



SUMMIT IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW GROUP (SIRG)

MEETING AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL (2008)

June 2, 2008

Centro de de Convenciones Plaza Mayor
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Report of the Meeting

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The meeting began with the salutations by the Chair, the Honorable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, to the high rank hemispheric authorities attending the SIRG at the Ministerial Level, thanking, in particular the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and National Summit Coordinators for their presence.

The Chair also expressed her deepest appreciation to the Government and People of Colombia for their warm reception upon the arrival of delegations in the city of Medellin.

The Chair then informed delegations that they could find a CD in their folders with various reference documents and reports on the ongoing collaborations in preparation for the Fifth Summit.

Next, the Chair presented the agenda of the meeting (document GRIC/M.1/DOC. 1 CORR 1/08) for the consideration and approval of the delegations. The agenda was then approved and the floor was offered to the members of the Head Table.

2. Opening Remarks by José Miguel Insulza, Secretary General of the Organization of American States

Secretary General Insulza began his remarks by highlighting that the three concepts embodied in the theme for the Fifth Summit of the Americas “Securing Our Citizens’ Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security, and Environmental Sustainability”, which were selected by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, will be at the heart of the discussions of the Heads of State at an extremely crucial time for inter-American relations.

The Secretary General mentioned that the Summits of the Americas process has been able to join forces with all entities of the inter-American system to face the challenges posed at the hemispheric level by new global realities. He opined that the Summits demonstrate the importance of good regional governance in the context of globalization and the need to seek joint solutions to problems that are truly transnational and hemispheric in nature – “problems to which all of us can

and must help find solutions”. Then he added that economic growth, elimination of poverty, a better distribution of wealth, a common energy policy, efforts against drug trafficking and organized crime, and preservation of a shared environment in the Americas, clearly constitute this type of problem.

Secretary General Insulza indicated that preparing for the Fifth Summit of the Americas is a matter of priority for the OAS and for all institutions of the inter-American system, since its outcomes, especially if they are converted into clear policies and concrete goals, will guide the work of the inter-American organizations in the years ahead.

The Secretary General stated that the results of the Summits of the Americas have gradually assumed the role of steering the work of the organizations of the system and that member states are obliged to produce mandates and other guidelines for action that are relevant, realistic, specific, and measurable within a specific time frame.

Secretary General Insulza acknowledged and commended the Government of Trinidad and Tobago for its work in the design and planning of the Concept Paper, in its drafting, in consultations on it, and in its recent submission. He mentioned that the Concept Paper has been well received by all countries.

The Secretary General ended his intervention by recognizing and expressing his appreciation for the work of the member states that submitted their views and of the institutions of the Joint Summit Working Group since their task was an important one and the results are already beginning to be apparent. He expressed that he believed that, on the basis of that work, the Fifth Summit will be successful, and that member states will be able to obtain anticipated results from it as they move toward realizing a future for the citizens of the Hemisphere in which all can enjoy the benefits of development, peace, and democracy.

The complete text of the opening remarks by the Secretary General may be found at http://www.summit-americas.org/SIRG/SIRG_0608/EN_Remarks_Insulza.doc

3. Statement by the Chair, the Honorable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

The Honorable Paula Gopee-Scoon, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago began her presentation by announcing Trinidad and Tobago’s decision that the Fifth Summit of the Americas will take place in Port of Spain, on April 17-19, 2009.

Minister Gopee-Scoon stated that the Fifth Summit of the Americas, the theme of which is “Securing Our Citizens’ Future by Promoting Human Prosperity, Energy Security and Environmental Sustainability” comes at a very critical time in the development process of our region.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago pointed out that the following issues have been analyzed and spoken about at length, and it seems that all have agreed that there is a need to act; decisively, quickly and in unison on the following issues:

- Threat of economic slowdown, rising energy and food prices, inflation, climate change, the persistence of poverty and inequality as a contribution to the level of crime and violence;
- Balancing economic growth, social progress and environmental sustainability;
- Access to the best possible health care;
- Affordable housing, sustainable communities, and facilities for sport, recreation and cultural development; vulnerabilities on energy and the environment;
- The problem of feeding our people.

Minister Gopee-Scoon thanked all Member States, the Joint Summit Working Group and the other Summit actors, including civil society organizations, who freely shared their ideas and concerns with the National Secretariat. Regarding the strengthening of the role of civil society and the private sector in the Summits Process, Minister Gopee-Scoon reported that the Civil Society Hemispheric Forum which took place in Miami on the May 1-2, 2008, demonstrated that this was indeed beginning.

Regarding the Declaration of Commitment of Port-of-Spain, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago expressed that for every commitment that was drafted and negotiated, the pertinent question must be “What real, tangible benefit will this measure bring?” She also indicated that the Declaration will have the format of identifying for each issue contained in the Concept Paper, a **Declarative Statement** which identifies the specific challenge or priority, followed by a **Resolution Statement** which describes the way in which the problem should be addressed and a **Mandate Statement** which outlines the commitment to specific targets and to the actions to meet those targets.

Also in terms of the Draft Declaration of Commitment, Minister Gopee-Scoon informed that the Joint Summit Working Group has agreed to provide information on the goals, targets, strategies, and activities which each institution intends to focus on in the coming years. She further added that this information is integral to the development of tangible and measurable targets for the Declaration and the strengthening of implementation and follow-up of mandates.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago invited member states to make use of this opportunity to put in place more efficient arrangements for follow-up and implementation. She further stated that the OAS should focus on this core issue to ensure that the Summit Process delivers real and lasting results.

Minister Gopee-Scoon indicated that in terms of the way ahead, over the next six months, there are plans to convene five meetings of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) to advance the negotiations on the Declaration - the majority of these meetings will take place in the Caribbean. She also informed that dialogue will continue with the various Summit stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector with a view to soliciting a wide cross section of opinions and perspectives.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago also announced that the Declaration of Commitment will be presented to Member States in the early summer. This she indicated would facilitate the start of negotiations in mid-September.

Minister Goope-Scoon closed her statement by reiterating that the unwavering engagement of the OAS remains vital to the Summits of the Americas and that it is the natural channel through which the Hemisphere's development objectives must be coordinated.

The complete text of the Statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago may be found at http://www.summit-americas.org/SIRG/SIRG_0608/EN_Statement_GS.doc

4. Presentation by the OAS Summits of the Americas Secretariat on the ongoing implementation and follow-up of mandates of the Summits of the Americas Process

Mr. David Morris, Director of the Summits of the Americas Secretariat began his presentation by expressing the view that it is essential to revitalize this hemispheric process by focusing political will on the effective implementation of agreements adopted, and doing so in a spirit of partnership and solidarity. He indicated that this will require the strengthening of the established institutional framework, and the crafting of new commitments capable of consolidating, in practical terms, the fundamental conditions for security, sustainable development and democratic governance.

The Director of the Summits of the Americas Secretariat highlighted that 80 percent of the mandates of the Summits of the Americas are directly pertinent within the Inter-American ministerial system, which forms an integral part of the overall Summits process. He mentioned that the inter-American Ministerials cover a wide range of sectors including, among others, labor, education, culture, sustainable development, science & technology, security, justice and social development. He further went on to say that it is these Ministerials and related technical committee meetings which both reinforce political will, and facilitate the mobilization of required resources, for the implementation of the very mandates adopted and endorsed by our Presidents and Prime Ministers at the Summits.

Mr. Morris indicated that since the various sectoral meetings are conducted within the OAS framework, therefore, in its role as Secretariat to these Ministerials, the OAS seeks to ensure that the outcomes are integrally related to the Summits' implementation and follow-up process; this he added, should be undertaken through facilitating policy dialogue and implementing specific programs, including technical assistance, institutional strengthening and capacity building initiatives which address the priorities identified.

The Director of the Summits of the Americas Secretariat mentioned that the vast majority of Summit mandates are clearly the responsibility, first and foremost, of Member States to address. He surmised that meeting these commitments required visionary leadership, strategic public investment, and respectful engagement in a collective effort involving governments, civil society, the private sector and institutions. He further informed that the twelve partner institutions of the Joint Summit Working Group (or JSWG), which is chaired by the OAS, collaborate in an integral partnership in this overall effort, creating synergies in helping implement mandates and in providing technical and financial assistance to Member States.

On the topic of implementation of Summits mandates, Mr. Morris expressed that an intensified effort is required to renew commitments to collective actions, to identify and exchange best practices, and to share lessons learned in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of national and international actions in a spirit of genuine partnership. He informed that it has been found that the mandates which are most conducive to implementation through concrete actions share the common characteristics of being Specific, Relevant, Measurable, Attainable and Time-bound. He pointed out that although these may present both a challenge and an opportunity for all the states in the Americas, the collaborative response of member states will demonstrate the collective will to achieve meaningful, sustainable results for the benefit of everyone in the Americas.

The Director of the Summits of the Americas Secretariat closed his presentation by expressing that the Summits Secretariat of the OAS looks forward to continuing to work with all Governments, particularly in continuing close collaboration with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, in support of a successful Fifth Summit of the Americas in Port of Spain.

The complete text of the Presentation by the OAS Summits of the Americas Secretariat may be found at http://www.summit-americas.org/SIRG/SIRG_0608/EN_Presentation_Summits.doc

5. Comments by Heads of Delegation of the Member States

The delegations of Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Panama, Saint Lucia, United States and Venezuela made presentations at this meeting. Below is a summary by topic of their comments.

I. Regarding the preparations for the Fifth Summit of the Americas, Member States:

- Expressed their appreciation for the comprehensive update provided by Minister Gopee-Scoon on the progress made by the government of Trinidad and Tobago (Jamaica);
- Congratulated Trinidad and Tobago for having been selected to host the Summit of the Americas and reiterated their Support to the delegation of Trinidad and Tobago (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados);
- Announced their support in the preparatory phase and their participation at the highest level in the Summit (Jamaica), indicated that they will continue to be fully engaged and active throughout the preparatory process and at the Summit and insisted in the need to bring their best collective focus and efforts towards ensuring a successful Summit (Canada);
- Highlighted the seriousness, with which Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean Community have undertaken the task of convening the Fifth Summit of the Americas. It was indicated that this demonstrated their belief that the Summitry process is the premier forum for a collective response by the Heads of the Hemisphere, to find solutions, to deliver on the promises that were made to the peoples of the hemisphere (Grenada);
- Mentioned that the Fifth will be the first Summit for many new democratically elected leaders in the hemisphere (United States);

II. In relation to the role of the OAS, Member States:

- Affirmed that the Organization is “the spiritual home” of the Summits process and that through its institutional framework it offers support and consultation facilities for consistent engagement. Stated that the OAS must remain the established mechanism that drives the process with the requisite support from all (Jamaica);
- Suggested that the OAS considers giving the Summits of the Americas a legal status by making it one of the organs of the Organization, perhaps at the highest level: the Summits of Heads of State and Government (Panama);

III. About the process of implementation and follow-up of mandates of the Summits of the Americas, Member States:

- Indicated that the agreements and goals of our Heads of State and government are guides for implementation and reporting (United States). Expressed concern about the process of implementation and believed that all leaders should have a responsibility to ensure that practical and real solutions, beneficial to all the people of the Americas be brought to the Fifth Summit (Barbados).
- Reaffirmed their commitment to the delivery of national reports which is viewed as an essential element to facilitate follow up on the progress and achievements of mandates and commitments by Member States (Colombia);
- Expressed support for a follow up and reporting process that is consistent with the commitments of leaders and encouraged National Coordinators’ oversight, to ensure that our objectives are not re-written or redefined (United States);
- Recommended drawing clear lines of accountability and communication between the Summit and the work of other inter-American fora, particularly Ministerial meetings. Proposed to aim for clear alignment of sectoral work plans with the priorities identified by leaders. Pointed out that implementation and reporting between ministerials and the Summit can also benefit from increased coordination (Canada);
- Mentioned that the **SMART** approach is really a project development and implementation approach. Pointed out that once member states are involved in projects the next step must be the results, following evaluation. It was argued that the whole idea is about translating words into action (Saint Lucia).

IV. On the expectations for the Fifth Summit of the Americas Member States:

- Mentioned that this process will enable citizens to benefit from development, growth peace, prosperity and security (Antigua and Barbuda). Called for countries to stay clear and focused, since the Fifth Summit provides the opportunity to set a roadmap for

collective efforts towards a safer, more democratic and more prosperous future for citizens - an opportunity to reenergize hemispheric cooperation (Canada);

- Proposed to achieve a relevant Summit and noted that common efforts to realize Summit objectives, should at least match efforts that are devoted to define them (United States). Advocated for mandates to be concise and achievable (Chile);
- Indicated the importance of the development of a positive agenda as well as concrete and actionable commitments. Encouraged the reporting of tangible results (United States).
- Expressed support for the efforts of Trinidad and Tobago for streamlining the process in order to ensure that mandates emanating from the Summit could be implemented. Cautioned all countries against having unreasonable expectations that lead to unreasonable mandates and finally disappointment (Barbados);
- Called for maintaining at the next Summit, a spirit of solidarity and consensus that hopefully will lead to a positive message about the future of the Region (United States);
- Recommended that appropriate experts be included in the SIRG delegations in order to move forward with constructive dialogue (United States);
- Noted that concrete Summit commitments have lead the hemisphere to work together to reduce the cost of remittances, provide medication to people living with HIV/AIDS, denied safe haven to corrupt officials (United States);
- Indicated that the Summit has to be an effective mechanism to deliver on agreed priorities (Canada);
- Proposed that the Summits Process use as a reference the fulfillment of the Millennium Goals, - the goals are already set, the criteria already established – it could be a sort of program for the Americas to fulfill the Millennium Goals (Venezuela);

V. Regarding the Summit of the Americas Process, Member States:

- Pointed out that it brings together the many states hemisphere to discuss shared priority issues of prosperity, education, democracy and employment among others (Canada);
- Mentioned that achieving the results that citizens expect and deserve, will require measures to make the Summit more regular, effective and accountable - the Summit of the Americas should be held on a regular, predictable basis (Canada);
- Expressed the intention to seek the continuation of a Summit process that is inclusive, transparent, positive and constructive (United States);
- Indicated that actions should be taken by Member States at the OAS to support this relevant political process and that it should constitute a hemispheric priority (Chile);

VI. In terms of Concept Paper for the Fifth Summit, Member States:

- Commended the government of Trinidad and Tobago for the work undertaken to produce the Concept Paper, indicated that it presents the most important issues that this region faces and welcomed the opportunity to collaborate with other member states in an effort to build a stronger more progressive hemisphere (Antigua and Barbuda);
- Expressed appreciation to Trinidad and Tobago's leadership in proposing and developing the theme of the Summit (Canada);
- Indicated that the theme addresses current and emerging challenges that concern of all us in the hemisphere (Canada);
- Mentioned that the Concept Paper is a document that addresses fundamental concepts for the achievement of a more harmonized, accelerated and equal social development program in this region, where poverty and inequality are the hard reality for millions of people. Pointed out that to achieve sustainable and equal development, a strong economy must go hand in hand with an effective political administration (Chile);

VII. Regarding the process of consultations by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, Member States:

- Expressed their appreciation for the efforts by the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to consult with all Summit stakeholders in order to draft a concept paper that is broader, more transparent and more inclusive (El Salvador).
- They opined that an open and transparent process can lead to a genuine consensus on a very important theme (United States);
- Indicated that active participation of the Joint Summit Working Group and Civil Society will assist in identifying concrete goals (Canada, Saint Lucia, United States). This will enable countries to achieve real results in a hemisphere with a strong affinity for cooperation and a renewed commitment to youth and democratic values (United States). Mentioned that Civil Society Organizations have shared their perspectives at the forum held in Miami, in May 1 and 2 (Chile, United States). Noted their national engagements in open and regular dialogues with civil society about the Summit of the Americas (United States).

VIII. On the contents of the Declaration of Port-of-Spain, Member States:

- Indicated that they share the determination of Trinidad and Tobago to make this Declaration one with achievable and realistic targets on which they can measure advances and calibrate their actions at the national level in line with their hemispheric commitments (Jamaica);

- Recognized the initiative by Trinidad and Tobago on proposing a Declaration of Commitment at the Fifth Summit which will be specific, measurable and time-bound (most delegations mentioned this issue);
- Requested that the fight against the global problem on drugs and the issue of energy security be included in the Declaration. Advised that a strategy on the more efficient use of energy resources be developed instead of setting as a challenge an energy system based on the low use of carbons (Colombia);
- Advocated for the inclusion of the issues of Trade and Energy Security in the Declaration (Chile);
- Highlighted the importance of the multidimensional definition of security as agreed to in Bridgetown, where all the methodologies and concepts that should guide the hemisphere on the issue of security were already set, to which a link is established with, among others, the elimination of poverty, the fight on natural disasters, the problem on migration from the perspective of human rights, and other problems that are definitively associated with the terrible social drama that the hemisphere faces (Venezuela);
- Recommended examining the tragic effects of natural disasters, which mainly affect the most vulnerable countries in the hemisphere, specifically the small Caribbean countries (Venezuela). Called for attention to the mitigation issue (El Salvador, Haiti, Venezuela);
- Proposed holding discussions on the global oil crisis and its effects on non-oil producing developing countries (Venezuela);
- Expressed disappointment at the collapse of the negotiations for the Free Trade Area of the Americas and called for a new dialogue that can lead to an alternative to the FTAA (Barbados);
- Called for level playing field policies between the rich and the poor countries as currently being adopted by the European Union (Haiti);
- Called for the use of alternate energy and moderate consumption as well as less wastage as part of achieving the goal of human prosperity (Bolivia);
- Suggested considering working towards building more communities and territories that are sustainable and protect biodiversity (Bolivia).

IX. The delegations of Jamaica and Haiti offered to host SIRG preparatory meetings.

6. Interventions by the Partner Institutions of the JSWG

Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) - Chelston W.D. Brathwaite, Director General

The Director of IICA expressed the view that the time has come for the countries of the Americas to review their food security policies. He recommended that food security be a priority item on the national development agenda of each country, and indicated that IICA is prepared to assist Member States with the technical knowledge to find solutions that will improve food and energy security, as well as promote a sustainable environment.

Director Brathwaite informed that in order to achieve this goal, there are two main items of concern that must be taken into account, namely, the increase in food prices and the so called “food versus fuel” predicament. About the rising food prices, he further informed that IICA has been evaluating the potential impact on the agricultural sector of the Americas and, as a result, has come to recognize that food prices and food supply are not determined by any single factor. He went on to say that IICA has found at least four basic reasons for the support of this reasoning. Additionally, Director Brathwaite mentioned that as suggested by the World Bank and others, IICA has observed that the food problem is not a temporary phenomenon but a trend that is likely to persist in the medium term. He informed that IICA believes that a sustained increase in food prices will contribute to higher levels of poverty and poor nutrition in the hemisphere – a condition that will limit the capacity of countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of reducing poverty by 50% in 2015, unless necessary steps to increase food security are taken.

Director Brathwaite also identified another area of concern, which is intrinsically related to the food crisis, namely the question of how agro-energy can contribute to the world energy supply without being a threat to food security. He informed that IICA recognizes the enormous potential of renewable fuels for global energy security, environmental and economic well-being, as well as their likely implications for food security. He also informed that from IICA’s perspective, a viable approach to the so called “food versus fuel” predicament would be to diversify the feedstock and the technology from which bio-fuels are produced, concentrating on products with a longstanding and positive track record. He was of the view that agricultural research and investments in new technologies are necessary in order to make bio-fuels production sustainable, economically viable, environmentally sound and socially equitable. He opined that the debate will be less controversial if national governments and their private sector partners become engaged in developing national agro-energy and bio-fuels policies and regulatory frameworks based on good science and a sound economic policy.

The complete text of the intervention by IICA may be found at
http://www.iica.int/Eng/prensa/Infoletter/Infoletter/2008/n4/n04_eng.pdf

Organización Panamericana de la Salud “OPS” – Dr. Hugo Prado, Acting Manager of the Area of Governance, Policy and Partnerships

Dr. Hugo Prado reported on the activities and challenges being faced by the health sector in preparation for the Fifth Summit. He indicated that, as it has been mentioned in the report of the Achievements of the Summits of the Americas since Mar del Plata that from a health perspective, there has been satisfactory progress in terms of new initiatives, particularly in the establishment of work and cooperation mechanisms. However, he cautioned that these results should not be taken to mean that PAHO’s work is complete and that there is still much work to be done in collaboration with the other members of the Joint Summit Working Group.

Dr. Hugo Prado also indicated that the mandates of a number of the meetings on health and other related topics will be submitted to the National Secretariat as a useful tool in drafting the mandates of the Fifth Summit of the Americas.

ECLAC - Ines Bustillo, Director, Washington Office

Director Bustillo informed that although there has been six consecutive years of growth for the economies of Latin America and the Caribbean, the Region is still in jeopardy of being affected by the economic slowdown caused by many factors, such as the increase in oil prices, the increase in food prices, as well as the negative impact of natural disasters.

She opined that it is within this context that the presentation of ECLAC's study on productive transformation of the economies, titled "Structural Change and Productivity Growth, 20 years later" and published for the Thirty-Second Session of ECLAC, could be a useful tool for Summit dialogue.

IOM - Christopher Gascon, Deputy Chief of Mission, Colombia

The Deputy Chief of Mission of IOM in Colombia stated that migration is a common and necessary feature of life and this phenomenon is clearly one that is present throughout the Americas. He indicated that IOM is of the view that without question, migration can be a fact of growth, so it is vital that it occur in an orderly and dignified fashion. He reiterated that migration principally arises from demographic and labor market needs, wage differentials, crisis and environmental pressures, however, migration has negative consequences as well as it creates social pressures, increases public service costs and security challenges, while causing a disintegration of the families and making migrants vulnerable to health, social and economical factors.

He further pointed out that regional processes such as the Regional Conference on Migration, or the Puebla Process, the South American conference on Migration, in which IOM provides technical support, illustrate the organization commitment to support the youth of the Americas and contributing to growth stability and democratic values.

The meeting was adjourned at this juncture.