the results of the Eighth Meeting of the REMJA Working Group on Cybercrime (hereinafter in this section, “REMJA Working Group”), held at OAS headquarters on February 27 and 28, 2014, in keeping with the provisions contained in the “Document of Washington,” the Conclusions and Recommendations of REMJA IX, and OAS General Assembly resolution AG/RES. 2783 (XLIII-O/13).

2. To adopt the recommendations made by the REMJA Working Group at its Eighth Meeting (CIBER-VIII/doc.4/14 rev. 1) and request that, through its Chair, it report to REMJA XI on the progress made with them.

3. That the REMJA Technical Secretariat continue to consolidate and update the portal on legal cooperation on crime involving computers and other electronic equipment (hereinafter, “the Portal”), via the OAS Web page. To that end:

- a) To request the REMJA Technical Secretariat to continue completing and updating the information on the Portal with regard to its public and private components, in coordination with the Working Group.
- b) To request the OAS General Secretariat, in line with available resources, to continue advancing on the development of new virtual spaces with restricted access for the exchange of information, experiences and good practices

among the governmental experts with responsibilities in the area of international legal cooperation on crime involving computers and other electronic equipment.

- c) To ask the States to respond to requests from the REMJA Technical Secretariat to complete or update the information disseminated on the Portal.
- d) To give due consideration to the use of other technological tools in order to facilitate the exchange of information between governmental experts with responsibilities in the area of international legal cooperation on crime involving computers and other electronic equipment.
- e) To ask the REMJA Technical Secretariat to continue establishing reciprocal links between the Portal and the Internet pages that the units or bodies that the States have established or establish in the future with responsibilities in the area of international legal cooperation on crime involving computers and other electronic equipment, and that any manuals or other information that is considered useful for facilitating cooperation in the areas of their responsibility be published thereon.

4. To recognize that certain OAS Member States have given consideration to applying the principles of the Council of Europe's Convention on Cybercrime, and recommend that those States that have not yet done so, evaluate the advisability of applying the principles of the Convention and consider the possibility of acceding thereto, as well as adopting the legal and other measures required for its implementation, bearing in mind the recommendations adopted by this Working Group and by the REMJA at previous meetings. Similarly, to this end, that technical cooperation activities be continued under the auspices of the REMJA Technical Secretariat and the Council of Europe.^{1/}

5. That mechanisms for information exchange and collaboration continue to be strengthened with other international organizations and agencies in the area of international legal cooperation on crime involving computers and other electronic equipment, such as the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the European Union, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the G-7, the Commonwealth, and INTERPOL, to enable OAS Member States to benefit from developments in those areas.

6. To continue to develop further partnerships among officials responsible for preventing, investigating and prosecuting such crimes and the private sector, especially with those companies that provide information and communications technology, in particular Internet services, in order to streamline and improve the obtainment of information in the context of international cooperation.

7. Express its satisfaction with the results of the training workshops to increase and strengthen international legal cooperation on crime involving computers and other electronic

1. Brazil is of the opinion that the Council of Europe's Convention on Cybercrime is the result of a regional negotiation process whose outcome is appropriate for that reality. However, Brazil considers that it is necessary to review the principles of that Convention to evaluate whether they meet the needs of the Americas, given that those principles support solutions based on an inclusive management cyberspace paradigm, focused on people and on development.

equipment, held in Guatemala City, Guatemala; Montevideo, Uruguay; Miami, United States; Lima, Peru; Asunción, Paraguay; Panama City, Panama; and Sao Paulo, Brazil in 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 under the leadership of the United States as Chair of the Working Group and with the financial support of the United States, the support of the States in which they took place, and the cooperation of the REMJA Technical Secretariat.

8. That the training program on international legal cooperation on crime involving computers and other electronic equipment financed with external contributions, continue to be executed within the framework of the REMJA. As part of this program, accept the offer of the United States Government to carry out training workshops in this field, in coordination with the Technical Secretariat of the REMJA, oriented primarily to judges and magistrates of the OAS Member States, considering the suggestions and specific interests expressed by those States.

9. That the REMJA Technical Secretariat continue disseminating the progress achieved in the framework of the OAS and by the States in the area of international legal cooperation on crime involving computers and other electronic equipment, through the Legal Cooperation Bulletin prepared and distributed electronically by the REMJA Technical Secretariat. Similarly, to request the States to contribute information on their developments in this field to be disseminated in the bulletin.

10. That the REMJA Working Group meet prior to REMJA XI, in order to consider, *inter alia*, the progress made with the implementation of these recommendations and shall report on the results obtained therewith.

C) LEGAL COOPERATION IN THE AREA OF FAMILY AND CHILD LAW

1. To continue strengthening the exchange of national experiences and legal and judicial cooperation under the aegis of the inter-American system in the areas of family and child law, on such topics as adoptions, the return of minors, and parental support payments.

2. To reaffirm the contents of REMJA IX's recommendation VIII.2, as regards requesting the member states to designate central authorities for the various Inter-American Conventions to which they are parties, such as:

- a) the Inter-American Convention on Letters Rogatory and its Additional Protocol;
- b) the Inter-American Convention on Proof of and Information on Foreign Law;
- c) the Inter-American Convention on Support Obligations;
- d) the Inter-American Convention on the International Return of Minors, and
- e) the Inter-American Convention on International Traffic in Minors.

3. Reiterate the terms of item VIII.7 of the Conclusions and Recommendations of REMJA IX, recommending that the member states consider ratifying or adhering to, as applicable and as promptly as possible, the Hague Convention on the International Recovery of Child Support and Other Forms of Family Maintenance, adopted in November 2007.

4. To request the Department of International Law of the Secretariat for Legal Affairs of the OAS actively to promote the content of these conventions, their ratification where appropriate, and the appointment of central authorities by those countries that are not yet parties to them.

D) LEGAL COOPERATION NETWORK

1. To support the advancement of the restructuring and modernization of the Criminal Matters Network (hereinafter in this section the “Network”) by the OAS General Secretariat through the REMJA Technical Secretariat and the Department of Information and Technology Services, as well as the implementation, within the available resources, of the reforms conceived in the pursuit of that process.

2. To urge the OAS member states, bearing in mind the usefulness and benefits offered by the Network, to consider making voluntary contributions for continuing with and consolidating its restructuring and modernization, and for its permanent updating, maintenance, and expansion.

3. To encourage permanent observers and other international partners to consider contributing financial resources for the network.

4. To urge OAS Member States to consider the possibility of making use of the Network for Cooperation in Criminal Matters in other areas, to the extent that their legal institutional system so permits, as well as the possibility of using the technological tools of the Network for Cooperation in Criminal Matters for the possible creation of networks for mutual assistance in other areas under the framework of the REMJA. In this regard, request the Secretariat for Legal Affairs of the OAS, through the questionnaire that is sent in advance of the meeting of the REMJA Working Group on Legal Cooperation in Criminal Matters, to consult regarding the aspects referred to in this paragraph

5. To thank the OAS General Secretariat for its continued efforts in maintaining and improving the Network, and to request that it report to REMJA XI and to the Working Group at its next meeting on the progress made in that undertaking.

III. JUSTICE STUDIES CENTER OF THE AMERICAS (JSCA)

1. To congratulate the JSCA on the work it has carried out in the Americas since REMJA IX, under the leadership of its new Executive Director, particularly in evaluating criminal justice reform processes; providing technical support for the implementation of reformed criminal justice systems in Mexico and Panama; promoting new models for the management of prosecutors’ offices with the development of capacities for criminal analysis and strategic criminal prosecution; identifying and disseminating best practices in the investigation of complex crimes; fostering the improvement of criminal defense standards; promoting pre-trial services; and developing skills for criminal litigation, for the conduct of hearings, and for appraising evidence.

2. To approve the appointment of Attorney Jaime Arellano Quintana as Executive Director of the JSCA, as agreed on by the Board of Directors at its regular meeting of November 15, 2013, in accordance with the JSCA Statute.

3. To congratulate the JSCA on the launch and dissemination of the new version of the Index of Online Access to Judicial Information on the Internet (IAcc) and the commencement of

information gathering for the Index of Online Judicial Services (ISJL), which contribute to the transparency of justice systems and to their accessibility for the region's citizens.

4. To promote a greater and more effective participation by the OAS member states in the programs and activities of the JSCA, particularly in those areas related to access to justice in civil matters, and to encourage the states and organs and institutions with ties to the inter-American system to consider deepening their working relations and exchanges of information with the JSCA in the areas in which it has competence.

5. To invite the JSCA, in accordance with the resources it has available and the objectives set out in its Statute, to consider including the conclusions and recommendations of the REMJA process in its work plans.

6. To extend a special call for the OAS member states to make voluntary contributions in order to enable the Center to continue with its renowned work, as agreed on by REMJA VI and approved by the thirty-sixth regular session of the OAS General Assembly.

7. To urge the OAS member states to undertake training initiatives with the support of the JSCA, such as the training events held in Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile.

IV. REMJA PROCESS

In light of the mandate from REMJA IX as regards specifying the competencies that correspond to the REMJA and adopting reforms to the "Document of Washington" that are necessary as a result, taking into account, to that end, that "the REMJA has consolidated itself as the hemispheric political and technical forum in the areas of justice and international legal cooperation," to agree on the following amendments to the "Document of Washington":

1. In the title of provision 2, allude to the nature of the REMJA and add a second paragraph to the provision, describing that nature. Thus, the provision would read as follows:

"Name and Nature. For any and all purposes that might arise, the process to which this Document refers shall be called 'Meeting of Ministers of Justice or other Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA).'

The REMJA constitute the hemispheric political and technical forum on justice and international legal cooperation."

2. In the first paragraph of provision 3, specify the responsibilities of the officials that attend the REMJA. Thus, the paragraph would read as follows:

"Composition. The REMJA shall be attended by the Ministers of Justice or other Ministers or Attorneys General of the member states of the OAS with responsibilities in the area of justice and international legal cooperation."

3. Taking into account the nature of the REMJA and in order to afford them flexibility to set up, maintain, and discontinue working groups, amend provision 15, which would read as follows:

“Working Groups. The REMJA may set up working groups to follow up on its recommendations.

At the meeting where a working group is created and at each ensuing meeting for as long as it is deemed that said working group should continue its activities, the respective REMJA shall assign it specific mandates to pursue between that meeting and the following one, at which the working group in question shall submit a progress report on those mandates.

The mandate of each working group shall expire when, in the opinion of the REMJA, it has fulfilled its purpose or whenever the REMJA deems it appropriate.”

4. Provision 5 would read as follows:

“Frequency, venue, and convocation of meetings. Barring exceptional circumstances, the REMJA shall be held every two years.”

V. VENUE OF REMJA XI

To express its appreciation of and accept the offer to host REMJA XI made by the delegation of The Bahamas.