



INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE AGAINST TERRORISM (CICTE)

NINTH REGULAR SESSION
March 4 – 6, 2009
Washington, D.C., United States

OEA/Ser.L/X.2.9
CICTE/INF. 14/09
17 March 2009
Original: English

**REMARKS BY THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES,
HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR ALBERT RAMDIN**

(Delivered at the Inaugural Session held on March 4, 2009)

REMARKS BY THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES,
HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR ALBERT RAMDIN

(Delivered at the Inaugural Session held on March 4, 2009)

Your Excellency, Dr. Antero Flores Aráoz, Minister of Defense of Peru and Chair of the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism;

Your Excellency, Ambassador Neven Yurica, Permanent Representative of Croatia to the United Nations and President of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the United Nations Security Council;

Distinguished Representatives of the CICTE Member States; Distinguished Permanent Representatives; Alternate Representatives; Distinguished Permanent Observers;

Dr. Carol Fuller, Secretary of CICTE; Colleagues from the OAS;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honor and privilege to join you at this Ninth Regular Session of the Inter-American Committee against on Terrorism to welcome you to the “Casa de las Américas.”

We are pleased to have the opportunity to host this annual meeting, which has become a constant public demonstration of the collective political commitment of the CICTE Members to combat, prevent and eliminate terrorism.

Indeed, the topics to be addressed at this Regular Session underscore the multidimensional nature of security in this Hemisphere, as well as the multifaceted approach that must be adopted to successfully address the terrorist threat within a framework of respect for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the OAS, the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, the rule of law, the sovereignty of States, and international law.

These are the understandings which led the OAS Member States to establish this Committee in 1999, and to adopt in 2002, the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, to which 23 States are now party. And, finally, it was those same principles that inspired the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy adopted by the United Nations in September 2006.

The overarching topic of this session, “Strengthening security and border controls” encompasses priorities, action, and collaboration necessary to face the terrorist threat at the national and hemispheric level.

Implicit is the recognized need for international cooperation to consolidate common perspectives and effective responses to this grave threat, as well as to share resources and expertise. In order to achieve more extensive and more stable public security in our Hemisphere, it is essential that we deepen and expand cooperation among our countries, between our agencies and other international organizations, and with public institutions, civil society organizations, and the private

sector in our countries. I am pleased to observe that since its inception, CICTE has promoted international cooperation and strategic partnerships with other international, regional, and subregional institutions, and has gained international recognition for its success in this regard.

Through the CICTE Secretariat, we maintain over 40 strategic partnerships with international, governmental, nongovernmental, and private organizations. Particularly outstanding are the cooperation endeavors with various United Nations bodies, especially the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee, which rated CICTE as an organizational model to be imitated. In the context of outreach and cooperation, I must mention, with appreciation, the financial and technical resources offered to CICTE by the governments of Canada, the United States and Spain, all of which contributed to the continued success and expansion of CICTE's capacity-building and technical assistance programs. I am especially pleased to inform that today the Government of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas joined the ranks of esteemed donors and presented to the OAS a financial contribution for CICTE, to support its programs conducted by the Secretariat.

The importance of international cooperation is underscored by the fact that the challenges we face in the fight against terrorism are not just multidimensional, but also multinational. We must therefore, broaden our perception of the many ways in which our security is being threatened and participate in all efforts to confront those threats. Among these efforts and actions is the ratification of the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism and the accession to the universal counter terrorism instruments. I therefore reiterate the OAS General Assembly's appeal to all Member States of the Organization of American States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede, as the case may be, to the inter-American and universal instruments against terrorism.

Indeed the issue of security in the Americas is of such priority for member states that our two major meetings programmed for this year, the Summit of the Americas to be held in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, and the General Assembly scheduled for San Pedro Sula, Honduras, will deal in a very integral way with security issues relevant to our Member States. Inherent in the two Draft Declarations of the Summit of the Americas and the General Assembly is the understanding that the security challenges our Member States face are so great that a multidimensional approach is necessary.

By leveraging the strengths of states to assist each other in developing their capacity, we are building a mechanism of sustainability within the security framework. Current scenarios predict escalating crime and threats of terrorism across the Hemisphere. Problems of poverty, inequality, and poor education threaten our children's future, and with that the social fabric of our societies. Yet, in spite of these threats, we must forge ahead with confidence and commitment. We recognize that traditional concepts and approaches must be expanded to encompass new and non-traditional threats, which include political, economic, social, health and environmental aspects. The key factor to our success is that we cannot consider security and development to be separate approaches. No country of the sub-region can face these challenges alone or in isolation. Instead, we must seek integrated, multidimensional approaches to find solutions in a multilateral framework.

The Declaration slated for adoption at this Ninth Regular Session will be yet another pillar in the counter-terrorism infrastructure, as the CICTE Member States reiterate their joint undertaking and set out practical ways of bringing their commitments to fruition. I congratulate you on your sustained determination to eradicate terrorism notwithstanding increasing resource challenges as the world

faces a major financial and economic crisis. It is persistence of this kind that has steadily built over 60 years an Organization of American States that endures.

I would particularly like to recognize Mr. Antero Flores Aráoz, our dear colleague and friend, who previously served as Chair of the OAS Permanent Council and who, during his unforgettable tenure as Ambassador to the OAS, was known for his dynamic, constructive and pointed interventions.

I would like to end these remarks by thanking the CICTE Chair and Vice-Chair for their outstanding leadership throughout the year, the Committee members for their active support and participation, the Member States and Permanent Observer States for their generous financial, technical and human resource contributions, the international organizations and others who collaborate with our efforts, and the Secretariat for its exemplary work –all of which combine to guarantee for the citizens of this Hemisphere, and of the world, a peaceful and more secure environment in which to thrive and prosper.

I thank you for your attention and I look forward to the outcome of your deliberations in the coming days.