

***1st General Assembly of the Parliamentary
Conference of the Americas
Quebec City, September 18-22, 1997***



At the initiative of the National Assembly of Québec, with the collaboration of the Parliament of Canada and of the regional Parliaments and interparliamentary organizations of the Americas, the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas brought together, for the first time in the history of the hemisphere, parliamentarians from throughout the region on the theme "Towards the Americas of the Year 2005: Democracy, Development and Prosperity", in Quebec City from September 18 to 22, 1997.

Over 1,000 [participants](#), including 400 parliamentarians from 28 countries of the hemisphere, took part in the [deliberations](#) to share their viewpoints on the issues and impacts of the economic integration process of the Americas as well as to consider how to adapt their means of action to face the new hemispheric realities.

At the conclusion of the Conference, the parliamentarians agreed, in a [Closing Declaration](#), to create a Steering Committee with the mandate to study the details of the framework for the establishment of the inter-American dialogue on a permanent basis.

QUEBEC DECLARATION

PLENARY SESSIONS

WORKSHOPS

CEREMONIES

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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Presidente do Senado da República Federativa do Brasil (1995-1996)
Senador da República Federativa do Brasil

Sr. Fernando Sarney
Conselheiro
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Presidente de la República de Costa Rica (1986-1990)

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CLOSING DECLARATION

Quebec City, September 21, 1997

**Process of adoption of the Closing Declaration*

We, parliamentarians of the Americas, assembled in Quebec City from September 18 to 22, 1997, on the occasion of the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas,

Considering that the project to create a hemispheric free-trade area, planned for the year 2005, constitutes a major challenge for the future of our societies and will have an impact in the legislative, political, social and cultural spheres throughout the Americas;

Considering that our functions, as legislators and as the political representatives of populations, enable us to express the needs, concerns and wishes of our fellow citizens, especially as regards the process of hemispheric economic integration;

Considering that our action within our communities fosters a better understanding of the stakes involved in the economic integration processes in the Americas;

Considering that, through direct and continued dialogue with our fellow citizens, we are able to stimulate public debate on the issues related to the impacts of hemispheric free trade, and thereby to contribute to the definition of public policies;

Considering that the democratic nature of the economic integration processes will be reinforced through dialogue between interparliamentary organizations and intergovernmental organizations;

Considering that the knowledge and experience gained

through our work with our constituents, within our parliamentary assemblies and interparliamentary organizations, and from existing processes of regional integration must be put to good account in the discussions on the creation of a hemispheric free-trade area;

Considering that the equality of men and women is a recognized principle in our societies, that women are among the most affected by processes of economic integration, that their participation is essential to achieve the goals of sustainable human development, that it would be imperative to facilitate in our structures and activities the contribution of women;

Democracy

Agree to encourage adherence to and promotion of the principles of representative and participatory democracy, in particular by supporting the various organizations that promote these principles, and through a comprehensive fight against corruption, so as to foster development, stability and peace within the Hemisphere;

Agree, in our capacity as citizens' representatives, to support and encourage active public participation in the discussions and consultations leading up to the making of decisions concerning the creation of a hemispheric free-trade area, while respecting the important contribution afforded by the experiences of the mechanisms of regional integration;

Human rights

Agree to protect and promote economic, social and cultural rights, both on the domestic level and through inter-American cooperation, according to available resources and having regard to the level of development of the different States, and the civil and political rights essential for dignity, justice and peace, as stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

Agree to work toward the implementation of measures designed to eradicate all forms of discrimination and exploitation, to intensify efforts to report human rights violations, to counter impunity and to create a climate conducive to the full enjoyment of human rights, while respecting the integrity and sovereignty of each State;

Agree to examine and respond to our respective country reports on the measures adopted and the progress made in achieving the observance of human rights;

Agree to support the initiative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) aiming to disseminate the values of peace through the respect of human rights and through the strengthening of a culture of peace supported by the parliamentarians of the Americas;

Free trade and employment

Affirm that every individual has the right to work and that access to employment must be a priority in the process of integration of our Hemisphere, the success of which may depend largely upon the full participation of workers in economic development;

Agree to ensure, within the process of implementing a hemispheric free-trade area, that policies are brought forward to create stable jobs, and that workers benefit from proper working conditions, just and fair remuneration, freedom of association and protection against unemployment, as stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

Education and job training

Agree to work toward the adoption of legislation providing universal access to education of high quality, at all levels, free from all forms of discrimination, in order to improve the economic, environmental, social and political conditions of the populations in the Hemisphere,

particularly those of children, women and indigenous populations;

Agree to sustain investment in the educational systems and job training programmes that promote the acquisition of general knowledge and skills adapted to the new social, economic and technological realities, thereby ensuring that a greater number of people have access to the labour market;

Agree to solicit the cooperation of UNESCO in order to contribute to the process of consolidating parliamentary participation in the development of appropriate public policies that will ensure improvement in the quality of education within the Hemisphere;

Social security and health policies

Agree to work toward the achievement of greater social equity, in order to create a form of sustainable social development supported by all populations in the Americas;

Agree to place social and humanitarian issues on the agenda of parliamentary debate concerning economic and social policy, and to better inform citizens of the social stakes of integration;

Agree to design economic and social policy so as to reconcile economic growth with social equity, and to intensify our efforts to reduce poverty, social and economic inequalities and exclusion from society;

Agree to work to improve the quality of health services and to increase public access to those services, so that every person may benefit from the best possible state of physical, mental and social health, as stated in the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development;

Cultures, languages and communications

Agree to ensure the preservation and promotion of cultural

and linguistic diversity, to act to reinforce the institutions concerned, and to ensure that linguistic plurality is respected within inter-American organizations, agencies and institutions;

Agree to promote exchanges and closer ties between educational institutions, cultural institutions and individuals as a means of promoting cultural diversity and contributing toward mutual understanding between the societies within our Hemisphere;

Agree to facilitate access to information and to new communications technologies, so as to foster increased public participation in political, economic, social and cultural life and to promote the strengthening of democracy;

Sustainable development

Agree to see to the implementation of the commitments made at the Summit Conference on Sustainable Development in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, in 1996, and to support the organizations working to promote sustainable development, thereby recognizing that present and future generations are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature;

Agree to increase the exchange of information on environmental matters and to establish active collaboration in order to ensure sustainable development within the Americas;

Agree to express our deep concern over the increasing size of the foreign debt in a number of countries in the Americas and over the obstacle that it represents to sustainable development for the populations of the Hemisphere;

Reaffirming our commitment to our constituents;

Agree to engage in close collaboration and coordination of

our efforts, in order to reflect the expectations, needs and concerns of the populations regarding integration processes, and to act in their best interests;

Indicate our willingness to take part in discussions involving the process of implementing a free-trade area of the Americas;

Agree to transmit this Declaration to our respective Heads of State and Government;

Urge the Heads of State and Government of the Hemisphere to acknowledge this Declaration during their next intergovernmental meetings at the regional and hemispheric levels;

Have decided to form a *Follow-up Committee* having as its objective to examine the framework for continuation of the dialogue leading to a structure, bringing together representatives of the parliaments and interparliamentary organizations of the Americas, to allow parliamentarians to share their views regarding the stakes involved in the process of integration within the Hemisphere and its legislative, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts;

Agree to confer the presidency of the Follow-up Committee on the President of the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas, who will convene that Committee's first meeting in 1998.

APPENDIX

COMPOSITION OF THE PCA FOLLOW-UP COMMITTEE

TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED(1)	NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES
INTERPARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZATIONS	10
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLIES OF UNITARY AND FEDERAL STATES	35
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLIES OF FEDERATED STATES	12
HOST ASSEMBLY OF THE 1st PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAS	1
TOTAL	58

OBSERVERS	NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES
INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS	4

(1) The breakdown of each type of organization represented may be consulted on the following page.

BREAKDOWN BY CATEGORY

INTERPARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZATIONS AND REGIONAL PARLIAMENTS	NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES
AMERICA REGION OF THE AIPLF	1

CANADIAN REGION OF THE CPA	1
CSG	1
ASSEMBLY OF CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY PARLIAMENTARIANS	1
PARLACEN	1
PARLANDINO	1
JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE OF MERCOSUR	1
PARLATINO	1
AMAZONIAN PARLIAMENT	1
INDIGENOUS PARLIAMENT OF AMERICA	1
SUB-TOTAL	10

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLIES	NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLIES OF UNITARY AND FEDERAL STATES(1)	35
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLIES OF FEDERATED STATES(2)	12
SUB-TOTAL	47

(1) The 35 Assemblies represented must be from different countries.

(2) Twelve federated States (two per federation) may thus have their parliament represented.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS	NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES
OAS	1
ECLAC	1
IDB	1
PAHO	1
SUB-TOTAL	4

PROCESS OF ADOPTION OF THE CLOSING DECLARATION

In order to assure itself of the consensual nature of the Quebec City Declaration, the National Assembly conducted numerous consultations with parliamentarians and interparliamentary organizations of the Americas.

During the months leading up to the holding of the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas, the National Assembly of Québec firstly consulted the Associated Institutions of the Conference, namely the House of Commons and the Senate of Canada, as well as the parliamentary partner organizations of the Conference (the Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians, the Joint Parliamentary Committee of Mercosur, the Council of State Governments (CSG), the Andean Parliament, the Central American Parliament, the Latin-American Parliament, the America Region of the International Assembly of French-Speaking Parliamentarians (AIPLF) and the Canadian Region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)), in order to benefit from their comments and suggestions regarding the draft Closing Declaration.

During the Conference, the draft Closing Declaration was submitted to all the parliamentary delegates, who were invited to submit their proposals for amendments to their delegation heads. After the members of the Honorary Committee studied the draft Closing Declaration on September 19, the heads of the delegations of the 28 countries met, *in camera*, on Saturday, September 20, to discuss the draft Closing Declaration and to make a few amendments to it.

It was on the occasion of a second session *in camera*, on Sunday, September 21, that all the delegates approved the Closing Declaration(1), which is intended as a reflection of the concerns and priorities of the populations and of the parliamentarians of the Americas, in the context of the hemispheric integration process.

Through the adoption of the Closing Declaration, the parliamentarians also clearly affirmed their commitment to continue the hemispheric parliamentary dialogue initiated in Quebec City.

(1) *Mr. Tom Campbell, Member of the United States House of Representatives, requested that the following clarification be mentioned: "It is my concern that, our delegation not having been chosen in a manner to guarantee authority to commit the U.S. Congress, my presence during the deliberations over the draft declaration not be interpreted necessarily as approval for all parts thereof, nor as on behalf of the U.S. Congress."*

PLENARY SESSIONS

[Plenary Session 1](#)

[Plenary Session 2](#)

[Plenary Session 3](#)

WORKSHOPS

Friday, September 19

[Democracy](#)

[Human Rights](#)

[Free Trade and Employment](#)

[Education and Job Training](#)

[Social Security and Health Policies](#)

[Cultures, Languages and Communications](#)

[Sustainable Development](#)

Saturday, September 20

[Democracy](#)

[Human Rights](#)

[Free Trade and Employment](#)

[Education and Job Training](#)

[Social Security and Health Policies](#)

[Cultures, Languages and Communications](#)

[Sustainable Development](#)

CEREMONIES

Inaugural Session

-
Keynote Speech by Mr. Oscar Arias Sánchez

Closing Session

-
**Luncheon hosted by the Prime Minister of
Québec, The Honourable Lucien Bouchard**

-
**Luncheon hosted by the Prime Minister of
Canada, The Right Honourable Jean Chrétien**

**Dinner hosted by the President of the National
Assembly of Québec and President of the
Conference, Mr. Jean-Pierre Charbonneau**

PLENARY SESSION 1

The Process of Integration in the Americas: Overview, Assessment and Future Prospects

Summary of the Plenary Session 1

Chair:

Mr. Fernando Solana

Chairman of the Committee
of Foreign Affairs, Senate of
Mexico

Alternate President of the
Latin-American Parliament

Vice-chair:

Mr. John Ciaccia

Member of the National
Assembly of Québec
Vice-President of the
Conference

Speakers:

Mr. Gert Rosenthal

Executive Secretary of the
United Nations Economic
Commission for Latin
America and the Caribbean
(ECLAC)

Mr. Roberto Bouzas

Senior Researcher in
International Relations at the
Latin American Faculty of
Social Sciences (FLACSO)

Mr. Peter Hakim

President, Inter-American

Dialogue

Secretary:

Mr. Gaston Bernier

National Assembly of Québec

Mr. Gert Rosenthal is currently Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). In Guatemala, he was a senior official of the Department of Finance and Secretary General of the National Council of Economic Planning. Active within the United Nations since 1974, he was director of the regional bureau of ECLAC in Mexico City, before becoming assistant executive secretary of that UN organization. He also worked within the Secretariat of the Central American Common Market. Mr. Rosenthal has many publications to his credit on various issues related to development, particularly those involving Central America.

Mr. Rosenthal's speech dealt with the possibility of harmonizing three trends which are manifesting themselves simultaneously in Latin America and the Caribbean: unilateral trade liberalization, the conclusion of formal free-trade agreements and the consolidation of sub-regional integration processes, and the commitment toward the creation of a hemispheric free-trade area.

Firstly, the speaker stated that it was a recognized fact that participation in regional or international groupings is fully compatible with the obtention of a better positioning within the international economic market. Countries consider their participation in regional economic integration processes not as an alternative solution, but rather as a complement to their entry into the global economy.

All States wish for a more open and transparent

international economy. In addition, they perceive the integration process as constituting the basis of an international economy without protectionism or barriers to the trade of goods and services. They are also aware that, depending on their nature and scope, the commitments toward integration may restrict or facilitate the transition toward increasing interdependence guided by the rules of the market and oriented toward a better insertion of the traditional economies.

Mr. Rosenthal also raised questions about the fact that the proliferation of bilateral and sub-regional integration agreements in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean might make it more difficult to implement the regional agreements. What most affected the regional market, in his view, was the overlapping and contradictions between the different agreements.

The creation of a hemispheric free-trade area raised a third questioning: must the deepening of the existing agreements take place prior to their broadening to include other members, or can broadenings of a thematic or geographical nature be applied simultaneously? There was a divergence of opinion. On the one hand, the experience of Mercosur demonstrated that it was possible to proceed with the establishment of a common market, while incorporating new actors such as Bolivia and Chile. On the other hand, arguments were brought forward in favour of a tightening of agreements before broadening them, in order to avoid making commitments toward third countries that could imperil the gains made by a group.

A final question remained, relating to precedents. It concerned the harmonization of national policies with the sub-regional and regional policies. The liberalization of trade was advancing more quickly in certain countries and this reality could lead to possible tensions arising out of integration commitments.

Despite the above, Mr. Rosenthal nevertheless felt that it was possible to launch a hemispheric integration process compatible with the rules of the World Trade Organization

(WTO). However, this would have to fulfill many requirements. In particular, it would have to aim toward a generalized liberalization of markets, covering all sectors of the economy. To begin with, the countries must enjoy flexible membership conditions. Furthermore, an integration process must be established based on simple and transparent rules that are reassuring to member States particularly in the area of safeguards, countervail duties and the settling of disputes. Mr. Rosenthal believed that the sectorial agreements adopted in the framework of the WTO should serve as reference points for integration agreements. In addition, the establishment of a system of common external tariffs is important in order to avoid the risk of seeing the original rules converted into disguised restrictions to international trade. He also mentioned that the extension of national treatment in the area of intra-regional investment must be considered. This clause could eventually enhance the revitalization of investment in certain previously neglected sectors. Finally, the harmonization of national standards must constitute a fundamental element of integration in order to reduce transaction costs and to accelerate technical progress.

In the context of growing trade liberalization, the most important thing, according to Mr. Rosenthal, lies in the reinforcement of the Latin American and Caribbean integration and in the simultaneous implementation of the commitments adopted at the Miami Summit in 1994. The enormous and as yet unexploited potential of this common enterprise should serve as a source of inspiration for the coming years.

Mr. Roberto Bouzas is a Senior Researcher in International Relations at the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO) in Argentina. He is also an independent researcher for the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET), and coordinates the Centre for North Americas and European Studies at the External Service of the Nation (ISEN). With a licence in economic sciences from the University of

Buenos Aires and a Master's degree in economic sciences from Cambridge University, he is specialized in international economics, a subject on which he has published many works. He is a full professor at the Faculty of Economic Sciences of the University of Buenos Aires, at the ISEN, at FLACSO and at the University of San Andrés. In addition, Mr. Bouzas is an advisor to national and international organizations.

Mr. Bouzas underlined that the idea of hemispheric integration is not a recent one. Since the project of Simón Bolívar, the Americas have seen various attempts at integration, some of which have unfortunately provided only highly mitigated results. Nevertheless, these experiences have made it possible to develop a contemporary vision of the hemispheric integration process.

Firstly, he referred to the major transformations that made it possible to relaunch this idea. The NAFTA is one of the three new facts to be considered. The importance of this economic agreement lies in the fact that it connects the industrialized world with the developing world. This association would have been an unlikely one fifteen or twenty years ago. Secondly, the progress of negotiations made it possible to lend credibility to the pursuit of such a large-scale project. The third indication of change is the dynamism of the integration process. Indeed, the regional integration processes of the Americas are fruitful and establish a climate of increasingly great economic interdependence between the participating countries. Mercosur is a good example of this.

This global development can be explained in part by a modification of the trade policy of the United States. Mr. Bouzas maintained that on account of growing dissatisfaction with the GATT system, the United States turned toward regional agreements as instruments for the pursuit of their national interest. This development can also be explained by the structural reforms and trade

liberalization achieved by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Finally, since the search for new markets has become the main thrust of trade policies and since the United States possesses the largest market in the Hemisphere, any free-trade project in which the United States participates has a tremendous power of attraction. Nevertheless, this project must satisfy the interests of the United States. The complexity of economic integration, according to Mr. Bouzas, lies precisely in the heterogeneity of the interests of the countries of the Hemisphere.

Secondly, the speaker underlined the major challenges that must be faced by the negotiators of the Free-Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). First there is the definition of the actual scope of the agreement, namely the establishment of the framework governing its set of themes. Next, the implementation strategy must be determined so that everyone may benefit from it, understand and reconcile the various national incentives in participating in the FTAA. Finally, it will be important to ensure equitable distribution of the costs and benefits resulting from economic integration.

Mr. Bouzas concluded his speech by stating the key elements of success for the hemispheric integration process. Hemispheric integration must aim toward economic growth and toward improving the well-being of all. The policies of the FTAA must have a catalytic effect, while preserving the gains made in the regional integration processes. The success of the project also depends on the participation of all, not only of the governments, but also of parliamentarians and of the population.

Mr. Peter Hakim is the President of Inter-American Dialogue, the principal American centre devoted to the analysis of politics and exchanges of viewpoints on the issues relating to the Western Hemisphere. The author of a regular column in the *Christian Science Monitor*, he is also the author of many texts and publications centred on

the relations between the United States and the Latin American countries. Mr. Hakim is a member of several management committees and advisory committees, particularly those of the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Center for Research on Women, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and Human Rights Watch/Americas.

Mr. Hakim mentioned, to begin with, the importance of the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas for the Parliaments to be considered as actors contributing to the improvement of the relations between States and to the development of a constructive foreign policy. This Conference also enhances the exchange of viewpoints between parliamentarians, on both national and international issues.

As a complement to the presentations by Messrs. Rosenthal and Bouzas, Mr. Hakim dealt with the political aspect of integration, and more particularly with the forms that the institutions of Hemispheric "governance" should take. To Mr. Hakim, if the international community needs a World Trade Organization, then the Americas must equip themselves with an organization — less formal and possibly connected with an already existing organization — to manage their own economic integration. This organization would also enhance the dialogue between States on topics of common interest, particularly on issues such as the interruption of the constitutional order, democracy or Human Rights. It could also draft joint regulations on a certain number of problems (drugs, the environment, immigration, etc.) that the States cannot regulate unilaterally. It is also necessary to undertake multilateral action for the establishment of universal rules and standards in the area of education and the fight against poverty.

The President of Inter-American Dialogue identified three obstacles to the development of an organization for hemispheric "governance". First, he raised the institutional

weakness of the Organization of American States (OAS) and its lack of credibility. In his view, it is imperative to continue the initiative undertaken by the Secretary General of the OAS, Mr. Gaviria, to strengthen the organization. The tendency of the United States to act unilaterally constitutes another problem, and according to Mr. Hakim, a change in attitude on their part is due. Finally, the speaker alluded to the erroneous vision that the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have of the OAS, which is often perceived as an impediment to unilateral American action, rather than as an organization dedicated to the solving of problems.

Lastly, Mr. Hakim formulated a few suggestions for the improvement of the overall situation of the region. In his view, it is indispensable for all the countries to work in concert, in a transparent manner, toward the restructuring of the OAS, and that they agree on the best way to cooperate in order to deal with problems of common interest. Other institutions will sometimes have to be called on to contribute, depending on the problems to be solved. According to Mr. Hakim, the Summit of the Americas represents a highly appropriate forum in which to discuss hemispheric "governance". Indeed, the first meeting in Miami demonstrated that it was possible to agree on important issues. The Summit of the Americas must serve as a forum of discussion on the difficulties faced by the Hemisphere. The issues of the circulation of capital and of the situation of Cuba must appear on its agenda. Finally, he suggested that the restructuring of the OAS be done in such a way that the process of Summits may be placed under its aegis, in order that it may become the cornerstone of multilateral cooperation in the Hemisphere.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

The first plenary session ended with comments from a few of the participants. A parliamentarian from Mexico recalled the complexity of the concept of the economic

integration of the Americas and the impossibility of transposing the European model of integration on account of the economic and social inequalities of the region. A Venezuelan delegate expressed his concern regarding the problem of the foreign debt. A Brazilian parliamentarian alluded to certain damaging effects of globalization, such as the increasing of public indebtedness and the impoverishment of the populations. In his opinion, it was necessary to avoid repeating the same errors, and to work towards a FTAA for the benefit of all. A delegate from St. Vincent and the Grenadines questioned the mechanisms envisaged to facilitate the integration of the small Latin American economies in the international economy. And, finally, a Senator from Brazil emphasized that the arms race is a threat that weighs heavily on the countries of Latin America, and suggested that parliamentarians unite to solve the problem.

Plenary Session 2

The Role and Participation of Parliamentarians in the Integration Processes

Summary of the Plenary Session 2

Chair:

Mr. Gilbert Parent

Speaker of the House of
Commons of Canada

Vice-chair:

Monsieur Joseph Facal

Member of the National
Assembly of Québec
Parliamentary Assistant to the
Prime Minister
Vice-President of the
Conference

Speakers:

Mr. Luis Hierro López

Senator of the Eastern
Republic of Uruguay
President of the Joint
Parliamentary Committee of
Mercosur

**Mr. Julio César Turbay
Quintero**

Senator of the Republic of
Colombia
President of the Andean
Parliament

Mr. Ernesto Lima Mena

President of the Central

American Parliament

**Mr. Georgios
Anastassopoulos**
Vice-President of the
European Parliament

**Monsieur Juan Adolfo
Singer**

Member of the Chamber of
Representatives
of the Eastern Republic of
Uruguay
President of the Latin-
American Parliament

Secretary:

Mr. Gaston Bernier
National Assembly of Québec

***Mr. Luis Hierro López** is President "pro tempore" of the Joint Parliamentary Committee of Mercosur. From 1985 to 1994, he was a member of the Chamber of Representatives of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, where he also held the position of President in 1989. In addition, he was President of the Committees on the Constitution, General Legislation, Administration and Human Rights. A Senator since 1995, he sits on the Committees on Education and Culture, on Finance, and on Housing. Also, Mr. Hierro López is currently chairing the Special Study Commission on anti- corruption legislation and is a member of the National Executive Committee of the Colorado Party.*

President Luis Hierro López explained that the Joint Parliamentary Committee of Mercosur, an internationally

recognized legal entity, plays a political role that is increasing in scale, insofar as Mercosur is now in a process of rapid economic growth. It must fulfill many popular expectations and build relationships of trust between the population and Mercosur by explaining to the population the economic difficulties to be faced, as well as the challenges represented by economic integration. The fundamental functions of the Committee are to accelerate the internal legislative processes with a view to applying the directives of Mercosur, thereby contributing to the harmonization of legislation between member countries. A real gap unfortunately exists between the standards of Mercosur, which have a legal validity, and the national legislation of each country. The Committee must see to filling these legal gaps.

The Parliamentary Committee also plays a political role connected with the mandate of parliamentarians. In this respect, it must ensure the application of the democratic clause stipulating that Mercosur could not function without the most rigorous possible respect of the democratic rules and codes of conduct within the member countries. It also aspires to broadening the dialogue in order to ensure that integration includes social, cultural, spiritual and political dimensions, thereby allowing a defence of common values and a coming together of the peoples.

The Joint Parliamentary Committee of Mercosur intends to bring a very valuable contribution to the integration process of Mercosur, through the broadening of the political dialogue, by enabling Parliaments to participate much more actively in the political negotiations in the framework of Mercosur. It is up to parliamentarians to define the political objectives and to open the path that will enable governments to make progress.

According to Mr. Hierro López, the challenge that is presented to the parliamentarians of the Mercosur member States is not to defend the legitimate interests of each of their respective countries, but rather to defend the community interests of the region, even if these different

interests are not always convergent.

The parliamentarians of the Mercosur member countries deeply believe in the coming together of the Americas, a feeling that they have inherited from their ancestors and from the different Latin American leaders who have dreamed of a united America; but their task is hardly an easy one. The member countries of Mercosur have fostered the opening of markets and now hope that North America will do the same. Mr. Hierro López considers that it is possible today to create a free trade area of the Americas, but to do so, it is necessary for a fertile, fraternal and sincere political dialogue to take root between all countries of the Americas.

***Mr. Julio César Turbay Quintero** is President of the Andean Parliament. A Senator of the Republic of Colombia, he is a member of the Committee on External Relations. He has sat in the Chamber of Representatives for the electoral district of Bogotá and Cundinamarca, where he was a member of the First Standing Constitutional Committee and of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Affairs of the National Liberal Directorate. Mr. Turbay Quintero has degrees in law and in socioeconomic sciences, and a Master's degree in political science from New York University.*

The Andean Parliament, whose Founding Treaty was signed in 1979, and whose head office is located in Santa Fe de Bogotá, works for the promotion and orientation of the integration process put forward by the Andean system of integration. For this purpose, it analyses the different operational structures of the national Parliaments in order to propose frameworks for reconciliation and harmonization of legislation.

For President Turbay, the Conference constitutes an unprecedented event that will foster the development of a

reflection on hemispheric unity and the emergence of a spirit of cooperation between the States of the Americas. While they have not always been constant, the efforts devoted to the establishment of dialogue between the Parliaments of the continent in the area of integration have been numerous. Throughout the century, and particularly during its second half, a number of organizations have tried to foster a coming together of the Parliaments of the Americas. Aware of the need to continue the search for values common to the Americas, the Andean Parliament affirms its intention of participating actively in the new hemispheric bloc that should begin to operate at the start of the next millennium.

According to Mr. Turbay, it is the people who, through their actions and conviction, will confer a legitimacy and a guarantee of success on the consolidation of the international processes. For this reason, through a protocol added to its constituent treaty, the Andean Parliament has determined that within five years, its parliamentarians are to be elected by direct universal suffrage. Since its formation, the Andean Parliament has demonstrated that integration responds not only to economic imperatives, but also that it has moral and cultural objectives, in order to guarantee a vast popular participation in the integration process of the Andean group.

The creation of a hemispheric bloc must not lead to the dissolution of the already existing regional and interparliamentary groups. Parliamentary diplomacy, in particular, does a remarkable job of supplementing the action of governments, since it contributes to the settlement of conflicts that traditional diplomacy sometimes has difficulty in resolving. As legitimate representatives of the populations, parliamentarians are called on to play a role at the forefront, both with regard to integration and with regard to the concerns of citizens in the areas of the environment, the economy, human rights and the fight against crime and drug trafficking.

Reflections and dialogues will not suffice to carry through with the integration project if precise actions, on the local

and hemispheric level, do not accompany its progressive evolution. It is indispensable, particularly, to call for hemispheric solidarity to fight against the poverty of peoples. Similarly, a commitment to strengthen democracies is necessary. According to Mr. Turbay, the long road that consists of building and consolidating permanent forums for dialogue between all nations of the Americas is only beginning, and in his opinion it is indispensable to provide a follow-up to this Conference in order that it may lead to the instigation of a Parliamentary Forum of the Americas.

***Mr. Ernesto Lima Mena** is President of the Central American Parliament. Born in El Salvador, he was elected a member of the Central American Parliament under the banner of the Nationalist Republican Alliance Party for the period 1996-2001. He holds a degree in legal science from the Doctor José Matías Delgado University in El Salvador, where he now holds the position of Director General of the Master's program in international law. He also obtained a Master's degree in international commercial law at Notre Dame University in London. Mr. Lima Mena has served as an advisor to the minister of Planning and the Minister of External Relations, and has represented El Salvador at many international organizations.*

President Lima Mena put into context the current perspectives on integration, recalling that as early as 1822, a famous Central American author, Mr. José Cecilio del Valle, already presented the essential aspects of what we consider today as an "Americanist" vision. Describing the Latin American independence movement, then in full swing, this author advocated the building of a supranational spirit and the regrouping of the new Central American States. Mr. Lima Mena recalled, among other things, that since 1821, no fewer than sixteen attempts at Central American political integration have been initiated,

all of which have involved the setting up a regional parliament.

In 1986, during the meeting referred to as Esquipulas I, the Presidents of the Central American States declared that it was necessary to create and complete the efforts toward regional cooperation and understanding through the creation of institutional mechanisms allowing for the reinforcement of dialogue, joint development, democracy and pluralism. Out of these fundamental elements, essential to the peace and integration of Central America, arose the Central American Parliament.

The Central American Parliament constitutes a forum of deliberation that analyses the common political, economic, social, cultural and security-related problems of the countries in the region. It also has the mandate to initiate and orient the integration processes and to foster a maximum of cooperation between its members.

Mr. Lima Mena underlined that the Central American Parliament, which results from Central America's democratic aspirations, shares the privilege of being one of the only two regional parliaments in the world to enjoy full legitimacy, stemming from the holding of free and direct elections. Convinced that integration must allow the articulation of the political ideologies of all peoples, he pointed out that the regional parliament has essentially a representative function toward its peoples, who are the true guarantors of its legitimacy, and who must be the principal beneficiaries of integration.

While a process of integration has as an objective the integration of policies, the legitimacy of this process will depend to a large extent on the active participation of the parliamentarians. In this regard, the creation of a free-trade area of the Americas will represent a challenge to be taken up during the coming years, and for which very strong political support will be necessary. Also, this Conference is the appropriate forum in which to initiate a debate on the review of the different dimensions taken on by inter-American relations.

In conclusion, Mr. Lima Mena underlined that the Central American Parliament subscribes to the principles underlying the holding this historic Conference, and furthermore he considered that they are the same as those expressed 175 years ago by one of the fathers of Latin American independence: *"From now on, America will be my only concern. America will be the most worthy issue for any American."*

Mr. Georgios Anastassopoulos has been Vice-President of the European Parliament since 1988. A graduate of the Athens College and of the Faculty of Law of the University of Athens, he completed post-graduate studies in Comparative European law at King's College, University of London. A journalist by profession, he followed courses at the School of Journalism at Northwestern University in the United States. From 1974 to 1981, he was Director General of the Athenian Press Agency. In 1977 and 1981, he was appointed Secretary of State to the Presidency. He was elected a member of the European Parliament in 1984, and then assumed the position of Chairman of the Committee on Transport. Mr. Anastassopoulos is currently a member of the Committees on Institutional and Legal Affairs of the European Parliament.

Mr. Georgios Anastassopoulos dealt with the evolution of the role of the European Parliament and its contribution to the European integration process. He recalled that it was in accordance with the Luxembourg accord (1966), which marked the first revision of the Treaty of Rome, that the European Parliament began to acquire real legislative powers and to establish a veritable European institution, thereby making it possible to reduce the democratic deficit within the European Union.

He underlined that it was in December 1952 that the first "European Parliamentary Assembly" was held, which then

included 78 members. Already at that time, the inclusion of such an assembly reflected the concern and the need to incorporate a certain minimum level of democratic control within the European Community.

Although at the outset, the Parliament enjoyed only a consultative power limiting it to the presentation of motions of non-confidence, over the years it has acquired legislative powers. The European Parliament is now firmly established as a legislative European institution, at least with regard to a certain number of fields of Community legislation. Its legislative, budgetary and supervisory powers, although substantial, nevertheless remain limited. They have, however, proven sufficient to enable the Parliament to intervene in the integration process.

The Maastricht Treaty, which entered into force on November 1, 1993, greatly increased the powers of the European Parliament, in several fields. In the near future, other powers should be granted it, with the signature of the Treaty of Amsterdam, which includes six chapters, 14 protocols and 46 declarations, and for which the Parliament participated in consultations on an informal basis, prior to the negotiations.

From this point on, democratic legitimacy, supranationality and the unique role that the Parliament can play, where the intergovernmental process has flagged, require any reform of the European Union to provide for the participation of the European Parliament as a constituent body of the Union, and for the close collaboration of the national parliaments of the member States. In the meantime, the Parliament will continue to support the process of European integration with the same conviction and the same will that it has so far shown. In immediate terms, this means that it will work on the preparation of the economic and monetary union — decisive for the future of the Union — and that in the long term, it will continue to act as a catalyst for European integration, while respecting the cultural identities and diversity.

Monsieur Juan Adolfo Singer is President of the Latin-American Parliament (Parlatino). Holding degrees in law, social sciences, philosophy and business administration, he has been active in politics since 1963. First he was a Deputy in the Chamber of Representatives of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay from 1963 to 1971, and then Senator until the military coup d'état in June 1973. During the military regime (1973-1984), he pursued underground political activities. Reelected Senator in 1984, he was appointed Vice-President of Parlatino by the Uruguayan Parliament at the XIIth session of Parlatino in 1988. Once again a Deputy from 1990-1995, he was elected President of the Chamber of Deputies in 1991, and in the same year he was also elected substitute President of Parlatino. He was reelected as a Deputy in 1994 for the period 1995-2000, and chairs the Committee on Internal Affairs of the Chamber of Representatives.

President Singer recalled that the Latin-American Parliament is an interparliamentary organization that was created in 1964. It was after the signing of a treaty in 1987 that it became an international public organization. The Latin-American Parliament is composed of an Assembly, an Administrative Council, and Advisory Council and a series of parliamentary and advisory committees dealing with the most important issues.

In all, 3,500 Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking legislators in Latin America are represented in the deliberations of this organization, which enables it to have a significant political, economic and cultural impact.

Mr. Singer recalled that among the objectives of the Latin-American Parliament is the need to harmonize legislation in Latin America and to set the groundwork for the community of Latin American nations, of which the Latin-American Parliament constitutes the main assembly.

The theme of integration affects all levels of society, and for this reason, the Latin-American Parliament has always sought to establish close relations with the various organizations of Latin American society, such as labour union, academic, business and religious organizations. Already an integration of all these entities is being seen on a regional level, and according to Mr. Singer, Latin American society is progressing more rapidly on this level than are the States themselves.

The Latin-American Parliament gave itself the mandate to promote and participate in the consolidation of all processes of sub-regional integration. For this purpose, it has signed conventions with all the sub-regional Parliaments, with the exception of the Joint Parliamentary Committee of Mercosur, with which negotiations are nevertheless under way.

With respect to questions of integration, Mr. Singer wished to clarify two important aspects. On the one hand, unacceptable economic inequalities, as well as highly different levels of development within the Americas, constitute fundamental injustices which prevent us from speaking of a true integration, whether it be of a commercial nature or otherwise. Moreover, in his view, integration must be based on three essential concepts, namely cooperation, competitiveness and solidarity.

Mr. Singer underlined the importance of the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas, as a first meeting between parliamentarians from North America and those from Latin America. He considered that this step marked the beginning of an interparliamentary dialogue among all countries of the Americas, and probably the establishment of a new type of relations between North America and Latin America. In his opinion, however, the long-term continuation of these meetings would necessitate greater participation by the United States.

PLENARY SESSION 3

Summary Report

Summary of Plenary Session 3

Chair:

**Mr. Jean-Pierre
Charbonneau**

President of the National
Assembly of Québec
President of the Parliamentary
Conference of the Americas

Rapporteurs:

Mr. Isaac Cohen

Director of the Washington
bureau of the United Nations
Economic
Commission for Latin
America and the Caribbean
(ECLAC)

Mr. André Franco Montoro

Member of the Chamber of
Deputies of the Federative
Republic of Brazil

Master of Ceremonies:

Madam Michaëlle Jean

Journalist-announcer for the
Radio-Canada news network

Secretary:

Mr. Gaston Bernier

National Assembly of Québec

Mr. Isaac Cohen is Director of the Washington bureau of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). He was previously responsible for economic affairs for the ECLAC bureau in Mexico. A native of Guatemala, he holds a PhD in political science from the Institut supérieur d'études internationales of the University of Geneva. In addition, he has worked as a consultant to the permanent secretariat of the Central American Central Integration System and to the Central Bank of Guatemala. Mr. Cohen has also served as a professor of political and social sciences at the Autonomous University of Mexico.

In his summary of the deliberations of September 19, Mr. Cohen emphasized, among the themes submitted, the leading topics of the day's discussions. The fact that the Quebec City Conference "owes its existence to the return of democracy" in Latin America is the first theme that held the attention of the parliamentarians. It would have been impossible, according to Mr. Cohen, to hold this Conference in the absence of the current democratic context.

The economic concerns expressed by the parliamentarians throughout the discussions and debates constituted the second recurrent element. A lengthy questioning centred around the question of whether economic integration could become an instrument and a motor of prosperity and growth. Indeed, according to Mr. Cohen, this is how integration must be designed; as an instrument of economic growth which, through the creation of jobs, will bring about greater prosperity and an improvement in the population's well-being. Societies that have no growth do not generate employment. In fact, employment remains the only means of raising a person out of poverty.

Nevertheless, job creation will not prove to be productive unless it is based on the education and health of the

population. Moreover, during all of the workshops, education took a central place within the concerns of the participants. A cornerstone of equity and justice, it constitutes the veritable key to overcoming the problems of poverty of the population and of productivity in our economies. An educated person earns more, improves his living conditions, increases his productivity and generates more growth. This is the type of integration that we are interested in: an integration that improves growth and makes it possible to overcome poverty. In the case of health, this is also a crucial sector whose budgets are intrinsically linked to unproductive expenditures. As was underlined by Mr. Arias in his opening speech, setting out the principles that inspired the debates, "if we wish to increase social spending within our economies, we must reduce unproductive spending".

Mr. Cohen then recalled that there had also been some discussion of the accountability of parliamentarians toward citizens in the framework of the integration process. They in fact have a duty to ensure the transparency of the process and to give full account to the citizens.

Finally, Mr. Cohen considered that the debates during the Conference were very rich and promising for the future. They reflected what parliamentarians desired for the Americas, namely integration that enhances prosperity. "We do not wish for any other type of integration"; this, according to Mr. Cohen, was the message from Quebec City.

Mr. André Franco Montoro is President of the Latin-American Parliament's Advisory Committee., and President of the Latin-American Institute. Active in politics since 1955, he has held the successive positions of Member of the Legislative Assembly of São Paulo and then of the Chamber of Representatives of Brazil, federal Senator and Governor of the State of São Paulo. In 1995, he was again elected member of the Chamber of Deputies of his country. A Doctor of Law and of Philosophy, and

the author of many publications, he is also a professor at the University of São Paulo, the Catholic University of São Paulo and the University of Brasília. Mr. Montoro has represented Brazil on many occasions at international conventions and conferences.

Mr. André Franco Montoro, for his part, sought to put into perspective the role of men and women of politics in the integration under way, by identifying their role according to their parliamentary functions, namely the political or representative function, the legislative or normative function, and finally the function of control or supervision.

Mr. Montoro recalled that the parliaments of the Americas have concerned themselves greatly with integration, referring here not only to the process of liberalization of trade, but also to cultural, political and social integration, which are equally important facets of the process.

In order to deal with these issues, in the context of their functions as representatives of the peoples, the parliamentarians created a series of international parliamentary organizations. These enabled them to work toward economic, cultural, social and political integration of the countries of Latin America and also made it possible to attack the greatest problem in Latin America, namely the fight against poverty. Mr. Montoro underlined that it was through the creation of jobs that the States of the Americas will succeed in overcoming this problem of extreme poverty and, more precisely, through the creation of small businesses, support to family farming operations, the creation of cooperatives, tourism development, preservation of the environment and awareness building about the importance of education.

The rapporteur also underlined that the parliaments must take inspiration from the example of Mercosur which, following the pressures exerted by parliamentarians, had to set up a representative forum of civil society so that employers, academics, women and young people could

participate in the process of regional integration. It is in this way that the parliamentarians exercised their function of representatives of the population.

In the exercising of their legislative function, parliamentarians approve and adopt international treaties. They have the possibility of thereby influencing the integration processes by adopting the proposed agreements, by refusing to do so, or by proposing amendments. Also, it is their duty to harmonize the legislative frameworks to ensure greater coherence between them and to facilitate the implementation of the integration process.

However, according to Mr. Montoro, of all parliamentary activities, it is the control function that is the most important, and it can be exercised in five ways: 1) budgetary control through voting on budget priorities; 2) the fight against corruption, which requires transparency, indictments and respected sanctions; 3) the defence of Human Rights, particularly through Human Rights Commissions, in order that rights may be respected and violators sanctioned; 4) the control of military spending, which has not decreased despite the end of the Cold War; and 5) the solving of the problem of the foreign debt, the interest on which cuts away an increasingly large share of the national budgets.

In reality, according to Mr. Montoro, there is a mandate that is all-inclusive: it is that of the defence of democracy, which he describes as the "royal path", but of a democracy that is at the same time social, participatory and pluralistic. He concluded by mentioning that the Conference remained the best example of what had to be done for the integration of the Americas, and thanked President Charbonneau for having called together the parliamentarians at this assembly.

DEMOCRACY

The democratic challenge and economic integration

***Summary of the conferences and discussions on Friday,
September 19, 1997***

Chair:

Mr. Isidro Muñoz Rivera
President of the Congress of
the State of Mexico

Vice-Chair:

Mr. Yvon Vallières
Chairman of the Committee
on Agriculture, Fisheries and
Food of the National
Assembly of Québec

Speakers:

**Mr. Manuel Antonio
Garretón Mérimo**
Full Professor of the
Department of Sociology of
the University of Chile

Mr. Robert A. Pastor
Director of the Latin
American and Caribbean
Program, The Carter Center

Madam Elizabeth Spehar
Executive Coordinator of the
Unit for the Promotion of
Democracy of the
Organization of American
States (OAS)

Secretary:

Mr. Charles Thumerelle
National Assembly of Québec

***Mr. Manuel Antonio Garretón Mérimo** is a Full Professor of the Department of Sociology, University of Chile. He holds a PhD from the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris. An Assistant Professor at Georgetown University since 1990, he has also been a visiting professor at Oxford University and at Notre Dame University. The author of some fifteen books and one hundred articles, translated into several languages, he has conducted research and taught in political sociology, and particularly on the themes of the State and society, democratization and transition, and authoritarian regimes.*

In the framework of the globalization phenomenon that we are witnessing on a worldwide level, the free trade agreements and treaties in their various forms have given rise on the one hand to integration processes, at the regional as well as international level, and on the other hand to a disarticulation of traditional modes of operation, at the national level. In this regard, the "polis", as a centre grouping together a set of democratic institutions where citizens have rights and where politics plays a dominant role, has been weakened.

This observation suggests new thinking with regard to economic spaces emerging in a world where globalization is the watchword. In order for considerations of an economic nature not to exercise hegemony over politics, and for a convergence of the two spheres to be possible, it becomes essential to create a supranational structure based on the principles that govern democracy. The latter must necessarily take into account the main components of the "polis", namely the economic, political, cultural and social spheres, toward which society generally converges.

However, this process must necessarily fit within a period of transition and consolidation, which leads to several types of problems: (1) that of the "relevance" of the political regime, i.e. its limits in resolving a certain number of societal problems that are outside of State control (e.g. problems relating to religion, private life, etc.) and which may be recuperated by opposing forces (e.g. corruption, drug trafficking, certain transnational forces such as the Churches, foreign governments, etc.); (2) the "deepening" of democracies, which implies an extension of democratic principles to all levels of society (national, regional or local); (3) the quality of democracy, which refers to the competence and aptitudes of the political class (that is, in particular, its capacity for self-renewal, or to implement affirmative action policies favouring women and minorities), and to the participation of citizens.

These difficulties demand a threefold reinforcement: (1) consolidation of the State on the basis of a control of spending related to the financing of political activities; (2) a review of its traditional functions, whether involving a reduction of military functions, an increase in functions of integration or the strengthening of representation functions (the political parties system); (3) the reinforcement of citizenship, at a time when we are witnessing a broadening of its field of application, which presupposes the redefinition of this concept at the supranational level.

Ultimately, the problem that is facing us, namely the setting up of democratic systems in an increasingly globalized world subject to even greater integration, imposes a reconstruction of the concept of the "polis", particularly at the regional, national and supranational level. It is clear that such a process, which requires the creation of executive, legislative and citizens' participation components on an institutional basis, will require the mobilization of considerable resources that it will be possible to free up only through a reduction of States' expenditures, particularly in the area of military budgets.

Mr. Robert A. Pastor is Director of the Latin American and Caribbean program at the Carter Center. He is also a professor at Emory University and the author of ten books and over 200 articles on topics that include democracy, international trade, Latin America and the Caribbean. He often gives conferences, and acts as a consultant for the American government and for several international organizations. As Executive Secretary of the Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government, he has been closely linked with control and mediation in the area of electoral operations in some ten countries in the Americas.

During the post-Cold War period, it has been possible to witness a veritable rallying of States toward democracy in both Hemispheres. However, this phenomenon is currently facing challenges of a different nature, particularly in the Americas.

Firstly, it is clear that democracy is not possible without free elections in which all the political parties have the opportunity to express themselves. To this should be added the existence of a second generation of challenges shared by all countries in the Americas, such as the problem of the financing of election campaigns, as in the United States, army interference in the civil sphere, and regular outbreaks of urban violence. In order to solve these problems, it is essential to consolidate the parliamentary institutions which have suffered erosion in the course of time, in accordance with the rule of law.

Furthermore, the movement toward globalization, while certainly of benefit as it makes possible the suppression of isolation, itself raises problems, because it has unequal effects between rich and poor nations. Parliamentarians therefore have a crucial role to fulfill in order to compensate the populations or groups that are the most harmed by this process, while multilateral negotiations are taking place between our different countries. Indeed, it is essential to continue the integration movement on a

hemispheric scale by reinforcing the international obligations of each country and by developing protection mechanisms capable of fulfilling certain fundamental principles, namely providing assistance to those that are left out, protection of Human Rights and the right to work, as well as access to education.

It would be possible to mobilize the resources necessary for the consolidation of this process of integration on a democratic basis, by bringing to an end the arms race. In this regard, it would be desirable for this Conference to be followed up within 2 to 3 years in order to evaluate the overall progress accomplished.

Madam Elizabeth Spehar is Executive Coordinator of the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy of the Organization of American States (OAS). Director of the Program of the Americas of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development in Montreal from 1990 to 1995, she also acted as an international development consultant for agencies such as the Centre for Research in International Development and the Canadian International Development Agency. She has also served as a program officer for the United Nations Development Program.

During the past decade, there has been a slow but steady convergence of ideas that integrate democracy as a common value, an absolute and collective priority. In this regard, the Organization of American States, through several amendments to its Charter, has raised the promotion and defence of democracy in the Hemisphere to the level of an absolute priority. This consensus has spread to the economic sphere, on the principles of the liberalization of trade, and of stability and prosperity at the regional and sub-regional levels. It is clear that without democracy, there can be no viable economic integration. In Latin America, in particular, the processes of

democratization and pacification have provided the basic conditions for greater economic cooperation in the region. The existence of a legal framework capable of guaranteeing transparency and the rule of law therefore constitutes a fundamental factor in integration.

On the other hand, growth and economic prosperity also exercise a determining influence on political stability. From this viewpoint, integration constitutes an essential benchmark that allows economies of scale by creating, in particular, new jobs and new sectors of activity. Moreover, while this interdependence between countries stimulates everyone's interest with regard to the overall stability, any interruption of the democratic order represents an unacceptable obstacle to the continuity of the integration process.

Nevertheless, these changes have involved a redefinition of the traditional role of the State. Indeed, economic integration is often presented as a threat to the democratic order, liable to lead to internal ruptures, by exacerbating the already existing inequalities, by compromising the rights of individuals and their participation in the development of the society to which they belong. It is therefore difficult to dissociate economic integration from the other factors that underlie it, whether one considers the social aspects, the respect of fundamental rights of individuals, or the ecological dimension. The creation of a "Free-Trade Area of the Americas", which has seen significant progress since the Miami Summit, should take into account the following aspects: (1) the participation of citizens in the negotiation process; (2) the dissemination of information to the populations regarding the choices made and the progress achieved; (3) the opening by governments of new spaces in order to allow the expression of such participation; (4) the setting up of mechanisms making it possible to provide the different sectors interested in this process with the expertise and information necessary for the improvement of technical analyses; (5) the strengthening of the role of mediators between the government and the population played by political parties; (6) the strengthening of the control function of

Parliaments; (7) the undertaking of new studies in order to analyse the many dimensions raised by the hemispheric integration process.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Firstly, the participants took time to recognize the quality of the presentations and the importance of the different dimensions raised by the speakers. Afterward, the true objectives of the hemispheric integration process were questioned, particularly with regard to the common standards that should govern such a movement. Actually, is the idea to improve the quality of life of individuals in the framework of a phenomenon of equitable globalization, or is it rather to have the poor countries adopt the standards of the rich countries? It was argued that globalization must constitute, above all, an equitable process for all, whereas in the Americas there exist considerable inequalities between North and South. Moreover, it was suggested that young people, who remain the *future* and the *life blood* of our societies, be taken into account, as well as other segments of the population which remain the most vulnerable to the integration project under way (e.g. the elderly, women or native peoples, to name only a few).

Furthermore, how can we reconcile the principle of respect for democratic values and the rule of law, as a common standard in the framework of an economic integration process, and the respect of the sovereignty of States? It was recalled that by its very nature, integration broadens the concept of Human Rights and participates in the democratization of regimes because it brings about a rallying of States around common values that are today universally accepted and considered by all as forming a priority objective (even though the heightened economic competition can lead to injustices). In addition, even though the charters of rights have entrenched the sovereign right of all States, it is important to keep in mind that the international Conventions (e.g. the Charter of the United

Nations, the Charter of the OAS, the American Convention on Human Rights, etc.) have raised Human Rights and democracy to the level of fundamental principles.

It was also pointed out that the political and economic objectives converge and that only spaces of democratic integration allow the free expression and the participation of citizens. It is therefore essential to encourage formulae capable of stimulating participatory democracy (e.g. referendums, plebiscites or the creation of national commissions), in facing a process that demands everyone's contribution. It was suggested that exchanges between countries be increased in the area of sharing knowhow regarding mechanisms of participation and the provisions for a greater decentralization of societies. Finally, emphasis was placed on the importance of downsizing military budgets and the ending of the arms race in a context of the Cold War being over, so as to devote additional resources to the development of civil societies throughout the Hemisphere.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Respect of human rights and integration: is harmony possible?

***Summary of the conferences and discussions on Friday,
September 19, 1997***

Chair:

Mr. Carlos Baraibar

President of the Chamber of
Deputies of the Eastern
Republic of Uruguay

Vice-chair:

Mr. Mario Dumont

Member of the National
Assembly of Québec

Speakers:

Mr. Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro

Director of the Centre for the
Study of Violence, University
of São Paulo

**Mr. Rúben Ignacio Zamora
Rivas**

Member of the Legislative
Assembly of the Republic of
El Salvador

Mr. Diego García-Sayán

Director of the Andean
Commission of Jurists Board
Member, Inter-American
Institute of Human Rights
(IIHR)

(In the absence of Mr.

García-Sayán, the presentation was read by Madam Nancy Thede of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development — ICHRDD.)

Secretary:

Mr. Michel Bonsaint
National Assembly of Québec

Mr. Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro is Director of the Centre for the Study of Violence, University of São Paulo. He is a United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights in Burundi. He is a professor of political science and is the author of several books on social history, human rights and violence. Recently, he taught at the École des Hautes Études en sciences sociales de Paris, at the Kellogg Institute of Notre Dame University in the United States and at the School of International Affairs of Columbia University in New York. Mr. Pinheiro was Rapporteur for the Brazilian Plan of Action on Human Rights, which was launched by President Fernando Henrique Cardoso in May 1996.

As this century ends, Latin America seems to be at a turning point in its development; one has the impression that changes are under way. However, these changes could prove to be less spectacular regarding the respect of human rights. Following the democratic transitions, it was mistakenly expected that Human Rights, around which the resistance against military dictatorships was articulated, would be universally respected.

In nearly all the countries of Latin America, there exists a considerable gap between the letter of the law and the way

in which it is enforced, despite the existence of constitutional protections in the area of human rights. Indeed, very few countries have succeeded in reforming the institutions so as to make the respect of human rights an actuality. The profound economic inequalities between citizens foster the spread of crime, the repression of which is characterized by arbitrary police behaviours most often directed toward the most vulnerable groups in society. Moreover, the police are most often considered as a tool to serve the wealthy, and do not take interest in the repression of organized crime involving the classes that hold power. In addition, the majority of the population do not truly have access to justice, which induces them to resort to violence to resolve conflicts. The democratic transitions in Latin America have not brought about any improvements either, regarding the conditions of imprisonment of inmates.

The role of the State — as a defender and advocate of human rights — is more than ever necessary in order to define the compensatory mechanisms, aimed at large sectors of the population whose social conditions tend to worsen under the effects of globalization. The State should not rely on the laws of the marketplace themselves to correct the economic and social imbalances responsible for the inequalities. For that purpose, the State should enhance the participation of the poor, while counting on the cooperation of the elite groups. This is the main contradiction and the main challenge set for the new democracies of Latin America for the next decade.

Mr. Rúben Ignacio Zamora Rivas is a Member of the Legislative Assembly of the Republic of El Salvador. He holds a licence in legal sciences from the University of El Salvador. He obtained a Master's degree in Latin American politics and government at Essex University in England. After having served as a Member and Vice-President of the Legislative Assembly between 1991 and 1993, he was a candidate for the Presidency of the Republic in the elections of March 1994. He was founder

Human rights are of a historical, universal and progressive nature. They are not inherent in the human being, but rather stem from a process. They appear at a precise moment in history and evolve in a regular and continuous manner, thereby fitting into the definition of human nature. Moreover, in this field one could hardly envisage a regression, since that would mean a serious loss for human identity. Even though they may be adapted and modified according to cultures, human rights are nonetheless universal. For example, one would not entertain the concept of Eastern or Western human rights.

The instigation of democracy in Latin America made it possible to take a step forward in the area of advocating human rights. Whereas the populations limited themselves, during the process of establishing democracy, to demanding a *first generation* of rights, such as the right to life and the right to integrity of the person, they now demand rights that form part of a *second generation*, namely social rights. In contrast to the industrialized countries, where the historical entry of human rights occurred in three successive phases, the countries of Latin America today must deal with an accelerated process which includes all three generations of rights, in a context laden with problems.

A process in three stages must serve as the basis for the development and respect of human rights in Latin America: first, a stage which consists in breaking with the heritage of the previous decades, and in enabling the citizens to gain access to effective juridical instruments through which it is possible for them to react in relation to the State; secondly, a stage which consists in consolidating the enforcement of the social rights of the *second generation*, in the neoliberal context, for which any State intervention in social matters is judged needless and unproductive; thirdly, a stage consisting of enforcing the

third generation of rights, which fit within a global context — more particularly in the context of North-South relations — such as the right to peace and immigrants' rights.

In contrast to the previous decades, the role of the State and of parliamentarians is absolutely fundamental for the promotion and development of human rights. Mr. Zamora Rivas therefore proposes an alliance between the parliamentarians of the Hemisphere and the international human rights organizations, in order to develop in concert a program that can contribute to making our societies more humanitarian.

***Mr. Diego García-Sayán** is Director of the Andean Commission of Jurists and a Board Member of the Inter-American Institute for Human Rights (IIHR). He teaches at the Faculty of Law of the University of Peru, where he occupies the Chair on Human Rights. Since 1988, he has represented the Latin American countries within the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances of the United Nations Human Rights Commission. Since 1989, he has been a member of the Advisory Board of the International Human Rights Law Group, and a member of Inter-American Dialogue.*

(In the absence of Mr. García-Sayán, the presentation was read by Madam Nancy Thede of the ICHRDD.)

During the second half of the 20th century, the international evolution of human rights on a normative and institutional level has not had concrete consequences in certain parts of the world, particularly in Latin America. A lack of awareness of this normative and institutional evolution resulted in a systematic placing aside, on the part of certain States, of international law concerning human rights.

This branch of international law is constantly evolving, both from the substantive point of view and from that of protection mechanisms. Certain "classical" mechanisms include limits that could be reviewed — particularly with regard to the investigation processes. There are also new mechanisms which are coming to light, such as peacekeeping operations launched by the UN in situations of war or armed conflict. Such operations have also been conducted in other circumstances in certain African countries, during the veritable collapse of the State and of its public institutions.

In a context of globalization, the protection mechanisms must be strengthened, in order to attack the problems at their root, namely: poverty, deterioration of the environment, demographic growth and the urban concentration of the population. In addition, economic openness must coincide with a greater freedom of movement for populations. Finally, the encouragement and consolidation of economic and political cooperation between countries of the Hemisphere relies on a reform of organizations such as the OAS and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. A reinforcement of these organizations is needed in order to enable them to increase their capacity to protect democracy and human rights.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

It was mentioned that any economic free-trade agreement should include a clause expressly providing for the respect of human rights by the signatory countries, as economic development and the respect of human rights are interdependent. However, if economic development is not beneficial to the entire populations, it will not lead to a greater respect of human rights. A free-trade agreement could also include a clause aiming to ensure the respect of certain international labour standards, which could in particular have the effect of civilizing the economy on the international level and of preventing labour standards from being subordinated to the laws of the marketplace.

Others maintained that a treaty ought not to be limited to demanding only the respect of primary rights, such as democratic electoral rights. It must also deal with the *third generation* rights, such as the right to development, the right to peace, the right to a clean and healthy environment and the right to balanced development. Also an agreement should not leave aside certain social, political and cultural dimensions of economic integration. For this reason, a hemispheric free-trade agreement could include a clause on immigration policy.

Finally, it was argued that a free-trade agreement must not limit itself to setting out broad principles in the area of human rights; it should also provide effective mechanisms to concretely ensure the respect of human rights in each of the signatory countries, in particular by granting international organizations the tools necessary to act effectively in the countries concerned.

According to certain participants, the parliamentarians should more systematically inform themselves of the different issues relating to the respect of human rights, particularly by studying the different reports produced by certain international organizations. In order to more effectively inform themselves of issues related to human rights, parliamentarians should encourage the creation of parliamentary committees on human rights. It is also necessary to break the isolation of Parliament from civil society, so that issues relating to human rights may not be examined exclusively by Parliament.

Parliamentarians should also exercise a rigorous control over their governments, in order to ensure that the latter do not negotiate an economic free-trade agreement without taking into account the respect of human rights. In this regard, the parliaments that have the power to do so should refuse to ratify any economic free-trade agreement that does not expressly provide for the respect of human rights.

FREE TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT

Lowering tariff barriers and improving working conditions: utopia or necessity?

***Summary of the conferences and discussions on Friday,
September 19, 1997***

Chair:

Madam Rome Italia Johnson

Speaker of the House of
Assembly, Commonwealth of
the Bahamas

Vice-chair:

Mr. Christos Sirros

Member of the National
Assembly of Québec

Speakers:

Mr. Vicente Paulo da Silva

President of Brazil's Unified
Workers' Confederation
(CUT)

Mr. Pierre Fortin

Professor of Economics,
University of Québec in
Montréal

Mr. Jorge Ramírez-Ocampo

Manager, CENMAR S.A.,
and Coordinator of the
Americas Business Forum,
Cartagena, Colombia (1995-
1996)

Secretary:

Madam Suzanne Langevin
National Assembly of Québec

Mr. Vicente Paulo da Silva has been President of Brazil's Unified Workers' Confederation (CUT) since August 1994. He participated in its foundation, on August 28, 1983, and then became President of the first regional labour organization of the CUT in Brazil. In 1991, he was elected to the national executive of the CUT. Since November 20, 1995, Mr. Silva has been exercising the duties of President of the Inter-American Institute for Racial Equality.

Mr. Silva began by emphasizing the importance of conferences such as this, but believes that they should be more democratized. He gave the example of Mercosur, where workers are represented, but where employment, social issues and cultural issues have not yet been discussed. Despite a strong increase in economic relations between the two large countries of that group, namely Argentina and Brazil, modernization measures do not mean anything if social factors are not taken into account. Over the past eight years, more than 25% of the jobs have disappeared and there is no solution to this problem of structural unemployment. Such results cause a rapid breakdown of the social fabric.

Taking the example of NAFTA, Mr. Silva noted the disappearance of one million jobs and the dropping of wages in Mexico. It is therefore crucial to begin a debate in order for free trade to also produce social results. The participation of workers in this debate will be capital, not only so that they will be informed of the decisions made, but also to enable them to defend their rights and promote the project of a social charter. The economy must definitely grow, but also this growth must rely on the workers. Moreover, the union movement must be jointly responsible for growth and propose alternatives in order

for globalization to fulfill the aspirations of the populations. This globalization must enhance international exchanges instead of nationalizing poverty, and must not leave the decision-making power in the hands of the wealthy. We must also globalize rights, as well as culture and hope.

Parliaments are a little on the sidelines of this major debate, either through lack of interest, or because they are excluded from it. If the union movement does not participate in this debate, it is not due to a lack of interest, but rather because it has been excluded from it at the risk of damaging a democratic process that is in full expansion. Therefore, a debate must be undertaken, directed toward the future, otherwise it will be observed that Man, who will soon be able to travel to Mars, is not yet able to resolve his own contradictions, nor problems such as hunger, the right to citizenship and the right to life.

Mr. Pierre Fortin is a Professor of Economics at the University of Québec in Montréal. He has many articles to his credit in scientific reviews in Canada and abroad, in the area of economic fluctuations, growth and employment. In 1997, he was the recipient of the Purvis Prize, awarded to the author of the best recent book or article in the field of political economy in Canada. He was President of the Canadian Economics Association in 1995-1996 and an advisor to the Finance Minister of Canada as well as to the Prime Minister of Québec. He is a member of several boards of directors of companies and community organizations.

At the outset, Mr. Fortin pointed out that he was presenting a North American perspective on the question of free trade and employment. During the 1990s, Canada's economic situation was characterized by a very weak level of employment and an increase in social inequalities. However, these two phenomena are not the result of free

trade.

From 1989 to 1996, Canada was the only OECD country to experience a decrease in its standard of living. In contrast, before 1990, Canada's performance in the area of employment was exactly the same as that of the United States. In 1997, it was 7% lower. The NAFTA and the agreement that preceded it, the Canada-United States Free-Trade Agreement (FTA), nevertheless have no connection with this trend. During the same period, there was a 200% increase in Canadian manufacturing exports in sectors other than that of the automobile, which had already been subject to a free trade agreement for thirty years. This was also reflected in total exports, which underwent remarkable growth during the 1990s, rising from 26% to 39% of GDP. As a result, far from hampering the expansion of the Canadian economy, the NAFTA instead prevented the major recession that occurred in Canada during those years from being transformed into a depression. The causes of the deterioration in Canada's employment situation must therefore be sought elsewhere. Rather, it was apparently the result of an extremely restrictive monetary policy on the part of the Bank of Canada, which set the objective of attaining a much lower inflation rate than that in the United States.

Secondly, the hypothesis that the liberalization and globalization of trade caused increasing social inequalities in North America cannot be seriously upheld either, in view of the fact that these inequalities exist in all sectors of the economy and not only in the sectors exposed to global competition. On the other hand, the technological hypothesis appears much more plausible to explain the increasing of inequalities. Indeed, the new technologies call for more knowledge and skills, which require a higher level of education. As evidence of this, the increasing of inequalities was much more pronounced in the United States than in Canada, where the level of education rose substantially, whereas it fell in the United States.

In conclusion, while the United States have obtained better results than Canada in the area of employment, by placing

the emphasis on sustaining employment rather than on reducing the rate of inflation, Canada did better than the United States in the area of wage inequalities thanks to its progress in the area of education and job training.

***Monsieur Jorge Ramírez-Ocampo** is currently exercising the duties of an administrator within the Colombian enterprise CENMAR. He is also Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Sudameris Bank, Columbia, and President of the Colombia-United States Management Council. He is a member of many Boards of Directors as well. From 1991 to 1997, he was President of the National Exporters' Association. In 1995 and 1996, he exercised the duties of general coordinator of the Entrepreneurs' Forum of the Americas, held in Cartagena in March 1996.*

In the view of Mr. Ramírez-Ocampo, the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas provides an excellent opportunity to encourage integration of the Hemisphere, and to involve parliamentarians in this undertaking, since they are the ones, ultimately, who must support or discourage the efforts toward this integration.

In his opinion, it is unfair to consider the integration process to be responsible for the elimination of jobs and for wage reductions. On the contrary, integration is the quickest way to improve and create jobs. He is thus in agreement with the thesis of creative development put forward by Schumpeter. According to this thesis, progress is initiated by competition, which then encourages technological development, which causes jobs to be lost, while at the same time making possible the creation of other jobs. He gives the example of the mule-drivers, who played a key role in the economic life of Colombia in the last century. With the arrival of airplanes and the development of roads, the mule-drivers disappeared. If Colombia had remained as it was, based on mule-drivers, the opportunities to educate children would not have

existed, and many people would still have low- paid exhausting jobs.

By opening up wider markets, which make possible the development of new technologies, economic integration contributes to job creation, while favouring better income distribution. But this integration cannot be successful unless it is accompanied by a series of fundamental structural reforms such as the reduction of customs duties, the changing of labour standards that can hamper job creation, and the simplification of administrative procedures.

It is true that in the 1980s, Latin America underwent a pronounced deterioration in terms of income distribution, because of macroeconomic policies operating in the context of a closed economy. On the other hand, during the 1990s, the opening of the economy instead generated a better distribution of wealth, with the poor registering a 10% increase in their share of income.

The processes of globalization and integration are irreversible. Nevertheless, in order for them to be effective and not to hamper income distribution, greater effort must be devoted to social policies, particularly to education. Similarly, technological development must not be halted, but on the contrary encouraged by increasing the flexibility of labour standards. Finally, it is indispensable that the policies on integration aim to attain an equitable distribution of the benefits between workers, consumers and enterprises. For this purpose, the participation of all the vital forces, including labour unions, enterprises, Parliaments and governments, must be assured.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

The vast majority of the participants in the discussion agreed on the fact that the integration process is irreversible. However, there was not a consensus as to how to proceed with this integration. It is not so much the

process of integration that is called into question, but rather the neo-liberal framework in which it is taking place.

Currently, an increase in destitution is being observed in Latin America, where 50% of the population live in poverty and 20% in abject poverty. In the view of certain participants, it is false to pretend that integration is not responsible for this situation, as the World Bank has recognized that Latin America was forced to open its markets when it was not ready to do so.

The creation of a free-trade area of the Americas will require that the heterogeneity existing between the levels of development of the participating countries be taken into account. Indeed, among the 35 countries in the Hemisphere, some are highly developed, some are getting by as best they can, whereas others, such as Haiti, number among the poorest on the planet. Therefore, there are countries for which integration threatens to be very difficult. In order that the opening of markets may also benefit the least well-to-do, it must be done in such a way as to favour a fair redistribution of the wealth or profits. For the Latin American countries, the foreign debt constitutes a huge burden to bear. Solutions must therefore be found to help these countries, particularly through the creation of compensation funds.

Secondly, it is fundamental for all social actors, and particularly for the representatives of workers, to be present and to participate fully in the talks toward the creation of this free-trade area. Several participants thus deplored the fact that the major management associations were invited to the talks concerning free trade, whereas the other social actors were excluded. It would therefore be appropriate to strengthen the participation of labour unions and to build their legitimacy. Several participants emphasized the need to adopt a social charter through which to entrench the rights of workers and of the populations in general.

Thirdly, it is also necessary to redefine the role of the State in order for it to properly assume certain functions that

prove indispensable, particularly in the areas of social policy, the redistribution of wealth, and education. This constitutes a determinant issue for the future.

Finally, the parliamentarians also have an essential role to play in this process in order that the populations not be despoiled of their rights, and so that their concerns and demands may be taken into consideration.

EDUCATION AND JOB TRAINING

***Education and job training:
balancing the imperatives of competitiveness
with the necessities of equal opportunity***

***Summary of the conferences and discussions on Friday,
September 19, 1997***

Chair:

Madam Lúcia de Carvalho
President of the Legislative
Chamber of the Federal
District of the Federative
Republic of Brazil

Vice-Chair

Mr. Claude Boucher
Member of the National
Assembly of Québec

Speakers:

Madam María de Ibarrola
Director General of the
National Teachers' Union
Foundation for the
Advancement of Teachers and
Researcher at the National
Council of Science and
Technology (Mexico)

Mr. Patricio Cariola, S.J.
Researcher, Centre for
Research and Development in
Education (Chile)

M. Pierre Van Der Donckt
Executive Director of the

Inter-American Organization
for Higher Education

Secretary:

M. Charles A. Bogue
National Assembly of Québec

Madam María de Ibarrola has been Director General of the National Teachers' Union Foundation for the Advancement of Teachers since 1993. She has been a Full Professor of the Department of Educational Research at the Centre for research and advanced studies of the Polytechnical Institute since 1977 and a distinguished researcher of the National Council of Science and Technology since 1985. She is also a consultant for UNESCO in the area of technical education and professional training in Latin America.

Madam María de Ibarrola stated that the title chosen for the workshop recalled, on the one hand, that "the unavoidable competition" in the labour market demands appropriate preparation and training and furthermore, that it requires an analysis of the relationships existing between education and the labour market. On this point, she presented five theses dealing successively with training and labour, equality of opportunity in the field of education, and the relationships that exist between education and labour in the Americas.

Madam de Ibarrola proposed, firstly, two dichotomic and representative scenarios of the current debates dealing with the future of labour in the XXIth century. The first scenario, characteristic of the situation in the rich countries, is centred on the effects of globalization and of technological advances, and may be viewed optimistically or pessimistically, depending on the viewpoint that one adopts. The optimists present, as inevitable and beneficial

for economic development, the globalization of markets, the transformation of production systems and competition in the field of labour. This approach is based on an indispensable adaptation of labour force skills and of education programs, and goes as far as to propose the recognition of skills acquired on the labour market.

For their part, the pessimists argue that increasingly, the new technologies are replacing labour and require society to choose between a model in which a small part of the population work a great deal while the majority remain unemployed and live in dependency on the public system, or a model of work organization allowing a more equitable distribution of jobs, through reductions in the work week and work sharing programs.

The second scenario, which is characteristic of the situation in developing countries, is based on the inequality and heterogeneity of production systems. Here, the highly variable distribution of the gross national product (GNP) per inhabitant means that the competitors are far from being on an even footing. Indeed, a certain number of enterprises offer good-quality well-paid jobs that enable people to enter the middle class, while contributing a high percentage of the gross national product. However, these jobs represent only a slim percentage of the total, as the vast majority offer only irregular work, without a minimum wage or fringe benefits, paid holidays, social security or job security. In certain countries, large segments of the population are already observed who, through a lack of education, are entirely inactive and have no future prospects, while others must turn toward illegal activities in order to supplement their income.

Secondly, the scale of the changes that have marked the XXth century, and especially the last twenty years, requires more than ever that economic development be subordinated to democratic development and social development. The challenge for each society consists not only in becoming integrated within the new global economy, but also in creating worthwhile job opportunities

for the entire population, that will make it possible to reduce inequalities in all spheres of life, including the productivity of work.

Thirdly, Madam Ibarrola maintained that today, we are required to make very complex decisions in technical areas which, moreover, require certain basic knowledge, including that of a moral nature. A new type of literacy is setting in: a knowledge of mathematics and sciences is certainly essential, but knowledge on culture and basic technologies — without which we would not know how to avoid the errors and horrors of the past — is equally so. It follows that education must include the humanities, ethics and civic life, so that the young people will not simply become "working automatons".

In the fourth place, equal opportunity in the area of pedagogy is far from being achieved in the Americas, despite the major efforts made in this direction. It is true that there exists an appearance of equality of access to primary-level education. On the other hand, the picture becomes darker when secondary school attendance is considered, and becomes catastrophic in the area of higher education. In the latter field, the distance between the United States and Canada, on the one hand, and the Countries of the South, on the other, is enormous. This has the result of opening an enormous gap between these regions as regards the number of qualified workers. These problems could not be solved without making fundamental choices, particularly between the centralization and decentralization of decision-making in the educational and pedagogical fields.

Finally, inequality in the area of education arises out of inadequate policies. It is not the teachers — all too often undertrained and underpaid — who are to be blamed, but rather the governments, who devote less than four percent of the GNP to education.

In conclusion, Madam de Ibarrola formulated a few recommendations:

- firstly, it must be ensured that a public and democratic education exists at all levels of teaching; in particular, the countries in the Americas must not content themselves with financing primary school and neglecting secondary school and university teaching, as in the past;
- secondly, particular attention must be devoted to the most vulnerable groups, namely young people, and especially to those who do not complete their primary school education;
- finally, education must be recognized as an investment. People too often tend to neglect it, whereas it must be given priority, since it proves fundamental to ensure future development.

Monsieur Patricio Cariola, S.J. is a Researcher at the Centre for Research and Development in Education, of which he was Director from 1969 to 1995. He is a State Professor and holds a Master's degree in Education from Harvard University. In 1978, he founded the Latin-American information and educational documentation network. He acted as rapporteur for Latin America at the World Conference on Education for All, held in 1990. In 1995, he received the Andres Bello Inter-American Education Award. He is the author of several studies on education in Latin America, and is currently an advisor to the Chilean Minister of Education

Mr. Cariola underlined the wide gap that has opened in the area of job training between the countries of Southeast Asia and those of Latin America. In 1960, these two regions were at the same level in this area; today, the sad reality forces us to realize that the Latin American countries are far behind the Asian countries.

Globalization, the growth of the economy and economic

integration have meaning only insofar as one can inject added value into products. Certainly, national income can increase without value added, but then it will always remain concentrated in the hands of a very small group. In order that the fruits of economic growth may be better distributed, the citizens must be provided with adequate training.

It is true that we have made enormous progress in the area of higher education, as well as a major comeback in the area of secondary school education. These figures are deceptive, however, since the rate of registration in urban areas is considerably higher than that in rural areas, to which must be added the weakness of preschool education in Latin America. This weakness is of capital importance, since the shortfall in the intellectual stimulation of children in the home tends to condemn them to never exceeding the level attained by their parents.

According to a study conducted by the director of the regional bureau of UNESCO for Latin America, it is undeniable that the performance of the basic school systems in Latin America is insufficient. Once again, this reality is too often concealed by misleading statistics. Indeed, nearly 45 percent of the pupils in primary school repeat their year of school. During 1990 alone, 17 million children occupied places that they should have freed up for other pupils, thereby generating considerable expenditures. The result: not only is the school system highly ineffective, but its shortcomings result in a huge proportion of functionally illiterate people. Given the direct relationship between reading and various levels of development, such a result is disastrous. Fortunately, this phenomenon is not observed in private schools and colleges.

According to Mr. Cariola, the cause of the phenomenon of repeating grades lies particularly in the passive spirit inculcated in the students. But another source of the problem is without doubt the fact that the children of parliamentarians in the Latin American countries almost exclusively attend private schools. Since they thus have

little or no contact with the realities of the public school system, the decision-makers are hardly in a position to realize the pitiable state of education provided there.

Finally, the public school system should go beyond basic education so as not only to teach the use of modern technology, but also to transmit ethical values.

Mr. Pierre Van Der Donckt is Executive Director of the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education. He was head of the governmental mission at the Centre d'études politiques et administratives du Québec at the ENAP from 1981 to 1985, after having exercised the duties of Assistant Deputy Minister, responsible in particular for the Higher Education and Research Branch of the Ministère de l'Éducation, from 1978 to 1981. He held the position of Agent General for Québec in Mexico from 1985 to 1989, and conducted activities of cooperation in 23 countries of the Americas. He is a member of the Board of Administration of the Canadian Foundation for the Americas.

Mr. Pierre Van Der Donckt centred his analysis around two themes: the importance of managing the major changes that have occurred since the 1960s, and the need for inter-American cooperation in the field of education. Firstly, while our education systems have undergone major changes in the past, the tectonic tremors that are currently shaking the world will cause them to undergo even more profound changes. Indeed, the current university model is worn out: without a radical reform, the universities will soon enter a crisis. The results so far achieved are certainly positive, or even spectacular. However, problems persist. These must be attacked with determination, despite the reduction in the financial resources available for the purpose, since education remains the key to economic and social development.

In primary school, the lamentable rates of participation and success of Latin American children are most worrisome. On the other hand, at the university level, too many students enter university and spend years there without really having the aptitudes or the will to succeed. In addition, the proliferation of private institutions has not been accompanied by rigorous and transparent processes to evaluate the quality of teaching. Finally, government initiatives often lack consistency, particularly with regard to the financing of the school system.

The world has entered into a relentless race in which chances of success depend on the quality and dynamism of the human capital. Even in Canada, we are called on to re-engineer the entire school system. This process is based on a new equitable pact between the social classes, which must not make those who are already vulnerable even more so. On the other hand, although we must concern ourselves for those who are at the back of the pack, we must also prepare those who are in front. And this must be done not only within national boundaries: we must open our post-secondary institutions to the rest of the world, particularly to all the countries of the Americas.

Secondly, any plan to transform education systems must take into account the context of integration and development of the countries in the Americas, who demand that new instruments of cooperation be implemented. Our vision of the Americas must not be limited to economic competition alone; it must be based above all on cooperation — hence the absolute necessity of providing young people with a truly inter-American education.

For this purpose, the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education proposes the creation of the College of the Americas. This project is inspired by the College of Europe, founded in Bruges in 1950, with the goal of inculcating in its students a broadened vision of the European continent. This new college will be set up starting next year, and will offer four programs, namely: a program on management and analysis of public sector

policies; a student exchange program, called "Inter-Americas", to enable young people to spend a year studying in a foreign country; a program devoted to the subject of integration in all its aspects — cultural, social and technological; and finally, ten networks of cooperation to form new professionals in an inter-American framework.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

During the discussion period, the focus returned to the problem of the resources devoted to education by the Latin American countries. Several participants considered that the budgets allocated to education must be increased, since it is clear that they are well below the eight percent of GNP recommended by UNESCO to progress out of underdevelopment.

Not only are the resources devoted to education insufficient, they are also spread out unequally, between North and South, needless to say, but also between cities and rural areas. In the opinion of some participants, it is important to dispense education mainly where the needs are the most pressing, and hence where the results are likely to be the most spectacular, namely in the more underprivileged rural areas. Moreover, the differences in education between boys and girls, a problem of a cultural nature, must be evened out.

The poor performance of the Latin American school systems as well as the problem of the repeating of grades were again raised. The repeating of a grade should be correctly understood as a symptom of the fundamental deficiencies of the educational system. The fact that a child must repeat his or her year of school does not necessarily mean that the programs are overloaded, but simply that he or she did not learn what was supposed to be learned, at the appropriate time. Too often, inadequately prepared and poorly paid teachers are trained "on the job". Supplementary research should be undertaken in this field: one should not limit oneself to

applying recipes found elsewhere, but rather, studies should be conducted in each country with a view to providing interactive teaching in the classrooms.

However, the point was raised that in certain countries, particularly Brazil, success was achieved in dramatically reducing the number of dropouts through better financial support in the form of bursaries to low-income families. Moreover, repeating ought to be managed in a rational and economic manner by requiring repetition of only those courses failed, rather than of the entire school year.

Who must take up these challenges? The State? The private sector? The media? Parliamentarians? Some observers consider that too much emphasis is placed on the distinction between the public and private school systems; it is the quality of education that counts, and sometimes private school does more with less money. All nevertheless agreed that the State has an important role to play, but the precise nature and scope of that role are not easy to define. Certainly, the decision-makers and the citizens must be brought closer together, by decentralizing the decision-making and by being attentive to the input of citizens. However, an exaggerated degree of decentralization, which is unfavourable toward poor regions, must be avoided. In addition, the State has the duty to establish standards to ensure quality training.

The mission and responsibility of the medias in education were raised several times. They undoubtedly have enormous power and could be powerful educators, but everything is yet to be done to define the links that should exist between school education, on the one hand, and the world of the Internet and cable television on the other. Furthermore, there is little in the way of legislation to govern the medias and, in most of the Latin American countries, they do not take up the challenge of contributing actively to education.

In the case of parliamentarians, their primary role must be to seek a consensus within the population. They must also exercise better control over the development of the

education systems, which implies the establishment of quality standards in this field. However, parliamentarians show a virtually total lack of awareness of the deficiencies of the school system and they do not possess the necessary information to accomplish serious work. Often, the elected officials who intervene in this area have only narrow financial concerns in mind.

The content of the school programs also constitutes a major concern: must the technical and technological literacy of the future workers be emphasized to render them functional and productive? Or instead, should young people be given preparation for their role as future citizens, by placing more emphasis on civic life, ethics and moral values? If the importance of a well educated and technologically aware labour force is indisputable, especially in the fields of health and environmental protection, some are concerned about the tendency to view education as only a preparation to exercise a productive job in a globalized economy. In their opinion, education has a much more noble vocation, namely to train young leaders for the future of the Latin American countries.

Indeed, education should be considered as an investment, but the governments too often act with a view to obtaining immediate results. The States should stop acting with a short-term view, advocating curricula that are too often designed on the basis of a shortage of resources; instead, they should develop long-term policies. From this viewpoint, the creation of the College of the Americas was favourably acclaimed.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND HEALTH POLICIES

***The implementation of fair social security and health
policies:
political options and economic feasibility***

***Summary of the conferences and discussions on Friday,
September 19, 1997***

Chair:

Mr. Cleuber Carneiro
Vice-President of the
Legislative Assembly of
Minas Gerais

Vice-chair:

Mr. François Beaulne
Member of the National
Assembly of Québec

Speakers:

Mr. Juan Antonio Casas
Director, Division of Health
and Human Development,
Pan American Health
Organization (PAHO)

Mr. Carmelo Mesa-Lago
Distinguished Service
Professor of Economics and
Latin American Studies,
University of Pittsburgh

Madam Marcia Rivera
Executive Secretary of the
Latin American Council of
Social Sciences (CLACSO)

Secretary:

Madam Nancy Ford
National Assembly of Québec

***Dr. Juan Antonio Casas** is Director of the Division of Health and Human Development of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Originally from Costa Rica, he holds a Master's degree in social medicine from the Autonomous National University of Mexico. He has also pursued studies in social pediatrics, epidemiology and primary health care. Among others, he has held the positions of Head Physician of the Belize Department of Health, Program Coordinator in Belize for the PAHO, Project Leader in Guatemala for UNICEF, Health Program Analyst for the PAHO in Washington and representative of the World Health Organization in Guatemala and Panama.*

Mr. Juan Antonio Casas dealt essentially with issues of health, integration and human development.

Firstly, he described the role of the Pan American Health Organization as an intergovernmental agency that sets the guidelines for policies and directives in the area of health. The strategic programs and orientations adopted for the region of the Americas during the four-year term 1995-1998 confirm the fundamental criteria established at the beginning of the current decade in the following areas: health and human development, development of health services, health protection and promotion, protection and development of hygiene and living condition, and finally, the combatting and prevention of diseases.

Also, among the principle political trends affecting the field of health, he underlined that the globalization of markets has led to major transformations in the political, economic and social conditions of the regions, and

consequently, to new challenges that need to be faced.

The main challenge that must be faced by the health sector consists in overcoming the lack of equity, both in the area of hygiene in living conditions and in that of access to care. If we wish health-care to play a primary role in the process of human development, it is essential to take the following measures: to improve the health situation and ensure universal access to basic care; to mobilize the resources and extrasectorial support to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable social groups; to initiate a reform of the health-care sector so as to achieve the goals of universality in basic care, health promotion and increased efficiency in the distribution of financial resources; and to promote a gaining of awareness, among political leaders, of the importance of health in human development.

Mr. Casas also touched on the necessary cooperation between the organization that he represents and the various legislative Assemblies as well as the regional Parliaments such as the Latin-American Parliament and the Andean Parliament. This would result in an improvement in the health-related legislation, a modernization of the parliamentary process, a gaining of awareness regarding the importance of health as a political issue, and greater cooperation between the executive and legislative powers in the administration of health services.

Mr. Carmelo Mesa-Lago is a Distinguished Service Professor of Economics and Latin American Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. He has also been received as a visiting professor at the Universities of Oxford, Miami, Havana and Madrid, among others, and as an associate researcher at the Max Planck Institute, of the Freien University in Berlin, at the Torcuato Di Tella Institute and at the University of Miami. In addition, he has served as a consultant for the World Bank, the ILO, la IDB, the UNCTAD, USAID, the OAS and the PAHO. Finally, he has given conferences in 32 countries and has written or

edited more than 40 books and 150 articles, translated into eight languages, and published in 26 countries, dealing in particular with social security and health in Latin America.

Mr. Mesa-Lago firstly underlined the importance of developing policies to eliminate poverty, as well as the need to evaluate the costs of reforms. Among other things, the phenomenon of globalization of the economy raises the problem of competition, which could have a negative effect on social security if certain countries decided to reduce standards in this area in order to reduce the payroll taxes of businesses. Furthermore, on account of the incredibly high level of costs for the social security systems in certain South American countries, the financing of the system becomes an increasing burden. Indeed, the integration and globalization of markets does not automatically result in economic growth, no more so than economic growth ensures social progress.

Mr. Mesa-Lago then dealt with the issue of the reform of social security systems, pointing out that it is impossible to rely on a single model, in view of the great diversity of the systems in Latin America. Currently, there exists a traditional model, namely that of the International Labour Office, and a new model, namely that of the World Bank, based on three pillars: a basic obligatory public system, a retirement system, and a private complementary system on a voluntary basis.

With respect to the role of international organizations in this sensitive sector, it is urgent for the latter to work in collaboration rather than in competition. In addition, the participation of those affected by a social reform is essential in order to arrive at a consensus.

Parliamentarians, for their part, must well understand the priorities in order to adopt programs adapted to the needs of their countries, covering the entire population.

Madam Marcia Rivera is Executive Secretary of the Latin American Council of Social Sciences, a network based in Buenos Aires, grouping together some one hundred research organizations spread out across Latin America and the Caribbean. She has an academic background in economics, sociology and political science from the University of Puerto Rico and the University of London. She has conducted many research activities and has published writings on development issues relating to Latin America and the Caribbean. She is a consultant in the area of program design and project evaluation on human development for several United Nations organizations.

Madam Marcia Rivera presented the challenges of social policy in Latin America, basing her comments on the results of research on the evolution of economic policies in the six following countries: Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Chile, Bolivia and Ecuador.

This study observed, over the past ten years, the failure of segmented policies having an exclusively social orientation, and the need to build on an integrated vision of economic and social policies.

Among the measures adopted during the 1980s, she mentioned the structural adjustment policy, the immediate objective of which was to stabilize the Latin American policies in the short term. This policy put into place a series of mechanisms, such as anti-inflationary budgetary reform, a price policy, a narrowing of the role of the State, private investments, deregulation of the labour market, a removal of ceilings and a decompartmentalization of the financial sectors and a search for a renewal of growth.

Through this policy, nearly all the countries have been able to choke off inflation and achieve a certain stability, although in other sectors, there has not been such clear success. Indeed, greater inequality has resulted, not only within a given country, but also between the countries of

the region. Despite economic growth, an increase is observed in certain countries in the rate of unemployment and of poverty and, especially, growing insecurity on the individual level.

During recent years, a set of policies have been implemented adopted in order to mitigate the negative aspects of structural adjustments through "social adjustment funds", the basic concept of which is a decentralized process fostering the participation of different social groups in the implementation of social policy. Alongside these funds, a reform of the social security systems and measures aiming to achieve greater flexibility in the labour market have been introduced, in most countries of the region, with results that warrant a closer examination.

It is interesting to note that all the studies tend to demonstrate that the active participation of citizens' organizations in the development of these social programs translates into greater productivity; hence the importance of what are commonly referred to as NGOs. Madam Rivera emphasized the need to eliminate the mistrust between the State and non-governmental organizations, to establish a new relationship between them, and to create a regulatory framework to allow for the legal existence of these NGOs.

Another apparent problem is that of the twinning of processes of participation and decentralization. Indeed, participation should not be envisaged only in connection with the implementation of centrally developed policies. It is essential that participation and decentralization go hand in hand. But to achieve these objectives, it is necessary to show creativity and to promote a propitious climate for experimentation, particularly through fostering investment in the social capital.

Within this process of decentralization, new functions of the State must be envisaged, and there must be a redefinition of the relations between the State and civil society. By favouring a devolution of power toward civil

society, it is possible to deepen the process of democratization in the region. Madam Rivera underlined that one must not fear a strong and vigorous society, whose relations with the State include mechanisms of control working in both directions: a monitoring of civil society by the State, and conversely, a monitoring of the State by civil society. Only a relationship of this kind can make it possible to face the challenges, and for this purpose, it is indispensable to integrate economic policy and social policy. Education may be used as a fulcrum for change in order to achieve an integration of these policies.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

During the discussion that arose following the presentations by the speakers, many participants pointed out the vital role of parliamentarians in everything related to health-care issues. In order to better assume this role, it is therefore desirable to have the best possible communications capacities, greater possibilities for sharing experiences, regarding failures as well as successes in the area of legislation, and to create a mechanism to disseminate information.

Also, it was mentioned that the role of the State should be reviewed, but also that non-governmental organizations should be regulated so as to avoid, among other things, a duplication of roles. One must not lose sight of the fact that the transparency of the State allows for the entrenchment of democracy.

The problem of decentralization was dealt with in the sense that on the one hand, it seems urgent and necessary to decentralize social spending, whereas on the other hand, it is observed that decentralization sometimes leads to problems of iniquity which necessitate corrective mechanisms.

Concerns were raised about the question of globalization. Economic integration could generate new problems, such

as increased migration of the populations in the regions toward the cities, and deficiencies in the area of housing, education and health care. This consideration leads to a gaining of awareness about the importance of a close link not only between social security and health, but also between health and education.

Iniquity in social security was also raised by several participants. It was suggested that States could make use of affirmative action policies in order to reestablish the balance.

It was also mentioned that the wealth of nations is a determining factor in health and that disease is often the result of poverty. To this observation is added the crucial problem of financing health-care as well as the consequences of the privatization of health care systems.

**CULTURES, LANGUAGES AND
COMMUNICATIONS**

***Between cultural uniformity and national identity:
the effects of a dynamics of integration***

***Summary of the conferences and discussions on Friday,
September 19, 1997***

Chair:

**Madam Norma Fidelia
Guevara de Ramirios**
Vice-President of the
Legislative Assembly of the
Republic of El Salvador

Vice-chair:

Madam Liza Frulla
Vice-Chairman of the
Committee on Culture of the
National Assembly of Québec

Speakers:

**Madam Nadia Brédimas-
Assimopoulos**

President of the *Conseil de la
langue française du Québec*

**Mr. Luiz Felipe Perret
Serpa**

Rector of the Federal
University of Bahia

**Mr. Luis Eduardo Soto
Cavanna**
Editorial Director, CBS
TeleNoticias

Secretary:

Madam Denise Léonard

National Assembly of Québec

Madam Nadia Brédimas-Assimopoulos is President of the Conseil de la langue française du Québec. With a university background in sociology, she was a professor at the University of Montreal during the 1970s, and now holds a position as a senior administrator there. She was a member of the executive of the Parti québécois from 1981 to 1988, and has worked within a number of organizations, including Amnesty International, the Association canadienne des sociologues et anthropologues de langue française, Radio-Québec and the Conseil supérieur de l'éducation.

In the view of Madam Brédimas-Assimopoulos, while the proposed economic integration of the States of the Americas requires the participating countries to open themselves to the world, they will have to assert their respective cultural identities all the more, in order to avoid a growing uniformity of cultural values and content brought about by the increased use of the *lingua franca* in many fields.

Cultural affirmation depends on the protection and promotion of national languages, which can be achieved through legislative intervention. For example, twenty years ago, Québec passed a law which renewed the strength and dynamism of the French language. This law, whose field of intervention remains the public sphere, made French officially predominant, while recognizing the acquired rights of the English-speaking community. Twenty years later, one may state that the principal objectives of the law have been achieved. Québec's experience may certainly enrich the discussions on what it is appropriate to do to protect the national languages in a context of the

globalization of markets.

Today, the prosperity of a State depends less on its primary resources than on the capacity of its enterprises to gather and produce information. From the technological point of view, States must therefore adopt a "dynamic approach", namely to develop effective tools of communication in their national language. This will enable the national cultures, which are at the heart of economic dynamism, to develop in spite of a homogenizing cultural context.

Since culture and the economy are closely linked, the respect of national languages, these vehicles of culture, becomes a central issue in the preparatory discussions for economic integration. It will be important for the participating countries to establish international standards in the four official languages and to make their use official within the supranational organizations which may be set up.

These considerations led Madam Brédimas-Assimopoulos to propose the holding of a pan-American meeting on the respect of languages and cultures in a broadened NAFTA.

Mr. Luiz Felipe Perret Serpa is Rector of the Federal University of Bahia (Brazil). He is a professor and researcher at various Brazilian universities. He has published writings in the fields of epistemology of science, cultural policy and Brazilian education. He was President of the Council of Education of the State of Bahia, and is now a member of the Board of Administration of the National Association of Directors of Federal Institutions of Higher Education.

Basing his remarks on the analysis of the genesis of the modern Nation-State and the role played by the New

World in this process, Mr. Perret Serpa argued that the dynamics of the markets in Latin America played a fundamental role in the economic expansion of the Nation-State and in the development of a homogeneous cultural identity that is its own.

The technological revolution has nevertheless changed this reality. Today, the world faces two phenomena of a structural market: permanent instability and deterritorialization. Permanent instability is generated by the new technologies which, by capitalizing on knowledge rather than on material goods, qualitatively modify the market dynamic by increasing the rate of the change processes. The technological revolution has also brought about a certain deterritorialization, since knowledge is not tied to the territory, in contrast to material goods.

Nowadays, the enterprises with the greatest worldwide extension use, produce and disseminate ideas. It is therefore the diversity of knowledge and of ideas that constitutes the most important type of economic capital and on which the future of the market economy depends. The idea of a separation between the economic and cultural fields must therefore be brought into question.

In conclusion, Mr. Perret Serpa stated that it is necessary to foster the diversity of ideas — and therefore of national cultures — while insisting, in a positive and effective manner, on the human value of cultures — even if mercantiled. It is in this way that we will foster the development not only of cultures, of national identities, of languages and of communication, but also of humanity.

M. Luis Eduardo Soto Cavanna is Editorial Director for CBS TeleNoticias. He completed studies in international law and political science at the Quito Catholic University. A journalist by career, he has contributed to the establishment of Hispanic television in the United States, in particular by working for the two largest American Spanish-language television networks, Univision and

Telemundo. He is one of the founders of CBS Telenoticias, the most ambitious Spanish-language telecommunications project in the world. As editor-in-chief, he has visited many Latin-American countries and has established strategic alliances with the media conglomerates of the hemisphere.

In Latin America, over 2,000 tribal dialects were encountered before the wave of colonization that imposed the Spanish and Portuguese languages. Of this number, some 800 still survive, but are on the path toward extinction. Five among these (Nahuatl, Maya, Quechua, Aymara and Guaraní) are resisting annihilation, in spite of everything.

Since language is a tool of communication, one may state that everything that is connected with language represents the raw material of culture. In this context, the quality of the language used by a media outlet becomes an eminently cultural gesture, since it has immediate repercussions on the linguistic behaviour of all the persons who enter into contact with messages transmitted through this collective means of communication.

Although it is not the primary function of the media to educate the population, they have the social responsibility to contribute to the maintenance of the quality of language within the population. By assuming this responsibility, the media contribute to the respect of a few of the most important political rights of the citizens, namely the right to investigate, to receive and disseminate information — freedom of information being the cornerstone of all freedoms.

The former colonialism of the countries of Latin America has given way to cultural colonialism through telecommunications by cable and by satellite. In order to counteract this cultural hegemony, it is important for the television networks to promote the national language. Moreover, in order for that language to survive, it must

renewed itself and develop. The means of communication must strive fervently to preserve the language. This can only contribute to the consolidation of democracy in our respective countries.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

During the discussion period, much emphasis was placed on the danger to the so-called weak cultures represented by the hegemony of English, especially in the context of an economic integration of the States of the Americas.

If we advance the postulate that language is the principle vehicle of culture and of values, we may presume that in the States where its influence is felt, the omnipresence of English contributes not only to a loss of cultural identity — an identity not yet affirmed in many cases — but also to a growing uniformity of values.

Among the means proposed by the participants to counteract the effects of the preponderance of English, the protection of national languages should be mentioned firstly. An increasing number of States are adopting legislation to officialize the primacy of their language and are setting guidelines for the use of other languages, particularly within the public domain (public services, labelling, etc.)

Moreover, the promotion of the language and culture is also equally important. The most significant actors in this field are the system of education (through the teaching of the language, of history and of literature), the media (through the creation of information channels in the national language) and the new technologies (through software, also created in the national language).

The emergence of an intercultural solidarity, referred to by one of the participants as "Small Cultures International", would no doubt enable the weaker cultures to occupy their rightful place within the future FTAA.

The participants concluded that, during the discussions preparatory to the economic integration of the Americas, it will be very important not to leave aside the issue of the respect of cultures and languages, and they recommend that a pan-American meeting on this question be held in the context of an eventual broadening of the NAFTA.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

***Economic integration:
a process leading to sustainable development?***

***Summary of the conferences and discussions on Friday,
September 19, 1997***

Chair:

Mr. Tito Nilton Mendoza
Deputy of the National
Congress of Ecuador

Vice-chair:

Mr. Jean-Guy Paré
Member of the National
Assembly of Québec

Speakers:

Mr. Ricardo Melendez-Ortiz
Executive Director of the
International Centre for Trade
and Sustainable Development

Mr. David Runnalls
Senior Fellow and Program
Director of the International
Institute for Sustainable
Development (IISD)

Mr. Victor Lichtinger
Executive Director of the
NAFTA Commission for
Environmental Cooperation
(CEC)

Secretary:

Madam Suzanne Roy
Secrétariat au développement
des régions

Mr. Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz is Executive Director of the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, located in Geneva. A graduate of Harvard University, in administration and management, he was Director General of the "Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano" 1994 to 1996 after having held several positions, from 1992 to 1994, within the Colombian mission to the United Nations in Geneva. He has served as a consultant with several international environmental organizations and for the governments of Panama, Ecuador and Bolivia. He has given conferences and is the author of many publications on subjects that include sustainable development, international development and Latin America.

The logic of the economic integration of Latin America with the United States is based on the recent proliferation of trade agreements at the hemispheric level. Mr. Melendez-Ortiz pointed out that these agreements have seemed to favour certain sub-regions. In this regard, he recalled that integration is a mechanism that should reach beyond the commercial aspects to the achievement of broader economic development.

He then underlined the fact that the international trade and environmental systems may sometimes appear very different, or even incompatible. As in the case of trade, the international environmental system fits within a series of agreements concluded at high-level summits. With respect to sustainable development, the three main summits have been the United Nations Conference on the Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972, the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and the Summit Conference on Sustainable Development in the Americas, held in Santa

Cruz, Bolivia, in December 1996. He emphasized, however, that there is an increasing tendency to take into consideration the aspects of sustainable development in economic integration processes.

According to Mr. Melendez-Ortiz, the countries of the Americas face four options with respect to the definition of the link between the economic integration process and sustainable development. 1) To let the trade system develop independently and without taking into consideration the environmental system; 2) To include a principle of environmental cooperation in the economic integration agreement, thereby generating two commitments: full compliance with the internal environmental legislation in each of these countries and the establishment of discussion forums on environmental cooperation; 3) To adopt an agreement such as the NAFTA side agreement on environmental cooperation, which makes it possible to establish a link between trade development and the respect of environmental objectives. 4) To fully integrate the concept of sustainable development in the objectives of trade integration.

According to Mr. Melendez-Ortiz, the fourth option is the most interesting from the viewpoint of a hemispheric trade agreement. Indeed, this would make it possible to avoid the development of conflicts that might affect the economic and political stability of the region, since from their inception, the trade agreements would be compatible with the environmental agreements, and vice-versa. Taking into account the environmental dimension in the trade agreements would thus make it possible to reduce the potential for conflicts.

Mr. Melendez-Ortiz concluded by asking the following question: is the creation of a free-trade area and of economic integration an end in itself, or is it an instrument by which to achieve higher standards of living?

Mr. David Runnalls is Senior Fellow and Program

Director of the International Institute for Sustainable Development in Winnipeg. He acts as a senior advisor to the Centre for Research on International Development (CRID) and to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). He has acted as a consultant for organizations such as the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). A member of several Boards of Administration of organizations active in the field of sustainable development, he is also a member of the working group on trade and the environment of the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and a regular columnist for the weekly "Earth Times".

To begin with, Mr. Runnalls alluded to the complexity of the relationships between international trade and sustainable development. He underlined the fact that the heightened competition resulting from economic opening may favour sustainable development; he cited as an example the increasing importance of the "ecotechnologies" in trade fluxes.

He recalled the divergence in viewpoints between economists and environmentalists regarding the impact of the liberalization of trade on the environment. By certain economists, this impact is perceived as beneficial, since it leads to the cleaning up of production technologies. By certain environmentalists, the impact is seen as negative since it tends to result in a downward levelling of the enforcement of environmental standards in order to attract investors, and furthermore causes a shrinking of the funding and support available to environmental protection organizations.

Mr. Runnalls then recalled that the environment and the global economy are inextricably linked and that treating them otherwise could lead toward failure. He also illustrated this relationship by mentioning the examples of

the collapse of the cod fishing industry in the Atlantic region, the salmon fishery, forestry overexploitation and the consequences of climate change. The fact of not taking into account the relationship between the environment and trade would not necessarily be manifested by an economic slowdown, but on the other hand, could cause a deterioration in the quality of life.

Finally, Mr. Runnalls voiced six proposals for parliamentarians, which could apply at the global, regional and national levels. These served to recall the importance of: realizing that the liberalization of markets is not an end in itself; being well informed of the calendar of events that effect the environment on the global level; continuing the process of putting into application effective and coherent policies between the countries of the hemisphere; strengthening multilateral environmental organizations; signing the already existing environmental agreements; and applying the ISO 14000 and ISO 5000 environmental standards.

In conclusion, Mr. Runnalls stated that economic integration and trade liberalization can favour sustainable development, but only if they are based on policies designed to ensure both commercial and environmental success. He raised the example of the Netherlands, where there exists a system of voluntary participation and cooperation through which government and industries can collaborate in developing and enforcing environmental standards.

Mr. Victor Lichtinger is Executive Director of the NAFTA Commission for Environmental Cooperation. A native of Mexico, he completed his university studies there and afterward completed a Master's in economics at Stanford University. After having worked within the private sector, as Director of a consulting firm specializing in environmental matters, he took on important duties within the public sector, including those of Coordinator General of Mexican delegations to international organizations,

including the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro.

Mr. Lichtinger cited the North American experience of the relationship between trade and the environment, which he proposed not as a model, but rather as a source of reflection for the Southern Hemisphere. Thus, the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), which was created in parallel with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), constitutes the sole example of an agreement dealing strictly with the environmental field which, since its origin, has been linked with a trade agreement. Another exceptional point regarding this Commission is that it binds two developed countries in the North and one developing country in the South.

He mentioned the four fundamental principles of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation, which could serve, moreover, within a perspective of economic integration of the entire hemisphere: the recognition of the sovereignty of each of the signatory countries of the NAFTA in establishing environmental standards, with no signatory having the possibility of imposing environmental standards on the others; the commitment, by the signatory countries, to comply with their environmental laws as well as with those of the other signatory countries of the NAFTA; the commitment to promote democratic participation in decision-making on the environment; and finally, the maintaining of high environmental standards.

The implementation of these four principles gives rise to the emergence of a "fifth" principle, namely cooperation between States through dialogue, debate and understanding of the shared environmental problems. In short, this cooperation makes it possible to prevent problems and to solve them jointly. The results obtained in the area of information, public participation, awareness-building and education are remarkable.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Certain contradictions which prevail between the protection of the environment and economic growth were raised. There was also a discussion of the polluting technologies used by developing countries, which were transmitted to them by the developed countries. The prohibitive costs of less- polluting products and the absence of financial assistance through which to accelerate the respect of environmental standards were mentioned as obstacles to the achievement of sustainable development.

Furthermore, the citizens must benefit more from a process of education in the environmental field in order to increase their awareness of environmental issues and to have a better knowledge of the issues in this field.

In this regard, two proposals from the Worldwide Conservation Union were set out:

- 1) the need to develop a work plan ensuring the participation of the population;
- 2) the importance of establishing strategic alliances within the Americas.

One participant mentioned that the Central American Parliament has recently prepared a document setting the essential basic conditions for the achievement of sustainable development. These refer to the respect of the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO), to the application of the exemption clause of the WTO to Central America, and to the adoption of regional action plans following the Rio de Janeiro and Santa Cruz accords.

Finally, members of a Mexican political party wished the government to publish the agreements that it has ratified in the newspapers.

DEMOCRACY

Parliamentarians, as key players of democratization in the Americas

***Summary of the conferences and discussions on
Saturday, September 20, 1997***

Chair:

**Mr. Cristóbal Fernández
Daló**

President of the Senate of the
Republic of Venezuela

Vice-chair:

Mr. André Boulerice

Member of the National
Assembly of Québec
Assistant House Leader of the
Government

Speakers:

Mr. Kély C. Bastien

President of the Chamber of
Deputies of the Republic of
Haiti

**Mr. Carlos Alberto
González Garabelli**

Chairman of the External
Relations Committee of the
Senate of the Republic of
Paraguay and Member of the
Joint Parliamentary
Committee of Mercosur

Mr. Carlos Augusto Valle

Chairman of the Peace

Committee of the Central
American Parliament

Secretary:

M. Charles Thumerelle
National Assembly of Québec

***Mr. Kély C. Bastien** is President of the Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Haiti. Elected in October 1995, he was Vice-President of the Chamber until January 14, 1997, on which date he became its President. A physician by training, he is a member of the Committee on Health and of the Committee on the Status of Women. He is also Vice-President of the Haitian Section of the International Assembly of French-Speaking Parliamentarians.*

On the threshold of the 21st century, the concept of democracy must not remain the only common denominator between the peoples of the Americas. President Bastien considered that broad-based measures must be undertaken in order to allow a real integration of the poorest nations into the global economic system, thereby contributing to the reinforcement of democratic spaces.

This process depends above all on the following elements: the satisfaction of fundamental needs of the peoples of the Hemisphere; the creation of productive spaces allowing all States to contribute normally to international exchanges, thereby ending the dependency of certain countries on conditional international aid; a balanced interdependence between States; the self-determination of peoples; and the reestablishment and reinforcement of political ethics.

Moreover, a true economic integration at the hemispheric level must also be based on other factors: the organization

of regional and international parliamentary associations; the setting up of forums relating to major socioeconomic projects; the arrangement of programs for the exchange of expertise between Parliaments; informing the population to whom these projects must be submitted, and whose suggestions must be listened to.

Indeed, in the view of Mr. Bastien, the democratization of the Americas by no means represents a chimera if one considers that it is up to parliamentarians to explore the pathways involved.

Mr. Carlos Alberto González Garabelli is Chairman of the External Relations and International Affairs Committee of the Senate of the Republic of Paraguay. From December 1996 to June 1997, he was President of the Joint Parliamentary Committee of Mercosur. Mr. González now divides his time between the Parliament and the Judiciary Council, where he represents the Senate. He is the author of a number of books and publications on political and legal topics.

The emergence of "social constitutionalism", which results from the expansion of the "Social State", brought about an unprecedented development in the role of Parliaments in the world. In Latin America in particular, the disappearance of dictatorships in favour of democratically elected governments, taken together with the increasing importance of the global integration process, has increased the influence of parliamentary institutions. This evolution suggests to Mr. González two types of reflection.

First, the reinforcement of the credibility of parliamentarians in relation with public opinion must remain a priority objective in a context in which the media often ascribe to them an ineffectiveness in solving complex issues. It is therefore essential that Parliaments have available to them the appropriate technical and

human means, that they remain in contact with the different actors in society, and that they benefit from relevant information in order to effectively face the increasing of their responsibilities.

Secondly, Parliaments have a fundamental function relating to integration processes, since on the one hand, although it is up to the executive authorities to negotiate international agreements in the area of integration, Parliaments must ratify them. On the other hand, they have the duty to echo the concerns of the population about integration processes, to ensure that these are not carried out to the benefit of certain sectors of society, and to the detriment of vast social groups.

In conclusion, Mr. González underlined that, just as the spinoffs of integration must not be for the benefit of a limited group in society, the integration processes must duly take into account the situation of the less economically developed countries. It is only with this approach, based on international solidarity, that it will be possible to ensure, with no risk of error, that integration processes enhance the development of all peoples, without any forms of discrimination.

Mr. Carlos Augusto Valle is Chairman of the Peace Committee of the Central American Parliament, of which he has been a Member since 1995. In 1990, he was elected Member of Congress of the Republic of El Salvador, where he chaired the Committee on Municipal Affairs. Founder of the "Avanzada Nacional" Party, he has held the positions of Assistant Secretary General and Member of the National Management Committee, among others.

Despite its great diversity, the Hemisphere of the Americas has democracy as its common denominator. However, the recent establishment of democratic institutions must not overshadow the existence of a

tendency toward autarchy that still threatens this fragile balance. In this context, Mr. Valle underlined that it becomes imperative to implement and consolidate the interparliamentary mechanisms of integration, in order to strengthen the "hemispheric democracy".

Within this process, which requires major structural changes in the internal organization of States, parliamentarians have an essential role to play as legislators, coordinators and mediators. In this regard, the latter must always keep in mind that economic development must never take place to the detriment of democratic values, at the risk of leading to the under-development of human societies.

It is true that integration, which already finds its expression in regional forums, such as the Central American parliament, represents an irreversible phenomenon capable of consolidating democracy. Nevertheless, this process must be considered above all as a collaboration between States, in a spirit of mutual respect and recognition. Its viability requires going beyond economic, social and cultural rivalries, as well as the implementation of mechanisms for dispute resolution and peaceful negotiation capable of attaining a complete pacification of the Hemisphere on the threshold of the third millennium. In this respect, the signature of the agreements on October 29, 1996, in Guatemala, which made it possible to bring to an end 36 years of fratricidal war, is a concrete example of openness toward a real and coherent integration at the hemispheric level.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

In the course of the debate that followed the presentations, the question of inequalities between rich and poor countries stood out in importance. In particular, the point was raised that democracy represents only a means of arriving at a viable integration, but that it does not suffice to feed the most underprivileged. Only an integration

based on the principle of solidarity of the economically strong peoples toward the weaker ones can achieve this. Indeed, as in the case of democracy, free trade remains a fragile process which demands particular attention. From this viewpoint, a fair treatment clause in an integration agreement could make it possible to improve the living conditions of the economically weakest populations and to reinforce hemispheric democracy.

Moreover, other participants pointed out that it is essential to take into account the different civil organizations within any integration process, by creating institutionalized spaces to this effect. The elected Parliaments should undertake to maintain consultative relations with such organizations (for example, associations of small traders, associations of small and medium businesses, cities, etc.), which represent a wide spectrum of interests on a societal level, and which would also have an opportunity to get across their different viewpoints on important issues such as environmental protection, literacy, etc.

Taking into account these various elements, it would be possible to give democracy a more elaborate social content and to confer upon it greater credibility, going beyond just the guarantee of public freedoms.

Moreover, although it is true that the Constitutions now prohibit the phenomenon of lifetime presidencies in most States of the Americas, other participants emphasized their concern about the immovability of the persons in charge of leading the political parties. It was therefore requested that greater vigilance be shown in the future regarding this phenomenon, which most often leads to a personality cult that is damaging to democracy.

During the question period, the problem was raised of the threat represented by the military power for certain young democracies in Latin America. In order to face this danger, countries such as Paraguay have adopted concrete measures that now enable the civil authorities to exercise permanent control over the army, particularly through the adoption of a law providing that members of the military

will no longer be allowed to affiliate themselves with a political party.

It was also stated that the international parliamentary organizations should be vigilant and prompt to react, each time that they observe a violation of Human Rights at the hemispheric level, in order for the integration process to be properly carried through. In this respect, communication between Parliaments has been judged essential in order to allow a quick reaction to any danger of this type.

Nevertheless, certain listeners also raised the great difficulty of applying the principle of an external armed intervention, for the purpose of reestablishing order and democracy, whereas the sovereignty of States is exercised everywhere. It was pointed out that the use of armed force remains unacceptable, apart from certain particular situations, and when it is applied in accordance with a resolution of the United Nations Security Council. Generally, external intervention was most often presented as a last recourse, and not as a panacea. For this reason, it was suggested that to the extent possible, the peaceful democratization of States be promoted, based on the reinforcement of the rule of law and of institutions.

In this respect, economic integration was evaluated as a process of the future, able to facilitate the deployment of mechanisms aiming to prevent any violation of these basic principles within member States.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Upholding human rights: from intentions to actions

***Summary of the conferences and discussions on
Saturday, September 20, 1997***

Chair:

Mr. Charles A. Rodríguez
Speaker of the Senate of
Puerto Rico

Vice-chair:

Mr. Raymond Brouillet
Vice-President of the National
Assembly of Québec

Speakers:

Mr. Hélio Bicudo
Member of the Chamber of
Deputies of the Federative
Republic of Brazil

**Madam Balbina Herrera
Arauz**
Member of the Legislative
Assembly of the Republic of
Panama

**Mr. Ricardo Hormazábal
Sánchez**
Senator of the Republic of
Chile

Secretary:

Mr. Michel Bonsaint

Mr. Hélio Bicudo is a Member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Federative Republic of Brazil. He holds a degree in law from the University of São Paulo. During his career as an attorney, he has instigated many commissions of inquiry relating to Human Rights. He represented Brazil at the second United Nations Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993. Reelected in 1994, he became Vice-President of the Committee on Human Rights of the Chamber of Deputies, and then its Chairman during 1996. Since 1995, Mr. Bicudo has been President of the Independent National Court Against Child Labour and a founding member of the Commission for Justice and Peace of the State of São Paulo.

The history of humanity has shown us that the constitutional entrenchment of Human Rights is not sufficient to guarantee their respect. The defence of Human Rights and the rights of peoples must be conducted on the basis of a worldwide awareness-building. Their respect cannot be fully assured by States, which in handling accusations of Human Rights violations, find themselves in the position of being both the judge and one of the parties. Seen in this light, the sovereignty of States in the area of Human Rights can no longer be invoked.

We have been witnessing an ongoing internationalization of Human Rights; this has been the case since the adoption of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* by the United Nations, in 1948. We must now reflect on the scope of international law in this area. In addition to the need to ensure the physical protection of citizens on an international scale, it is necessary to create international mechanisms to foster the promotion and protection of their rights. Among these, we must provide for the possibility for citizens to bring their own cases before international judiciary organizations. The decisions that would be made

there should however be binding, and not limited to mere expostulations of principles.

Finally, globalization must not be perceived only in economic terms. It is a question of recognizing the interdependence of all rights. The United Nations World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993, clearly underlined the right to development; the protection of this right, especially in developing countries, is the foundation of democratic rights. It is in a context favourable to the respect of Human Rights that any steps toward economic integration must be taken.

Mr. Bicudo therefore proposed that the parliamentarians recognize that the right to development is a universal right, that all citizens are entitled to security, and finally that the creation and more widespread formation of parliamentary committees on Human Rights are fundamental actions for the maintaining of justice.

Madam Balbina Herrera Arauz has been a Member of the Legislative Assembly of the Republic of Panama since 1989. From 1994 to 1995, was President of the Legislative Assembly of Panama and in 1994, was Vice-President of the Latin-American Parliament. She studied at the Master's level at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Panama. Madam Herrera Arauz was named one of the 100 most remarkable women in the world in 1995, at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China.

From the viewpoint of the promotion and protection of Human Rights, economic openness is an opportunity to instigate a new dynamic that would recognize the existence of a link between economic integration and the respect of Human Rights. Over and above matters of principle, economic agreements must be accompanied by effective mechanisms in order to ensure, in practice, that a

new process relating to the respect of Human Rights, based on more just social development, is indeed initiated.

Madam Herrera Arrauz considered that parliamentarians must take the necessary initiatives so that the respect of Human Rights is driven by a policy of dialogue and discussion between the different groups in society, while taking into account the cases specific to certain countries and certain social sectors. The legislative power, by virtue of its democratic nature, should intervene with the other powers so as to ensure the respect of Human Rights in the current context of economic transformations. Poverty — and as a result, food and education — is the main problem on which parliamentarians in Latin America must concentrate, since the persistence of these problems threatens to undermine fundamental rights. In a context of globalization, mechanisms of cooperation and reciprocity should also be provided, bearing the stamp of solidarity between developed and developing countries.

Most particularly, parliamentarians must also take into account the situation of women in a context of economic integration. In this regard, it would be important for parliamentarians to take immediate measures, such as: to put forward innovative ideas through legislation; to devote greater resources to the sectors where the participation of women is important; to enhance increased participation of civil society in the design of development plans; and to include a section dealing with the status of women, in an upcoming Parliamentary Conference of the Americas.

Mr. Ricardo Hormazábal Sánchez is a Senator of the Republic of Chile. He studied at the Faculty of Law of the University of Chile. In 1973, he was elected Deputy for the first district of Santiago and later participated in the organization of the first demonstrations against the military government of General Pinochet. In 1987, he finished second behind Patricio Aylwin for the position of President of the Christian Democratic Party with 40% of the votes. Until 1989, he was President of the

Confederation of Banking Unions of Chile, the second largest union organization in the country.

Human Rights arise out of the very nature of individuals; they are based on natural rights. This is why, rather than to dwell on the relevance of these rights, it is better to emphasize their recognition and respect.

According to Mr. Hormazábal, Latin America is going through a period of moral reconstruction, and the mandate given to democracy still continues to be tinged by the transition from authoritarian regimes toward democracy. In this regard, parliamentarians must use all means of action made available to them in order to create a culture of respect of Human Rights and individual freedoms, to play a more active role in the debates and in the ratification of agreements and treaties dealing, among other things, with the rights of workers and the protection of the environment, and enhance their participation in the national and international debates.

Parliamentarians must make those who violate Human Rights politically accountable and at the same time promote the legal standards that favour the respect of these rights. The actions of parliamentarians must not be limited to simply analysing the economic impacts of a globalization of markets devoid of morals. Indeed, social relations must not be driven by economic activity alone. They must instead be subordinated to transcendent principles. Democracy, which remains the best system through which to guarantee the respect of Human Rights, becomes a reality only when it succeeds in keeping separate, although interdependent, the political, economic and moral powers. The links between politics and trade must be broken so as to make way for institutions in which the strength of power and the strength of reason and justice will be reconciled.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

The ratification of the conventions and treaties relating to Human Rights must be encouraged. What specific roles can parliamentarians play in order to ensure that the necessary measures are taken in the area of socioeconomic and cultural rights? Some parliamentarians considered the instigation of a parliamentary committee on Human Rights in all Parliaments of the Americas.

One delegate pointed out that in order for treaties to be effective, it is essential for States to recognize the international courts as the holders of the necessary jurisdiction to judge the rights of their citizens. In his view, Parliaments must also to recognize this jurisdiction — and by the same token, indicated that the governments of the United States and Canada have shown reluctance in this regard.

Another participant pointed out that the dignity of the human being must be guaranteed. This must be reflected at all levels of the administration of justice, namely in police behaviour, in the conduct of trials and in conditions of detention. In certain Latin American countries, the good administration of justice is closely linked with the elimination of drug trafficking, economic development and the building of wealth.

The State must never use violence in the area of the administration of justice. Any sentence aiming to suppress a criminal offense must be determined by an independent tribunal, in accordance with the rule of law. In addition, any person facing accusations must be brought to trial as expeditiously as possible. In certain countries in Latin America, the time spent in prison awaiting trial is sometimes longer than the sentence applying to the offence.

It was also pointed out that the development and respect of Human Rights necessarily depend on popular education. In this regard, parliamentarians have the responsibility to foster better access to education for all of their citizens.

Some participants considered that the political authorities must not submit themselves to the diktat of economic power with regard to the respect of Human Rights. It is important to break the links between the political and economic powers, so that the needs and rights of the population — not those of the economic elite — are at the centre of the governmental concerns.

During the debates, it was also pointed out that the parliamentarians must still concern themselves with promoting the freedom of movement of citizens, the improvement of the status of women — particularly access to education and family violence —, as well as with the conditions of detention of accused persons and with the right to decent and salubrious housing.

FREE TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT

A parliamentarian's challenge: accommodating workers' rights and employers' interests

***Summary of the conferences and discussions on
Saturday, September 20, 1997***

Chair:

Mr. Luis Molinari Romero

President of the Chamber of
Senators of Córdoba
Vice-Governor of Córdoba

Vice-chair:

Madam Diane Barbeau

Member of the National
Assembly of Québec
Assistant Whip of the
Government

Speakers:

**Madam Céline Hervieux-
Payette**

Senator of Canada

Mr. Jorge Roig

Member of the Chamber of
Deputies of the Republic of
Venezuela

Secretary:

Mr. Christian A. Comeau

National Assembly of Québec

Madam Céline Hervieux-Payette is a Senator of Canada. In 1979, she was elected to the House of Commons. She has subsequently held the positions of Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General of Canada, Minister of State for Fitness and Amateur Sport and Minister of State for Youth. In 1995, she was appointed to the Senate by Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, where she currently sits as a member of the Committee on Banking, Trade and Commerce. In 1997, she became Associate Governor of the University of Montréal.

Madam Hervieux-Payette recalled that as early as 1948, at the time of the first GATT agreements, Canada was showing itself to be favourable toward the liberalization of trade. More recently, in 1994, in Miami, it undertook to respect the objectives of the Summit of the Americas. She saw several economic advantages for the community in free trade, particularly in the area of job creation. It is estimated that each additional billion dollars in exports represents about 15,000 jobs in Canada. This is what motivates the country to liberalize its trade with Latin America and the Caribbean.

Free trade also involves some less positive aspects, particularly with regard to its impacts on the quality and quantity of jobs. From the gains made in certain sectors of economic activity, one must deduct the losses of jobs that occur in other sectors. Also, the victims are most often workers with few qualifications, for whom it is difficult to find a new job in another sector of activity. Thus, Madam Hervieux-Payette believes that parliamentarians must especially take interest in the labour- force adjustment measures in the declining economic sectors in order to enable the workers to increase their opportunities for finding a new job. By accelerating the adaptation of workers, their chances of finding employment quickly can be greatly increased, thereby reducing the social costs of unemployment. She also alluded to the adjustment measures, both active and passive, that many countries have already implemented.

Elected officials may, in her opinion, contribute substantially to the harmonious instigation of free- trade policies. Through their functions, they can act directly on labour-force adjustment policies, by bringing in changes and by ensuring that the programs enjoy sufficient funding, by ensuring that these resources are distributed optimally, by seeking to consolidate partnerships and by recommending paths of action that will be better able to fulfill the adjustment needs of workers.

Mr. Jorge Roig is a Member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Venezuela. He was coordinator of the parliamentary wing of "La Causa Radical" in the Finance Committee and President of the Committee on Culture of the Chamber of Deputies. He is currently responsible for the parliamentary section of "La Causa Radical". A former Secretary of the Venezuelan Confederation of Industry, he is founder and director of the Venezuelan Association of Executives.

Mr. Roig emphasized the importance that the theme of free trade and employment will take on in the coming years and recalled that the target date of 2005 constituted the deadline for the process of integration in the Americas. In his view, the different agreements in effect, in the North as well as in the South, have not yet produced the expected results. Overall, the volume of exports has increased, but at the same time there has been a reorientation of export markets. The members of Mercosur, for example, have registered an increase in intra-regional exports, but have seen a decrease in their exports toward the Asian markets. Although it is difficult for the moment to measure accurately the real impacts of free trade, he believes that the agreements have been a success on the economic level.

In contrast, the reverse is true of the social dimension of free trade. The promises regarding the increasing wealth of

workers and better living conditions are far from having become a reality. Mr. Roig believes that the increase in economic exchanges has occurred to the detriment of social integration and that this is the major challenge that awaits us. Social integration consists in the capacity of States to conclude other types of agreements and to arrange it so that economic integration is compatible with the social policies existing within the different countries.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

The speakers as well as the participants acknowledged the inevitable nature of hemispheric economic integration. While some expressed reservations or concerns about this process, no one expressed a systematic rejection. In actual fact, the Americas have already been in a process of economic integration for several years; one need only think of the NAFTA, the Canada-Chile Agreement, Mercosur, CARICOM, the Andean Group and the Group of Three.

Free Trade in the Americas raises as many hopes as concerns. One of the first expected outcomes of free trade is a general improvement in efficiency on an economic level. The liberalization of trade enables producing countries to realize gains in efficiency by specializing in the production of goods that can be manufactured at a relatively low cost and by importing those that are relatively expensive for them to produce, thereby creating jobs in the economically weaker countries. In economic terms, the free-trade agreements have already produced positive results for the participating States.

According to one speaker, this specialization must also allow economies of scale for manufacturers. The gains in productivity and the reduction of production costs have an impact on real income, which stimulates investment and job creation. The evaluation of the net effects on the employment rate cannot be measured with precision, but the Canadian experience in the framework of the NAFTA

demonstrates that while free trade brings about increases in jobs in certain sectors, it also causes job reductions in other sectors.

On the other hand, economic integration, profitable as it may be, must not lead to social disintegration, particularly where employment is concerned. For South America, the positive effects — other than commercial — of the free-trade agreements are still being awaited. With regard to the quality of justice, public administration and property rights, a slight overall improvement is noted, whereas in the North, just as in the South, the gap between the rich and the poor is widening.

It was also pointed out that integration must not be accomplished to the benefit of a minority and to the detriment of an increasing number of people who are left out. In the United States, the richest country in the Hemisphere, if not on the planet, the acceleration of economic activity in recent years has generated many jobs, and yet real wages are lower than those that were paid ten years ago.

Canada is registering a similar phenomenon. Exports toward the United States have increased by 37% while 800,000 jobs have been lost. Over the past ten years, qualified Canadian workers aged 18 to 45 are also reported to have lost 15% of their purchasing power. Hence, globalization appears to be causing a transfer of investments toward the countries where wages are lowest.

Nevertheless, it was pointed out that the cost of labour is not the only factor determining the location for the installation of an enterprise. Some participants considered that the Mexican electronics sector, which is in full expansion, was a good example, as this sector requires high technology, a qualified labour force and high productivity, on account of the stringent quality control measures.

Others emphasized that these data must be placed in their context and recalled that in the exporting Mexican plants,

95% of the material resources utilized are imported. Hence, despite the qualifications of the labour force and Mexican productivity, the cost of labour would indeed appear to be the determining factor.

What measures can be envisaged to enhance the respect of workers' rights and the protection of the environment? In addition to the international quality standards, which give value-added to products, could we not add to this a social value-added? Can we hope to include a Social Charter in an eventual common market of the Americas? It came out in the debate that the adoption of a Charter of Social Rights of the Americas would be more difficult to achieve than in Europe. The European partners have the advantage of more homogeneous levels of economic and social development. In this regard, the disparity among the partners in the Americas makes it quite difficult, at least in the short term, to define common criteria in this area.

Economic integration boosts trade, but does it have a multiplier effect? Is this increase in trade real, or is it not done to the detriment of other trade zones? For the time being, at least, sufficient data do not exist to determine who are the winners and who are the losers. Apparently, there are both inter-area transfers and a net multiplication of trade.

The assembly raised questions about the impacts of free trade on the economies of the smaller States. The latter are most often characterized by a lower level of production and a less diversified economy. They are therefore more sensitive to the effects of competition and have greater difficulty in adapting.

The first adaptation effort depends on education and job training, as a well-educated labour force can change jobs and renew itself more easily than one composed of unspecialized workers. It allows for a greater diversity in the economy by giving access to the secondary and tertiary sectors.

The smaller States often have a policy of protecting their

economies through tariff barriers. The opening up of borders and the global trade agreements tend to make this practice disappear and to penalize those who seek to maintain it. The integration of smaller States in a larger American whole could take inspiration from the European model. The members of the European Union have adopted a policy of positive assistance to facilitate the integration of certain States within the Union. Several participants spoke of the creation of a social and educational development assistance fund. This equalization fund would be a contribution from the rich countries toward their less favoured partners, who nevertheless contribute to the collective enrichment.

The States must make a choice in the orientation of their development. Do they prefer a single investment of 600 million dollars, or 600 investments of one million dollars each? Several participants instead considered that a multiplicity of sources of investment must be favoured, thereby diversifying production as well as export markets. The governments must create economic and fiscal conditions more favourable for small and medium businesses.

Will free trade be an obstacle to unionization, or will it be an instrument of its involuntary promotion? Free trade is not primarily an ally of unionization, particularly in countries where the movement is less developed. The role of unions must be different from what it has been until now. They must have better-trained advisors available to them. The future of unionization in a free-trade oriented economy perhaps lies in its sectorialization. The example was given of Québec and Alberta unions that have associated themselves with development through the creation of a risk capital fund.

Parliamentarians, both from national Parliaments and from federated States, have a major and crucial responsibility in succeeding with the inevitable integration of markets. It is their duty to be aware of the decisions, or even to anticipate them. They are the ones who vote in laws and control their enforcement. The labour laws, and the social

security and environmental protection measures must be adjusted rapidly to the reality of markets. Ironically, it was pointed out that the discussion brought out all the importance of education and job training, whereas everywhere Parliaments have reduced spending in these fields.

It would no doubt be beneficial to parliamentarians from the States participating in a free-trade agreement to equip themselves with institutions enabling them to pool their experiences.

EDUCATION AND JOB TRAINING

Education and job training as the basis of a regional and inter-American partnership

***Summary of the conferences and discussions on
September 20, 1997***

Chair:

Mr. Mark Lawrence

Speaker of the Senate of the
State of Maine

Vice-chair:

**Madam Monique Gagnon-
Tremblay**

Member of the National
Assembly of Québec

Speakers:

Mr. Daniel E. Bosley

Chairman of the Committee
on Government Regulations
House of Representatives of
Massachusetts

**Mr. Francisco Xavier
Salazar Sáenz**

Secretary of the Committee
on Education of the Senate of
Mexico

Mr. Ruben Vélez Nuñez

Secretary-General of the
Andean Parliament

Secretary:

Mr. Charles A. Bogue
National Assembly of Québec

Mr. Daniel E. Bosley is currently Chairman of the Committee on Government Regulations, House of Representatives of Massachusetts, having previously chaired the Joint Committee on Trade and Labor for three years. Since 1993, he has chaired the working group on export promotion of the Council of State Governments / Eastern Regional Conference, whose mandate is to examine means of increasing the effectiveness of the export promotion programs on the international market.

Mr. Bosley underlined the scale of the technological changes that have occurred since the 1960s. Seen from the viewpoint of the United States, the challenges to be faced arise more out of the new technologies than out of the globalization of trade: the technologies of heavy industry, which was at its pinnacle thirty years ago, have given way to the communications technologies, which are rapidly evolving, to the extent that some 43,000,000 jobs have been lost in the traditional industries since 1979.

An increasingly high standard of knowledge is sought in today's workers: 80 percent of the jobs that will be created in Massachusetts between now and the year 2000 will require post-secondary training, and yet in the United States, one person out of six does not know how to read above grade six level. Retraining programs are too reactive: it is necessary to act more quickly to prevent job losses. In addition, it has become essential to learn a second language nowadays.

Two kinds of training should be perfected: specialized professional training, aiming to satisfy the needs and criteria of a precise job in a precise industry; and general training liable to provide students with basic knowledge. In the final reckoning, the latter is the more important of

the two, since it makes students adaptable and versatile, and as a result, liable to develop and assume multidisciplinary functions in a job that will be done mainly on a teamwork basis.

In order to better provide the necessary training, a partnership between governments and businesses is essential. Professional training must become an integral part of the practices of each enterprise, and must be recognized as a commercial asset, not as a fringe benefit. But governments will always have an important role to play, particularly in the field of literacy training. In addition, in cooperation with the private sector, the public sector can enhance distance training, group together and coordinate the large number of existing occupational training programs, standardize the skills required and regulate training programs.

Mr. Francisco Xavier Salazar Sáenz is Secretary of the Committees on Education and on the Historical and Cultural Heritage of the Nation, of the Senate of Mexico. He holds a Master's degree in Administration and has completed his courses for a PhD in social sciences. He has been Chief Executive Officer of many Mexican enterprises and has taught at the Esperanza Institute, at La Salle University and at the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosí. During his years of teaching, he has worked actively within many unions, including the National Confederation of University Workers, which has a membership of 100,000 unionized workers, and of which he was Secretary General from 1985 to 1989.

Mr. Salazar Sáenz stated that the central planned economy system has shown itself not to be very effective, and that the market economy, which is increasingly subject to the neoliberal ideology, is not able to solve all problems either. Indeed, with liberalism, problems such as unemployment, marginalization, exclusion and the gap

between rich and poor have worsened.

Education cannot escape from the influence of the economy. In the context of a globalized economy, two approaches can be adopted in the area of education: training that is limited to making workers more productive, or training that allows them not only to survive, but also to live better within the community. It is the latter that must be favoured, as the harmonious development of the well- rounded human being demands the teaching of spiritual and ethical values, which there is a tendency to overlook nowadays. These values recall the ideal of a university, where the student is called on to discover truth on a relatively autonomous basis, through discussion and analysis.

Who must determine which values to teach? This is above all the responsibility of parents and of society. Firstly, a broad consensus must be established on a range of economic and educational policies that will stand up to changes of government, having been established within a long-term perspective.

What must the legislators do to promote education? Firstly, they must eliminate the obstacles to the forming of consensus — particularly over-bureaucratization, inefficiency and indifference — and encourage the citizens to participate more actively. Then, they must increase the budget devoted to education. Finally, they must situate their actions in the pursuit of a fundamental objective of education, namely the promotion and reinforcement of national identity, as each culture contributes to the global enrichment.

Mr. Ruben Vélez Nuñez holds the position of Secretary-General of the Andean Parliament, of which he has also been Vice-President. He holds a licence in political and social sciences, a PhD in jurisprudence and is a lawyer. A Professor at the University of Buenos Aires, he is specialized in the field of international organizations and

intellectual penal law. Notably, he has been a member of the National Congress of Ecuador and Vice-President of the Committee on Constitutional Reform.

Mr. Vélez Nuñez dealt with the theme of education from three angles. Firstly, while we can state that access to education has been improving over a certain period, it nevertheless remains true that the fight against illiteracy is far from having been won. The next century will be that of knowledge and the countries will perhaps no longer be divided according to their wealth, but rather according to the quality of education of their populations.

In the Andean countries, it will be necessary to create a high-quality educational project to build collective knowledge and thus a civilized community. It is indispensable to create innovative options in education, open to the marginalized sectors. Increased budgets are required for this purpose, as well as concrete solutions, such as virtual university and the itinerant school, which are apt to broaden access to education in all the regions.

Secondly, it is indispensable to create a democratic culture based on solidarity. Today, the political authorities are in a crisis in the Latin-American countries: the constant restructuring of the State, the depoliticization of civil society, the absence of clarity in the goals of governments and administrative chaos undermine the credibility of the political institutions in the eyes of the citizens, and are as many negative influences on the democratic processes.

Democratic culture is based on standards of conduct, roles and behaviours which enhance equality between all individuals, although without hindering their freedom. However, in actual fact, there does not currently exist a program of education in democracy that favours the participation of citizens in public life.

This brought Mr. Nuñez to speak, in the third place, about the training of parliamentarians themselves. The

weaknesses that we can observe in the case of parliamentarians are numerous: structural dependency, dependency on the Executive, absence of laws, absence of controls, deficiency of procedures, lack of information, lack of knowledge on subjects dealt with by parliaments, poor method of examining legislative bills and a refusal to collaborate on the part of other institutions, to name only a few. Ultimately, better training for parliamentarians must be at the centre of the educational reform, although without detracting from the reform of the political parties and electoral systems. This is why the Andean Parliament has created, notably, the Andean Centre for the Training and Development of Legislators, in order to strengthen democracy within the Andean Community through the setting up of training programs.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

It came out in the discussion that the main concern of the participants lies in the teaching of moral and human values. Given the force of the new technologies, the transmission of traditional heritage is becoming increasingly precarious. School children of course learn how to operate computers, yet they are often unaware of the moral principles of their parents. Yet Man is not a machine and it is not only in order to find a job that one obtains an education; it is also for personal enrichment. Finally, sustainable development must mean that we can conserve traditional values, while enhancing healthy economic development.

Who must define the values to be taught? Is it the role of the legislator? Of the educator? Of the citizen? In the opinion of many participants, a dialogue must be triggered that is apt to create a consensus before establishing standards. All elements of society, including parents especially, must contribute to it. In this regard, the main value to be taught could be the importance of participating in all the facets of life in society, since this value, indispensable to democratic life, is not yet fully

assimilated in several Latin American countries.

It was noted that in this area, as in many others, there exists a risk that the richest and strongest will impose their values on others, through the power of their economic and communications means. Indeed, how is one to react given the values inculcated in children by the modern technologies, which are more efficient than the transmission of cultural heritage by parents? It seems clear that it is no longer sufficient to teach traditional values at school and in the home: society as a whole must be mobilized to reach a consensus and defend the fundamental principles that it cherishes.

However, it was argued that the participation of parents is often hindered by real obstacles of an economic nature, among others. They will participate in the consultation process only if their opinions are listened to — which too often is not the case, since the political culture that prevails in the educational institutions hardly encourages participation. Moreover, even a minimal participation in activities relating to the education of their children could impose unaffordable costs on the poor, particularly for child care and transportation. A serious approach in this area should resolve these important obstacles.

The search for a fair balance between the respective roles of the State, of educators, of the private sector and of citizens was a concern for several participants. Some contended that the governments will not be able to assume all the education costs at all levels; instead they should provide the basic education, while at the higher levels, a sharing would be essential. Others maintained, on the other hand, that it is mainly up to the State to fulfill the needs of the educational systems at all levels.

Regarding the partnership between the State and the private sector which is advocated by some to face the requirements of the globalized economy, participants wondered to what point it was appropriate to subsidize for-profit enterprises that also benefit from this training. What should be the guidelines for such a partnership, for

example, with regard to the choices of teachers and of subjects to be taught? The answer could lie in a sharing of responsibilities defined in accordance with the economic sector concerned as well as with specific local needs. It was also recalled that the State could not play its proper role without true communication between parliamentarians and the education system, which is essential to enable elected officials to intervene in a well-informed manner.

However, the point was raised that the problem does not always lie in the amounts devoted to education by the State; several Latin American States devote a relatively high proportion of their resources to it. Where the problem lies is in the use of these funds: too often, excess bureaucracy, wastage, inefficiency and corruption have the effect of diverting these resources from their legitimate uses. Moreover, the preference manifested by many teachers to live in the city, and the presence of a large number of ethnic groups, in certain countries, complicates the search for solutions. In this regard, it is important to create innovative techniques, such as itinerant schools, in order to bring the teaching to the students, rather than to expect the students to travel themselves — many even go to study outside the country, at a high cost, — in order to receive an adequate education.

Finally, it is essential to establish the principle of accountability of educators, so that they are evaluated regularly and answer for their activities, especially to the parents. Educators resist the idea of establishing public and universally recognized standards, but the publication of the results of standardized national examinations — which would be quite lamentable in many cases — would be liable to mobilize public opinion.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND HEALTH POLICIES

***Economic integration and social priorities:
the role and responsibility of parliamentarians***

***Summary of the conferences and discussions on
Saturday, September 20, 1997***

Chair:

Mr. Rafael Peguero Méndez
President of the Chamber of
Deputies of the Dominican
Republic

Vice-Chair:

Mr. Robert Lesage
Member of the National
Assembly of Québec

Speakers:

**Madam Graciela Fernández-
Baca de Valdez**
Member of the Congress of
the Republic of Peru

**Mr. Carlos Antonio Guerra
Gallardo**
Principal Secretary of the
National Assembly of the
Republic of Nicaragua

Madam Monique Simard
Member of the National
Assembly of Québec

Secretary:

Madam Suzanne Langevin
National Assembly of Québec

***Madam Graciela Fernández-Baca de Valdez** is a member of the Congress of the Republic of Peru. She is a specialist in socioeconomic research. She spent 26 years as a civil servant, and held the position of President of the National Statistics System. In 1994, she was a candidate for the First Vice-Presidency of Peru alongside Javier Perez de Cuellar. She was elected to the Congress of the Republic a year later. She is currently President of the Peruvian Institute for Responsible Parents, a member of the Administrative Committee of the Congress of the Republic, a member of the Committees on the Economy and on Budgetary Review of the Republic and a research professor at the Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia, in Lima.*

According to Madam Fernández-Baca de Valdez, there is an indispensable balance to be respected between economic policy and social policy. One of the strategies to achieve this is articulated around four fundamental ideas: 1) on the political level, the establishment of a representative democracy and the rule of law; 2) on the economic level, the search for equitable growth and consolidation of the market economy; 3) on the social level, the promotion of measures for general well-being and equal opportunity, particularly between men and women; 4) on the global level, the search for peace and prosperity through the integration process.

The dream of economic integration must not cause us to forget that there exist major differences between the countries in the Americas: not only cultural and demographic differences, but also, differences between the political systems and between the levels of economic and social development. In this discourse on globalization and modernization, many countries are hindered by social

underdevelopment. The disparities between the GDPs of the different countries are striking. In 1995, the United States had a GDP of the order of \$27,000 per inhabitant, followed by Canada, with \$19,380. At the other end of the spectrum, seven countries had a GDP per inhabitant below \$1,000.

Countries such as Paraguay and Peru have seen their social spending virtually triple since the early 1990s, whereas it has decreased in Nicaragua and Honduras. For an effective social spending strategy, the following fundamental principles must be respected: a stable economic climate with sustainable growth; the implementation of a social investment program; the taking into consideration of regional particularities in the investment measures; a national effort, not only on the part of the State; and the setting of qualitative objectives to be regularly reviewed.

One cannot speak of quality of life for the inhabitants of the countries of the Americas if the social component is still unwell, if the health indicators do not improve and if the indicators of infant mortality and maternal mortality remain high, through lack of access to adequate prenatal and reproductive health services. Even though a recent report by UNICEF notes major progress in the area of health and a reduction in infant mortality, one cannot overlook the tragedy that exists in the suburbs of the major cities in Latin America: a lack of water, of electricity, of schools and of health care centres. The cost of health is high, but illness carries even higher costs, and it also constitutes a violation of human rights.

As legislators and participants in the dialogue on social development, parliamentarians have the responsibility to find solutions to these problems. They must be familiar with the demographic situation of their countries, with the population growth projections, the distribution of incomes and the distribution of specific needs. They must also exercise political control and severely sanction corruption. They still must coordinate their actions with those of the NGOs as regards the provision of services. The continuity of social programs and investments must be ensured.

Health education must also be given an ongoing role, whether in the medias or in school.

As long as the differences remain so pronounced, it is difficult to envisage a veritable economic integration both within countries and between them, in terms of quality of life and equal opportunity. Nevertheless, it is important to continue the dialogue in quest of this integration, which is indispensable if we want to create a new and more egalitarian world for all the inhabitants of the Americas.

Mr. Carlos Antonio Guerra Gallardo is Principal Secretary of the Administrative Committee of the National Assembly of Nicaragua. He founded the national leadership of the Liberal Party for National Unity, of which he is currently President. For the legislative period 1997-1998, Mr. Guerra Gallardo is chairing the Committee on Human Rights and Peace. He is also a member of the Committee on External Relations, of the Special Anti-Corruption Committee and the Special Committee on Tourism.

Often used as a reference for poverty in the Americas, Nicaragua has a young population with an average age of 16.1 years and a growth rate of 2.9% per year. With an unemployment rate of 54%, 70 % of the population lives in a situation of poverty. In the area of public health, 45% of the population has no access to water supply systems, and the situation is worst in rural areas. With regard to waste disposal, barely 446 of the 1,272 metric tonnes of daily garbage are collected, which gives an idea of the efforts that must be deployed in the area of public health. In addition to emergent diseases, certain diseases that had disappeared, such as cholera, are reappearing, while others which had come under control are regaining in vigour.

Mr. Guerra Gallardo explained the measures that have been taken in his country to face this reality, and which are

articulated around five policies. The first consists of a modernization of the health care sector through an updating of the legal framework and an ordering of the functions or roles that are incumbent upon each institution.

The second policy aims to reinforce the Department of Health, which in addition to its regulatory function, must finance the health costs of persons who are not able to pay, and must provide the entire population with the services that they require, whether financed by the State, by social security, or by the citizens themselves.

The third policy is attached to the reinforcement of hospital care. The priority that was traditionally placed on primary care led to a deterioration of the infrastructure and equipment of hospitals. This is why hospital services must be reorganized so that they will be satisfactory for the users, thanks to a more effective information system for the population and an improvement of the emergency services.

The development of new public health strategies is the subject of the fourth policy. Health care, which was of a curative nature, must offer a broader range of basic services to the population, and also must orient itself, according to the available financial resources, toward prevention and the fight against epidemics.

Finally, efforts are being made to modernize the social security system and to reinforce the health system to provide care to all beneficiaries through the purchasing of services from both private and public enterprises. In addition, the insured must be free to choose which establishment that will provide their care, whether public or private.

In closing, Mr. Guerra Gallardo alluded to the questions of social security, pointing out that the phenomenon of street children and the abandoning of senior citizens are problems that are difficult to combat. In his view, uniform legislation is needed, one of the priorities being the adoption of a Charter for Children as well as the

implementation of a Labour Code.

Madam Monique Simard is a member of the National Assembly of Québec. After having been responsible for the status of women for the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN) from 1979 to 1983, she became its Vice-President in 1983. She was a member of the Conseil du statut de la femme from 1981 to 1985. From 1983 to 1988, she was a Commissioner for the Commission des droits de la personne du Québec and a member of the Council of Governors of the Canadian Social Development Council from 1987 to 1991. From 1989 to 1993, she chaired the Fondation Sida-secours. Elected a Member of the National Assembly in 1996, she is currently a Member of the Board of Administration of the Canadian Foundation for the Americas.

The globalization of an increasingly large part of the economy leads to a headlong race to improve competitiveness. This is translated into very strong pressure on Governments to reduce their expenditures so as to make the domestic products more competitive, to increase national production and thereby to improve the standard of living of the population. The question of redistributing the fruit of economic growth is being raised with increasing insistence in view of the fact that increasing gaps are being observed between rich and poor countries, but also between the wealthier and poorer elements within a given country.

While social development is linked with economic development, the latter does not necessarily guarantee good social development. There are choices to be made, and they are not made in the same way in every country. For example, the United States ranks second in the world in terms of GDP, but tenth in terms of life expectancy. In comparison, Québec would rank ninth in terms of GDP and fourth, together with five other countries, in terms of

life expectancy.

Since the Quiet Revolution, a choice has been made in Québec to invest in the public sector, with the State assuming an extremely important role as a lever of economic development and social progress, which has made it possible to considerably increase the indicators in terms of education, health and culture. With globalization, this important place for the State in collective life is called into question, while strong pressures exist in favour of the privatization of certain services. In this context, Québec's parliamentarians have a crucial role to play, since it is necessary for them to preserve the essence of the gains made, while at the same time bringing in reforms that are needed to streamline the role of the State and reestablish the equilibrium of public finances. For example, the reform undertaken in the area of health aims to reorganize health care toward services focusing more on home care, though without affecting the essential elements of the health care system, which remain public, universal and free of charge.

Apart from the health system, the social safety net in Québec is made up of several programs, either federal or provincial (last resort assistance, employment insurance, family allowances, retirement pensions, legal aid, etc.). Since most of these programs are paid for out of public funds, the tax system is at the centre of the concerns, and the progressive structure of Québec's tax system makes it possible to narrow the gaps between incomes; for it is the concern for equity that is at the base of the social security system, while the most effective measure, under this relationship, remains a better distribution of wealth.

Madam Simard concluded by referring to two fields in which parliamentary action could prove essential in the coming years: increasing the participation of civil society and the development of a new sector of the economy, namely the social economy. The recognition of these new instruments of intervention and of development would allow a more rapid and more harmonious evolution, for the benefit of the populations.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

The participants noted that there exist important differences between Québec and the Latin American countries. One of these differences is related to the expenditures devoted to health care. They represent 10% of the GDP in Québec, but nearly all of them come within the public sector. In Latin America, the health care expenditures exceed 10% of the GDP, but only one third of these expenditures come within the public sector, while two thirds are within the private sector. According to one participant, this would then mean that two thirds of the population work for a small group. In his opinion, the tax structure of the Latin American countries is also highly regressive, as the greater part of revenues comes from consumption taxes, which means that the poor devote a larger proportion of their income to taxes.

In the opinion of several participants, a system such as the one existing in Québec would be nearly unthinkable in the Latin American countries. In Québec, for example, 30% of the budget of the State goes to health care, whereas in the developing countries, it is impossible to devote such a high percentage, since other problems such as illiteracy and housing issues must also be taken into account. For this reason, several participants consider that the governments of the Latin American countries cannot take charge of all the health care expenditures. It is therefore necessary to turn toward other forms of financing which bring into play all actors, from both the public and private sectors. In Peru, the workers have the choice between contributing to social security or subscribing to private insurance plans. Colombia has also opted for a mixed system, which provides the possibility of benefiting from private insurance or from a subsidiary insurance plan financed both by the State and by workers' contributions. The goal is to have 98% of Colombians covered by an insurance plan between now and 2002.

Moreover, even though the bill is high, the health care expenditures are often poorly distributed and not well used. Several countries have a tendency to put all the money into the curative part and not enough into prevention. According to one participant, other fundamental needs are often left aside, which have a considerable influence on the quality of life and health of the population. This is to forget that 90% of the gains in life expectancy that have been achieved in the developed world since the beginning of the century are attributable to factors other than medical ones, such as the physical and social environment, the sanitary infrastructure, roads, and general improvements in living conditions and nutrition.

Parliamentarians have a major responsibility in this regard, but they often lack information necessary to make more enlightened decisions. They have a watchdog role, but sometimes are too timid toward the executive branch when the time comes to discuss the distribution of the national budget. It is therefore essential for parliamentarians to assert their role, which is to act as negotiators capable of defending the needs of the population and to ensure that the governments follow them in the priority measures such as health and education. They must also fight corruption, which is a phenomenon that affects a number of Latin American countries.

Parliamentarians also have another responsibility, namely that of being consistent in all their overall political actions. In this sense, it is also necessary to attack at the root of the problems, particularly in fighting unemployment, which is one of the main causes of the difficult situation that we are currently facing.

Finally, parliamentarians must also feel supported in their actions, hence the need to establish structures of solidarity. Meetings such as the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas are therefore very valuable, as they reinforce parliamentarians in their conviction and in their desire to involve themselves in favour of social policies, development, human rights and health. The globalization process must therefore be based on solidary actions of the

peoples of the Americas.

CULTURES, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATIONS

***From communities to international organizations:
parliamentarians and the challenge of cultural policies***

***Summary of the conferences and discussions on
Saturday, September 20, 1997***

Chair:

Mr. Yldefonso Finol
Member of the Legislative
Assembly of Zulia

Vice-chair:

Mr. Léandre Dion
Member of the National
Assembly of Québec

Speakers:

Madam Margaret F. Delisle
Member of the National
Assembly of Québec

**Madam Laura Pavón
Jaramillo**

Secretary of the Committee
on Culture of the Senate of
Mexico

**Mr. Ramón Francisco
Giménez**

Chairman of the Committee
on Culture of the Chamber of
Deputies of the Nation of the
Republic of Argentina

Secretary:

Madam Nancy Ford
National Assembly of Québec

***Madam Margaret F. Delisle** is a Member of the National Assembly of Québec. She was a municipal councillor for the City of Sillery from 1982 to 1985, and then Mayor from 1985 to 1994. Within the Communauté urbaine de Québec, she was President of the Grand Conseil, from 1986 to 1987, and Vice-President of the Executive Committee, from 1991 to 1994. From 1992 to 1993, she was president of the Canadian Federation of Municipalities. Since November 1994, she has been the Official Opposition Critic in the areas of Municipal Affairs and matters relating to the National Capital.*

Madam Delisle dealt with cultural policies and priorities of Québec during her presentation. Firstly, she gave a general overview of the cultural policy adopted by the Government of Québec in 1992, a policy which covers all facets of culture and which was developed in a spirit of openness.

Three issues arise out of this cultural policy: a collective issue relating to the affirmation of cultural identity; a second relating to support for creativity and the arts, and finally, an issue concerning the needs of citizens in terms of access to and participation in cultural life. These are the main concerns in Québec society relating to its culture.

In implementing this cultural policy, two independent organizations took charge of supporting the arts and the cultural industries: the *Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec* and the *Société de développement des entreprises culturelles*.

The current priorities for action remain the diversification

of sources of financing and cultural democratization. Hence, over the past few years, various fiscal measures have been adopted in the form of income tax credits and exemptions. More recently, a *Fonds de la culture et des communications* has been created to support the development of new content for the information highways and multimedia. The government's efforts are also being concentrated on broadening the dissemination of the arts and of culture to all sectors of the population and within all regions of Québec.

Secondly, Madam Delisle raised the theme of including the cultural exemption in trade agreements, the objective of which is to allow the free circulation and universal broadcasting of culture, as well as to create favorable conditions for diversity and cultural pluralism.

In conclusion, Madam Delisle pointed out that pluralism in the area of culture depends on a broad and open exposure to creation in all languages and in all its forms. However, this must not prevent realism and openness to dialogue. In her view, interparliamentary cooperation in this regard constitutes an instrument that would make it possible to create new equilibria in the discussions.

Madam Laura Pavón Jaramillo is Secretary of the Committee on Culture of the Senate of Mexico. She has been a member of the Institutional Revolutionary Party since 1963 and has held positions including Secretary General of the Council for the Integration of Women. She was successively a local Deputy of the Congress of the State of Mexico, Mayor of Toluca and federal Deputy of the 53rd and 55th Legislatures. During the latter, she chaired the Administration Committee of the Chamber of Deputies. For the 56th Legislature, she is a Senator of the State of Mexico and Chairs the Commission for the Protection of Children's Rights.

Madam Pavón Jaramillo essentially dealt with the problem of the preservation of the cultural heritage of the indigenous populations of the Americas, in the context of economic globalization.

The large-scale trade negotiations and economic globalization which are marking the end of the century do not occur without generating serious conflicts and problems. The accelerated formation of economic blocks carries the threat of new types of protectionism.

There exists a tendency to resituate Man and his needs at the centre of the concept of development. In this context, the demands of peoples that have been integrated in various ways, through various mechanisms of domination in one territorial, political or cultural unit, are becoming more comprehensible. However, the economic integration process at the global level has left aside cultural demands, in some cases giving rise to movements of extreme nationalism. Given the risk inherent in the fragmentation of States, which threatens the integration project and causes perplexity on the part of the population, sovereignty, national unity and territorial integrity must be reaffirmed. However, this statement must not point to the conclusion of a monolithic idea of national culture, but rather to a conception based on the recognition of cultural plurality, the respect of individual liberties and the strengthening of political democracy, with acceptance of the fact that development is not only an economic project, but also indeed a cultural project.

Hence, the constitutional reform of 1992 recognized, in the fundamental law of the Republic of Mexico, the multi-ethnic and multicultural nature of the national identity of the Mexican people, whose origins lie precisely in the diversity of the indigenous peoples. In this way, harmony within diversity is favoured, thus reaffirming respect and tolerance without any distinction of superiority among the diverse origins of the population.

Notwithstanding the importance, in cultural terms, placed on the indigenous peoples, the latter are in fact in a

position of inequality on the economic and social levels. Society must therefore be sensitized to the poverty of the indigenous peoples. The principles that should guide us with regard to the issues relating to these peoples are the following: pluralism, integrity, participation and free choice. Particular attention should be placed on the status of women and young indigenous people, among whom marginalization and exploitation are often accentuated. Also, the agrarian demands of the indigenous peoples must be taken into account, since one of the fundamental elements of the Indian identity in the Americas is land-based.

In conclusion, the efforts of the governments in general, and in particular of the legislators, must promote the participation of groups of citizens in the design of policies and programs in the area of culture, so that these may be favorable toward the indigenous peoples.

Mr. Ramón Francisco Giménez is Chairman of the Committee on Culture of the Chamber of Deputies of the Nation of the Republic of Argentina. He is a professor of philosophy and of education sciences. Among his political experiences, he was Assistant Secretary of Education, Minister of Culture and Education, Deputy of the Nation, Provincial Deputy, Rector and Founder of the Formosa National University, and Minister of the Interior. As a Deputy, he is a member of the Committees on Education, Science and Technology, General Legislation and National Defence.

Mr. Ramón Francisco Giménez centred his presentation on the cultural experience in Argentina, and more particularly in the Province of Formosa, where many ethnic groups contribute to the cultural identity and history of this people. Argentine cultural identity is defined, expressed and reinforced by the reaffirmation of the cultural identity of each region. In order for growth to occur, it is

fundamental for the people to know about their origins and respect their cultural identities.

In the Province of Formosa, with the advent of democracy beginning in 1983, a large place was reserved for the social and cultural development of the indigenous groups which, until then, been excluded from the process of national and regional development. By granting these communities the status of persons under public law, the State enhanced their social integration and at the same time the improvement of their economic conditions, which improves their participation in national and regional development.

National identity and its recognition are essential to developing good legislation in the cultural area. Each people has its own values and customs: therein lies its identity. Legislators have the duty to formulate the standards that reflect the manifestations, spheres of interest and facets that make up the emergent and existing cultural heritage. Moreover, it is also important to define the role of the private sector in the world of culture, to open inter-American channels of exchange under the rules of free circulation of cultural goods and human resources.

It is essential to deal with the concept of the "culture of tolerance" in the building of the Americas.

Parliamentarians must legislate so as to preserve cultures, for their enrichment and their integration in the respect of diversity, so that this grouping of culture may give a distinctive character to the Americas.

Finally, Mr. Giménez mentioned that it is the duty of the peoples of the Americas to listen to the indigenous peoples, who demand the recognition of the inalienable right to ownership of their lands, upon which depend their aspirations and their identity.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

In the course of the discussion that arose following the presentations by the guest speakers, many participants expressed the need to interact culturally in order to preserve the cultural identity and underlined the role of parliamentarians in this process. The experiences cited included that of Mexico, in relation to the problem of the large number of ethnic groups speaking various languages and dialects, and the reform undertaken to make the law of the State compatible with indigenous rights.

Another theme that was often raised was that of the symbiosis in the indissoluble bonds between the land and the culture of the Indian peoples. In this context, it is essential to consider what will happen to the cultural diversity in the future, when the continent will be subject to integration and globalization on an economic level. The respect of the diversity of small communities is vital in a world in which linguistic marginalization is an aspect of economic marginalization.

One of the main difficulties in a world of homogenization is the preservation of the less-used languages. However, the efforts to preserve the national languages and cultures must be made while respecting the customs and traditions of the indigenous peoples, and the preservation of the territorial integrity of these peoples must be exercised while respecting the diversity of the small communities. Education is the channel that makes it possible to transmit these ideas and to survive. Indeed, this is the most appropriate means for encouraging the respect of multiculturalism.

In conclusion, at the suggestion of the Vice-chair of the workshop, it was recommended that the creation of a standing committee on languages, cultures and communications be placed on the agenda of an upcoming meeting.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

***Developing and enforcing regional
and international commitments toward sustainable
development:
the role of parliamentarians***

***Summary of the conferences and discussions on
Saturday, September 20, 1997***

Chair:

Mr. Montgomery Maule
Speaker of the House of
Assembly of St. Vincent and
the Grenadines

Vice-chair:

Mr. Henri-François Gauthrin
Member of the National
Assembly of Québec

Speakers:

**Mr. Emigdio Flores
Calpiñeiro**
Member of the Chamber of
Deputies of the Republic of
Bolivia
President of the Amazonian
Parliament

Mr. Bob Mills
Member of Parliament, House
of Commons, Canada

**Mr. Humberto Peláez
Gutiérrez**
Executive Secretary of the
Latin American Parliament

Secretary:

Mr. Jean-Guy Pelletier
National Assembly of Québec

Mr. Emigdio Flores Calpiñeiro is a Member of the Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Bolivia, where he was Chairman of the Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources and Chairman of the Committee on Science and Technology. After having exercised the duties of Vice-President of the Amazonian Parliament, he has assumed its Presidency up until 1998. Having graduated in sociology from the Paul Valéry University in France, Mr. Flores Calpiñeiro held the position of coordinator of the CORDEPANDO development corporation in Bolivia, from 1979 to 1980. From 1982 to 1988, he was a professor at the Federal University of Acre in Brazil as well as technical coordinator of the Agricultural Planning Commission of the State of Acre.

Mr. Emigdio Flores Calpiñeiro firstly presented the Amazonian Parliament, which brings together parliamentarians from the countries of the Amazon river basin, and whose goal is to strengthen the political and legislative ties between the eight member countries, namely Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Surinam and Venezuela. He also emphasized that this organization took many initiatives in the areas of the environment, sustainable development and biological diversity, particularly through the development of a legislative framework on biological diversity, national parks, endangered species and forestry resources. The Amazonian Parliament is also working on an Amazonian Fund project, the goal of which is to accumulate resources to finance regional projects that fit within the scope of sustainable development.

Parliamentarians have three main tasks within their national Congresses: to legislate, to monitor the measures adopted by the executive branch, and finally, to take measures on behalf of their constituents. According to Mr. Flores Calpiñero, they can contribute, through each of these tasks, to the debate and to the process of sustainable development. According to the speaker, it is possible for a policy to respect the criteria of sustainable development. To him, the creation of Departments of Sustainable Development in fact constitutes an effective means of achieving the objectives of sustainable development. However, these Departments must have the appropriate powers to take into account its political, social and economic dimensions and, in particular, to have a say with regard to public and private investments.

The integration of the measures connected with sustainable development between our respective countries is not only a need, it is a pressing necessity. In this sense, the process of integration is not a threat to sustainable development. On the contrary, constructive work must be done based on our legislative texts, in order to ensure better coordination and thus to allow our countries to integrate within larger groups. In this respect, the forming of committees to deal with integration and with major infrastructure projects, such as the construction of a gas pipeline between Bolivia and Brazil, appears as an encouraging element. The discussions that will be held will aim, in particular, to mitigate the direct and indirect effects of these projects on the protection of the environment and on the native communities.

Without a democratic system, we cannot speak of sustainable development, since political stability leads to economic stability and the latter enables us to aspire to other projects, such as sustainable development and integration on a large scale. Mr. Flores Calpiñero was glad that the environmental concern was now present everywhere, but he raised an alarm call about the arms race that is currently taking place in Latin America. In his opinion, parliamentarians have considerable means available to them to enhance the achievement of

sustainable development and may exercise pressure on the executive branch to move forward with integration and to ensure the adoption of the necessary laws.

***Mr. Bob Mills** has been a Member of the House of Commons of Canada since October 1993. He is the Official Opposition critic on international affairs, as well as a member of the House of Commons Committee on External Affairs and International Trade. Before beginning his political career, Mr. Mills obtained a B.A. in Science and a diploma in education from the University of Saskatchewan. He then completed a major in history and biology. From 1965 to 1979, he taught biology at the Lindsay Thunder Comprehensive Secondary School in Red Deer. In 1979, he founded the Mills Travel Limited travel agency, for which he received the Travel Hall of Fame Award in 1992 in Orlando in the United States.*

Sustainable development has become an all-purpose buzzword in this latter part of the century, and requires some explanation. Sustainable development is development that satisfies the needs of current generations without compromising the capacity of future generations to satisfy theirs. We must also recognize that what is meant by sustainable development will change in the course of time, as its definition is dynamic. Each generation is responsible for managing its development so as not to cause irreparable harm to the environment.

Poverty is one of the main enemies of sustainable development. Not only must the standard of living be raised, in order that all may benefit from minimum living conditions, but also investments must be made in education, health, research, roads, communications, energy, housing, supply of drinking water and waste management.

The rapidity of the changes together with technological

progress result in a situation today in which we cannot imagine what will happen in the XXI century. For example, the changes that have taken place in the field of agriculture over the past 25 years in Canada have been extraordinary: crop rotation, improvements in equipment and new techniques have all contributed to increasing productivity.

Thirty years ago, it was thought that the world's population would continue to grow unchecked; however, we are now witnessing a decrease in the rate of demographic growth. The United Nations nevertheless estimates that in the mid-XXI century, there will be ten billion inhabitants on earth. Will our ecosystem be able to provide subsistence for twice the current population? The answer is affirmative if, through the use of new technologies, we increase the productivity of land in the developing countries.

Moreover, the 28 countries represented here must also collaborate in order to ensure the management of renewable resources. The current sources of energy could run out some day, which would push up its cost. To be more fair, however, it is necessary to add that alternative solutions will become more competitive and energy conservation practices will increase. Between now and the end of the XXI century, we will have access to energy sources whose existence we do not even suspect today.

It should be kept in mind that the biosphere is a closed system. Hence, for the XXIst century, we must concentrate on the development of new recycling technologies in order to maximize the utilization of non-renewable resources. Landfill sites are an inefficient way of disposing of waste. Indeed, more materials should be recycled rather than being thrown out.

To Mr. Mills, it is essential that parliamentarians work to implement the concept of sustainable development in their respective countries by cooperating and by establishing partnerships. In addition, if we wish to ensure sustainable development within the Americas, a proactive attitude must be adopted so as to assist the States less advanced in

this area in establishing and in enforcing environmental standards. Mr. Mills expressed above all the hope that parliamentarians will succeed in giving new hope to the youth of the Americas.

Mr. Humberto Peláez Gutiérrez is Secretary General of the Latin American Parliament. He was a senator of the Republic of Colombia between 1974 and 1994, during which period he presided over the Colombian Congress and chaired the Budget Committee and the Senate External Relations Committee. He held the positions of Vice-President and President of the Andean Parliament successively between 1986 and 1989. From 1982 to 1995, he was Vice-president, President, Secretary General and Director of the permanent head office of the Latin American Parliament.

During the past half-century, we have drawn more from the earth than throughout all previous centuries, and during this same period, we have increased our capacity to destroy it. The general indifference toward these phenomena has also become generalized. Nowadays, less than a quarter of the world's population consumes three quarters of the raw materials and produces 75% of the solid waste. For this reason, according to Mr. Peláez Gutiérrez, we must recognize an absolute imperative: that of protecting the environment and ensuring a sustainable development, which is defined, according to the United Nations, as "the balanced development of our present resources without compromising the development and resources of future generations." We do not have an absolute and permanent right of ownership over the earth's ecological capital; we are only the tenants on this planet.

During the past decade, the theme of the environment has been on the agenda of nearly all the international conferences. The subjects that turn up most frequently in the different international declarations and agreements

mainly involve the protection of the atmosphere, biodiversity, the environment, forests, water, the marine habitat, as well as issues related to toxic and dangerous waste, biotechnology, aboriginal populations, science and technology, the legal and juridical framework, institutional reinforcement, financial resources, and international trade.

There exists a consensus on a certain number of fundamental principles that explain the origin of certain environmental problems, such as underdevelopment, the greenhouse effect and the sovereignty of States in the exploitation of their natural resources. The Earth Summit also placed emphasis on the fact that environmental challenges are closely connected with questions of consumption, demographic growth and increasing economic inequalities within populations.

However, despite this observation, not only has the overall situation of the planet not improved, but it has continued to deteriorate in certain areas. It must be acknowledged that there is no true political will to implement the strict measures aiming to solve the problems that have negative impacts on the environment.

Different concrete means must be identified to rectify the errors of the past. The solution is closely connected with the adoption of a new attitude regarding international cooperation, which could translate into an increase in financial resources, better access to technologies, a multiplication of commercial exchanges and the solving of the problem of the foreign debt.

One interesting suggestion lies in what could be referred to as "conscious participation", namely a social commitment and a gaining of awareness through education. Two fundamental concepts are thus associated: sustainable development and participatory democracy. For this to occur, the concerted action of all actors in society appears as an indispensable area of support to parliamentary action. Each legislative assembly has the threefold function of legislating, controlling and debating social problems, in addition to exercising a coordinating

function. This job should be accomplished both by Parliaments and by the international parliamentary organizations which constitute major forums of discussion and analysis. National parliaments must therefore ratify international conventions and see to their implementation.

The Latin American Parliament, which groups together 22 countries, is an example of a regional organization of a permanent nature. It was created with the goal of playing the role of a high-level political forum, to act as a promoter of development and integration, in a framework of absolute democracy. In addition to the activities of Parliament itself, several committees have been set up in order to establish an essential link with the various Parliaments of the member countries and with many organizations, such as the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the Latin American Interparliamentary Commission for the Environment, and in the context of interparliamentary conferences, with the European Parliament.

We must become the bearers of a message of hope based on the need to establish a world of cooperation. The implementation of Agenda 21, adopted at the Earth Summit in 1992, is not only achievable, but imperative, from both an economic and an environmental viewpoint. We must make certain that economic growth no longer leads to human destruction, and that industrial development does not cause deterioration of the environment in an irreversible way. In summary, any development strategy must place priority on the future and on sustainable development in the world.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

A Brazilian delegate mentioned that beyond the ratification of international agreements, such as Agenda 21, countries must respect their commitments, failing which these processes will serve no useful purpose. Hence, it is a problem of redistribution of wealth that we face

collectively, as there is too much wealth in the hands of too few, and too much misery in the hands of the others.

A Deputy from El Salvador regretted, for his part, that the international agreements do not always produce the results expected, since the local parliaments do not fulfill their responsibility of control and monitoring of pollution.

One participant asked whether sustainable development was being taken into account in the mining operations in Latin America. Mr. Péláez Gutiérrez pointed out that mining operations are one of the main sources of pollution, but that corrective measures were under way to regulate mining operations and to protect the environment.

Others maintain that Peru is in the process of bringing in stricter legislation in order to enable the country to develop while respecting what was agreed on in Rio in 1992. For example, a law has just been promulgated to the effect that any investment project must be accompanied by an evaluation of the environmental impacts.

According to one participant, the Latin American Parliament would need to be able to bring pressure on local parliaments to make them fulfill their responsibilities. A delegate from El Salvador pointed out that laws are being voted in to punish those who do not respect the agreements, and in his opinion, one must not be content only to apply punishment, but should also reward those who respect the agreements.

One participant pointed out that assemblies such as this make it possible to build awareness among parliamentarians on environmental issues. A delegate underlined that, in his view, women had had little presence at this assembly, and he hoped that they would play a greater role on a future occasion. All the participants agreed that it is no longer time for discussion, but rather to adopt concrete measures.

INAUGURAL SESSION

Summary of the Inaugural Session

Speakers:

**Mr. Jean-Pierre
Charbonneau**

President of the National
Assembly of Québec
President of the Parliamentary
Conference of the Americas

Mr. Gildas Molgat

Speaker of the Senate of
Canada

Mr. Jean-Paul L'Allier

Mayor of Quebec City

Mr. Cesar Gaviria

Secretary General of the
Organization of American
States

Master of Ceremonies:

Madam Michaëlle Jean

Journalist-announcer for
Radio-Canada news network

Secretary:

Mr. Gaston Bernier

National Assembly of Québec

***Mr. Jean-Pierre Charbonneau is President of the
National Assembly of Québec and President of the***

Parliamentary Conference of the Americas. He holds a B. A. in criminology from the University of Montreal. From 1968 to 1976, he was an investigative journalist for the printed and electronic press. Elected a Member of the National Assembly for the Parti Québécois in Verchères in 1976, he was reelected in 1981 and in 1985, became Parliamentary Assistant to the Prime Minister and then President of the Committee on Education and the Labour Force, and President of the Committee on Labour and the Economy. He resigned as an MNA in 1989 to work in Africa, in the area of international aid. From 1992 to 1994, he was president of Oxfam-Québec, an international aid organization. Elected MNA for Borduas in September 1994, on March 12, 1996, he became President of the National Assembly. He is also Vice-President of the International Assembly of French-speaking Parliamentarians (AIPLF), and in 1996, was President of the Eastern Regional Conference of the Council of State Governments (ERC/CSG). He has published two books, La filière canadienne (1975) and L'Option (1978 — as co-author).

To begin with, President Charbonneau underlined the historic nature of the meeting. For the first time, parliamentarians from Central America, South America, North America and the Caribbean gathered: over 400 members of parliament and senators from nearly one hundred unitary, federal and federated States accepted the invitation of the National Assembly of Québec.

The President explained that this Conference took shape with the setting in of a new political and economic dynamic in the Hemisphere. The reforms based on the opening of markets have given a second wind and a renewed vigour to the economic integration processes, serving as a springboard to gain access to international markets and thus to occupy a greater place in the global economy. At the same time, parliamentary democracy and the rule of law have also gained ground. The convergence of ideas on economic development and political

governance are creating conditions conducive to the intensification of inter-American dialogue.

The Heads of State and Government of the Americas, at the Summit in Miami in 1994, launched an ambitious inter-American project of which President Charbonneau recalled two elements: the negotiation, by the year 2005, of a free-trade area extending from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego, and the wish to see an intensification of the cooperation between the legislative bodies of the Hemisphere.

Taking due note of this plan to integrate the economies of the Hemisphere, and noting that so far, there had been no forum or assembly bringing together parliamentarians from throughout the Americas, the National Assembly of Québec has taken the initiative to bring them together to debate the issues relating to the proposed economic integration of the Americas. To President Charbonneau, in fact, the Conference must be an opportunity for parliamentarians to take up the issue, and to examine its potential consequences, so as to strategically position the role of elected officials in the integration process under way.

Parliamentarians must also agree on the steps to take in following up on this process. Mr. Charbonneau advocated that this first Conference should not remain without further action, that the dialogue between legislative bodies should be continued in a credible and effective manner, and that it be supported by and placed within a framework of solidly established structures and mechanisms.

Throughout the deliberations of this Conference, the parliamentarians will be invited to undertake a reflection and debates on issues of major importance for the future of our democracies, for employment and for our cultures, to cite only a few examples. Hence, to what degree can the strengthening of links between our countries, in the framework of the integration of the Americas, contribute to the consolidation of democracy and the reinforcement of the Rule of Law? Since an economic integration project

must favour greater prosperity for all, and a reduction in economic disparities, how can we ensure ourselves that a reduction in tariff barriers will bring about an improvement in working conditions? Considering that the cultural and linguistic plurality of our Hemisphere constitutes the richness of the cultural heritage of the Americas, how can we see that the integration process will contribute to the preservation of the cultural diversity, rather than to its uniformization?

Finally, the President announced that he was making available to all participating assemblies the Internet site of the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas. During the coming months, this would be transformed into a virtual Parliamentary Forum of the Americas, to bring the parliamentary assemblies of the Hemisphere on-line using the new information technologies. Among other things, this would provide elected officials with an effective tool of communication and information, and would become a useful, dynamic and interactive forum for dialogue.

Mr. Gildas Molgat has been Speaker of the Senate of Canada since November 1994. He studied commerce at the University of Manitoba. Elected for the first time to the Manitoba Legislature in 1953, he was reelected in 1958, 1959, 1962, 1966 and 1969. The leader of the Liberal Party of Manitoba and Leader of the Opposition from 1961 to 1968, he was appointed to the Senate by the Right Hon. P.E. Trudeau in 1970. Elected first Deputy Speaker of the Senate in 1983, he was reelected in 1988. During this period, he co-chaired, among others, the Special Joint Committee on Senate Reform (Molgat-Cosgrove Report). He is a member of several parliamentary associations.

Mr. Molgat pointed out that extraordinary progress had been made over the past ten years in the area of liberalization of trade and integration of markets in the hemisphere. Canada, for its part, took up the wager of free

trade, as reflected by the agreements with the United States, Mexico, and more recently, Chile. He also pointed out that each time the signing of a free-trade agreement has been considered, the Canadian Parliament has been the scene of vigorous and passionate debates on the anticipated consequences of these major political choices.

According to Mr. Molgat, the Government of Canada holds the conviction that the establishment of strong economic partnerships at the hemispheric level is in the interest of everyone. Moreover, there now appears to exist a broad consensus in the country regarding the economic advantages resulting from hemispheric integration. Parliamentarians, as representatives of the people, must however remain vigilant, as hemispheric free-trade will be neither an Eldorado nor the panacea for the societal problems in the Americas.

Would an economic integration that did not take into account the political, social and cultural characteristics of each of the countries concerned be viable? This is the major question which, according to Mr. Molgat, parliamentarians must try to answer in the coming days. The objective of the Conference consists in bringing parliamentarians to collaborate in spite of their differences, in order that the integration processes may produce advantageous results for all the populations.

By way of conclusion, Mr. Molgat reminded the parliamentarians that they must not forget that public policies and international agreements of any type, and particularly trade agreements, essentially aim to ensure social progress, security and improvement of the quality of life of the populations, and that they must especially benefit those who are most needy.

Mr. Jean-Paul L'Allier is beginning his third term as Mayor of Quebec City. He has a background in law and political science. He was a member of the National Assembly of Québec and held various ministerial

portfolios from 1970 to 1976. He served as Québec's Délégué général to Belgium from 1981 to 1984, and as honorary Consul of Belgium in Québec from 1985 to 1988. Among other things, his current duties include those of: President of the Communauté urbaine de Québec, Board member of the Union des municipalités du Québec, Vice-president of the international Association of Mayors and, since 1991, President of the Organization of World Heritage Cities. Mr. L'Allier was made an Officer of the Legion of Honour in May 1992 by the President of the French Republic.

Mayor L'Allier welcomed the participants to Quebec City, the oldest city north of the Rio Grande, which will be celebrating its 400th anniversary in 2008. He underlined that Québec is a city of exchanges, of meetings, of tolerance, of openness and of sharing. He recalled that it was here, during the final weeks of the Second World War, that Churchill and Roosevelt met in order to develop the after-war strategies, and also that it was in this city that the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was created some fifty years ago. Hence, Mr. L'Allier believes that the parliamentarians have gathered in a city that is welcoming to those who wish to imagine the future, to define it and to build it.

He pointed out that Quebec City is a city of convergence, a convergence that is being sought by the parliamentarians during the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas, just as they seek complementarity and solidarity. According to Mr. L'Allier, throughout the world, this convergence, this solidarity and this complementarity will always be based on a better knowledge of others and on the respect of peoples, of societies and of persons.

Mr. Cesar Gaviria is Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS). First elected to the Chamber of Representatives of the Republic of

Colombia in 1974, he became its President in 1983. Having served as Minister of Finance and then as Minister of the Interior under the administration of Virgilio Barco, he was chosen as presidential candidate by the Liberal Party and was elected President of Colombia in 1990. He played a major role in the promotion of a policy of openness toward democracy, of developing regional trade and of progressing toward economic integration. Recognized as a mediator, a fervent democrat, a partisan of regional integration and an advocate of Human Rights, he was appointed Secretary General of the OAS in 1994. Upon taking up his duties, Mr. Gaviria instigated reforms aiming to modernize the organization, thus enabling him to benefit from a new capacity of adaptation to the challenges and needs of the Hemisphere.

Mr. Gaviria underlined that as we approach the end of the millennium, the Americas have entered a new era, rich with possibilities, the most important of which is integration, but also one of challenges and of major issues, the most worrisome of which are those that threaten our democracies.

He emphasized that these two major objectives, integration and democracy, must inspire our deliberations, in a context in which marginality, poverty, drug trafficking, terrorism and insecurity constitute the main ills of our societies.

Mr. Gaviria mentioned that the reason for being and the main mission of the Organization of American States is to work toward the promotion and consolidation of the democratic institutions, underlining that the ills that affect the democracy harm both the quality of life of the citizens and economic development. He recalled that still today, many problems undermined the legitimacy and credibility of democracy, thereby decreasing its efficiency. He pointed out, on this subject, that the defence of democratic institutions requires the active participation of all governments, Parliaments and inter-American institutions, citing as an example the collaboration obtained in the

framework of the Inter-American Commission against drug abuse, the Anti-Corruption Convention, the Plan of action against terrorism, the steps aiming to eliminate land mines and the Summit of the Americas on sustainable development.

To Mr. Gaviria, to work for democracy is to work for integration, since the more participatory a democracy becomes, the more it favours an integration space. This is why the reinforcement of the legislative function and of Parliaments is crucial. In order to be able to maintain the current accelerated pace of inter-American integration, it is imperative to have Parliaments that deliberate in all nations of the Hemisphere, he stated. Thus, through their initiative in the legislative field, parliamentarians held one of the most important keys to enhance integration and to consolidate democracies.

In conclusion, Mr. Gaviria recalled that the OAS would continue to contribute to the integration process, and undertook to implement a vast program of reforms and of inter-American cooperation, underlining in this regard that the collaboration of parliamentarians and of legislative institutions was fundamental to the achievement of this objective.

OPENING CONFERENCE

"Towards the Americas of the Year 2005: Democracy, Development and Prosperity"

Summary of the Keynote Speech

Keynote Speaker:

Mr. Oscar Arias Sánchez

Nobel Peace Prize Winner
(1987)

President of the Republic of
Costa Rica (1986-1990)

***Mr. Oscar Arias Sánchez**, Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1987 and President of Costa Rica from 1986 to 1990, enjoys enormous international prestige as a spokesman of developing countries and as an advocate of human development, democracy and demilitarization. Under his presidency, Costa Rica played an active role in the quest for democracy and peace for the countries of the Central American region. In 1987, he developed a peace plan — the Arias Peace Plan — to bring to an end the regional crisis. His initiative reached its culmination with the "Procedure to Establish a Firm and Lasting Peace in Central America", signed by all Central American presidents on August 7, 1987, at Esquipulas, Guatemala. In the same year, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace. He devoted the monetary award accompanying this prize to the establishment of the Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress. For his work, Mr. Arias received many honorary doctorates and several international awards.*

Mr. Arias first congratulated the National Assembly of Québec for having taken the initiative of organizing this

meeting, open to all parliamentarians of the Hemisphere, and for having held it prior to the second Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Americas, since it is indispensable for all democratic forums of the Hemisphere to assess the efforts made toward the objectives set at the first Summit in Miami, in 1994. In his view, it would be regrettable for the leaders of the Hemisphere to content themselves with discussing technical issues, without concerning themselves about the political, social and cultural context.

Mr. Arias thus rejected the idea that economic integration automatically generates democracy, development and prosperity. Without democracy, and hence without peace or stability, development and prosperity are not lasting. For this reason, according to Mr. Arias, the proposed economic integration of the Hemisphere must draw lessons from history, particularly from the breakup of the Soviet Union and from the significant progress accomplished by the European Union. The strengthening of democracy is a *sine qua non* condition for economic integration to lead to a lasting success.

Noting that for the first time in the Americas — with the possible exception of one case — democracy is omnipresent, he questioned the viability of these democracies. In his view, globalization and economic growth will not bring solutions to the poverty that afflicts Latin America if the decision-makers do not change their political rationale. Are the existing democracies able to bring about this change? Few have succeeded in redistributing wealth to the benefit of the greater number. Globalization could have made this possible. Unfortunately, the reality of it is completely different since it has confirmed the duality of our societies, shared between a minority who gain wealth through technological developments and a resigned majority who are denied access to education. Bit by bit, the dominant discourse is leading us to accept the unacceptable: that not all individuals will benefit from the spinoffs of economic development. We must therefore seriously reevaluate our moral criteria, Mr. Arias stated.

Moreover, while the centralized economic development models have failed, capitalism has also proven so far to be a costly failure. It must now be recognized that the State and the market are complementary and not adversarial forces. Economic development must make it possible to resolve social inequalities if we do not want to face the discrediting of democracy. Indeed, the enthusiasm generated by the wave of democratization is now largely tempered by the persistence of violence and corruption in all its forms.

According to Mr. Arias, history also teaches us the importance of education in the development of peoples. As long as societies are not prepared to invest heavily in the education sector, economic underdevelopment will persist, as will authoritarianism and social disintegration. It is necessary to educate in order to consolidate democracy, to form citizens who contribute creatively to the progress of their society.

Mr. Arias also called into question the scale of military budgets in the Americas, considering that these resources could be allocated to more useful purposes, namely the reduction of social inequalities. He recalled, on this subject, the initiative that he launched aiming to establish a code of ethics in the transfer of arms, by proposing to the Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government, based in Atlanta, that it place pressure on arms-exporting countries to halt the arms buildup in the poorer countries.

He underlined that the Americas are at a turning point in their history, that peace now constitutes a viable option. An era of oppression has ended and many nations have declared that they are firmly resolved to work toward democracy and development. For Mr. Arias, the time has come to place more importance on human beings than on arms, to favour human security, meaning to protect human beings against ignorance, famine, isolation and persecution.

Addressing his words to parliamentarians, he recalled that the intellect is of no use unless it is put into the service of

ideals. He asked them to arrange it so that through the power that they hold, human security may be made a universal priority. Fate must not be left to chance; it must be subject to the making of choices. And these choices must be based on a new ethic anchored in the political, philosophical and religious principles that have come down to us through history. It is time to find a reason for being for the Americas, he concluded, since perhaps we will then succeed in making this continent what we have sought to make it for more than two centuries.

CLOSING SESSION

Summary of the Closing Session

Speakers:

Madam Violeta Barrios de Chamorro

President of the Republic of Nicaragua (April 1990 to January 1997)

Mr. Edgard Leblanc Fils

President of the Senate of the Republic of Haiti
Honorary Co-President of the Conference

Mr. George E. Pataki

Governor of the State of New York
President of the Council of State Governments

Mr. José Sarney

President of the Federative Republic of Brazil (1985-1990)
President of the Senate of the Federative Republic of Brazil (1995- 1996) Senator of the Federative Republic of Brazil
Honorary Co-President of the Conference

Mr. Jean-Pierre Charbonneau

President of the National Assembly of Québec
President of the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas

Master of Ceremonies:

Madam Michaëlle Jean

Journalist-announcer for the
Radio-Canada news network

Secretary:

Mr. Gaston Bernier

National Assembly of Québec

***Mr. Edgard Leblanc Fils** is President of the Senate of the Republic of Haiti. He pursued his university studies at the Institut Supérieur des Cadres Politiques et Administratifs in Port-au-Prince. He holds a degree in civil engineering and another in public administration. He held various positions within the Transport Division of the Department of Public Works, Transport and Communications, before being elected in 1995 as Senator of the Republic for the region of Grand'Anse. Since 1995, he has been President of the Senate and of the National Assembly of the Republic of Haiti. Since 1996, Mr. Leblanc has also been President of the Haitian section of the International Assembly of French-Speaking Parliamentarians (AIPLF).*

The President of the Haitian Senate and Honorary Co-President of the Conference referred to the changes that have occurred in the Americas over the past two decades, which place them today at a crossroads, as well as to the requirements, obstacles and conditions for the achievement of the integration of the Americas.

Among the important changes that have taken place within the Americas over the past two decades, Mr. Leblanc mentioned: Canada's joining of the Organization of American States (OAS); the broadening of the fields of

interest of this organization, which now range from the monitoring of elections to the strengthening of democratic institutions; the appearance of the concept of integrated development, more representative of the political and socioeconomic reality of the countries of the hemisphere; the decision not to grant recognition to governments arising out of a coup d'État; the inclusion of a developing country in an existing agreement between two industrialized countries; the formation of Mercosur, which breathes new energy into the regional integration process; and the emergence of groups of small countries within the Americas.

Mr. Leblanc affirmed that overall, we would have good reason to be optimistic in light of such developments. However, he recalled that we will also have to face major challenges. The Americas present considerable contrasts regarding the size of the different States, the degree of development of their economies and the working conditions that prevail. How can these economies, which present such wide disparities, be integrated into a single bloc, and how can the benefits of this integration be divided so that all may benefit from them?

The globalization of the economy gives rise to global problems for which solutions will have to be found which require a sharing of responsibilities and solidarity between advanced countries and developing countries. The Americas need a new pact that can make the international economic flows more equitable, and that can allow the control of financial speculation and democratize communications. In this regard, parliaments are called on to bring to bear the full weight of their influence and their representativity in order for such a pact to be sanctioned.

It must be ensured that all citizens can participate in the management of the *Res publica*, to ensure that they benefit from rapid and concrete results in terms of the improvement of their living conditions; we must work to transform political ethics and defend the fundamental human rights (health, education, etc.), so as to finally arrive at an open and meaningful dialogue between States,

whatever their differences and disparities, and toward a common political agenda. In short, the countries of the hemisphere should redouble their efforts to overcome all difficulties that arise on the path toward development, democratization and Human Rights.

Mr. José Sarney is a Senator of the Federative Republic of Brazil. Mr. Sarney began his political career in 1958, when he was elected to the federal Chamber of Deputies. In 1966, he became Governor of the State of Maranhão. A Senator from 1971 to 1985, he was President of the Republic until 1990. He represented Brazil at many international conventions, including the Conferences of the Interparliamentary Union in Tokyo (1973), Madrid (1974) and London (1975). In addition, he was Vice-President of the Interparliamentary Union and President of the Research Institute and Council of Congress (1971-1983). Elected to the Senate for the period 1995-1999, Mr. Sarney presided over that institution in 1995 and 1996. An attorney and a graduate of the Law Faculty of Maranhão, he is also a professor and a journalist by training. A member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters since 1981, Mr. Sarney has published works as an author and as a poet, and has also received many awards.

Mr. José Sarney, honorary Co-president of the Conference, maintained that continental integration must be seen as a means and not as an end in itself. It must be based on a more profound and important motivation than mere competitiveness between markets. The integration of the Americas must include a political, cultural, scientific and technical integration, as well as the search for a community of nations such as what seems to be taking shape in Europe. This process, which must be explained to the peoples by the Parliaments, must lead to a more just society, a society within which the gaps are reduced as much as possible, a society free of epidemics, malnutrition, poverty and misery.

Under the pressure of technological developments, the world is becoming globalized. There is a need to point out certain dangers resulting from this. For example, some industrial or commercial enterprises are much more powerful than the State, and can therefore avoid its control. There is also a trend toward the formation of cartels and toward the domination of knowledge which can lead to the emergence of new inequalities, which must be avoided. Thus, the most technologically advanced countries should avoid dominating the countries more dependent on these technologies, which are therefore more susceptible to cultural servitude.

In this context, parliamentarians and Parliaments must accompany the integration process so as to incorporate in it their vision of human problems and of the social rights that they must defend in the framework of their duties and debates. It is important that the Free Trade Area of the Americas be the instrument for the construction of the ideals of the Americas. For the rest, the speaker called for the self-monitoring of the representatives of the people and for an unparalleled moral conscience. Referring to Québec's motto, "*Je me souviens*", Mr. Sarney urged parliamentarians not to forget what constitutes the foundation of their work, namely to strive to improve the quality of life of the populations.

Finally, Senator Sarney stated that he was pleased with the success of the Conference, as the participants had concluded that there was a need to form a Follow-up Committee with a mandate to continue the dialogue and to carry through concretely with everything that was said during the meeting.

Mr. Jean-Pierre Charbonneau is President of the National Assembly of Québec and President of the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas. He holds a B. A. in criminology from the Université de Montréal. From 1968 to 1976, he was an investigative journalist for the

print and electronic media. Elected as Member of the National Assembly for the Parti Québécois in Verchères in 1976, he was reelected in 1981, and in 1985, became parliamentary assistant to the Prime Minister, and then President of the Committee on Education and the Work Force and President of the Committee on Labour and the Economy. He resigned as MNA in 1989 to work in Africa, in the field of international aid. From 1992 to 1994, he was President of Oxfam-Québec, an international cooperation organization. Elected MNA for Borduas in September 1994, on March 12 1996, he became the President of the National Assembly. He is also Vice-President of the International Assembly of French-Speaking Parliamentarians (AIPLF), and in 1996 he was President of the Eastern Regional Conference of the Council of State Governments (ERC/CSG). He has published two books, La filière canadienne (1975) and L'Option (1978 - as co-author).

The President of the National Assembly of Québec recalled the historic nature of the Conference, underlining with pride the results achieved, and particularly the text of the Closing Declaration. He recalled that it was the efforts toward rapprochement and the seriousness of the discussions that made it possible to obtain the desired results, despite the many different points of view or varying sensitivities on a certain number of issues.

It is because the parliamentarians of the National Assembly of Québec believe in the importance of dialogue that they took the initiative of organizing this Conference. Through this dialogue, what we sought was not unanimity at any cost, but rather to bring us closer together.

During this meeting, the parliamentarians succeeded in reflecting the concerns and hopes of the people whom they represent, and they also agreed on the need to continue the dialogue by creating a Conference Follow-up Committee. Furthermore, the parliamentarians will hold another meeting around 1999.

It is appropriate to recall that the holding of this Conference imposes duties upon the parliamentarians, one of the most important of which consists in informing the citizens and in having them participate in the developments under way. Also, the Members of Parliament and Senators who were present in Québec will transmit the Closing Declaration to their Heads of State and Government who, at the Summit of the Americas in 1994, had expressed the wish to see an intensification of the interparliamentary dialogue. Now that this dialogue is under way, they will have to take it into account in the framework of their future meetings and in their actions.

President Charbonneau reiterated that the National Assembly of Québec would support inter- American interparliamentary dialogue. After expressing his sincere gratitude to all the participants for the enthusiasm with which they responded to his invitation, he voiced the hope that the collective project that had just been initiated in Quebec City would be the prelude to a fruitful and lasting relationship among the parliamentarians of the Americas.

**TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR
2005:
DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND
PROSPERITY**

**Speech delivered during the Luncheon hosted by the
Prime Minister of Quebec**

**Speech by the Prime Minister of Quebec
The Honourable Lucien Bouchard**

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Mr. President,
Honorary Vice-Presidents,
Speakers of the assemblies and parliaments of the
Americas,
Representatives of international organizations,
The Secretary General of the Organization of American
States,
The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for
Latin America and the Caribbean,
Representatives of the diplomatic and consular corps,
Mr. Mayor,
Government ministers,
Distinguished guests,

On behalf of the Quebec government and the Quebec
people, I would like to welcome you to Quebec City, a
United Nations World Heritage Site that is nearly 400
years old and the capital of Quebec.

I would like to congratulate the conference's organizers, in
particular the President, Jean-Pierre Charbonneau, and the
two Vice-Presidents, Messrs Facal and Ciaccia. The
organization of such an event demands close attention to
detail, energy and perseverance. You and the members of
your team have every reason to be proud of what you have
accomplished and of the success of the event, which

reflects well on Quebec and its capital.

Parliamentarians from the Americas have not met for over a century to discuss a common challenge. Why? Because we were never before confronted with a change as important as the economic integration of the Americas.

This reason is crucial. Why, then, meet in Quebec, in the capital city of one of the smallest nations in the Americas, from the standpoint of population, that is, only 1% of the total, and the home of a people that speaks French, which is the least widely spoken language in the hemisphere?

Perhaps there are two reasons. In both the southern and northern hemispheres, we are all engaged in economic integration that is designed to enrich us. We have other resources. Each table here represents identities, traditions and cultures that reflect the remarkable cultural and social diversity of the Americas. Whether we come from Calgary or Valparaiso, New York, Caracas or Montreal, each of us proudly bears our national traits.

The challenge of broader economic integration has raised a number of fears in our respective countries. One example is the fear of losing part of the regulatory, legislative and tariff measures which, for a long time, have been regarded as a guarantee of security.

There is undoubtedly an even more basic fear of the risk of the homogenization of national cultures. I am thinking in particular of the fear of witnessing the disappearance of part of the feeling of belonging that is essential to individuals and societies.

We must avoid exaggerating these fears, but we would be mistaken to overlook them.

Quebec is keenly aware of the precious nature of our identities. Our friends south of the border are the greatest economic and cultural power the world has ever known. Our Canadian friends have the advantage of speaking the same language as the Americans do. Our Spanish-speaking

friends enjoy some degree of security because of their numbers. Our Brazilian friends are, by themselves, an economic and cultural power.

Quebec and the Quebec people are living somewhat dangerously. Quebec's economy cannot rely on the domestic market alone. We export 54% of our output. Our collective wealth depends on it. Consequently, we are the most fervent free traders in all of Canada. Quebec was the key player in Canada's participation in free trade with the United States, then under the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Quebecers' faith in free trade is contagious and is gradually winning over pragmatic, open-minded individuals. We supported the free-trade agreement signed by Canada and Chile and I have assured President Cardoso of Brazil of our support for an agreement with the Mercosur countries. Quebec is concluding agreements and engaging in trade with the New England and Great Lakes states, our main trading partners.

From an economic standpoint, Quebec is fully playing the integration card.

However, from a cultural standpoint, Quebec cannot rely on its numerical strength or the proximity of a French-speaking power. Our French-speaking Acadian neighbours to the east are thriving. However, it should be noted that Quebec is the only place in Canada where the proportion of French-speakers in the population is not declining. This has been true for the past 20 years, since we adopted the Charter that protects our language and culture.

From a social standpoint, each nation is meeting in its own fashion the challenges that are arising as the century draws to a close. There are no good or bad choices. Quebecers have made decisions that set them apart from some of their partners. As is the case elsewhere, we are eliminating our deficit, but our labour legislation, unionization rate, family policy, wage equity measures, and the partnership we have established between the government, businesses and the

unions and community organizations all reflect a people that reasons in its own way. Mention has been made of a Quebec model, although it must meet the criterion of competitiveness inherent in economic integration.

What does this mean? It means that the Quebec people, a French-speaking community of exporters who have devised a specific model, represent to some extent a test case for the integration of the Americas. We are a living laboratory of the trends that prevail in our respective countries.

Quebec lies on the border with its giant neighbour to the south and its trade with the rest of the continent is increasing rapidly. However, it is attempting to demonstrate that it is possible to preserve its cultural, social and political identity while broadening its relations with its neighbours. To act otherwise would be disturbing and would send a warning to all cultures.

What we are seeking is to prove that economic integration can be achieved, not by diluting the cultural differences that are the hallmark of the Americas, but, to the contrary, by bolstering what sets us apart and what unites us.

As you know, some people, such as myself, the members of my government and nearly half of the Quebec electorate, believe that Quebecers should go one step further in the twofold logic of integration and the bolstering of the national character by making Quebec a sovereign state, associated economically with its neighbours. Our friends in the Official Opposition do not share this opinion. We are debating the issue in one of the Americas' and the world's oldest parliaments, proud to participate in one of the most vigorous democracies in the world. Allow me to point out that 94% of voters took part in the 1995 referendum on sovereignty.

Here in Quebec, we are searching for the means to combine economic integration and the preservation of our social and cultural character. We know that you share this concern. Indeed, we share the same duty. That is why this

conference is so valuable. Through it, we must pool our experience, compare our methods and broaden our thinking.

As the century draws to a close, globalization is an inexorable force. To attempt to resist it would be to fight a rearguard battle. I prefer the vision of Bolivar who, 150 years ago, convened the first pan-American congress. However, we must ensure that various peoples do not serve globalization, but that globalization serves the peoples concerned. That is why we are here today.

We can discuss together key issues such as democracy, human rights, employment, education and training, social protection, health, sustainable development, culture, language and communications. We have gathered here to share our experience. Quite frankly, we are here to steal from each other our best ideas. Among parliamentarians, this is quite legal.

On the eve of the 21st century, we are not alone in engaging in this type of discussion. However, we do have an advantage over the Asians and Europeans who are debating these issues. We are fortunate in being able to examine these questions with parliamentarians from the United States, that is, from the country that is the hub of globalization.

I am especially pleased that numerous American parliamentarians are participating in this conference. The stakes are not the same for you, although debate about the strength of national identities in an increasingly interconnected world concerns all of us equally.

In the United States, there is widespread debate on how to strike a balance between multiculturalism and the need for a solid core of national values and a strong national character. Even the question of an official language has become an issue, not only along the border with Mexico, but in New Hampshire as well. The impact on your economy of an expanding free-trade zone figures prominently in many political campaigns.

In the United States, you seem to be asking the very questions about cultural and economic cohesiveness that the other nations of the Americas have to consider because of your considerable strength.

Regardless of where they live in the Americas, parliamentarians need to examine this process. We must ask ourselves how to better achieve integration while preserving national identities and how the priorities adopted by voters can be achieved through the integration process. We cannot be passive in this regard.

One thing is certain: there are no easy answers. This conference affords us a remarkable opportunity to start examining these issues.

While our origins are different, we live on the same continent and have a shared past. We have had to master, settle in and adapt to these new territories. We have had to establish relations with the indigenous populations. We have also had to cast off the shackles of colonialism.

However, it is our future, more than anything else, which unites us. Business dealings in the Americas are proliferating. Goods and services are crossing our borders with ever greater ease. By the year 2005, economic issues will be of paramount concern in the Americas.

The remarkable outpouring of emotion sparked by the deaths of Princess Diana and Mother Theresa vividly reveal the need of various peoples for humanity. The economy and prosperity must serve humanity, not the opposite.

Politics is the art of giving people the means to achieve their hopes, enabling them to enjoy their rights and making them aware of their responsibilities. These hopes, rights and responsibilities are in our hands.

Let us strive together to ensure that integration allows for our mutual enrichment, of course, but also that it helps to

advance civilization and humanity.

Thank you.

**TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR
2005:
DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND
PROSPERITY**

**Speech delivered during the Luncheon hosted by the
Primer of Canada**

**Speech by the Primer of Canada
The Right Honourable Jean Chrétien**

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Mr. President Charbonneau,
Mr. Prime Minister of Québec,
Mr. The Secretary General of the Organization of
American States,
Speakers of the Senate and the House of Commons,
Government ministers,
Madame Lieutenant-Governor of Québec,
Parliamentarians,
Distinguished guests,

It is a great pleasure for me -- as Prime Minister of Canada
-- to welcome you to Quebec City for the first-ever
Conference of Parliamentarians of the Americas.

This Conference marks an opportunity to extend and
improve relations among the nations of the Western
Hemisphere. And I wish to convey my appreciation to the
Quebec National Assembly for being your host.

Our common history has been one of discovery. First the
Old World discovering the New. And now -- as we each
have gained our own identity and maturity -- we are
reaching out to one another in a modern voyage of
discovery. To learn more about each other. To understand
and appreciate our differences. To celebrate our common
values.

I can think of no better setting for this gathering than

Quebec City. As you will no doubt already know, this is one of the most beautiful cities in Canada. But it is a special kind of beauty. A beauty that comes from a unique blend of the old and the new.

Quebec City was one of the earliest European settlements in our country. The pioneers who came here were inspired by their vision of a new and better life. And it was from this place -- and others like it from Baffin Island to Tierra del Fuego -- that our common adventure of hemispheric discovery first began.

I am also pleased that you can be here at this particular time in our history. It gives you -- our hemispheric neighbours -- a first-hand look at the renewed sense of national optimism that has come from our own successful battle against the deficit and the renewed growth our economy is experiencing.

Once again, Canada is a confident, outward-looking player in the community of nations and the global economy. We are seeking new relationships that build on historic ties with the Old World and our great and close friend the United States. We are exploring new links with Asia. And more and more, we are looking for new opportunities in the Americas.

Geography has made Canada a country of the Americas. History -- and especially recent history -- has seen a steadily growing sense among Canadian that our future is closely linked to that of our neighbours in the hemisphere.

We have cultural ties of long-standing. They have been stimulated by the settling in Canada of people from all over the hemisphere; as well as by educational exchanges, sports and tourism. And all Canadians are looking forward to the 1999 Pan-American Games in Winnipeg.

Our 1990 decision to join the Organization of the American States (OAS) showed our desire to be a more active player in the hemisphere. And I am, indeed, pleased that we will host the OAS General Assembly in the year 2000.

In 1994, I had the privilege of representing Canada at the Miami Summit of the Americas. The Summit saw the drawing of a historic blueprint for deeper hemispheric integration.

Your presence here takes this process one step further. It shows that the basic principles that we strongly endorsed in Miami are taking hold and flourishing.

During your work this week, you will exchange information and establish friendships. You will seek to build on what was achieved in Miami in various ways:

to preserve and strengthen democracy and respect for human rights;

to promote prosperity through economic integration and free trade;

to eradicate poverty and discrimination;

and to achieve sustainable development as the basis for social stability and economic prosperity.

For Canada, the key to fostering democratic development -- in all of its facets -- is the creation of a framework for economic prosperity. History teaches us that freedom is always in peril where there is no freedom from want. Poverty and despair are always fertile ground for the forces of reaction and despotism.

With the emergence of a truly global economy, there is now a common understanding -- in the Western Hemisphere and beyond -- that enhanced trade and investment flows are the engines of economic growth and prosperity. And Canada is living proof.

We have always been a trading nation. We developed quickly because we opened our doors to foreign technologies. By adapting these technologies to our unique environment, we achieved one of the highest standards of living in the world. With prosperity as our foundation, we acted on the common Canadian belief in the value of helping each other by building a social safety net that is

one of our proudest national achievements.

We have enjoyed the benefits that come with freer trade. That is why we have championed trade liberalization globally and in the region. I firmly believe that the free trade agreements we have already entered into with the United States, Mexico and Chile are just the beginning. We are deeply committed to following through on the Miami commitment to the establishment of a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

Canada firmly believes in a FTAA of "many amigos;" many of whom are here today. We are committed to launching formal negotiations next April at the second Summit of the Americas in Chile.

As a complement to the FTAA, we are also exploring an enhanced trade relationship with MERCOSUR. I discussed this with President Cardoso of Brazil earlier this year and I remain strongly committed to it.

This momentum must be maintained. Canada is convinced that a comprehensive, rules-based trading system -- with all our hemispheric neighbours as members -- will be a major boost for trade. We believe it will provide greater security for trade, investment and technology transfer. And, most importantly, we believe it will lead to a better life for all our peoples.

The Western Hemisphere is a region of growing economic dynamism.

And it gives me great pleasure to announce to you today that I will be leading a Team Canada Mission to the region early in the New Year.

Provincial premiers, territorial leaders and the leaders of Canadian municipalities will join me. As will an impressive group of Canadian business leaders. Together we will travel to Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and Chile from January 11-23. Our Minister for International Trade -- who is with us today -- has just returned from meetings with his counterparts from three of the four countries that Team Canada will be visiting.

The Team Canada approach has been a remarkably successful one for Canada. Three Team Canada missions I have led to Asia -- as well as another trade mission to Latin America -- have brought home more than \$20 billion in new agreements for Canadian business.

They have demonstrated to Asian government and business leaders our commitment to Asian markets. They have raised awareness of Canadian capabilities and expertise in the Asia Pacific region and around the world. They have anchored Canada in the Asia Pacific.

It is my strong belief that Team Canada will have the same positive impact on our trade relations with our hemispheric neighbours. Like your presence here at this conference, it will be one more step in the unfolding voyage of discovery that -- every day -- is bringing us closer together as friends and neighbours.

I wish each and every one of you a most enjoyable and productive stay in Quebec City.

**TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR 2005:
DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND
PROSPERITY**

**Speech delivered during the Dinner hosted by the
President of the National Assembly of Québec
President of the Parliamentary Conference of the
Americas**

**Speech by Mr. Jean-Pierre Charbonneau
President of the National Assembly of Québec
President of the Parliamentary Conference of the
Americas**

*This document is a translation. The French version is the
official text.*

Messrs. Presidents of the Conference,
Messrs. Presidents of the assemblies and Parliamentarians
of the Americas,
Mr. Vice-President of the European Parliament,
Representatives of the diplomatic and consular corps,
Ministers of the Government of Quebec,
Mr. Mayor of Quebec City,
Distinguished guests,

It is a great pleasure to welcome you this evening to the Château Frontenac. You know, it is on this promontory overlooking the Saint Lawrence River that the residence of the representative of the King of France used to stand, and later that of the representative of the British Crown in what the Europeans then called the New World. The Château Frontenac is one of the jewels of Quebec's architectural heritage. These halls in which we are gathered have witnessed events that have left their mark on the history of our community and, on certain occasions, on that of all humanity. It was here that Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, together with their military staff, met in 1943 and again in 1944. From these summit meetings

were born the elements of a strategy that was to carry the Allies to victory.

These walls were also the theatre of another historic occasion. On October 16, 1945, with the aim of eliminating famine around the world, representatives of 44 States agreed, to create the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. Two years ago, the ministers of Agriculture and Development of the FAO member States met right here to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the organization.

I also imagine that after a certain time, people will remember that the first gathering of the parliamentarians of the Americas also took place within these walls, in order to discuss a fundamental issue: the foreseeable future of the 775 million persons whom they represent.

Before going further, I would like to take the opportunity, while you are all here this evening, to acknowledge and express my gratitude to all the financial partners of the Conference for the remarkable trust that they have shown in the National Assembly of Québec through their generous support of this gathering.

To the Governments of Quebec and of Canada, to the leaders of private and public enterprises, thank you. Your invaluable and close collaboration is a significant gesture for us.

At this stage, allow me also to thank all the employees of the National Assembly who, in the course of their duties, assisted in the organization of our Conference in one capacity or another. Their professionalism and enthusiastic devotion have been remarkable and are worthy of recognition.

Finally, I would like to salute my predecessor, President Roger Bertrand, today Minister of Industry and Commerce for the Government of Quebec. He was the first to believe in the value of this project proposed by the Interparliamentary Relations Section of the National

Assembly. For my part, I have had the pleasure and the honour of orchestrating its organization.

The Parliamentary Conference of the Americas is already drawing to a close. Tomorrow, a wrap-up of the discussions will be presented to us, and together we will prepare the Closing Declaration. Although it is not yet time to assess matters, I would like to share with you a few impressions on what we have just experienced together: impressions gathered by chance as I went from place to place and during my conversations. First of all, I very soon felt that a convergence of viewpoints was taking shape and that elements of consensus were coming forward. The environment in which each of us lives is certainly unique, but it seems to me that a number of the steps that we can take for the advancement of our societies are common among us. That being the case, it becomes possible, together, to explore avenues of solution. This is what we have already undertaken to accomplish.

Upon the conclusion of these two days of deliberations, I also feel that each of us will return home richer than before, with a richness acquired in the course of our debates and during our pooling of experiences, a wealth of knowledge and new ideas — that enable us to progress as individuals; that we can draw on to better fulfill our role as elected officials and as representatives of the people, and also as servants of the State, as researchers, or as socioeconomic leaders.

Friends, it is becoming increasingly clear to me, as we approach the closing of the final curtain on the Conference, that this first gathering of the parliamentarians of the Americas is only a beginning. It also appears increasingly clear to me that it will be followed by actions, small and large, that we will take, inspired by a firm will to act. It appears increasingly clear to me, finally, that the Conference and its sequels will open the door to concrete and large-scale actions, not only with regard to the creation of a free-trade zone in the Americas and on the delicate management of the impacts of this process, but also with regard to other decisive issues for the

development of our continent and of our peoples.

Among these issues, there is a fundamental one on which we have in fact already conferred at great length: democracy — that which already exists, and that which we wish to see appear, be consolidated, and flourish throughout our different areas.

And to speak of democracy is necessarily to speak of parliamentary systems, unless we think that the organization, operation and leadership of our societies can and must be done now and in the future only by elected monarchs. For my part, I am convinced that those of us here this evening all share the profound conviction that in spite of its imperfections and its occasional setbacks, parliamentary democracy still remains the best system ever invented for governing peoples.

Does this mean that because parliamentary democracy is present today, nearly everywhere in the Americas, that our societies are well governed? — and that our fellow citizens are well satisfied?

Can we in fact say that the democratic state of health of our countries is good, or at least acceptable?

Are the best existing democratic standards to be found in our Hemisphere?

And if so, are these high standards generalized?

Have violence and intimidation disappeared everywhere and given way to tolerance and peace?

Have abuses of power and abuses of policies, of all kinds and from all directions, on the part of business people, union leaders, the media or interest groups ceased even in the wealthiest and most materially developed of our societies?

Have corruption and favouritism been eradicated from all

corners of our Hemisphere? Is our conduct as elected officials and leaders fully reflective of the ethical requirements that are inseparable from our positions and responsibilities?

Are the levels of information, of awareness building, of civic empowerment, of political commitment and of popular participation, for example in the processes of electoral choices and referendums, in keeping with the standards of the needs and requirements of healthy democracies?

In asking these embarrassing questions, like all of you in fact, I am essentially aware of the answers. I know, as do you, of the immense amount of work that remains to be done in order to make it possible for democracy, justice, prosperity and peace to flourish everywhere.

On the other hand, like yourselves, I am aware of the immense progress that we have accomplished on the path toward the democratization of our Hemisphere. In this regard, our presence for the past three days in Quebec City is both a great moment and a significant step.

History will recall, I hope, that the legitimate representatives of nearly all the populations of the Americas and its parliamentary institutions chose to be actors rather than passive spectators as concerns the building of the future.

We parliamentarians have all felt that our silence would lead to an inevitable erosion of our influence and of our legitimacy as representatives of the population; many social groups are already participating actively in talks on economic integration and on the renewal of inter-American cooperation. I sincerely believe that we should be glad of this openness, but — like yourselves no doubt — I am also convinced that parliamentarians must occupy the place that is naturally and legitimately theirs.

Thus, business people have held gatherings on the fringes of the meetings of the Ministers of External Trade of the

Americas, which have been held every year since 1995. They make known to the Ministers their viewpoints and positions regarding the discussions leading to the creation of a free trade zone extending from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego. They have formed a network, and using the new information technologies, they conduct a continuing dialogue and exchange strategic data and information. Their presence with us and the active support of a number of them for our initiative are indicative of this major commitment.

Labour organizations have also followed suit by participating in the last meeting of the Ministers of External Trade, last May in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. Non-governmental organizations devoted to environmental protection also grouped together and held meetings on the fringes of the Summit Conference on Sustainable Development in Bolivia in December 1996. They pleaded, before the governmental authorities of the Americas, for an economic integration and a liberalization of trade respectful of the biodiversity and the long-term requirements of development in the Hemisphere. Early this week, it was the turn of the Quebec representatives of popular organizations to gather, and yesterday they formally submitted their grievances to us.

Friends, these networks that are being created, these meetings that are being held, reflect a willingness not to allow the specialists and our colleagues the Ministers to decide alone, behind closed doors, on the economic, social and cultural future of the 775 million individuals whom we represent.

As elected officials, our reading of reality is not necessarily the same as that of the technocrats, however competent and indispensable they may be.

We have the possibility of ensuring an attentive vigilance. For example, we may urge the negotiators to take into consideration certain decisive issues for the future of the populations, which might otherwise have been neglected.

It is our duty to question the finer details as well as the implementation framework of an eventual free trade zone of the Americas. It is also our duty to explain to our constituents the reasons that may provide a solid basis to justify such a project, as well as the advantages likely to result from it. We have the responsibility of being part of the process, open yet vigilant, active and influential.

This first gathering, as well as what will result from it, offers us this possibility.

It also offers us an excellent opportunity to prove to our compatriots, who have become so sceptical and cynical toward the political class, that parliamentary democracy more than ever has its reason for being, and that it must be everywhere and always at the centre of the fundamental debates and choices of society.

Guests, I now invite you all to raise your glasses in a toast to fraternity between the populations of the Americas and between the parliamentarians of our Hemisphere.

Thank you and good evening.

**TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR 2005:
DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND
PROSPERITY**

**The Processes of Integration in the Americas:
Overview, Assessment and Future Prospects**

PLENARY SESSION 1

**"Hemispheric Integration, Intra-Latin
American Integration and Trade Liberalization:
How to Reconcile Their Agendas"**

**Speech by Mr. Gert Rosenthal
Executive Secretary of the
Economic Commission for Latin America and the
Caribbean (ECLAC)**

I

I would like to thank the organizers of this Parliamentary Conference of the Americas, and in particular Mr. Jean-Pierre Charbonneau, President of the National Assembly of Québec, for inviting the organization I represent to co-sponsor this important event and for asking me to address the plenary body.

While Latin American legislators have a tradition of coming together to discuss topics of mutual interest, this is the first such occasion uniting legislators from the entire hemisphere. The encounter is valuable in itself and all the more valuable because the topics we will be discussing are of special importance for the development of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and for inter-American relations.

I am also pleased that this meeting is taking place in Canada, a country that has played such a constructive role in furthering hemispheric cooperation through its strong ties both to its immediate neighbour, the United States, and to the other countries of Latin America and the

Caribbean. There is much we can learn from this great country about economic development based on rational use of natural resources and about social development in a society of great cultural diversity. Recently, Canada has become a pioneer in forging free trade agreements compatible with its commitment to openness to the rest of the world: first came its bilateral agreement with the United States, followed by the North American Free Trade Agreement with the United States and Mexico, and more recently a whole series of bilateral and multilateral agreements.

II

The subject I wish to address this morning is how three simultaneous trends observable in Latin America and the Caribbean can be harmonized: unilateral trade liberalization (i.e., opening up "to the world"); the conclusion of formal free trade agreements and strengthening of subregional integration processes already in existence (especially in the Southern Cone); and the commitment to create a free trade area encompassing the entire hemisphere.

Reconciling or harmonizing the agendas of multiple integration agreements is a conceptual and practical challenge of a high order. Indeed, there are some who would ask, not how to reconcile agendas, but whether such reconciliation is even possible.

I would like to say at the outset that in our proposal entitled "Open regionalism in Latin America and the Caribbean", my organization (the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) stresses that a policy of trade liberalization, a deepening of subregional integration processes and the establishment of a free trade area of regional or even hemispheric scope are mutually compatible. This does not mean that it will be easy to achieve so many objectives simultaneously. On the contrary, different types of practical and conceptual difficulties are inevitable, and countries surely will have opposing view-points arising, among other aspects, from

differences in size and stage of development.

III

A certain level of agreement already exists with respect to the **first** major question regarding compatibility between subregional or regional trade agreements and global agreements. It is thus recognized that regionalism and internationalism can be perfectly compatible with the objective of attaining an increasingly competitive position in the international market. Neither the developed countries that have entered into integration commitments nor the developing nations look upon their respective subregional integration processes as an alternative, but rather as a complement to a more dynamic form of integration within the global economy.

Developed and developing countries alike usually claim that they are in favour of a more open and transparent global economy and claim that they see the integration process as the building blocks of a global economy free from protectionism and barriers to trade in goods and services. Indeed, in the Plan of Action adopted at the Summit of the Americas, the Heads of State declared that "while pursuing economic integration and free trade in the Hemisphere, we reaffirm our strong commitment to multilateral rules and disciplines".

But it is also fully recognized that in building up economic "blocs" there is the inherent risk of creating a fragmented world (or, in our case, a fragmented region), dominated by free trade between members and a more regulated trade between the blocs.

In short, and depending on their nature and scope, integration agreements may hinder or enhance the transition to an increasing interdependence led by market indicators and geared towards closer linkages with the global economy.

IV

A **second** question that must be raised is whether the proliferation of bilateral and subregional integration agreements in Latin America and the Caribbean will not make it difficult in the long run to harmonize regional agreements. The sheer number of agreements in force not only complicates their implementation in a single country, but also contributes to the high economic cost of investment polarization and the administration of a wide range of agreements. What seems to affect most the integrity of the regional market is the proliferation of partial agreements, some of which are overlapping or contradictory, while others do not cover sectors with a high potential for intraregional trade.

V

The **third** question that arises in this context is whether it would be advisable to expand the scope of the formal integration processes currently underway ("deepen") *before* extending them to other trading partners in the region ("widen"), or whether it would be preferable to *move forward simultaneously* on both fronts. The same dilemma arises at the hemispheric level with respect to the possibility of strengthening Latin American integration before proceeding to take steps towards the establishment of the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

In other words, one should consider whether it is appropriate to deepen the commitments between signatories of a subregional agreement before proceeding to widen the membership, or whether it would be feasible to expand both the subject matter and geographic scope simultaneously. This question is particularly relevant in view of the commitment made at the Summit of the Americas to create a hemispheric free trade area by the year 2005.

At least in conceptual terms, within the framework of "open regionalism", a group of countries could, in fact, move to deepen their reciprocal commitments and, at the same time, albeit at different rates and in different ways, open up membership to others. Some recent examples

confirm this: the member countries of Mercosur are engaged in deepening subregional integration within the group, while at the same time broadening a part of those arrangements -the creation of a free trade area- to other South-American countries; Bolivia and Chile have already become associate members of the group.

Nevertheless, there are respectable arguments in favour of countries with stronger affinities and deeper commitments (for example, a common tariff structure) strengthening ties with each other before proceeding to broaden the geographic scope of their reciprocal preferences. Perhaps the most convincing of these arguments is that countries should be cautious about entering into potentially conflicting commitments with third countries lest they jeopardize the advances they have already made within their group. To offer an extreme example, some of the countries participating in formal subregional integration processes might chose to try to establish a unilateral link with a hemispheric free trade area rather than negotiate jointly with the other members of the subregional grouping.

VI

One **final** question, related to the all of the above, is how **national** policies can be made compatible with subregional and regional policies. Some countries are pursuing trade liberalization more rapidly and intensively than others, and this policy may create serious conflicts with the integration commitments they have assumed. In essence, this is the reason for the decision taken recently by the Government of Peru, but subsequently modified, to revise its agreements with the other countries of the Andean Group.

VII

Despite the diversity of situations in which subregional integration agreements are currently operating, it is not utopian to consider the possibility of moving ahead with an integration process -without setting deadlines- aimed at creating a free trade area that encompasses the entire

region as well as the entire hemisphere, and is, at the same time, compatible with the rules of the World Trade Organization.

Nevertheless, there are prerequisites for attaining the above, prominently including the following:

The **first** is broad liberalization of markets in terms of both countries and sectors. With regard to sectors, this means allowing few exceptions and stating them in terms of negative lists of goods and services excluded, rather than positive lists of goods and services covered by the intraregional free trade agreement. This approach does not preclude the possibility of allowing for transition periods. With regard to countries, it means formulating agreements that have flexible membership criteria and include major trading partners.

The **second** condition is that the integration process should be governed by stable, transparent rules, so that reciprocal integration agreements offer some "insurance" against the risk of interruption of access to the expanded market and the uncertainties that possibility creates. Hence, there must be clear and transparent rules regarding safeguards, countervailing duties and dispute settlements. In this connection, the agreements discussed within the Uruguay Round should serve as a frame of reference for integration agreements.

Third, in view of the possibility of wide-ranging intraregional liberalization of trade and investment, one should be aware of the danger that rules of origin might become a subtle tool of protectionism discriminating disproportionately against the countries less able to take advantage of the expanded market's potential or those with a larger proportion of investment from outside the region. Thus, while rules of origin may be necessary, especially in the absence of common tariffs, considerations of competitiveness and equity suggest that their requirements should be limited.

Fourth, the extension of national treatment to

intraregional investment, which is also provided for in part in some integration agreements, may also have the effect of creating investment opportunities in sectors previously closed (particularly services) and boosting the confidence of enterprises in the region interested in investing outside their home countries. This effect could be strengthened by clauses or agreements protecting intraregional investment and eliminating double taxation.

Fifth, to promote the incorporation of technical progress, harmonization of standards must become a basic element of the integration process. The concept of open regionalism favours the adoption of international norms.

Lastly, integration can cut down on factors that make transactions more difficult or costly and, along with tariff and non-tariff trade barriers, increase costs to regional suppliers and effectively obstruct reciprocal trade. Reducing these transaction costs involves building infrastructure to link countries together, eliminating or harmonizing rules and regulations and implementing institutional reforms that make it easier for incomplete or segmented markets to become integrated.

VIII

The key, then, is to advance, on at least the conceptual front, towards greater Latin American and Caribbean integration in a climate of increasing trade liberalization and at the same time to move forward in realizing the commitments made in Miami in December 1994. The good news is that we know much more today than two years ago about how to go about it. And the source of inspiration to do so is the enormous potential, as yet unexploited, that this common endeavor entails.

Thank you.

HACIA LAS AMÉRICAS DEL 2005: DEMOCRACIA, DESARROLLO Y PROSPERIDAD

**Los procesos de integración en las Américas:
reseña, balance y perspectivas de futuro**

SESIÓN PLENARIA 1

**Alocución del señor Roberto Bouzas,
Investigador Principal del Área de Relaciones
Internacionales de la
Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales
(FLACSO)**

Buenos días. Muchas gracias al Sr. Vicepresidente, Sr. Presidente. Quería comenzar mi presentación agradeciendo al Presidente de la Asamblea Nacional de Quebec, Jean-Pierre Charbonneau y a la Asamblea misma por la organización de este evento que, a juzgar por la concurrencia, sin duda será un éxito en su desarrollo y en su conclusión, y agradecer también por haberme dado la oportunidad de compartir algunas ideas respecto a los desafíos del proceso de integración hemisférica. Mi participación en esta conferencia no responde a ninguna representatividad institucional ni política. Soy un investigador, un profesor, y por lo tanto, trataré de hacer mis observaciones intentando ser analítico y en la medida de lo posible, objetivo en la revisión de las tendencias principales y de los problemas que surgen hacia el futuro, obviamente manteniendo una especificidad difícil de evitar, que es el punto geográfico desde donde miro este proceso, que es la Argentina y el Mercosur.

En mi intervención, voy a tratar básicamente de hacer dos cosas. En los términos de referencia que nos fueron enviados, se menciona reiteradamente que la integración es en el hemisferio un proyecto viejo, un proyecto que se remonta a las ideas de Bolívar. En lo que respecta a América Latina y el Caribe la doctrina Monroe puede ser interpretada como una manifestación desde el norte de un

ideal de integración. La Conferencia Panamericana de 1889 fue otro hito importante y la experiencia de integración en América Latina y el Caribe primero en Centroamérica con la creación del Mercado Común Centroamericano y luego con la creación de la ALALC y el CARICOM, son todos antecedentes que muestran que esta historia tiene varios años por detrás. Sin embargo, en la práctica esta historia ha resultado en la recolección de una serie grande de frustraciones, de avances muy limitados. Por lo tanto, lo que uno debe preguntarse como primer interrogante frente al resurgimiento del interés por los procesos de integración en el hemisferio en la última década es: ¿Qué cambió? ¿Qué hay de nuevo en el horizonte que permita visualizar el desarrollo futuro de estos procesos con una perspectiva diferente a la del pasado? En la primera parte de mi comentario voy a tratar de hacer una breve síntesis de cómo veo las principales transformaciones que permiten mirar hoy este proceso con una perspectiva distinta a lo que usamos en el pasado. El segundo conjunto de comentarios se refiere a los desafíos del proceso hemisférico: a la agenda del ALCA, a los desafíos que coloca y a los problemas de política que plantea, no sólo a los ejecutivos y a los negociadores, sino también a los Congresos y más en general a la sociedad civil.

¿Qué cambió? Yo diría que hay tres manifestaciones de que algo cambió. Estas tres manifestaciones -sin darles por su ordenamiento un orden de importancia- son las siguientes: En primer lugar, existe hoy en día a nivel hemisférico, el primer acuerdo de libre comercio Norte-Sur que vincula una economía desarrollada con una economía en desarrollo. El NAFTA en ese sentido -o el TLC- es un dato nuevo. Hace 15 o 20 años pocos se hubieran siquiera atrevido a pensar en la posibilidad de un acuerdo de este tipo como algo viable. La segunda manifestación de cambio es que el proceso del ALCA ha progresado en la fase de preparación de las negociaciones. Hoy es posible pensar si este proceso hace sentido. Nuevamente, hace dos décadas a nadie se le ocurriría asignar a una propuesta de esta naturaleza algún grado de verosimilitud. En tercer lugar, la otra manifestación de

cambio, es la vitalidad de los procesos de integración en América Latina. En los últimos 10 años los procesos de integración en la región se han dinamizado. En particular algunos han tenido un éxito sin precedentes desde el punto de vista de aumentar la interdependencia económica entre sus miembros. El Mercosur es un caso particular de un proceso de integración que vincula a 4 países, entre ellos las dos mayores economías de Sudamérica, que ha adquirido un dinamismo y ha tenido un éxito -si el éxito se mide en términos de aumentar la interdependencia económica, con todo lo que eso significa- sin precedentes en la región. Creo que este tercer elemento es también una manifestación de que algo más profundo ha cambiado en el hemisferio.

¿Qué explica este cambio? Voy a referirme rápidamente a algunos rasgos que creo que ayudan a entender las razones de este cambio, tanto desde la perspectiva de un actor central en todo este proceso como son los Estados Unidos, como desde la perspectiva de los países de América Latina y el Caribe. ¿Cuál es el principal cambio que ha tenido lugar desde el punto de vista de la política comercial de Estados Unidos? El principal cambio es la nueva percepción que existe en Estados Unidos o en el gobierno norteamericano -al menos en el Ejecutivo- respecto a la funcionalidad de los acuerdos regionales de comercio para promover su agenda de política comercial. Durante todo el período de posguerra Estados Unidos fue el pilar del multilateralismo, el principal defensor y promotor de la cláusula de nación más favorecida. En los últimos años esto ha sido complementado con una revalorización de la función que los acuerdos regionales de comercio tienen para promover los intereses y la agenda comercial norteamericana.

¿Por qué? En primer lugar es evidente en los últimos 15 años en Estados Unidos una insatisfacción creciente con la capacidad del GATT para promover de manera efectiva la política comercial y los intereses de la política comercial de Estados Unidos. El acuerdo con Canadá es probablemente la primera manifestación de un interés económico y no meramente político o estratégico de

relacionamiento preferencial con un socio importante -el NAFTA es el segundo- y el proceso del ALCA y APEC muestran que las consideraciones económicas están por primera vez empezando a ocupar un papel central. Este hecho no es ajeno al cambio en la posición de Estados Unidos en la economía internacional y al hecho de que en las últimas 2 décadas Estados Unidos se ha convertido en un *primus inter pares* con características distintas a las 3 décadas que siguieron al segundo conflicto mundial, con más énfasis en la reciprocidad, con más énfasis en intercambiar una concesión por otra y menos una visión de hegemonía benigna como dicen los cientistas políticos respecto a la tarea de conducción internacional.

¿Qué ha cambiado en América Latina y el Caribe? En América Latina y el Caribe ha cambiado mucho también. Por un lado, las políticas de reforma estructural y en particular de reforma comercial y apertura que ya fueron señaladas esta mañana, son un dato fundamental del nuevo escenario. Las políticas de apertura comercial hacen viable pensar hoy en día en procesos de integración entre países de la región, o del tipo Norte Sur, de una manera que era simplemente imposible hace 15 o 20 años atrás. También ha cambiado en América Latina, o mejor dicho, se ha generalizado en América Latina desde mediados de la década del 80, un cierto temor por una sensación de marginación en el escenario internacional. Recordemos si no la reacción a todo el proceso de cambios en Europa central y Europa oriental, la onda de preocupación que generó en la región cómo este proceso de transformaciones iba a impactar los movimientos internacionales de capital, el acceso a mercados, etcétera. En tercer lugar, en parte por las dos razones anteriores, la búsqueda de mercados se ha transformado en un objetivo central de las políticas comerciales. El mercado de Estados Unidos es, sin duda, el mercado más significativo del hemisferio, y por lo tanto, una propuesta de libre comercio en la cual participa Estados Unidos tiene, como punto de partida, un elemento básico de atracción del interés y de la atención que no puede desconocerse.

Estas nuevas realidades, sin embargo, son muy

heterogéneas en la región. A pesar de que hay tendencias comunes, estas realidades se expresan de manera distinta en distintos países de la región lo que da como resultado un cuadro bastante más complejo que el que surge de hacer una mirada a vuelo de pájaro como la que acabo de hacer.

Permítanme pasar ahora al segundo de los temas que quería tratar en esta breve exposición: los desafíos que el proceso hemisférico tiene por delante. Desde que se lanzó en diciembre del 94 el proceso del ALCA ha realizado sin duda un progreso muy significativo en la preparación de las negociaciones. Ya fueron señaladas las tareas de recolección de información, organización de base de datos que son muy útiles en sí mismas y podrán ser de gran utilidad en la negociación. Pero en mi impresión -creo que con relación a esto es difícil estar en desacuerdo- la reunión Ministerial de Belo Horizonte en mayo de 1997, cerró la etapa fácil del proceso de negociación. A partir de entonces se ha abierto una fase que continuará de marzo 1998 en adelante, en donde se deberán tomar decisiones de carácter estratégico que afectarán las condiciones de vida y las perspectivas de desarrollo de todo el hemisferio.

No voy a referirme a los acuerdos que se han alcanzado en esta fase preparatoria, algunos de los cuales son muy importantes, pero de alguna manera dejan muchos aspectos aún sin definir. Simplemente voy a destacar 4 temas que son áreas en donde los desafíos que el ALCA tiene por delante serán especialmente significativos. El primero de estos 4 temas es el tema del alcance del acuerdo. El acuerdo del ALCA, por lo menos en su fase preparatoria, incluye una variedad de temas que hace que su contenido trascienda con mucho los contenidos tradicionales de un acuerdo de libre comercio de bienes. En qué medida se va a avanzar más allá de las disciplinas multilaterales en ámbitos que trascienden el tema de acceso a mercados y comercio de bienes es una pregunta que no está resuelta; pero es una pregunta de la mayor importancia y seguramente será -ése es el sentido del proceso- un resultado de ese proceso de negociación. Es importante no obstante, mantener presente que en esta

agenda OMC PLUS (es decir, los compromisos que van más allá de la OMC) no sólo hay una agenda -podríamos llamar de alguna manera- colocada por los intereses comerciales de Estados Unidos. Muchos países de América Latina también tienen una agenda OMC PLUS, una agenda que va más allá de los compromisos de la OMC. Para mencionar simplemente dos ejemplos, uno es el tema de comercio agrícola; el otro es de los procedimientos para aplicación de medidas de alivio comercial. En qué medida esta agenda OMC PLUS va a ser cubierta por el acuerdo, hasta dónde va a llegar y en qué medida va a incorporar de manera balanceada aspectos de la agenda de los países de América Latina y el Caribe, es un tema absolutamente fundamental.

El segundo tema en materia de desafíos se refiere a la implementación del acuerdo. Existe un acuerdo de principio alcanzado ya en las primeras reuniones Ministeriales respecto al proceso del ALCA; es el llamado *single undertaking* es decir, un acuerdo comprensivo y único que será implementado como tal. Sin embargo, existe también el compromiso de una cosecha temprana, de un *early harvest* que todavía está por definirse. Existe también la posibilidad de avanzar en acuerdos bilaterales o ministeriales fuera -o independientemente- del marco del ALCA. En la práctica estas puertas abiertas -que por otra parte es imposible cerrar- colocan un desafío respecto a la arquitectura que el proceso del ALCA habrá de adquirir a lo largo del tiempo. Uno de los principales desafíos de este proceso es que no se transforme simplemente en la réplica de alguno de los acuerdos comerciales minilaterales que existen en el ámbito hemisférico. Y esta puerta está abierta en la medida en que no existe ningún mecanismo para limitar la capacidad de los distintos actores de avanzar acuerdos con miembros seleccionados sin que sus beneficios se extiendan al conjunto. El tema de la arquitectura por lo tanto, es un tema de la mayor importancia.

Un tercer punto que quería mencionar es el relativo a las asimetrías en los incentivos para participar de un acuerdo de libre comercio de alcance hemisférico. Si uno mira la

región, y mira particularmente la América Latina y el Caribe de norte a sur, va a encontrar rápidamente que los incentivos y las ecuaciones de costo-beneficio para un acuerdo de esta naturaleza difieren de manera importante de país a país. Hay países que por su concentración del comercio e inversión con Estados Unidos, tienen un natural y obvio incentivo en un acuerdo de carácter hemisférico, o por lo menos en un acuerdo con el mercado más importante. Hay otros países que por la estructura de su comercio, por la diversificación de su comercio y por las características de su estructura productiva, tienen una relación de costos y beneficios diferente. Conciliar esta asimetría de incentivos será uno de los desafíos fundamentales del proceso del ALCA y lo será porque una manera de ver estas asimetrías es interpretarlas, o interpretar el resultado de estas asimetrías, como oposiciones, como posiciones de conflicto. Si comienza a leerse estas asimetrías de incentivos como relaciones de conflicto, las respuestas serán correspondientes, dando lugar a una escalada de malentendidos que puede terminar de una manera no deseada para el conjunto de la región. De forma tal que creo que será absolutamente clave, y lo será a lo largo del proceso, entender los incentivos nacionales y encontrar fórmulas que permitan procesar políticamente esas diferencias de incentivos nacionales.

El último tema que debe recibir atención en el futuro, y que ha recibido bastante poca atención por cierto en el pasado, es el tema de la distribución de costos y beneficios. El proceso del ALCA agrupa países con niveles de desarrollo, dimensiones de su economía, ingresos per cápita muy diversos. ¿Cómo se distribuyen los costos y beneficios de un proceso de integración que va mucho más allá del libre comercio de bienes? ¿Habrá más confianza en la fuerza de los mecanismos de convergencia, más confianza o más temor en los riesgos de la polarización? Sobre este tema poco se ha dicho y sin duda habrá que decir bastante más no sólo por consideraciones de equidad, sino porque una de las garantías de que este proceso sea sustentable es justamente que atienda a los intereses de todas las partes y que, por lo tanto, distribuya costos y beneficios de una manera que sea aceptable y

políticamente sostenible en el tiempo.

Tres conclusiones para terminar: La primera es que el objetivo principal del proceso de integración hemisférica es mejorar la perspectiva del crecimiento y el bienestar de las poblaciones de la región. El ALCA es en este proceso un instrumento, un medio y no un objetivo en sí mismo. En segundo lugar, el ALCA tiene la posibilidad de catalizar el curso de ciertos procesos de integración en desarrollo en América Latina, pero también tiene el potencial de causar ruidos en la marcha de los mismos. Y este es un aspecto que debe incorporarse necesariamente a la formulación de políticas porque los avances que ha habido dentro de la región en materia de crear mayores interdependencias entre países, fenómeno relativamente nuevo, es un activo que no debe perderse ni desecharse en función de un proyecto en construcción. Finalmente, la tercera conclusión apoyada en las dos anteriores, es que este proceso requiere de una atención y de un seguimiento muy atento de todos los involucrados, no sólo en los poderes ejecutivos, sino también en el Congreso. Porque esta atención y la de la opinión pública, será lo único que permitirá, o por lo menos aumentará las posibilidades de que el proceso del ALCA-avance sin que al mismo tiempo queden en el camino algunos de los logros importantes que han sido conseguidos en los últimos 10 años en la región.

Muchas gracias.

TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR 2005: DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY

The Processes of Integration in the Americas: Overview, Assessment and Future Prospects

PLENARY SESSION 1

Speech by Mr. Peter Hakim President, Inter-American Dialogue

It is a pleasure and an honor to exchange ideas with this distinguished group of parliamentarians. You represent the convergence of domestic necessity and international reality. Legislatures focus on domestic political and economic issues--on internal problems. What this meeting can do is to encourage parliamentarians to integrate their domestic concerns, with international issues and, in so doing, reinforce their capacity to deal with both sides of that equation.

Too often in this hemisphere, parliaments are seen, not as contributors to good relations among countries, but as obstacles to more constructive foreign policies. The legislature of my own country has at times been an obstacle to improved inter-American ties--but it has as well made many constructive contributions over the years.

Our first two speakers spoke about the economic integration of the Hemisphere. I want to focus on political integration or on what I call "hemisphere governance". How should we--the countries of this hemisphere--manage our increasingly cooperative hemisphere? What kinds of institutions do we need? What kinds of rules are necessary? What kinds of arrangements will enable us to take full advantage of the opportunities of increased integration?

Economic integration, for example, will be accomplished, but there will be disputes about how to proceed. There will

be questions about the rules and the goals and how to change them. If the global community requires a World Trade Organization, then the hemisphere needs an organization--perhaps not as formal, perhaps connected with an existing institution--to manage its own economic integration.

There is a similar need, in the area of democracy and human rights, where--over the past generation-- we have seen critical changes. What happens within each country, regarding political freedom and basic rights is now the concern of every country of the hemisphere. This principle was codified in the resolution taken by the Organization of American States in 1991 in Santiago, Chile. An interruption of democracy in any nation obliges a response from all nations. The nations have responded collectively on four occasions: in Haiti, in Peru, in Guatemala and most recently in Paraguay. But stronger rules and arrangements are required to increase the effectiveness of efforts to protect democracy and constitutional order.

We also need to build multilateral governance because many problems that were once internal to each country have now become international problems. These include: drugs, crime, environmental issues, and migration. It is not only that we need better ways to address these problems: we need cooperative ways of approaching them, both to avoid conflict and be more effective. Just think for a moment about the drug issue. By attacking the problem unilaterally or bilaterally, we sometimes provoke conflicts between countries instead of the cooperation which is essential for moving forward.

Finally, there are problems that we have barely begun to engage multilaterally--like poverty and education--for which stronger rules and norms need to be developed. These ought to be as universal as our current rules are about human rights or economic management.

Unfortunately, there are several very important obstacles to moving forward toward the development of broad hemisphere-wide governance arrangements. I want to

address three of them, which are closely linked to one another.

First, there is the institutional problem. The Organization of American States, has many strengths and does many things very well. The Inter-American Dialogue works with the OAS in many ways and we are proud to do so. The fact is, however, that the OAS still lacks wide credibility. The lack of credibility often makes it difficult to generate support for and confidence in multilateral initiatives in this hemisphere. So the first prescription is obvious. We need to strengthen the Organization of American States, to make it more effective. No government should tolerate mediocrity in the OAS. We have made great progress under the leadership of Secretary-General Cesar Gaviria. But we have to keep moving forward. If we do not, we may lose the most significant institution we have for managing multilateral initiatives--and, with it, our capacity for cooperative action.

The second obstacle is the United States. We are--on virtually every dimension--the most powerful country in the hemisphere. But we often choose to act unilaterally, alone, without consultation. We frequently look at the OAS, not as a place for multilateral cooperation, but as a way to mobilize support for our preferred course without taking account the view of others. The United States has to change its attitude toward the Organization.

Third, there is the obstacle posed by Latin American and Caribbean nations. In many circumstances, they see the Organization of American States, not as a mechanism to solve problems, but as a means to keep the United States from taking action.

What can be done to remove these fundamental impediments to cooperation. First, the United States, Canada, and the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean must decide discussions about how they want to restructure the OAS, and agree on how best to cooperate in dealing with common problems. They have to sort out what it is they want to accomplish together and how they

want to do it. This discussion must go beyond the OAS itself -- and involve other institutions and the various dimensions of inter-American relations.

The Summit of the Americas is the right place to begin this review of the governance arrangements of the hemisphere. What is more multilateral than a gathering of the presidents and prime ministers of all hemispheric countries. The Summit of the Americas ought to be a place for talking about the basic issues of multilateralism. It is also important that the Summit be given a special place in inter-American relations.

The first Summit in Miami made an enormous contribution to hemispheric cooperation. It spurred the development of the Free Trade Area of the Americas, which is the critical foundation of long term integration. The agreements reached on 21 other issues were also valuable. They may not have led to as much action as hoped, but they showed a dramatic convergence of views and approaches. But the second Summit cannot be a replica of the first. It is not enough to tackle six, eight, ten more issues and add them to the first 23. We need to use the Summit of the Americas more imaginatively, as a mechanism to address the serious issues facing the Hemisphere.

The presidents- - even if they cannot come to concrete conclusions--ought to have all of the vital issues on the agenda. The presidents, for example, should be discussing capital flows as well as the situation of Cuba,--precisely because these are the toughest issues in the hemisphere. Conclusions that can be put into a final declaration may not be reached but the issue should be on the agenda.

Finally, the presidents should consider how to restructure the Organization of American States so that it has the capacity to manage the Summit. The OAS should in short, be adapted to the needs of the Summit process, which should become the centerpiece of multilateral cooperation in this hemisphere.

Thank you.

**HACIA LAS AMÉRICAS DEL 2005:
DEMOCRACIA, DESARROLLO Y PROSPERIDAD**

**La función y la participación de los parlamentarios
en los procesos de integración**

SESIÓN PLENARIA 2

**Alocución del Señor Julio César Turbay Quintero
Senador de la República de Colombia
Presidente del Parlamento Andino**

Señoras y señores:

Esta esplendorosa ciudad se ha convertido gracias a la feliz iniciativa de la Asamblea Nacional de Quebec, en inigualable escenario para las reflexiones y la necesaria hermandad de las Naciones del Continente.

En realidad este es un esfuerzo sin precedentes, que a no dudarlo, pondrá a los pueblos americanos a transitar por un camino más despejado en el propósito de la integración. De esta manera lograremos aproximarnos cada vez más, a la comprensión de las realidades regionales, sintonizando a los Parlamentos y Congresos de las Américas con el necesario tema de la integración.

Es conocido por todos ustedes que los esfuerzos para lograr una comunicación recíproca entre los Parlamentos de nuestro continente bajo el ideal de la integración no son una tendencia reciente, pero tampoco una tendencia constante. En esta segunda mitad de siglo se han conformado varias organizaciones interparlamentarias en América, las cuales, de uno u otro modo, al establecer acuerdos multilaterales, han tratado de despejar los caminos para el acercamiento de los Parlamentos americanos, o por lo menos, para que las ocasiones de diálogo sean más frecuentes.

Conscientes de la necesidad de seguir buscando puntos de

identidad continental, estamos interesados en formar parte del bloque americano, proyectado para entrar en funcionamiento en los inicios del próximo milenio.

Para la consecución de este objetivo y para acercarnos aún más al propósito de una integración real, sería conveniente trabajar más por el camino de la cooperación, que dejarnos tentar por la desafortunada confrontación entre nuestras naciones. Por ello considero importante compartir con ustedes las experiencias de la forma como el Parlamento Andino, que me honro en presidir, desarrolla sus funciones dentro del contexto del Sistema Andino de Integración, buscando consolidar los lazos de amistad y entendimiento, e identificando los posibles obstáculos, para superarlos con pragmatismo y creatividad.

Igualmente el Parlamento Andino analiza las diferencias en el enfoque de las legislaciones nacionales, para proponer esquemas de coincidencia y armonización que permitan en lo posible y en un tiempo prudencial, una normatividad que sin renuencias a atender las particularidades y necesidades propias de cada nación, tengan un común denominador que permita, por un lado perseguir el delito en todos los países, evitando la impunidad resultante de las diferencias legales ; y por otro lado, mejorar las condiciones del entendimiento económico y comercial.

En el desarrollo de estas actividades el Parlamento Andino, se orienta por el principio internacional de que cada nación debe ejercer con plenitud su soberanía reconociendo siempre el derecho a la autodeterminación de los pueblos.

El Sistema Andino de Integración tiene como uno de sus organismos principales al Parlamento Andino, creado el 28 de Octubre en la ciudad de La Paz-Bolivia, con la firma del Tratado Constitutivo.

Como respuesta a las exigencias de los Países de la Subregión, el Parlamento Andino obtuvo su Personería Jurídica Internacional, en enero de 1984, y en Diciembre

del mismo año se firma el acuerdo sede entre el Gobierno de Colombia y el Parlamento Andino donde se decide que su oficina central permanente estará ubicada en la ciudad de Santafé de Bogotá- Colombia.

Los principios del Parlamento Andino consisten en promover y orientar el proceso de integración, trabajar por la paz, la justicia social y la democracia ; velar por el respeto de los derechos humanos y el bienestar de los pueblos andinos ; buscar en el apoyo democrático la legitimidad de sus representantes y actuaciones ; promover la armonización y el desarrollo legislativo comunitario entre otros.

Actualmente el Parlamento Andino como órgano deliberante común del Sistema de Integración Andina, se perfila como el motor de impulso entre los cinco países que lo conforman. En este organismo los Gobiernos Andinos cifran sus esperanzas y expectativas de desarrollo cultural, económico, político y social para lograr la consolidación del área. Por ello, este Parlamento parte de un modelo basado en los principios democráticos, en el debido respeto a la pluralidad de ideas y partidos, a la libertad y a los derechos humanos dentro de una plataforma dirigida a la activa participación de los pueblos dentro del proceso de integración.

En este sentido somos conscientes de los problemas que se suscitan en torno a los Parlamento s regionales en cuanto al tipo de estructura social, política, cultural y jurídica al que están referidos. Son los pueblos, y no solo un segmento privilegiado de ellos, como auténticos generadores de legitimidad, los que deben estar compenetrados y convencidos del ideal de la integración.

La integración a ultranza por sí misma, si me permiten decirlo, no es una ideología suficiente para perfeccionar los procesos de consolidación internacional, si en definitiva no son los actores sociales y políticos de cada parte los que mediante su convicción e impulso otorgan legitimidad y garantías a tales esfuerzos. Por eso el Tratado Constitutivo del Parlamento Andino prevé la

realización de un Protocolo Adicional, el cual ya fue perfeccionado, donde se establece que los Parlamentarios Andinos serán elegidos mediante sufragio universal, directo y secreto de sus representantes.

Estas elecciones deben realizarse en un plazo hasta de cinco años, y por eso nuestra más firme intención es que la mayoría de los Parlamentarios Andinos elegidos por dicho sistema, puedan iniciar el ejercicio de su gestión antes de finalizar el presente siglo.

El Parlamento Andino está integrado por cinco (5) parlamentarios principales y dos (2) suplentes por cada país, los que actualmente son elegidos en forma indirecta por los órganos legislativos de las naciones que lo componen, esto es Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Perú y Venezuela.

Desde su constitución, el Parlamento con sus gestiones y objetivos ha tratado de demostrar que la integración no obedece únicamente a variables económicas.

Trascendiendo este plano, se le ha concebido como una empresa múltiple que guarda objetivos morales y culturales, así como una significación social que implica formas de organización política orientadas a garantizar una amplia participación popular en el proceso y dirección de globalización propias del actual momento histórico Andino. Por esta razón el Parlamento Andino, dentro del espectro de integración de la subregión, cuenta con varias atribuciones para la consecución de este fin.

Así, además de participar en la promoción y orientación del proceso de puede formular recomendaciones sobre los proyectos de presupuesto anual de cada ente del sistema cuya constitución se haga con las contribuciones directas de los países miembros. Finalmente, y como un anticipo de la capacidad reguladora que se espera el Parlamento llegue a tener sobre determinadas materias, puede participar en la generación normativa del proceso a través de sugerencias sobre temas de interés común, las cuales se entienden incorporadas al ordenamiento jurídico de la

Comunidad Andina.

Como se puede constatar, el Parlamento de la América Andina va cobrando cada vez más fuerza e impulso en la subregión, todo para lograr una progresiva participación de los sectores políticos y sociales con el objeto de alcanzar la credibilidad de sus poblaciones respecto a las ventajas y viabilidad de los procesos de integración.

Al respecto, la Junta del Acuerdo de Cartagena informó alentadoramente en recientes días que las economías Andinas, entre 1970 y 1996, período en que se avanzó de modo significativo en el proceso de integración, tuvieron un ritmo de crecimiento del 3,2 por ciento en promedio anual, esto es, por encima del crecimiento poblacional que fue del 2,0 por ciento.

De igual manera, el crecimiento de las exportaciones a nivel subregional tuvieron un repunte importante. Al inicio de 1970 las ventas intrasubregionales fueron de 111 millones de dólares, mientras en 1996 las mismas alcanzaron la cifra de 5.000 millones de dólares.

Este vigor de la comunidad Andina, paralelo al de otras comunidades subregionales de América, nos lleva a pensar que un mecanismo para lograr la unión total del bloque continental, es, ante todo, seguir afianzando los procesos subregionales existentes, para luego, con su posterior conexión, concluir con coherencia el itinerario completo del proceso. Esto implica que la conformación final del bloque no debe traer consigo la desactivación de la estructura organizativa de los actuales grupos subregionales, toda vez que estos juegan y jugarán un papel de primera importancia para mantener vivo el espíritu de la integración, creando una visión más cercana y realística de las dificultades que puedan surgir en el camino y que requieran ajustes.

Es justamente aquí donde se le debe conceder todo el valor a este afortunado encuentro. Hoy que están reunidos todos los Congresos, que son a no dudarlo la mayor expresión democrática de los pueblos de América, deseo resaltar la

importancia que le atribuyo no sólo a desarrollar los lazos de amistad entre los miembros de estas instituciones, sino también al hecho de impulsar una gestión internacional de diplomacia parlamentaria que, partiendo de la capacidad y voluntad política de acción y a través de la expresión de normas reguladoras, contribuya a resolver problemas de diversa índole entre los Estados que no siempre encuentran solución por los tradicionales caminos diplomáticos dependientes del Ejecutivo.

La complementación de ambos esquemas, el de la diplomacia parlamentaria y el tradicional desempeñado por el Ejecutivo, ha probado ser muy conveniente cuando se trata por ejemplo de asuntos limítrofes, o de reducir las tensiones y las fricciones surgidas entre las naciones en el campo comercial. Los grupos de amistad y cooperación parlamentaria cumplen funciones sorprendentemente efectivas, en beneficio del entendimiento de nuestros pueblos.

Son los Parlamentarios de las Américas los llamados a ejercer, por su misma naturaleza de legítimos representantes de la voluntad popular, un papel protagónico tanto en el campo de la integración , como en otros aspectos relacionados con los temas ambientales, de derechos humanos, de lucha contra el delito, y el narcotráfico ; al igual que en aspectos económicos y comerciales ; y son estos mismos parlamentarios de las Américas, los indicados para fomentar y promover el bienestar de nuestros pueblos, mediante el desarrollo o ejercicio de la sociedad regional.

En la sociedad civil de cada país hay que desarrollar una gama muy amplia de acciones comunes en órbitas diferentes como la educación, la cultura, la ciencia, la técnica y la información, entre otros factores relevantes. En el ámbito puramente político se requiere de autoridades, partidos, representantes, grupos de opinión y de presión para generar, en últimas, la manifestación de los múltiples intereses que bajo el abanico democrático puedan encauzarse hacia la integración parlamentaria del continente.

En las postrimerías de este milenio vemos como la tendencia de la reorganización geopolítica fundamentada en la internacionalización y globalización, enclava su estructura en el perfeccionamiento de bloques como el europeo. En este sentido los Congresos americanos deben empezar a crear condiciones para que el continente, como grupo articulado frente a otros bloques, adquiera una presencia esencial en el esquema internacional.

Bajo esta concepción la integración debe ser, por lo tanto, integral y equilibrada, donde el desarrollo de todos y cada uno de los países integrantes se establezca como uno de los objetivos mediatos para que de esa forma se aumente la capacidad de negociación conjunta frente a los otros bloques del entramado internacional.

Solo me resta afirmar que nunca serán suficientes las reflexiones y diálogos que agoten y perfeccionen el fenómeno de la integración, si acciones precisas y adecuadas en el plano local y continental no acompañan su progresiva evolución. En mi concepto considero que la faz mundial en el próximo milenio se orientará más hacia la globalización de sus componentes que hacia su atomización y dispersión. Por eso no dejo de ver un asomo de premonición cuando el Libertador de nuestros países Andinos, Simón Bolívar, proclamó: "¿Quién resistirá la América reunida de corazón, sumisa a una ley y guiada por la antorcha de la libertad?"

HACIA LAS AMÉRICAS DEL 2005: DEMOCRACIA, DESARROLLO Y PROSPERIDAD

**La función y la participación de los parlamentarios en
los procesos de integración**

SESIÓN PLENARIA 2

"El Parlamento Centroamericano en el Proceso de Integración Centroamericana"

**Alocución del Señor Ernesto Lima Mena
Presidente del Parlamento Centroamericano**

En nombre del Parlamento Centroamericano, deseo presentar un cordial saludo a todos los participantes en esta Conferencia Parlamentaria de las Américas y aprovechar la oportunidad para felicitar al Señor Presidente Jean-Pierre Charbonneau y a la Asamblea Nacional de Quebec, por hacer posible esta trascendental Conferencia.

"Oíd, americanos, mis deseos. Los inspira el amor a la América, que es vuestra cara patria y mi digna cuna.

Yo quisiera:

Que en la provincia de Costa Rica o de León, Nicaragua, se formase un Congreso General, más expectable que el de Viena, más importante que las Dietas donde se combinan los intereses de los funcionarios y no los derechos de los pueblos:

Que cada provincia de una y otra América mandase para firmarlo, sus Diputados o Representantes con plenos poderes para los asuntos grandes que deben ser objeto de su

reunión;

Que los diputados llevasen el estado político, económico, fiscal y militar de sus provincias respectivas, para formar con la suma de todos el general de toda la América.

Que unidos los diputados y reconocidos sus poderes, se ocupasen en la resolución de este problema: trazar el plan más útil para que ninguna provincia de América sea presa de invasores externos, ni víctima de divisiones intestinas.

Que resuelto el primer problema, trabajasen en la resolución del segundo: formar el plan más eficaz para elevar las provincias de América al grado de riqueza y poder que pueden subir.

Que fijándose en estos objetos, formasen: la Federación grande que debe unir a todos los Estados de América y el Plan Económico que debe enriquecerlos.

Que para llenar lo primero, se celebre el pacto solemne de socorrerse unos a los otros estados en las invasiones exteriores y divisiones intestinas

Que se designase el contingente de hombres y dinero con que debiese contribuir cada uno al socorro del que fuese atacado dividido.

Y que, para alejar toda sospecha de opresión, en el caso de guerra intestina, la fuerza que mandasen los demás estados para sofocarla, se limitase únicamente a hacer que las diferencias, se decidiesen pacíficamente por las Cortes respectivas de las provincias divididas y obligarlas a

respetar la decisión de las Cortes.

Que para lograr lo segundo se tomasen las medidas, y se formase el Tratado General de Comercio de todos los Estados de América.

Distinguiendo siempre con protección más liberal el giro recíproco de unos con otros, y procurando la creación y fomento de la marina que necesita una parte del globo separada por mares de las otras.

Congregados para tratar estos asuntos los Representantes de todas las potencias de América.

!Que espectáculo tan grande presentaría en un Congreso no visto jamás en los siglos, no formado nunca en el antiguo mundo, ni soñado antes en el nuevo!"

Esto escribe el prócer centroamericano José Cecilio del Valle, en su periódico "Amigo de la patria" el 1 de marzo de 1822.

Sin conocer los esfuerzos de Bolívar, José Cecilio del Valle digno representante de la generación americanista de principios del siglo XIX, que se enfrenta al cambio que produce la independencia, con un espíritu supranacional, inicia una nueva corriente en Centroamérica para lograr la reunión de los nuevos países centroamericanos.

A partir de 1821, en Centroamérica se han realizado al menos 16 esfuerzos de reintegración política y todos estos intentos han sido acompañados de los esfuerzos para la instalación de un Parlamento Regional, común denominador de un insoslayable anhelo democrático y libertario.

En la década de los años cincuenta se suscribe la carta de

la Organización de Estados Centroamericanos como instrumento de integración y se inicia la experiencia de integración económica al suscribirse al Tratado General de Integración Económica que creó el Mercado Común Centroamericano y otros mecanismos.

LA ETAPA RECIENTE DE LA INTEGRACIÓN POLÍTICA.

Por iniciativa del gobierno de Panamá, se reúnen en la Isla Contadora, en enero de 1983, los Cancilleres de México, Venezuela y Panamá, con el objetivo de intentar buscar una solución negociada al conflicto centroamericano, creándose así el "Grupo de Contadora", compuesto por Colombia, México, Venezuela y Panamá.

Los Ministros de Relaciones Exteriores, de Argentina, Uruguay, Brasil y Perú suscriben "La Declaración de Lima" que da origen al "Grupo de Apoyo a Contadora".

A estas dos instancias latinoamericanas, conocidos posteriormente como Grupo de Río, se suma el respaldo de la Unión Europea, y es en este esfuerzo conjunto, en el que Centroamérica retoma el camino de la paz y la democracia que marcó el proceso de Esquipulas.

En la trascendental reunión conocida como Esquipulas I, realizada el 25 de mayo de 1986, los Presidentes Centroamericanos expresaron:

"Que es necesario crear y complementar esfuerzos de entendimiento y cooperación con mecanismos institucionales que permitan fortalecer el diálogo, el desarrollo conjunto, la democracia y el pluralismo como elementos fundamentales para la paz en el área y para la integración de Centroamérica".

"Es por ello que conviene crear el Parlamento Centroamericano. Sus

integrantes serán electos libremente por sufragio universal directo, en el que se respete el principio de pluralismo político participativo".

Resumiendo, de los Acuerdos de Esquipulas nace el Parlamento Centroamericano como la instancia política permanente y democrática, de representación popular, que marca un hito renovador en la integración centroamericana.

El Tratado Constitutivo

El Tratado Constitutivo del Parlamento Centroamericano y Otras Instancias Políticas fue suscrito en octubre de 1987.

En septiembre de 1989, se suscribe un primer protocolo que viabilizó la vigencia del Tratado con la ratificación de tres países y amplió los plazos de elección establecidos dentro del mismo.

El 16 de junio de 1991, se suscribe un segundo Protocolo con el objeto de ampliar los plazos de las elecciones de Diputados al Parlamento Centroamericano, incluyó la facultad de designación de observadores por parte de los países suscriptores del Tratado y sus Protocolos que no hubiesen electo Diputados Centroamericanos y abrió la posibilidad de suscripción del Tratado por parte de la República de Panamá.

El 28 de octubre de 1991, en sesión solemne se instala el Parlamento Centroamericano, teniendo como país sede la República de Guatemala.

El 13 de octubre de 1993, el gobierno de Panamá suscribe el Tratado y sus Protocolos y el 16 de mayo de 1994, la Honorable Asamblea Legislativa aprueba los citados instrumentos.

El Tratado Constitutivo del Parlamento Centroamericano y Otras Instancias Políticas ha sido suscrito por seis países, ha sido ratificado por cinco países, de los cuales, cuatro

países han realizado elecciones y dos están pendientes.

Las principales funciones

Servir de foro deliberativo para el análisis de los asuntos políticos, económicos, sociales y culturales comunes y de seguridad del área centroamericana.

Promover la consolidación del sistema democrático pluralista y participativo en los países centroamericanos, con estricto respeto al derecho internacional.

Impulsar y orientar los procesos de integración y la más amplia cooperación entre los países centroamericanos.

Proponer proyectos de Tratados y Convenios a negociarse entre los países centroamericanos que contribuyan a la satisfacción de las necesidades del área.

Elegir al funcionario ejecutivo de más alto rango de los organismos existentes o futuros de la integración centroamericana, creados por los Estados partes del Tratado.

Propiciar la convivencia pacífica y la seguridad de Centroamérica.

Recomendar a los gobiernos centroamericanos, las soluciones más viables y efectivas en relación a los diferentes asuntos que, dentro de sus atribuciones conozcan.

Funcionamiento

Órganos del Parlamento Centroamericano:

El Parlamento Centroamericano se integra por tres órganos que son: Asamblea Plenaria, Junta Directiva y Secretariado.

Asamblea Plenaria:

La Asamblea Plenaria del Parlamento Centroamericano está compuesta actualmente por los diputados: 22 por El Salvador, 22 por Guatemala, 22 por Honduras, 22 por Nicaragua y 20 Parlamentarios Designados por Panamá.

Composición Política

Partidos Políticos:

El Parlamento Centroamericano está integrado por 32 partidos políticos centroamericanos, de los 38 que tienen significativa representación parlamentaria en los Congresos Nacionales y Asambleas Legislativas del Istmo Centroamericano.

Grupos Parlamentarios:

La figura de los Grupos Parlamentarios ha sido conceptuada como la participación política pluripartidista y multinacional, lo que le confiere al trabajo del Parlamento una dimensión supranacional.

De conformidad con el reglamento, a la fecha se han constituido los siguientes Grupos Parlamentarios:

El Grupo Parlamentario Alianza Democrática Centroamericana está integrado por 38 diputados, que agrupa a 5 partidos políticos de tendencia liberal.

El Grupo Parlamentario Centro-Democrático se integra con 32 miembros que agrupa 15 partidos políticos de tendencias centro-derecha y centro-izquierda.

El Grupo Parlamentario de Izquierda se integra por 13 diputados de 4 partidos de izquierda.

El Tratado Constitutivo y el Reglamento del Parlamento Centroamericano establecen, además, como estructura

orgánica: la Junta Directiva Ampliada, los Grupos Parlamentarios, y doce comisiones parlamentarias y los observadores, especiales , originales y permanentes.

Secretariado:

La estructura administrativa del Parlamento Centroamericano la encabeza el Secretario Ejecutivo.

El Parlamento Centroamericano cuenta con tres subsedes, que representan oficinas de apoyo a las actividades de los Diputados Centroamericanos en sus respectivos países, en El Salvador, Honduras y Panamá. Próximamente funcionará la subse de Nicaragua.

LA MISIÓN DEL PARLAMENTO REGIONAL

El Parlamento Centroamericano, es producto de los anhelos de paz y democracia, y comparte el privilegio de ser uno de los dos Parlamentos Regionales en el mundo que disfrutan de la legitimidad democrática plena que les confiere la libre elección directa de sus diputados.

Estamos convencidos, que la integración se debe incorporar al sistema de creencias políticas de los pueblos y debe ser percibida como compatible y armónica con los intereses nacionales y necesaria para darle a aquellos intereses una dimensión real.

La misión del Parlamento Regional es la de representar, funcionalmente, la expresión de las ideas políticas de los pueblos. Tiene una función esencialmente representativa.

Son los pueblos, como auténticos generadores de legitimidad, los que deben estar compenetrados de la integración.

Ello supone, naturalmente, que los partidos políticos de cada país de la región hayan asumido, previamente, la convicción programática de las ventajas de la integración regional y hayan decidido convertir esa convicción en un

propósito a alcanzar.

La estructura parlamentaria, que actúa en la práctica en torno al eje de los partidos políticos, es fuente de legitimación, además de ser fuente de representatividad.

Al Parlamento Regional se le derivan las siguientes competencias fundamentales: presupuestaria, de supervisión y control político, legislativa, y la de servir de foro permanente de debate político.

Para cumplir los objetivos antes mencionados es menester recurrir a procedimientos de cooperación, conciliación, consulta, dictamen conforme y codecisión.

El Parlamento Centroamericano está cumpliendo un intenso papel político, en cuanto foro de discusión y proposición y se están revisando sus atribuciones para fortalecer sus competencias legislativas, presupuestaria y de control democrático.

Si un proceso de integración tiene como objetivo políticas integradas, la legitimidad democrática del proceso dependerá, en gran parte, de la participación activa de un Foro Parlamentario.

LA CONFERENCIA PARLAMENTARIA DE LAS AMÉRICAS

En nombre del Parlamento Centroamericano deseo agradecer esta privilegiada oportunidad de poder compartir la experiencia parlamentaria de la Integración Centroamericana.

Creemos también, que es una ocasión propicia y el Foro apropiado para iniciar el debate sobre la necesidad de revisar las relaciones interamericanas en sus diferentes dimensiones.

La conformación del Área de Libre Comercio de las

Américas nos lanza el desafío de un arduo proceso de negociación en los próximos años que requerirá de un soporte político muy consistente.

Deseo patentizar nuestro agradecimiento al pueblo Canadiense y de manera muy especial al pueblo de Quebec por su cordial hospitalidad.

El Parlamento Centroamericano se siente verdaderamente comprometido con los principios de esta histórica Conferencia, no puede ser diferente, hace 175 años la soñó uno de los próceres de nuestra independencia quien terminó su artículo con la siguiente expresión:

"La América será desde hoy mi ocupación exclusiva. América de día cuando escriba. América de noche cuando piense el estudio más digno de un americano es América".

Muchas gracias.

HACIA LAS AMÉRICAS DEL 2005: DEMOCRACIA, DESARROLLO Y PROSPERIDAD

**La función y la participación de los parlamentarios
en los procesos de integración**

SESIÓN PLENARIA 2

**Alocución del Señor Juan Adolfo Singer
Diputado de la Cámara de Diputados de la República
Oriental del Uruguay
Presidente del Parlamento Latinoamericano**

Trataré de ser lo más breve posible, porque me hago cargo de que después de tanto tiempo escuchando discursos de alguna manera a todos nos gana cierta fatiga intelectual.

Primero una información: el Parlamento Latinoamericano es una organización interparlamentaria, se fundó a fines de 1964, en Lima; 23 años después, en 1987, se estructuró por medio de un Tratado y pasó a ser por lo tanto un órgano de derecho público internacional. Se integra con una Asamblea, una Junta, una Mesa Directiva, un Consejo Consultivo, cuyo Presidente es el Dr. André Franco Montoro, que nos acompaña y, como todos los parlamentos nacionales de América Latina, con comisiones asesoras sobre los puntos más importantes que debe considerar. Lógico, para poder trabajar con eficacia es necesario tener una asistencia técnica de primer nivel y eso cuesta mucho dinero y como no lo tenemos hemos apelado a la cooperación de organismos internacionales que vienen actuando como secretarías técnicas de nuestras comisiones. Por ejemplo, la Comisión de Salud trabaja con la asistencia técnica de la OPS (Organización Panamericana de la Salud), la Comisión de Asuntos Culturales, Educación, Ciencia y Tecnología con el asesoramiento técnico de UNESCO, la Comisión de Asuntos Económicos con el asesoramiento técnico del SELA y la colaboración de ALADI y de CEPAL y así,

pues, todas las comisiones. Esto nos ha permitido desarrollar un trabajo mucho más eficiente en las oportunidades en que estas comisiones se reúnen, una o dos veces al año, en un continente que va desde el Río Bravo hasta el Cabo de Hornos, que abarca más de 21 millones de kilómetros cuadrados, casi 500 millones de habitantes y en un parlamento como organización interparlamentaria donde están representados, en cifra redonda, 3.500 legisladores nacionales de la totalidad de los países de América Latina de habla española y portuguesa. Por medio de este trabajo procuramos, en los asuntos de más alto impacto político, económico, social y cultural, armonizar la legislación en América Latina como cimiento y base para la conformación de la Comunidad Latinoamericana de Naciones, que es el objetivo central con el que fue creado el Parlamento Latinoamericano. Y en algunos aspectos se han realizado avances importantes en esta materia: para poner simplemente un botón de muestra, un ejemplo, hace muy poco tiempo la Comisión de Defensa del Usuario y del Consumidor, con el asesoramiento de ALADI y de CONSUMER'S INTERNATIONAL, una ONG de rango mundial que tiene su sede latinoamericana en Santiago de Chile, concluyó un proyecto de ley marco sobre defensa del consumidor que ahora estamos enviando a todos los parlamentos nacionales, que tendrán la oportunidad de ajustarlo conforme a la realidad política, económica y social de cada país.

Tenemos claro, eso sí, en el Parlamento Latinoamericano, que el tema Comunidad Latinoamericana de Naciones, integración de América Latina, no puede ser un tema reducido a la esfera parlamentaria ni partidaria; es un tema que compromete a la sociedad en su conjunto, y de ahí que, desde el Parlamento Latinoamericano, hayamos establecido un diálogo y una relación cada vez más estrecha y profunda con las grandes organizaciones de la sociedad latinoamericana: las iglesias, las organizaciones sindicales, los grandes medios empresariales y las universidades. Todas ellas integradas a nivel latinoamericano y organizadas en toda la región y yo me permitiría decir que en este sentido la sociedad

latinoamericana va más adelante que los propios estados. Este es un hecho real en América Latina y que revela la necesidad de esa coparticipación de la sociedad con la dirigencia política.

Del mismo modo, en el Tratado que creó al Parlamento Latinoamericano, tenemos el objetivo de promover y ayudar a consolidar todos los procesos subregionales de integración. En ese sentido hemos establecido un convenio con la totalidad de los parlamentos subregionales, faltando, pero creo que se terminará de formalizar en poco tiempo, la Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del Mercosur. Es decir, el Parlamento Latinoamericano trabaja en asociación con el Parlamento Centroamericano, con el Parlamento Andino, con el Parlamento Amazónico, hay un Parlamento Amazónico, y hay un Parlamento Indígena, con todos ellos y con la Comisión Parlamentaria Conjunta del Mercosur. Porque la tarea de la integración, de la formación de una Comunidad Latinoamericana de Naciones, creo que es bien claro para todos, no es sencilla, es compleja, tiene muchos obstáculos, en lo interno y en lo internacional, y lleva y llevará sin duda mucho tiempo.

De cara a esta somera descripción quiero decir que, para nosotros, la convocatoria hecha por el Parlamento de Quebec ha sido muy importante; ésta es la primera oportunidad en que los parlamentos latinoamericanos se reúnen con los parlamentos del norte: de Estados Unidos y de Canadá.

Digamos, eso sí, una cosa: me parece que tenemos que hablar con mucha claridad, con total franqueza, para que haya un futuro en el diálogo interparlamentario de las Américas. La presencia en pleno del parlamento de los Estados Unidos es decisiva, de lo contrario vamos a armar un gran ferrocarril, con una buena locomotora, pero con los motores parados. Tenemos que ser conscientes de esta realidad y trabajar sobre ella. Creo que hay aquí, una presencia, que nosotros valoramos, por parte del Congreso de los Estados Unidos, pero de todos modos digamos que el diálogo América Latina, Canadá y Estados Unidos, tiene que ser un diálogo en plenitud de todas las partes para que

sea verdaderamente un diálogo parlamentario de todas las Américas.

Desde el comienzo me parece que tenemos que tener claro algunas cosas, que son muy importantes, sobre todo los temas que se han tocado aquí, empezando naturalmente por los temas de integración comercial. En primer lugar hay que tener clara una cosa: el racero nivelador en materia de integración comercial representa una desigualdad insoportable. El mismo trato para niveles distintos de desarrollo no sirve en materia de integración comercial ni en ningún tipo de integración. Ese es el primer punto que me parece que tenemos que tener claro, para cualquier avance posible, actuando con un criterio realista.

El segundo asunto es que, en este caso siguiendo el buen ejemplo de los europeos, todo proceso de integración, sea comercial, sea mucho más completo que el comercial, como en el que nosotros venimos trabajando en América Latina, tiene que tener tres componentes: cooperación, competitividad, solidaridad. Y finalmente el tercer elemento debe de ser una regla de oro que, en su momento, ya hace unos cuantos años de esto, definió el antiguo canciller alemán Genshcer, que durante tanto tiempo estuvo al frente del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de Alemania: *"Para avanzar con eficacia en un proceso de integración nadie debe poder impedir que los que están de acuerdo avancen y nadie debe estar obligado a hacer lo que no quiere."* Creo que ésta es una clave que debemos de tener muy presente y muy en cuenta en esta materia.

Yo digo que ésta puede ser una instancia histórica y lo es, de todos modos, porque principio quieren las cosas, y por aquello que es un lugar común, pero no es ocioso repetirlo: no hay peor gestión que la que no se hace. La gestión que ha hecho el parlamento quebequence en ese sentido es una gestión valiosa y con contenido histórico. Si logramos establecer un diálogo interparlamentario de las Américas, con la totalidad de los países que las integran, creo que habremos dado un paso muy importante, de verdadera

trascendencia. Porque creo además, y esto es lo que más me importa subrayar en esta oportunidad, que puede ser esto el comienzo de un nuevo relacionamiento entre Estados Unidos y América Latina.

Hasta ahora en los procesos de integración en América Latina, sea a nivel regional o subregional, muchas veces hemos tropezado con obstáculos y yo creo que esto parte de una visión errónea de las nuevas realidades.

En primer término, a nivel nacional en nuestra América Latina no estamos en condiciones de dar respuesta a las necesidades de nuestra gente. Hemos probado a lo largo de los años las más diversas formas de gobierno, de un extremo al otro. Menos ahora, en el proceso de globalización, no creo que ningún gobierno nacional esté en condiciones de arbitrar al interior de cada país la realidad determinante de la globalización. Así yo debo decir que siento que los Estados Unidos y también sin duda Canadá, tienen un desafío. Yo creo que para ellos una América Latina integrada y unida puede ser un socio y un aliado mucho más valioso, mucho más eficiente y mucho mejor desde todo punto de vista. No tengo ninguna duda a ese respecto. Y que ése es el desafío que tienen los políticos, los legisladores y el conjunto de la sociedad norteamericana de cara a las nuevas realidades, de cara al fin de este milenio, de este siglo.

Una América desunida, no es más que una serie de pequeños mercados y seguramente de prestatarios endeudados, que una vez y otra vez también estarán con el sombrero en la mano.

De todos modos me parece importante que deje aquí, en este ámbito, la convicción de que América Latina por razones históricas, por razones de identidad cultural, pero sobre todo por razones de los desafíos del presente y del futuro, indispensablemente va a avanzar en su integración.

Muchas gracias.

RUMO ÀS AMÉRICAS DE 2005: DEMOCRACIA, DESENVOLVIMENTO E PROSPERIDADE

**Implicações e impactos legislativos, políticos, sociais e
culturais
do processo de integração econômica das Américas**

Grupo de Trabalho: Direitos Humanos

**"Violência e Crime nas novas democracias: desafios
para a próxima década"**

**Alocução do Sr. Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro
Diretor do Núcleo de Estudos sobre a
Violência da Universidade de São Paulo**

A humanidade vai ter uma oportunidade única de começar um novo milênio. Transição: passagem, mudança, de um lugar para outro e de um conjunto de circunstâncias para outro. A passagem de um simples ano para outro, de uma década para a próxima de um século para o seguinte, excita as pessoas. Se assim for, a inauguração de um milênio provoca o mesmo espanto que a passagem de um cometa: novos começos trazem com eles a claridade dos momentos fundadores, que têm a qualidade do inesperado.

Mas haverá razão para otimismo, para grandes esperanças ? O fim do século XIX viu surgir o conceito de fin de siècle que foi imediatamente seguido pelo fascínio da belle-époque e pelo florescimento da art- nouveau nas artes aplicadas. A revista The Economist lembrava-nos recentemente que a passagem de um milênio é um fim e começo, e que o otimismo no fim do século XIX não era compartilhado por todo mundo e cita o ensaísta George Steiner falando de um " grande mal-estar" que prenunciava imagens de destruição. Os fantasmas da Primeira Guerra Mundial já estavam à espreita da humanidade do outro lado do espelho.

Talvez seja prudente não contar com mudanças dramáticas quando entrarmos no terceiro milênio. Em toda transição o passado ainda não está morto: nem passado é ainda. O futuro é algo que começa a tomar forma no momento presente : as sociedades não serão dramaticamente diferentes do que elas são do final do século XX, chamado de "século curto " pelo historiador Eric Hobsbawm.

Em muitos países latino-americanos, como no Brasil, uma dos maiores legados do passado é um dramático 'gap' entre a letra da lei e o mundo real da implementação da ordem. Apesar do retorno à democracia, persiste uma situação de violência endêmica, caracterizada pela combinação de violência intensa nas interações pessoais e nas formas de dominação política, de altos níveis de criminalidade, da implantação do crime organizado e pela persistência das graves violações de direitos humano, fruto do arbítrio das instituições do Estado, com impunidade generalizada. A pacificação no interior da sociedade na sociedade, que deveria ter sido assegurada pelo monopólio da violência física pelo Estado, com o fim os organismos clandestinos de repressão, apesar do estado de direito, continua precária.

Desigualdade e violência

A criminalidade violenta tem crescido na maior parte das sociedades latino-americanas, especialmente a partir dos anos 1980. Em quase todos os países da região, com exceção da Costa Rica, entre as mortes por causas externas, são altas as taxas de homicídio. Na cidade de S. Paulo ,os homicídios e suas tentativas que em 1988 atingiam uma taxa de 41,6 por 100000 habitantes, passaram para 50,6 em 1991, para 44,0 em 1992 chega a 50,2 em 1993.

Nas manifestações mais visíveis dessa criminalidade individual, sobressaem crimes individuais contra a vida ou a integridade física [homicide and assault] (either intentional or non- intentional)) ; contra a propriedade theft, robbery and fraud];ofensas contra a liberdade sexual [rape] - e a criminalidade organizada. A criminalidade

violenta, como o homicídio, em geral tem como alvo aqueles em posições sociais similares. Os bairros populares e as habitações irregulares são o espaço da violência : na maior parte das regiões metropolitanas há uma coincidência entre os lugares onde os pobres vivem e a morte por causas violentas. Há clara correlação entre as condições de vida, violência e taxas de mortalidade. A violência, como observou Amartya Sen, é claramente uma parte significativa da social deprivation - a alta mortalidade por causas externas nos bairros populares reflete mortes causadas pela violência, ainda que ela não seja a única causa de mortalidade.

O grupo social que tem apresentado os níveis mais altos de crescimento de homicídios - colocando diversas grandes cidades latino-americanas no mesmo patamar - são os jovens. Na cidade de S.Paulo na faixa de idade entre 15 e 24 anos a média e S.Paulo é de 102,58 homicídios por ano para cada 100 mil habitantes de 15 a 24 anos. Há alguns bairros da capital que as cifras de homicídios nessa mesma faixa atingem níveis entre 197 e 222 homicídios (mais de dez vezes a média nacional de homicídios no Brasil) que poderiam ser considerados como epidêmico.

Sem pretender estabelecer uma relação direta entre pobreza e violência ou criminalidade, é indispensável levar em conta a noção de desigualdade na distribuição de renda e de acesso aos recursos disponíveis. Países com maior desigualdade, com altos índices de concentração da renda nos grupos de maior ingresso, tender a ter índices de criminalidade e de violações de direitos humanos mais altos.

Justamente em todas as sociedade latino-americanas os jovens são o grupo mais atingido pelas conseqüências catastróficas dos processos de exclusão social e de desigualdade, submetidos ao impacto do aumento de desemprego, da ruptura das estruturas familiares e da desintegração dos valores. A exclusão que se vem consolidando nos países em desenvolvimento na América Latina resulta numa alta percentagem de adolescentes a níveis de educação extremamente baixos e a altas taxas de

desemprego e sub-emprego. Em consequência, para largos contingentes da população o crime que acaba sendo uma forma fácil e rápida de ascensão social :os jovens freqüentemente tendem a compensar a exclusão pela adesão às gangues de rua e o envolvimento com o narcotráfico.

Práticas arbitrárias e "social deprivation"

Essa violência endêmica implantada num contexto de largas desigualdades econômicas e num sistema de relações sociais profundamente assimétricas, não é um fenômeno novo na região, ainda que se tenha agravado as duas últimas décadas: é a continuação de longa tradição de práticas de autoritarismo das elites contra as "não elites" e no interior das próprias classes populares. O retorno ao constitucionalismo democrático não eliminou a continuidade de um autoritarismo presente na sociedade.

Os milhões de pobres, especialmente os grupos mais vulneráveis nas sociedade - como os povos indígenas, os negros, os camponeses sem terra, as crianças de rua e os homossexuais - estão sujeitos ao arbítrio policial sistemático, pouco afetado pela democracia. Esse arbítrio complementa-se e conjuga-se com a discriminação, que com a desigualdade, é um importante determinante dos níveis nacionais de homicídio: medidas de discriminação racial ou econômica contra grupos social tendem a aumentar as taxas de homicídios nacionais.

Uma sociedade de exclusão, uma democracia sem cidadania, vem progressivamente tomando de nossas sociedades, especialmente em meio urbano . O ambiente, entendido como - meio familiar, meio cultural, situação social contribuem para que os grupos mais atingidos pelo desemprego, fora do sistema de educação marginalizados estejam mais submetidos à vitimização, tanto como resultado do crime como da repressão arbitrária da polícia. As violações estruturais dos direitos humanos que se encontram arraigadas na estrutura econômica e social destroem tanto os princípios democráticos como a

violência ou as violações dos direitos civis. As crises, consequências dos programas de ajuste econômico à globalização separam, como disse Hector Castillo Berthier, como nunca as pessoas, os pobres e os remediados nas sociedades, como se fossem água e óleo.

As pessoas vivem isoladas, sem uma rede social que as envolva, consequência da crescente desigualdade social. Esta é a situação predominante nas diversas formas de habitação popular presentes em quase todas as cidades latino-americanas :nos mocambos em Recife,nas favelas no Rio de Janeiro ou em S.Paulo, no Brasil, nos ranchos em Caracas, nas barriadas em Lima, nos campamentos em Santiago, nas ciudades perdidas no México, nas villas misérias na Argentina.Essas diversas formas de habitação irregular, "periféricas" que incham as cidades, alargando aparentemente as taxas de urbanização, como mostrou Ignacy Sachs dissimulam o fato "de que a maior parte dos habitantes das megalópoles dos países em desenvolvimento não possuem as condições mínimas daquilo que se pode chamar de vida urbana. A partir do êxodo rural, vai-se aglomerando numa espécie de pré-cidade geográfica e social que reúne habitações precárias e perigosas, insegurança no acesso ao trabalho e à renda e dificuldade de obtenção de serviços básicos".

Nos espaços dessas "pré-cidades", para usar a expressão de Ignacy Sachs, onde vivem os excluídos socialmente, sem o amparo das instituições do Estado, a pacificação posta em prática pelo Estado moderno, através da grande "invenção sócio - técnica", do monopoly of the legitimate use of physical violence, existe precariamente. Nesses milieus a man's reputation continua ainda a depender em parte da manutenção de uma ameaça crível de violência. Ora, como Martin Daly e Margo Wilson apontaram, " onde quer que esse monopólio esteja relaxado - tanto na sociedade inteira ou no interior de uma classe abandonada - então a utilidade da ameaça torna-se evidente ".Qualquer afronta menor pode então ser interpretada como um "estímulo" para ação isolada no tempo e no espaço. E um dos objetivos primordiais da violência é demonstrar, convencer seus pares que você é capaz de defender seu

status :quando os homens matam outros que eles conhecem, geralmente há uma audiência(ou uma referência à reputação). Não podemos esquecer que a violência em larga medida é performance.

Uma das explicações para essa inner- city violence pode ser portanto uma " perda de estrutura na sociedade": num ambiente onde a violência é considerada legítima, a inclinação humana para a violência pode ser sempre reiterada. Largos contingentes da população vivem em comunidades onde as restrições sociais foram dissolvidas.. Mas para evitar cairmos em determinismos, leve-se também em conta também que a violência pode ser simplesmente a reação de pessoas normais a circunstâncias opressivas - por exemplo a pressão do crime organizado e do arbítrio da polícia, como observou Loic Wacquant observou. Os pobres e espoliados estão ameaçados de serem mais vitimizados pela violência e pelos aparelhos repressivos. No Brasil aqueles cuja renda familiar está abaixo da linha da pobreza, conforme mostrou a última pesquisa Nacional de Amostra Domiciliar (PNAD) em 1988, foram mais vitimados por crimes violentos que qualquer outro contingente da população.

Mas raramente a análise da criminalidade faz essas qualificações: as altas taxas de violência e de crime servem para manter vivo o fear of crime como uma ameaça que vem das classes populares, as "classes perigosas", aliás a maioria das vítimas. O que tem permitido a manutenção de pautas intensamente ilegais na repressão ao crime nas novas democracias.A percepção do crime pela opinião pública, se levarmos em conta a maioria esmagadora dos processos e dos condenados de justiça são fundamentalmente aqueles delitos praticados pelas classes populares. As práticas criminosas das elites - como a corrupção, os golpes financeiros, a evasão fiscal - não são percebidos como ameaças evidentes. O crime organizado - como o narco-tráfico, a lavagem de dinheiro, o contrabando, inclusive o muito rentável mercado de armas não são alvos de políticas repressivas consistentes.

Instituições e impunidade

Entre os anos 1970 e 1990 muito países experimentaram transições de regimes autoritários para regimes democráticos. Em 1990 nove em dez países da América do Sul tinham governos democráticos, em comparação com oito governos não- democráticos em 1974. Mas apesar dessas mudanças políticas, muitos países não tiveram sucesso, para dizer o menos, em assegurar o controle legal da violência.

O retorno ao governo civil trouxe a esperança em muitas sociedades que os direitos humanos conquistados para a proteção das oposições políticas sob as ditaduras militares pudessem vir a ser estendidas para todos os cidadãos, em especial para aqueles grupos mais destituídos e vulneráveis. Ainda que que as formas mais brutais de violações dos direitos humanos usuais contra os dissidentes políticos tenham sido eliminadas sob o governo civil, as democracias não conseguiram até o momento proteger efetivamente os direitos fundamentais de todos os cidadãos.

Note-se, entretanto, diferença fundamental entre os dias de hoje e o passado quando se avalia essas graves violações de direitos humanos: o Estado não coordena, como na ditadura, as ações de violência ilegal - mesmo que muitos de seus agentes continuem cometendo abusos. Mas se na democracia o Estado não organiza a coerção paralela e ilegal, sua responsabilidade consiste em não se omitir, em impedir as práticas repressivas ilegais por parte das agências do Estado e em debelar a impunidade desses crimes como aqueles cometidos por particulares. Ora, o Estado democrático e os governos eleitos no Brasil e em muitos países da América Latina, quando não são coniventes tem sido omissos e incapazes de debelar as práticas criminosas e garantir a pacificação na sociedade.

Em muitos países, como Guillermo O'Donnell demonstrou, a instalação de um governo eleito democraticamente não abre necessariamente as vias para formas institucionalizadas de democracia- especialmente nas áreas

de proteção dos direitos das maiorias excluídas. Em muitas democracias emergentes sem uma tradição democrática, a "segunda transição" depois da "primeira transição" do regime autoritário - é imobilizada por muitos legados negativos do passado autoritário.

Se nós considerarmos a continuidade de práticas autoritárias no funcionamento do exercício da violência física pelo Estado sob o constitucionalismo democrático como constituindo um novo sistema de governo - mas ainda incapaz de atender os requisitos da formalidade plena da democracia - talvez possamos explicar melhor o funcionamento dinâmico de vários sistemas políticos na América Latina. Diante da continuidade de graves violações de direitos humanos - detenções arbitrárias, tortura, execuções sumárias- da impunidade, da "non-accountability" dos funcionários do Estado, poderíamos propor que os regime autoritários e os novos governos democráticos civis são expressões apenas diferenciadas de um mesmo sistema de dominação pelas mesmas elites, independentemente da periodização política e das transições.

A sobrevivência do legado autoritário

Uma explicação provável para essa continuidade é que uma forma social de autoritarismo, que poderia ser chamado de "socially rooted authoritarianism" sobrevive muito além da democratização política. Esse autoritarismo está não apenas presente no funcionamento das instituições macro-políticas (como a polícia), como demonstram as freqüentes violações de direitos humanos, mas também nos micro- despotismos da vida quotidiana, expressos pelo racismo, a intolerância, as hierarquias. Nas novas democracias há profundas práticas autoritárias que perpassam não apenas as práticas política mas as práticas sociais no seu conjunto, especialmente na assimetria, fundada na profunda desigualdade econômica, entre os grupos sociais. Implantar um funcionamento democrático nas instituições estatais de controle da violência - como polícia, judiciário, ministério público, assistência judiciária

- tem sido muito mais difícil do que se esperava durante as mobilizações contra o regime autoritário.

Há uma desigualdade dramática entre ricos e pobres, um gap profundo e histórico que não tem sido diminuído. A falta de controles democráticos sobre as ruling classes continua a combinar-se com a negação dos direitos dos pobres. Essa combinação reforça fortes hierarquias sociais, onde o estado direito é mais uma referência ilusória do que realidade. Em consequência, somente os poucos setores da sociedade que tem acesso a condições razoáveis de sobrevivência econômica e social, beneficiam-se do controle efetivo que a democracia exerce sobre a violência física: para a maioria pobre e miserável das populações o arbítrio continua a ser a face mais visível do Estado sob a democracia.

Mais do que em outros países do mundo, na América Latina, apesar das constituições democráticas e dos códigos penais, a percepção do crime está diretamente influenciada pelo uso que as elites fazem dos aparelhos judiciais. Há uma confluência entre os alvos do medo do crime, das políticas judiciais e da percepção da mídia das práticas criminosas que são os crimes comuns. Em consequência, as políticas de prevenção do crime - especialmente aquelas propostas nas campanhas eleitorais - visam menos reduzir e controlar o crime e as oportunidades de delinquir ou aprofundar a eficiência de políticas de prevenção ao crime mas a apenas diminuir o medo e a sensação de insegurança das ruling classes.

Grande número dos cidadãos latino - americanos não acredita que o Estado tem ou tenha tido empenho, mesmo após as transições políticas, em implementar as leis com igualdade e imparcialmente para todos os cidadãos e muitos estão convencidos que o sistema judiciário existe para proteger os poderosos, como recentemente constatou Alfred Stepan. Esse descompasso entre as garantias formais e as violações persiste porque corresponde a um outro descompasso entre a letra da constituição, das leis, dos códigos e o funcionamento concreto das instituições encarregadas de sua proteção e implementação, e as

práticas de seus agentes, como o judiciário e a polícia. As instituições de controle da violência tendem a se tornar inoperantes numa sociedade virtualmente ingovernável dentro dos parâmetros do direito, criminalizada e afetada por uma violência endêmica.

Os judiciários de quase todos os países apresentam, em maior ou menor grau, alguns problemas que podem ser considerados emblemáticos. A lei continua a ser percebida como um instrumento de opressão e esteve sempre ao serviço dos ricos; o sistema judiciário desacreditado pela sua venalidade e ineficiência, com pouca autonomia, durante e depois do sistema democrático. Deficiente sob todos os aspectos : faltam recursos materiais, há excesso de formalidades nos procedimentos judiciais, número insuficiente de juizes, número insuficiente de jurisdições, insuficiente formação profissional dos juizes. As práticas dos tribunais judiciais na maioria dos países estão ligadas à forma hierárquica e discriminatória que marcam as relações sociais. Muitos judiciários tem sido impotentes em face do crime organizado, com ligações inclusive com o narco- tráfico.

A incompetência do judiciário fica flagrante nas novas democracias diante da incapacidade do governo em investigar e processar aqueles que cometem graves violações de direitos humanos, como por exemplo homicídios em conflitos rurais no Brasil ou assassinatos de lideranças sindicais no Chile.

O sistema judiciário e a polícia são virtualmente ausentes quando se trata da investigação e prosecution de violência rural contra os pobres. No Brasil, segundo a Comissão Pastoral da Terra, entre 1964 e 1992, houve 170 assassinatos de camponeses, trabalhadores rurais, líderes sindicais e advogados, assim como religiosos atuando como assessores em conflitos rurais e trabalhistas: apenas trinta desses casos foram trazidos a julgamento até 1992 e somente dezoito desses casos resultaram em condenações. Entre os 1542 sindicalistas assassinados no Chile desde 1986, nenhum dos assassinatos levou a alguma condenação.

Ainda que as violações sejam extremamente variadas há um fator crítico comum a todas elas no continente que é impunidade. A impunidade está virtualmente assegurada para aqueles que cometem ofensas contra vítimas consideradas indesejáveis, desumanizadas, tendo como consequência que aqueles responsáveis por graves violações de direitos humanos continuam a cometer outras violações.

Quanto aos aparelhos policiais, em quase todos os países da região os perigos da autonomia da polícia em relação a qualquer controle civil fica patente quando se examina casos recentes de abusos contra presos e uso de força em excesso. No Chile entre 1993 e 1994 houve dezenove casos de ações legais denunciando tortura e a polícia também foi alvo de críticas por causa da política de "first shoot, ask questions later", como mostrou em 1995 relatório do Relator Especial das Nações Unidas sobre Tortura. Na Colômbia a impunidade continua a ser a regra para as forças de segurança implicadas nas violações de direitos humanos. No Brasil, a tortura é ainda aplicada na maioria das delegacias policiais, especialmente durante a investigação de crimes contra o patrimônio. Embora as investigações sobre essas violações sejam feitas em algumas instâncias, levando a identificação dos culpados, muito excepcionalmente os responsáveis são punidos.

A capacidade investigativa da polícia na maior parte dos países da região é muito limitada e uma baixa proporção dos casos investigados chega às cortes. A metade dos assassinatos em S.Paulo fica sem solução: em 1995, foram esclarecidos 2174 casos de homicídios, correspondendo a 45,2% dos 4802 homicídios registrados no ano passado na cidade de S.Paulo.

A enorme maioria dos brasileiros não crê na imparcialidade da justiça e do sistema policial cuja existência é percebida como proteção dos poderosos. Em consequência, muitos tendem a fazer justiça por si mesmos, na forma da ação de grupos vigilantes ou de linchamentos, através do qual se consolida o ciclo de

ilegalidade e de violência. É comum nas grandes capitais brasileiras o recurso aos justiceiros, gunmen, encarregados de manter a ordem nos bairros populares, a soldo de pequenos comerciantes e as vezes das próprias associações de bairro. No Brasil os linchamentos são prática corrente havendo o sociólogo José de Souza Martins inventariado num estudo recente 515 linchamentos no período de 1970 a 1994, envolvendo um total de 366 mortes. O paradoxo é que nos últimos dez anos quase a metade desses linchamentos ocorreram na região Sudeste, o que pode indicar a precariedade do funcionamento das instituições encarregadas do controle da violência ilegal. Diante do abandono dessas populações pelo Estado, não surpreende que essas práticas ilegais estejam tão difundida nas práticas das populações urbanas.

Policimento ineficiente e visão militarizada

Esses fatos contribuem para que a experiência dos cidadãos com a polícia, especialmente aqueles das classes populares, menos protegidas e amparadas (a presença da polícia concentra-se nos bairros mais afluentes) seja de insatisfação e de uma crença na falta de eficiência da polícia. A polícia nas áreas urbanas atua como se fosse uma guarda-fronteira para proteger as classes médias e afluentes da criminalidade, deixando sem proteção a maioria da população concentrada nos bairros populares. As forças policiais concentram-se precisamente onde as taxas de criminalidade violenta e de homicídios são mais baixas.

Muitas polícias apresentam altos níveis de violência fatal. As polícias militares em cada estado da federação no Brasil, em pleno período democrático, continuaram a praticar execuções sumárias de suspeitos e de criminosos, chegando ao número de 1470 mortos no ano de 1992, no estado de S. Paulo. O maior número dessas mortes ocorrem nos bairros populares e tem como alvo os grupos mais vulneráveis, pobres e negros. A impunidade dessas práticas, ainda que os números tenham dramaticamente diminuído nos últimos dois anos, foi consagrada até hoje

por uma justiça militar estadual, composta pelos próprios oficiais militares. As polícias militares consideram essas mortes como uma estratégia de enfrentamento da criminalidade e contam com larga aquiescência por parte das próprias classes populares.

Essa impunidade também consagra uma série de massacres realizados pelas polícias militares em vários estados na repressão a motins em prisões: em fevereiro de 1992, 111 detentos foram assassinados na Casa de Detenção em S. Paulo, depois de debelado um motim no interior da prisão que abriga mais de 7000 detentos. Nas áreas de conflito rural tendem a agir em conluio com grandes proprietários de terra e os políticos locais em Corumbiara, no estado de Rondônia, em 9 de agosto de 1995 10 posseiros foram mortos; em abril de 1996, numa operação contra trabalhadores sem-terra que ocupavam uma estada, a Polícia Militar matou 19 deles.

Essa sucessão de mortes e de massacres, no campo e na cidade, podem ser considerados como o legado de uma visão militarizada da segurança pública que motivou em dezembro de 1994 a ocupação pelo exercito dos morros e bairros populares do Rio de Janeiro. Como essa visão militarizada prevalece em muitas novas democracias, o exame dessa intervenção serve para mostrar a fragilidade dessa repressão ao crime.

A questão do crime organizado, especialmente do narcotráfico, que controla largos espaços dos bairros populares no Rio de Janeiro, entretanto, não é militar: o alegado "Estado paralelo" nas favelas cariocas e em outras porções do território brasileiro nada tem a ver com "territórios ocupados" que necessitariam ser libertados pelas forças armadas. A atual situação de desrespeito da legalidade somente se consolidou e subsiste graças ao conluio entre o crime organizado, funcionários públicos e comerciantes e agente do Estado. O crime organizado, os narco-traficantes continuam nos bairros populares, porque agentes do poder público toleram (ou empresariam) suas atividades ilícitas e consumidores das elites asseguram um mercado regular, protegido por sua vez pela polícia. As

populações das favelas cariocas foram abandonadas de tal forma pelo poder público e pelo Estado que dele conhecem quase somente a face da extorsão pela polícia e da repressão ilegal. Quando os traficantes nos morros - na verdade meros pequenos intermediários dos verdadeiros traficantes que moram na cidade - doam algumas migalhas dos enormes lucros de seus patrões oferecendo empregos miseráveis e proteção, não admira que sejam venerados como beneméritos.

Consciência da sociedade civil e novos obstáculos

Em contraste com essas respostas diretas a criminalidade nos bairros populares, a sociedade civil em todos os países tem-se mobilizado. Há hoje em todo o continente uma rede importante de organizações de proteção de direitos, profundamente desigual em termos de recursos e peso. Mas chama atenção a larga diversidade dos grupos vulneráveis cujos direitos são defendidos por essas organizações. Apesar desse sucesso deve ser registrado que ameaças e riscos de vida ainda pairam sobre os militantes principalmente nas unidades da federação menos desenvolvidas. E os ativistas se defrontam com a tarefa mais difícil de defender os direitos dos pobres e dos grupos vulneráveis, sendo bem mais difícil identificar as novas vítimas, diferentemente dos reduzidos grupos de opositores políticos sob as ditaduras, porque não constituem um grupo homogêneo e seu número é infinitamente maior. Uma dificuldade adicional é a dificuldade dos pobres de reconhecerem seus próprios direitos como direitos humanos. Esta percepção combina-se com um alto nível de aceitação de práticas de violência ilegal por parte de agentes do Estado of the State agents, pela população em geral, mesmo entre os pobres, que apesar de serem as vítimas preferenciais da violência, assumem essa aquiescência como uma forma de se diferenciarem dos criminosos.

De qualquer forma a luta contra os regimes militares contribuiu para uma maior tomada de consciência dos direitos civis e políticos, mas também dos direitos

econômicos e sociais. A diferença da situação que imperava nos anos setenta e oitenta, existe hoje uma rede generalizada em todo o continente de organizações não governamentais de direitos humanos, tanto urbanas quanto rurais, assim como associações profissionais, grupos ecologistas e de defesa dos indígenas.

No estado do Rio de Janeiro, a organização Viva Rio, criada em 1993 é um bom exemplo das novas formas de articulação da sociedade civil, funcionando como uma rede de redes, congregando o empresariado, movimentos populares, fundações privadas, igrejas, mídia e publicidade. Em 1995 foi capaz de mobilizar uma grande caminhada pela Paz nas avenidas centrais do Rio de Janeiro, a primeira grande manifestação desde a campanha pelas eleições diretas uma década antes. A organização tem-se dedicado com sucesso a dois temas de trabalho : a violência urbana e a integração das favelas na cidade, através de parcerias entre entidades populares, empresas e governo.

Se a sociedade civil foi capaz de assumir a questão da luta contra a violência e os direitos humanos, apesar de todas as dificuldades das transições democráticas, os governos tem em vários países assumido a gramática da proteção e da promoção dos direitos humanos. Além do reconhecimento formal pelo constitucionalismo democrático, os governos civis tem promovido o ingresso dos países na legalidade plena do sistema internacional de proteção de direitos humanos. Essa postura tem determinado novas formas de controle da violência do Estado e na definição de novas políticas de segurança pública. Um dos últimos esforços nessa direção foi o Programa Nacional de Direitos Humanos, lançado pelo governo Fernando Henrique Cardoso, em maio de 1996, incluindo 168 propostas, desde diretrizes para treinamento da polícia até a propostas de proteção às testemunhas e às vítimas da criminalidade violenta. Algumas das reformas propostas pelo governo brasileiro no quadro do programa - como a criminalização da tortura, a transferência da competência da justiça das polícias militares para a justiça civil para julgar os crimes comuns de policiais militares

(já transformadas em lei) e a investigação federal de crimes de direitos humanos - mudarão radicalmente as práticas de violência policial e de impunidade.

Apesar de todos esses avanços, na sociedade civil e no Estado, os pobres continuam a ser as vítimas preferenciais da violência, da criminalidade e das violações de direitos humanos, tanto no Brasil como em muitas novas democracias na América Latina que não tem sido capazes de assegurar a liberdade e a justiça para todos. O fato de que muitos governos não respeitem suas próprias leis ou as obrigações internacionais assumidas para a proteção dos direitos humanos, além de agravar o desrespeito aos direitos humanos, põe em perigo sua própria legitimidade e torna mais difícil mobilizar apoios para introduzir reformas estruturais com vistas a um desenvolvimento mais equitativo, com um acesso mais democrático aos recursos.

"Violência estrutural" e globalização:perspectivas

A pobreza está espalhada por todas as regiões e países, e entre os diversos membros e grupos em cada comunidade. Muitos pobres vivem nas regiões ambientais mais vulneráveis e estão particularmente ameaçados pelos desastres ecológicos. O desrespeito aos direitos econômicos e sociais de largos contingentes da humanidade é também causa de conflitos sociais e violência.

As dimensões sempre crescentes da pobreza em todo o mundo e as cada vez maiores disparidades entre o Norte e o Sul põem em risco as fundações éticas da vida no planeta e penalizam o futuro das gerações que virão. Uma pessoa em cada quatro vive em situação de pobreza absoluta e quase a metade da humanidade vive à margem da pobre. A polarização entre os países ricos e pobres tem assumido dimensões dramáticas, assim como a desigualdade mais que dobrou nos últimos trinta anos. Essa situação está pondo em questão modelos de desenvolvimento, o crescimento econômico e os processos de consolidação democrática.

As vagas de refugiados tentando fugir da "incivilidade" das guerras do Terceiro Mundo, conflitos internos, fome e miséria, são hoje alguns dos maiores desafios enfrentados pelos governos e pelos movimentos da sociedade civil dos países desenvolvidos. A grande maioria desses refugiados, vindos da Europa Oriental, África, Ásia e América Latina, vítimas do colapso das tiranias comunistas, de guerras étnicas e religiosas, de desemprego, tentam entrar nos países desenvolvidos. Muitos deles não são refugiados políticos e simplesmente querem escapar da fome e viver como seres humanos.

Durante o próximo milênio todos os países vão precisar articular-se em programas conjuntos para combater alguns dos mais sérios problemas da incivilidade - pobreza, fome, analfabetismo, o esgotamento de recursos não renováveis. Isto precisa ser a base do reconhecimento que o mundo não poderá estar seguro no futuro próximo sem a total cooperação de todos, do Norte e do Sul. Mais do que nunca uma aliança é necessária entre Estado e sociedade, ricos e pobres, grupos de direitos humanos e empresários. Sem uma mobilização de governo e uma participação efetiva e maciça da sociedade civil, uma sobrevivência decente estará ameaçada.

Tanto as democracias desenvolvidas como aquelas em desenvolvimento na América Latina devem enfrentar o problema dos "novos pobres" gerado pela competição tecnológica e pela crescente globalização. Tais desequilíbrios econômicos e sociais - que estão na base da desigualdade e da vitimização - não podem ser corrigidos apenas pelo livre mercado. Essa conclusão agora é unânime - desde o Seminário de Davos, na Suíça, este ano até o Banco Mundial e as vanguardas dos centros de reflexão sobre o capitalismo mundial.

Devemos reconhecer, no entanto, que a conjuntura internacional atual não é a mais propícia para implantar nas novas democracias políticas redistributivas com vistas a reduzir a brecha social e instituir princípios de justiça social em seu processo de desenvolvimento. Os benefícios da integração na economia mundial, prenunciados pela

globalização, como alertou o economista Deepak Nayar, somente se tornarão realidade naqueles países que lançaram as fundações da industrialização e do desenvolvimento: isto significa investir no desenvolvimento de recursos humanos, a criação de infraestrutura física, o aumento da produtividade no setor agrícola, a aquisição de capacitação tecnológica e administrativa. Como os países latino-americanos estão longe de terem construído esses pre-conditions, as consequências podem vir a ser danosas: "Os países que não criarem essas pré-condições terminarão por globalizar preços sem globalizar a renda. Nesse processo, um segmento estreito de sua população poderá integrar-se com a economia mundial, em termos de padrões de consumo ou de condições de vida, mas uma larga proporção dessas sociedades será ainda mais marginalizada". As novas democracias padecem do desemprego tradicional que geram os "oubliés de la croissance" e compartilham com os países industrializados o problema dos "novos pobres" gerados pela concorrência tecnológica. O papel do Estado - como defensor e promotor dos direitos humanos - é mais necessário do que nunca para definir mecanismos compensatórios para os largos contingentes cujas condições sociais tendem a ser agravadas pelos efeitos da globalização. Não cabe esperar que as forças do mercado corrijam os desequilíbrios econômicos e sociais que estão na raiz da desigualdade e da vitimização: a educação e a saúde, prioridades sociais que são condições para uma pacificação efetiva na sociedade somente podem ser realizadas pela ação do Estado. E para implantar um programa dessa índole, os governos necessitam mais do que nunca mobilizar a participação dos pobres e contar com a cooperação das elites.

Eis a principal contradição e o desafio das novas democracias na próxima década. Sem estender e assegurar os direitos - tantos os civis e políticos, como os econômicos e sociais - para todos os cidadãos, mesmo nessa conjuntura desfavorável, será extremamente difícil para os governos do continente consolidar a democracia e controlar a violência endêmica. As reformas políticas, as inovações nas políticas de segurança pública, a reforma do

judiciário, para serem bem sucedidas requerem que a violência estrutural, a do desrespeito dos direitos sociais e econômicos, seja debelada. A democracia para ser plenamente legítima e poder assegurar a pacificação na sociedade deve assegurar uma efetiva cidadania para todos os cidadãos.

O Estado - como defensor e promotor de direitos humanos, o defensor da pacificação, defensor pacis - tem um papel crucial a desempenhar em todas as sociedades confrontando-se com o crescente problema da pobreza e os problemas associados da violência e do crime. Somente redefinindo as instituições públicas, o Estado, em parceria com a sociedade civil, poderá assegurar na América Latina programas nacionais para promover a saúde e a educação - pré- condição para uma ordem social, fundado não no silêncio do arbítrio e na impunidade, mas na democracia, no desenvolvimento e na solidariedade. E então, quem sabe, o terceiro milênio, já no ano 2006, poderá significar efetivamente para os que sobreviverem e para aqueles que chegarão a esse planeta, um novo começo.

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HACIA LAS AMÉRICAS DEL 2005: DEMOCRACIA, DESARROLLO Y PROSPERIDAD

Las problemáticas y los impactos legislativos, políticos, sociales y culturales del proceso de integración económica de las Américas

Taller: Derechos Humanos

"Respeto de los Derechos Humanos e Integración: ¿una concordancia asegurada?"

**Alocución del Señor Diego García-Sayán
Director Ejecutivo de la Comisión Andina de Juristas
Miembro del Consejo Directivo del Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos (IIDH)**

En años recientes, se han ampliado y diversificado los espacios de integración económica en América Latina. Acuerdos tales como el Mercosur(1) ganan legitimidad en la medida que van probando su efectividad en la aceleración de las relaciones comerciales cumpliendo, a la vez, un papel centrípeto en relación a otros países. En este caso, los integrantes han convenido en una suerte de cláusula de condicionalidad democrática, ya que la condición democrática es necesaria para incorporarse al mecanismo integrador.

El mercado común centroamericano, por su parte, avanza en flexibilizar los nexos comerciales intraregionales sobre la base de políticas de apertura hacia fuera de la subregión. Por su lado, en medio de tremendas dificultades, la Comunidad Andina de Naciones (CAN)(2), sucesora de la Junta del Acuerdo Cartagena, busca su relanzamiento con la confirmación de los países miembros de su voluntad efectiva de vertebrar e integrar sus políticas macroeconómicas.

A nivel hemisférico, es importante resaltar la experiencia del Tratado de Libre Comercio (TLC), desde un país que no es parte del mismo -Chile- ya ha establecido relaciones comerciales preferenciales con los socios norteamericanos del tratado. Un aspecto interesante del establecimiento de estas relaciones es el de la adecuación del país aspirante a las condiciones y normativa relativas a materias ambiental y laboral vigentes para los socios fundadores del TLC.

Paralelamente, y a partir de la toma de conciencia de la comunidad de problemas que afectan a determinados grupos de países, se sostienen acuerdos internacionales no sólo encaminados a potenciar el crecimiento económico de los países, sino a preservar sus recursos, mejorar los niveles de vida de su población, y trabajar en forma concertada en la promoción del desarrollo sostenible. Tal es el caso del Tratado de Cooperación Amazónica (TCA), suscrito en 1978(3). El TCA se plantea diseñar respuestas coordinadas a una serie de problemas que se presentan como nuevas amenazas a la seguridad regional, como el hambre y la extrema pobreza, el deterioro del medioambiente y las violaciones a los derechos humanos; a partir de la aprobación y puesta en práctica de acuerdos específicos.

Como es bien sabido, el proyecto hemisférico de crear para el año 2005 el Área de Libre Comercio en las Américas (ALCA) tiene entre sus propósitos defender y promover la democracia en un proyecto de ataque a problemas endémicos como la pobreza.

Es verdad que mucho de lo escrito en proyectos o acuerdos internacionales no necesariamente se traduce en programas y planes de acción política concretos. La retórica en los documentos internacionales es una incomoda y a veces inevitable compañía. Lo que sí es verdad es que, primero, los contenidos de los acuerdos van superando enfoques estricta o limitadamente economicistas y, segundo, que van refiriéndose de manera cada vez más clara y concreta (como la condicionalidad democrática en el Mercosur, por ejemplo) al componente democrático y de derechos humanos.

Por ello, estos acercamientos entre países con el fin de lograr su integración económica deben ser vistos como lo que son: oportunidades para el establecimiento de políticas y mecanismos encaminados a consolidar las democracias y proteger los derechos humanos. Ello se inserta en una

perspectiva en la que la multilateralización gradual de temas como los derechos humanos se constituye en un ingrediente colaborador frente a las tremendas dificultades y retos en los que se debe basar la agenda para la gobernabilidad y la democracia en el hemisferio.

Esta perspectiva le ha planteado a muchos la pregunta de si pueden existir contradicciones y hasta incompatibilidades entre las políticas de apertura de mercados y el sistema democrático. La naturaleza de la relación no es clara y, en cualquier caso no es unívoca. De la experiencia latinoamericana se deduce que en algunos casos la reforma económica ha estado atada a condiciones autoritarias (el Chile de Pinochet, por ejemplo), o en otros casos, ha tenido impacto negativo sobre ciertos componentes clave de la democracia, como por ejemplo, el movimiento sindical (caso de Argentina o Perú). En otras circunstancias, ciertos condicionantes políticos e institucionales frenan e impiden el sinceramiento de las economías, postergando medidas inevitables de ajuste y saneamiento en el aparato de Estado (casos de Ecuador y Venezuela).

En algunos foros internacionales se ha abogado en favor del establecimiento -para América Latina- de una condicionalidad de tipo "europeo" para la integración económica. Los criterios-guía, en este caso, serían el respeto de los derechos humanos y los derechos de las minorías. La Unión Europea promulgó una Carta Social que, aunque no es un requisito formal, sí representa un intento por establecer normas de equidad social entre los estados miembros. El Mercosur sería -en la región latinoamericana- el mecanismo integrador que más analogías tendría con ese enfoque.

Se podría argumentar, por cierto, que a nivel interamericano los principios democráticos ya están establecidos a nivel hemisférico en la Carta de la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA) desde 1948 y que no es necesario repetirlas en acuerdos económicos. La historia de América Latina en los últimos cincuenta años, sin embargo, no parecería dar cuenta de un enraizamiento muy sólido de esos principios. Resulta evidente que el peso de un acuerdo económico y comercial, en relación a la explicitación de principios democráticos y de derechos humanos, les transmite a estos una fuerza especial. Esto, sin embargo, debiera plantearse, en todo caso, en consonancia con el desarrollo y fortalecimiento de los mecanismos institucionales internacionales concebidos para la protección de los derechos humanos en armonía con procesos de decisión no sólo latinoamericanos sino globales, orientados a atacar condiciones objetivas generadoras de tensión y conflicto.

La globalización y la democracia

Las relaciones internacionales hacia fines de este siglo, en medio de sus complejidades, están marcadas actualmente por la globalización y la interdependencia. No porque el conflicto -inmanente a las relaciones internacionales- haya desaparecido sino porque este tiende a manifestarse más al interior de los estados que entre los estados. El reto para los Estados está en vertebrarse de manera adecuada a las dimensiones múltiples de la globalización, de manera que esta sirva a los propósitos de bienestar y democracia de los pueblos. Ello supone ajustar metas, objetivos y acciones a esta nueva realidad.

La globalización se presenta como un fenómeno ambivalente. De un lado, impulsa a la homogeneización de políticas (económico-financieras, en especial), de la información y de ciertos valores. El flujo de las comunicaciones vía satélite o internet abre insospechados espacios para compartir puntos de vista y acceder a información. Así, parece borrarse cualquier posibilidad de soberanía absoluta, e incluso de ejercicio franco y definido de fronteras por las autoridades de un país. En el ámbito financiero, los miles de millones de dólares que se transportan cada día en el mundo por cable, superan muchas veces los presupuestos nacionales de los propios países desarrollados que albergan los cuarteles generales de empresas transnacionales.

Por otro lado, sin embargo, la globalización puede hacer que cada vez menos actores en el ámbito financiero o de generación de información manejen la suerte de más y más millones de personas. Las posibilidades de regulación y control se pueden diluir a tal punto que podría llegarse al extremo que sean unas cuantas voluntades en pocos consorcios transnacionales las que decidan la suerte de todo el planeta. Homogeneización de información, valores y políticas sin embargo, no es necesariamente sinónimo de generalización de opciones adecuadas para todas las partes concernidas.

Paralelamente, el fenómeno descrito se manifiesta junto a fenómenos que marchan en dirección contraria. En tanto proceso complejo y contradictorio, la globalización entraña la existencia y generación de nuevos polos de conflicto. El más visible es, acaso, el de la multiplicación de Estados-Nación, que se opone diametralmente a la globalización integradora de códigos, lenguajes, políticas económicas y maneras de organizar las cosas en la sociedad. La creación y re-creación de fundamentalismos y nacionalismos de sorprendente vigor y fuerza, en regiones del mundo tan disímiles como Africa y Europa es otra señal de que el "fin de la historia" no pasa de ser una frase que suena inteligente pero que no refleja los procesos sociales reales del planeta.

Globalización y Conflicto	
Globalización Financiera y de las comunicaciones Erosión concepto clásico soberanía estatal	Multiplicación Estados Nación Fundamentalismos y nacionalismos

Erosión de la soberanía y derechos humanos

La globalización ha ido de la mano de un proceso de erosión profunda del concepto clásico de soberanía estatal que ha tenido expresiones consistentes en el desarrollo del derecho internacional y, en particular, del derecho internacional de los derechos humanos a lo largo de las últimas cinco décadas.

En tanto proceso social y económico, la "aldea global" está, por cierto, mucho más allá del derecho. Pero en el estricto ámbito de lo jurídico y de los derechos humanos, el vertiginoso desarrollo producido ha cimentado mecanismos legítimos de debilitamiento de las autoridades "soberanas" de los estados que ya no pueden -o no deben- actuar sin límites ni estándares fundamentales que se encuentran contenidos en los instrumentos internacionales de los derechos humanos.

La historia y el derecho han avanzado por saltos hacia el orden actual, signado por la erosión de las fronteras. Un hito importante fue la influencia de las ideas liberales en las revoluciones democráticas del siglo XVIII, con su correspondiente expresión en las normas internas de los distintos Estados: Constituciones democráticas a lo largo del siglo XIX y la primera parte del siglo XX.

Más allá de su manifestación en el derecho interno, esos principios se fueron manifestando gradualmente en estándares internacionales insinuándose la lógica de incursionar en asuntos otrora reservados totalmente a la soberanía absoluta de los estados. Esta perspectiva ya se apreciaba para ciertos temas en algunos desarrollos del derecho internacional durante el siglo XIX. Así, por ejemplo, se empezaron a registrar gran cantidad de tratados para regular y proteger los derechos e intereses de grupos nacionales en el territorio de otros Estados.

Por otro lado, a partir de Solferino se avanzó gradualmente en poner en blanco y negro ciertos estándares mínimos para el comportamiento de los combatientes en los conflictos armados. Si bien estos estándares se orientaron sólo a regular las confrontaciones bélicas internacionales, dieron la pauta doctrinaria y conceptual para evoluciones posteriores y más recientes que se refieren a los conflictos armados no internacionales (Art. 3 común de los Convenios de Ginebra de 1949 y Protocolo II de 1977).

Algunos Antecedentes en la erosión de la soberanía clásica

- Status especial a cristianos residentes en el imperio turco (Tratado de París, 1856)
- Derecho a la propiedad, a ejercer comercio, industria y actividades profesionales a los españoles residentes en Cuba, Filipinas y Puerto Rico (1898)
- Sociedad de las Naciones impulsa tratados para proteger minorías étnicas, lingüísticas y religiosas
- Convención contra la esclavitud (Ginebra, 1926)
- III Conferencia Internacional Americana: Convenciones sobre el Estatuto de los extranjeros y sobre Asilo (1928)
- "Libertad de Asociación" y "Libertad de Expresión para los Trabajadores y la Defensa de sus Derechos Humanos" consagrados por estados americanos (Lima, 1938)

A partir de estas tendencias insinuadas desde el siglo XIX, luego de la Segunda Guerra Mundial se acelera e intensifica la "intrusión" del derecho internacional en general y del derecho internacional positivo en particular (tanto bilateral como multilateral), en áreas antes reservadas al ejercicio irrestricto del poder de los gobernantes de cada Estado. A partir de la Carta de las Naciones Unidas, fueron sucediéndose de manera sistemática estos pasos en el desarrollo del derecho internacional de los derechos humanos.

Luego de la Declaración Universal de Derechos Humanos en 1948, se aprobaron y pusieron en vigencia numerosos tratados internacionales sobre derechos humanos. Numerosos instrumentos internacionales de tipo general (Pacto Internacional de Derechos Civiles y Políticos, por ejemplo) o específico (Convención sobre Derechos del Niño, por ejemplo), así como universales o regionales, empezaron a entrar en vigencia a partir de la década del 70 con especial fuerza.

En conexión a esa dinámica de codificación sustantiva, se dio un incesante proceso de generación y proliferación de organismos y mecanismos de protección internacional de los derechos humanos. Algunos con base en tratados internacionales como el Comité de Derechos Civiles y Políticos o el Comité Contra la Tortura, en el ámbito universal, o la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, en el espacio regional. Otros, como los Relatores o Grupos de Trabajo de las Naciones Unidas, basados más bien en decisiones de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos de las Naciones Unidas en torno a *temas* específicos (desapariciones, tortura, mercenarios, etc.) o a países.

A todo ello se agregan los aparatos jurisdiccionales supranacionales de protección de los derechos humanos que, en orden cronológico de aparición, son el Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos y la Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos. Las decisiones jurisdiccionales de estos órganos van mucho más allá de constituirse en meras recomendaciones pues revisten carácter obligatorio. Y lo que es más importante: estos tribunales internacionales funcionan. La Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, por ejemplo, ha dictado sentencia sobre varios países soberanos de América Latina, como Honduras, Colombia, Perú o Surinam, los cuales efectivamente han aplicado o están aplicando esas decisiones.

Si esta diversidad de instrumentos internacionales y de mecanismos de protección es suficiente indicación de la evolución acelerada del derecho internacional en este campo, este proceso está revelando algunos desarrollos conceptuales trascendentes y fundamentales dentro de este marco de "globalización" de los derechos humanos. Quiero destacar dos que resultan especialmente relevantes.

En primer lugar, el hecho que se reconozca e institucionalice la condición del *individuo como sujeto del derecho internacional*. Este desarrollo fundamental del derecho internacional, concretado recién en la segunda parte de este siglo, es el que permite que los afectados puedan presentar quejas y denuncias ante instancias multilaterales frente a un Estado todopoderoso. Con un significativo ánimo de flexibilización, las quejas pueden incluso ser presentadas por terceros -ante la Comisión

Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, por ejemplo- sin que exista previo mandato o representación formal de los afectados.

En segundo lugar, es de la máxima importancia el cuerpo de doctrina que se ha ido generando y desarrollando a través de lo que podríamos llamar la "jurisprudencia" de los mecanismos internacionales de protección. Desde los resultados del procesamiento de reclamaciones específicas, hasta los denominados "comentarios generales" sobre normas o principios emitidos por algunos mecanismos, se ha consolidado un "corpus" doctrinario y conceptual que es doblemente importante.

De un lado, porque desarrolla principios y normas sustantivas ya estipulados (a veces sólo de modo general). De otro lado, porque puede y debe incidir sobre los criterios que apliquen las autoridades e instituciones nacionales en materia de derechos humanos ya que no se está ante "dos" ordenes jurídicos paralelos (el internacional y el interno) sino ante uno sólo en el que convergen los espacios internacionales e internos. Las autoridades administrativas y judiciales nacionales deben pues incorporar en sus razonamientos estos desarrollos generados en espacios multilaterales.

Toda esta evolución se ha traducido en un gran andamiaje normativo e institucional cuyo conocimiento y utilización es de la máxima relevancia. No obstante, el evidente desconocimiento práctico, ético y conceptual que existe sobre el mismo se revela plenamente al analizar los procesos políticos y sociales concretos en diferentes partes del mundo y en particular en América Latina. La suprema ignorancia sobre esta evolución normativa e institucional implica que, en los hechos, las autoridades de muchos estados pongan de lado regulaciones sustantivas y de procedimiento concordadas internacionalmente y que los mismos estados se han comprometido jurídica y políticamente a respetar. Pese a saludables evoluciones, lamentablemente esta negligencia parece ser la regla en las sociedades latinoamericanas así como en la conducta de muchos integrantes y dirigentes de instituciones públicas fundamentales, como la administración de justicia. Esto es ciertamente preocupante, ya que constituye una de las grandes limitaciones para que la "globalización" de los derechos humanos se refleje en avances consistentes y sostenidos en la efectiva tutela y vigencia de los derechos fundamentales.

Pero no es sólo cuestión de ignorancia o de no aplicación de estándares internacionalmente consensuados y desarrollados. Se llega incluso a lógicas confrontativas que resucitan obsoletas opciones dualistas del derecho. Así, se llega en ocasiones a la absurda y paradójica situación que cuando se pone en funcionamiento la maquinaria internacional construida por los propios estados afectando ciertas decisiones adoptadas o actos ejecutados por autoridades de un país, se levantan, recurrentemente, en mayor o menor medida, encendidos argumentos contra la supuesta intromisión en "asuntos internos" del país. A veces parecería que toda esta evolución no ha tocado sino la epidermis de quienes toman decisiones en muchos rincones del hemisferio.

En cualquier caso lo que es muy claro es que como todo proceso social y jurídico, el derecho internacional de los derechos humanos está en evolución permanente tanto en el plano sustantivo como en el de los mecanismos de protección y está muy lejos de ser un fenómeno acabado. Por el contrario, es probablemente la rama del derecho internacional público con la evolución más intensa y en el más rico proceso de transformación y enriquecimiento creativo.

Límites de los mecanismos de protección

En la medida que se explora los derroteros de esta "multilaterización de la injerencia" y de la construcción de espacios de cooperación económica que tienen impacto en la prevención y protección de los derechos humanos, es importante detenerse en revisar algunas de las limitaciones que tienen estos mecanismos que podríamos llamar "clásicos" a la luz de experiencias recientes y novedosas de protección y verificación de los derechos humanos.

Los mecanismos "clásicos" tienen, en medio de sus virtudes, una serie de características que le trazan sus límites. En primer lugar, estos no están implantados en el territorio del país respectivo. La Comisión de Derechos Humanos de Naciones Unidas funciona en Ginebra, el Comité de Derechos Humanos se reúne periódicamente en esa misma ciudad o en Nueva York, la Comisión Interamericana opera desde Washington y la Corte Interamericana desde San José de Costa Rica. En este sentido, lo máximo que pueden hacer sus integrantes en términos de investigación o verificación directa de los hechos o circunstancias materia del reclamo es realizar visitas cortas. Y eso cuando los

Estados concernidos consideran apropiado cursar las invitaciones para ese efecto.

En segundo lugar, estos mecanismos clásicos se caracterizan por tener procedimientos de investigación no permanentes. Sus recursos no solamente son limitados, sino también sus mandatos se hallan restringidos en cuanto a su capacidad de producir investigaciones en el terreno que permitan conocer en todos los detalles hechos o situaciones jurídicas que puedan haber sido materia de una queja, denuncia, o reclamación internacional.

En tercer lugar, por el hecho de estar asentados fuera del territorio en el que eventualmente se producen las situaciones que afectan los derechos humanos, estos mecanismos deben basar su práctica y conocimiento de la realidad a partir de las quejas o denuncias que se le transmitan. Su accionar se limita y está restringido a la posibilidad de que un particular o un grupo de particulares conozca la existencia de ese mecanismo, y pueda llegar con su queja o su reclamo. Esto genera la obvia limitación que restringe severamente el acceso a la realidad que es vista a la luz de la información transmitida en las quejas. Estas, muchas veces, no llegan a producirse sea por ignorancia, por temor derivado de la intimidación, o incluso por la limitada credibilidad de algunos de estos mecanismos en cuanto a su eficacia o celeridad.

Mecanismos Clásicos de Protección Internacional de Derechos Humanos

- no implantados en el territorio
- procedimientos de investigación no permanentes
- acciones sustentadas básicamente en denuncias
- reducidas posibilidades de seguimiento
- limitada capacidad de influencia para cambiar la situación de derechos humanos

Por todas estas consideraciones, los mecanismos "clásicos" tienen además reducidas posibilidades de seguimiento de sus propias decisiones o recomendaciones. Dependen y dependerán de lo que les informen los representantes de gobiernos o, eventualmente, las organizaciones no gubernamentales. Todo esto hace que dichos mecanismos tengan una restringida capacidad de influencia para modificar efectivamente el cuadro de los derechos humanos en un país o circunstancia determinada. No quiero con esto insinuar que estos mecanismos no son fundamentales, pero sí decir que tienen limitaciones serias para transformar radicalmente la situación de los derechos humanos en un país o circunstancia específica.

Los nuevos mecanismos

A veces la creación del derecho se da no tanto por la aplicación de preceptos o normas existentes sino sobre la base de innovaciones y evoluciones que van más allá de lo normado sin que lo contradigan. Los mecanismos no previstos en la Carta de las Naciones Unidas han ido adquiriendo una riqueza extraordinaria en la práctica del sistema en los últimos ocho o nueve años, con las Operaciones de Mantenimiento de la Paz ("Peacekeeping Operations"). Pero no se trata de las operaciones tradicionales integradas por los "cascos azules" y restringidas a supervisar "ceses de fuego" sino las más renovadas y renovadoras operaciones integradas por personal militar y civil, impulsadas por las Naciones Unidas, para establecer o mantener la paz y la seguridad dentro del contexto de acuerdos políticos o de paz a verificar.

¿En qué consisten estas "nuevas operaciones de paz"? ¿cuál es su relación con los derechos humanos y en qué medida introducen elementos de reflexión interesantes en las relaciones entre soberanía, injerencia y derechos humanos?

Primero hay que advertir que se está ante un proceso de extraordinaria riqueza, creatividad y dinamismo, y no ante una situación rígida en la que sólo se aplica lo previamente normado y escrito. Las "nuevas operaciones de paz", no emergen de lo expresamente enunciado en la Carta de las Naciones Unidas (que al respecto no dice nada) sino que van surgiendo a partir de la práctica política de los órganos pertinentes de las Naciones Unidas -la Asamblea General, y particularmente el Consejo de Seguridad- en respuesta a problemas y demandas específicas.

La mayoría de estas circunstancias son las que han derivado no de conflictos internacionales sino de conflictos internos o de graves situaciones de tensión y desorden al interior de países soberanos. Es por ello que estas operaciones están orientadas a hacer frente a conflictos armados de esta naturaleza y a actuar al interior de las fronteras de estados soberanos. Ya no son operaciones de paz como las de los primeros 45 años de Naciones Unidas, sino operaciones como las de Ruanda, Burundi o Haití, entre otros.

Estas "nuevas" operaciones, cualitativamente distintas de sus predecesoras, tienen una serie de ramificaciones, consecuencias y condicionantes de tipo político y jurídico que abren a su vez una serie de interrogantes y posibilidades para el futuro. Ante todo, porque la preocupación central ya no es cómo hacer frente a un conflicto entre dos estados soberanos, sino cómo entrar a trabajar para producir y promover la paz y la estabilidad al interior de un Estado soberano con todo lo que ello ha venido implicando en las operaciones de esta naturaleza producidas en los últimos años en centroamérica (El Salvador, Haití y Guatemala) o en países como Camboya.

Yendo más allá de estas experiencias (contexto de conflicto armado o golpe de Estado), muchos se cuestionan si no estamos *ad portas* de que - en un futuro mediato- se requieran e instalen operaciones de naturaleza semejante ante graves situaciones de tensión interna que no sean exactamente calificables como de guerra o conflicto armado no internacional. De algún modo éste ha sido el caso en países del África, cuando -más allá de que se esté ante un conflicto armado no internacional- lo que se ha presentado muchas veces es el virtual colapso del Estado y de las instituciones públicas. Esta "injerencia internacional" permitiría restablecer, al menos en principio, la institucionalidad pública e incluso la privada.

A diferencia de las tradicionales, estas "nuevas" operaciones de paz ya no se instalan para verificar sólo ceses de fuego, sino para acompañar el cumplimiento de acuerdos globales alcanzados en un diálogo entre las partes concernidas. Ello incluye muchas veces reformas radicales en la composición, principios y formas de organización del aparato del Estado y las instituciones fundamentales. Como corolario de todo esto, dichas operaciones de paz ya no están ni estarán compuestas por contingentes militares únicamente, los llamados "*cascos azules*", sino por policías y especialmente por civiles.

El razonamiento-fuerza detrás de estas innovaciones es que la sinonimia "paz = ausencia de guerra" es falsa. No sirven de nada los ceses de fuego mientras no se ataquen, simultáneamente y con un planteamiento sostenido, las raíces del conflicto. Ello supone abordar la complejidad de temas en los que anidan el conflicto, la inestabilidad y las violaciones a los derechos humanos.

Hablar del hemisferio hoy supone, por cierto, fortalecer los mecanismos que aquí he llamado "clásicos" de protección de los derechos humanos y, a la vez, tener la agenda abierta para impulsar nuevos y heterodoxos mecanismos en el terreno cuando las condiciones lo exijan y permitan. Pero lo importante es explicitar una agenda sustantiva en torno a la cual se puede y debe conjugar esfuerzos en el hemisferio para garantizar el afianzamiento de la democracia y los derechos humanos en el actual contexto.

La agenda continental de derechos humanos

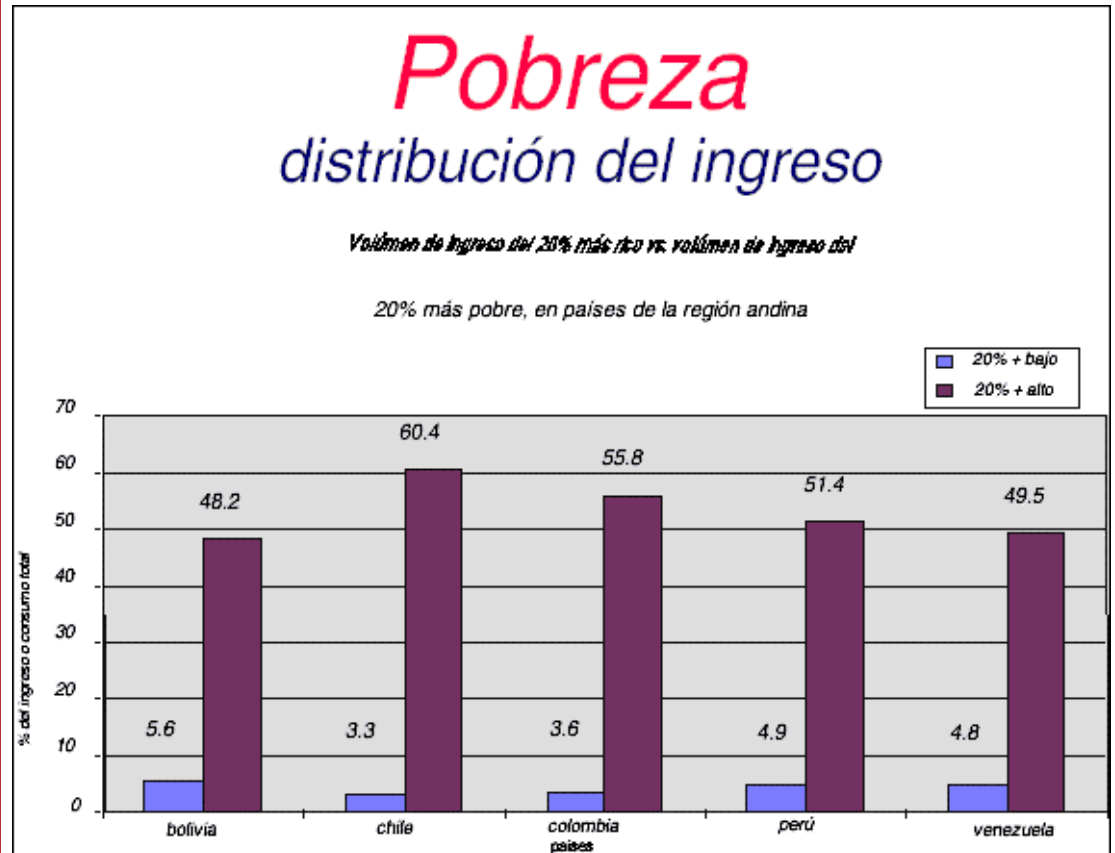
¿Cuáles son esas "raíces" del conflicto o de tensión en América Latina? Sin temor de soslayar las situaciones particulares en cada país, se puede señalar ciertos temas como áreas efectiva o potencialmente generadoras de conflictos, presentes o a futuro. Estos son, de manera general y siempre en el escenario de la globalización, los siguientes: pobreza, medio ambiente, población y democracia.

En el rubro *pobreza*, existen al menos tres dimensiones fundamentales: los niveles de pobreza, la distribución del ingreso y la provisión y acceso a servicios como una expresión específica de la pobreza que afecta a un sector importante de la población.

Aún ciñéndonos en América Latina a las cifras más conservadoras, del total de hogares el porcentaje de hogares pobres sería no menor al 39%, mientras que el porcentaje de hogares en situación de indigencia sería de 18%(4). En las zonas rurales estas proporciones se elevan a 53% y 30%,

respectivamente. Niveles semejantes de pobreza e indigencia socavan inevitablemente la viabilidad y estabilidad de nuestros países.

En cuanto a la *distribución del ingreso*, los datos son preocupantes, ya que existen como dos caras de una moneda, pobreza y riqueza concentrada como caldo de cultivo de inestabilidad y descontento, llevando lógicamente a la indignación y la rebelión. En la región andina el 20% más pobre de la población recibe sólo entre 3,3% (Chile) y 5,6% (Bolivia) del ingreso. Por su parte, el 20% más rico recibe entre el 60,4% (Chile) y el 48,2% ó 49,5% del ingreso (Bolivia, Venezuela)(5).



Estos datos ponen de manifiesto una situación social generadora de tensión permanente, mientras que en lo económico dan cuenta de mercados internos restringidos que dan escaso margen para que las estructuras productivas locales desarrollen parte importante de su producción nacionalmente.

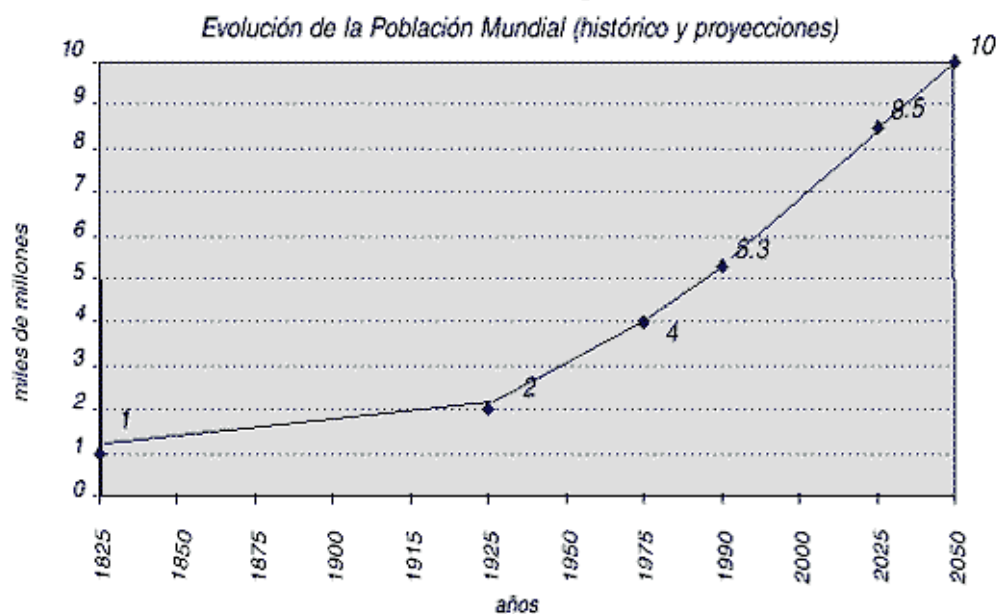
Finalmente, los datos sobre *provisión y acceso a servicios* nos dan cuenta de una situación también seria aunque es verdad que el tema es de difícil análisis, dado que la información es incompleta y poco homogénea lo que dificulta las comparaciones. La constatación de este problema ofrece la oportunidad de llamar la atención a los gobiernos e instituciones sobre la necesidad de recopilar y hacer accesibles estas estadísticas.

A estos elementos hay que agregar los riesgos que se derivan de la afectación del entorno ambiental cuando, por ejemplo, diez árboles son cortados por cada árbol plantado en la región amazónica. Deforestación, calentamiento global, erosión de suelos y contaminación de la atmósfera, tierras y aguas, son amenazas medioambientales de índole global que tienen, en el caso amazónico, entusiastas contribuidores en una explotación forestal indiscriminada o en la explotación de hidrocarburos con controles ambientales insuficientes o inexistentes. En ningún otro ámbito como en el ambiental, es tan claro cómo el comportamiento de ciertos actores globales se vertebran con los locales para tener un impacto global a la larga inmanejable. Sin embargo, a diferencia de las amenazas bélicas, los daños ambientales no son fácilmente perceptibles a corto plazo, por lo cual no es fácil crear una conciencia ecológica en los ciudadanos, menos aún en los encargados del diseño de políticas.

La problemática *demográfica* es otro componente importante en la agenda continental. Preocupan no sólo el crecimiento demográfico de los países, sino también la concentración poblacional en grandes

ciudades y las migraciones internas e internacionales. Así, mientras que en el siglo XVIII la población crecía a un ritmo de 250 millones cada 75 años, hoy se alcanza esa misma cifra de crecimiento poblacional en el mundo cada tres años. Las graduales mejoras en la esperanza de vida determinaron que la población mundial se duplicara en los cien años transcurridos entre 1825 y 1925. Por los avances en expectativa de vida la población volvió a duplicarse ya no en cien sino en cincuenta años (entre 1925 y 1975). El crecimiento actualmente continúa, llegando la población del planeta a un nivel aproximado de 5,3 mil millones de habitantes. Según el Banco Mundial, se espera que la población se estabilice sólo alrededor del 2050, alcanzando para entonces los 10 mil millones. Los países en desarrollo serían los responsables del 95% de este crecimiento, proyectado entre la actualidad y la mitad del próximo siglo.(6)

Población *crecimiento vegetativo*



Este cuadro muestra no sólo un fenómeno de crecimiento poblacional, sino ante uno específicamente explosivo en los espacios urbanos. Para este fin de siglo serán al menos 20 las llamadas "megaciudades", que concentrarán cada una poblaciones mayores a los veinte millones. De ellas, 17 estarán en países en desarrollo. Comparando las proyecciones de distribución poblacional para África, Asia y América Latina, encontramos que esta última tiene la peor perspectiva, con sólo un 15% de población rural, frente al 85% de población urbana. Ciudades como México y Sao Paulo superarán los 23 millones de habitantes cada una.

Esta sobrepoblación acarrea, como es evidente, graves tensiones internas y, potencialmente, internacionales. Las difíciles condiciones de existencia para bolsones enormes de población en megaciudades abarrotadas e incapaces de satisfacer las más elementales condiciones de vivienda, salubridad, educación y ambiente sano son ya fuente de cíclicos estallidos sociales que tienen imprevisibles e inmanejables efectos políticos, institucionales y sociales. Las deplorables condiciones ambientales y de empleo prometen ser, además, factor generador de migraciones hacia el "norte" más rico. No es para nadie una sorpresa que las remesas enviadas por trabajadores migrantes desde los países anfitriones hacia sus hogares alcanzan cotas altísimas. Se calcula en US\$ 70 mil millones el flujo de divisas que circulan por este concepto anualmente en el mundo(7).

De más está decir que no es viable promover la apertura económica a través de la flexibilización de barreras arancelarias o la integración comercial, intentando simultáneamente mantener congelado el tránsito de poblaciones. Permeabilizar el comercio y blindar las fronteras es, acaso, una respuesta viable en el corto plazo, pero probablemente inmanejable en el mediano y largo plazo.

Todos estos problemas configuran un difícil escenario para la gobernabilidad y la vigencia de los derechos fundamentales. Instituciones débiles y poco legítimas, desbalances en las relaciones civil-militares, deficiencias en el control del poder que detenta el ejecutivo por parte de los parlamentos, y la falta de independencia de los poderes judiciales, unida a una crisis generalizada de partidos políticos y movimientos sociales, configuran el otro paquete de ingredientes que plantea colosales retos a la democracia haciendo difícil la vigencia sostenida de los derechos humanos en el hemisferio.

La Integración y la democracia

La revisión de los desarrollos hasta aquí reseñados, recogidos a la luz de la globalización y las crecientes tendencias a integrar mercados, lleva a plantear varios puntos a tener presentes en la agenda de cooperación para el futuro. Los retos están planteados: fortalecer las instituciones democráticas y reducir las desigualdades y la pobreza en cada uno de nuestros países mientras que se mejora el desempeño económico. En tanto región, trabajar para que los acuerdos bilaterales y multilaterales se traduzcan en políticas efectivas de cooperación internacional y de respeto de los derechos humanos. Todo esto en un marco de reglas de juego multilaterales que deben ser respetadas y consolidadas.

El fortalecimiento de las instituciones y conductas democráticas es ingrediente fundamental para la consolidación de la cooperación hemisférica. No sólo los desempeños económicos, sino la trayectoria democrática de cada uno de los países, será lo que finalmente tienda los lazos sólidos que se pretende. Control del poder ("accountability"), elecciones libres y soberanas, descentralización y una ciudadanía mejor educada y activa expresándose en sindicatos, organizaciones civiles, movimientos estudiantiles y otros movimientos sociales, darán cuenta de la salud de nuestras democracias. Difícilmente puede darse un clima de confianza económica en países inseguros e inestables política y jurídicamente. Todo esto sin olvidar el inmenso reto de superar la pobreza y las desigualdades socioeconómicas, que en estos momentos hacen inviables a muchos de los latinoamericanos.

En los enfoques de muchos de los Tratados, Acuerdos y Organizaciones activas en el hemisferio, una clara intención de abordar los problemas comunes de manera holística que debe ser reconocida y alentada. Sólo a través de respuestas coordinadas reconociendo dificultades que nos afectan más allá de las fronteras políticas, podrán abordarse problemas tales como la contaminación ambiental, la pobreza y el deterioro de la calidad de vida, o las migraciones internacionales.

Estos instrumentos, al incluir cláusulas relativas a la defensa de los derechos humanos, se convierten en verdaderas herramientas promotoras de la equidad social y la gobernabilidad en el hemisferio. Los acercamientos entre países para celebrar acuerdos en materia económica se convierten entonces en excelentes oportunidades para establecer estándares que se traduzcan, de manera efectiva, en políticas y mecanismos que contribuirán a la consolidación democrática.

La convergencia de intereses, valores y objetivos es propicia en el escenario internacional para acercar a los países en sus esfuerzos hacia el desarrollo concertado. En este sentido, es necesario presionar para el fortalecimiento del sistema interamericano, pasando por las reformas necesarias, tanto de su estructura como de su *modus operandi*.

En este escenario, el multilateralismo es un espacio importante de acción y diseño de políticas.

En el ámbito universal, los pasos dados por las Naciones Unidas a través de operaciones en el terreno en la perspectiva de crear condiciones estables para la paz reformando las instituciones y verificando la vigencia de los derechos humanos, abre perspectivas importantes a desarrollar en el futuro. La legitimidad de una injerencia multilateralizada y orientada por los principios fundadores de la organización mundial, debiera estar fuera de discusión. Lo importante es encontrar los nexos creadores entre las voluntades políticas y sociales al interior de los estados con la apropiada y eficaz capacidad de interlocución y respuesta en los órganos de las Naciones Unidas y en los estados que la integran.

La reforma de la OEA es también un punto pendiente en la agenda al cual los gobiernos del

hemisferio deben dar una atención apropiada. Se requerirá de una organización más fuerte y activa que funcione como marco para manejar la cooperación económica y política entre los países americanos fortaleciendo su capacidad de proteger la democracia y los derechos humanos. El fortalecimiento y mejora en la capacidad de acción y respuesta oportunas por parte de la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos debe merecer especial decisión política de los gobiernos del hemisferio y de la Secretaría General de la Organización. Estos criterios orientadores debieran inspirar los acuerdos que se adopten sobre la reforma de la OEA en la próxima cumbre hemisférica en Santiago de Chile en 1988.

Hay que reafirmar la idea del consenso como esencia del multilateralismo y rescatar la importancia de la toma de conciencia de la naturaleza común de los problemas, no sólo al interior de América Latina, sino globalmente, como elementos fundamentales para la efectiva integración de las Américas.

1. Agrupa a Argentina, Brasil, Uruguay y Paraguay.
2. Países miembros: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Perú y Venezuela
3. Países miembros: Bolivia, Brasil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Perú, Surinam y Venezuela.
4. Hogares pobres: ingreso menor al doble del costo de una canasta básica. Indigentes: ingreso menor al de una canasta básica
5. Social Watch/Control Ciudadano, 1996.
6. Paul Kennedy (1993) Preparing for the XXI Century.
7. Peter Stalker, The work of strangers: a survey in international labor migration. Ginebra, OIT, 1994.

HACIA LAS AMÉRICAS DEL 2005: DEMOCRACIA, DESARROLLO Y PROSPERIDAD

**Las problemáticas y los impactos legislativos, políticos,
sociales y culturales del proceso de integración
económica de las Américas**

Taller: Libre Comercio y Empleo

"Integración y Empleo"

**Alocución del Señor Jorge Ramírez-Ocampo
Gerente, CENMAR S.A.**

**Coordinador General del Foro Empresarial de las
Américas, Cartagena, Colombia (1995-1996)**

Introducción

Deseo, ante todo, agradecer al Sr. Jean-Pierre Charbonneau, Presidente de la Asamblea Nacional y de esta Conferencia por la invitación a participar en tan importante Convención, para analizar con Ustedes el tema del empleo que es uno de los de mayor trascendencia en el proceso de integración de las Américas.

Deseo, igualmente, saludar a mis compañeros del taller, Srs. Vicente da Silva, Presidente de la Central Única de Trabajadores de Brasil y Pierre Fortin, profesor de la Universidad de Quebec, en Montreal y especialista en temas de empleo y libre comercio.

Ellos, sin duda, tienen mayor autoridad y competencia para analizar este tema. Personalmente me he interesado en este tema durante muchos años, pero especialmente a raíz de la coordinación del Foro Empresarial de las Américas, que tuvo lugar en Cartagena, en Marzo de 1996. En esa oportunidad fuimos los anfitriones de casi 1,600 empresarios y tuvimos la oportunidad de analizar en uno de los talleres los temas relacionados con el empleo. Contábamos para ello con la participación de varios

representantes del movimiento sindical interamericano.

El "Manifiesto de los Trabajadores de las Américas" que fue promulgado por los representantes de las organizaciones sindicales del hemisferio, afiliadas a la ORIT, en Belo Horizonte, Brasil, en Mayo del presente año, incluye una declaración de categórica oposición al proceso de integración :

"El movimiento sindical ha venido alertando sobre las consecuencias desastrosas que los procesos de integración de cuño neoliberal pueden ocasionar a los trabajadores y a los pueblos de las Américas, en términos de eliminación de puestos de trabajo, (y) reducción de los salarios".

El "Manifiesto" se extiende en una serie de consideraciones para justificar su tajante posición y reclama con una serie de "reivindicaciones", que comparto en su mayor parte.

Debo decir, sin embargo, que, en mi opinión, no es válido asignarle al proceso de integración la responsabilidad de eliminar empleos y promover la reducción de salarios. Por el contrario, considero que la integración es el camino más expedito para generar mayores y mejores empleos.

Estimo, por otra parte, que la trascendencia del tema hace que éste deba ser objeto de la prioritaria atención de los cuerpos legislativos, ya que, en el proceso de integración, será indispensable su activa participación.

1. La Destrucción Creadora

En una de las tiras cómicas de "Educando a Papá", Don Pancho exhibe orgulloso las máquinas que desarrollarán todas las actividades de su empresa, sin intervención humana, y concluye: "Ahora sólo nos falta una tarea: **Conseguir empleo**".

Según el Profesor Schumpeter la "destrucción creadora", originada en la innovación tecnológica y en la competencia, es el origen del progreso. Schumpeter señala que una empresa que logra satisfacer mejor y a menor costo las necesidades de su clientela gracias a un avance tecnológico puede desplazar a sus competidores y lograr un éxito comercial. Pero su nuevo paradigma no le permitirá mantener su liderazgo por tiempo indefinido. La confianza puede convertirse en el origen de su destrucción, porque sus competidores comenzarán a ver la manera de superarla con menores costos, mejor calidad o nuevos productos que cumplen mejor la misma función.

Así, la competencia ha ido generando el desarrollo tecnológico, el mayor bienestar de la comunidad y oportunidades de empleo de mejor calidad que las que se ofrecían anteriormente. Veamos dos ejemplos ilustrativos :

En los años 40's, los sistemas de **teléfonos** requerían la participación de **operadores** que conectaban manualmente a los interlocutores a través de un sistema de clavijas. Pues bien, cuando se inventaron los sistemas de discado directo, estos empleos desaparecieron. Sin embargo, gracias a esta innovación tecnológica y a todos los otros avances que utilizamos hoy en las telecomunicaciones, ha sido posible lograr un acelerado progreso de la economía mundial y la generación de millones de empleos mucho más interesantes y mejor remunerados que el de operador de conmutador.

Pero se han perdido muchos empleos. Si hoy se mantuviera el sistema de conmutadores manuales, el volumen de comunicaciones que se realiza en la ciudad de Nueva York requeriría la utilización de toda su población, incluyendo a los turistas y a los recién nacidos, pues, de lo contrario, no se alcanzarían a realizar la totalidad de las conexiones.

Los conmutadores destruyeron muchos empleos, pero el avance en las comunicaciones ha sido uno de los motores más vigorosos del desarrollo de Estados Unidos y de su inmensa capacidad para generar nuevos y mejores empleos.

Otro ejemplo, que tiene que ver con las tradiciones de Colombia a mediados del Siglo pasado, es el de los **arrieros** que transportaban la carga a lomo de mula y a lomo de buey. Esa actividad era vital para el desarrollo del país, porque los arrieros transportaban toda clase de mercancías y eran, además, una especie de correo informal que llevaba cartas y razones.

La arriería era gran generadora de empleo y fue el origen de algunas de las fortunas más antiguas de Colombia, como la de un famoso empresario que vivió hasta principios de este Siglo a quien llamaban Don Pepe Sierra. Don Pepe invirtió gran parte de su patrimonio en propiedades rurales, entre las cuales estaban las tierras del norte de Bogotá, en donde están hoy los principales barrios residenciales. El era prácticamente analfabeta. A alguien que se atrevió a sugerirle que escribiera "hacienda" con "h", le respondió: "Yo tengo muchas **aciendas** sin "h", Ud. cuántas tiene con "h"?

Pues bien, cuando llegaron el tren y el transporte fluvial, comenzó a desaparecer la arriería. Dice el testimonio de un antiguo arriero que hoy tiene más de 90 años: "Ya a lo último, a nosotros nos perseguía el ferrocarril".

Pero veamos cuántos empleos generaría hoy la arriería, solamente para manejar las importaciones y exportaciones del país. Las cifras que vemos a continuación muestran que, si se hubiera mantenido el transporte a lomo de mula, hoy se requerirían cerca de seis millones de trabajadores para movilizar internamente la carga generada por el comercio exterior. Es decir, el 88% de la población económicamente activa (PEA) de las siete principales ciudades del país, que asciende a 6.8 millones de personas.

**Cálculo del número de empleos perdidos
a consecuencia de la desaparición del transporte a
lomo de mula**

Capacidad de transporte de una mula TT	0.150
Velocidad Promedio Km/dia	30
TT/Km/mula/año	1080
Toneladas Comercio Exterior 1996	64,234,000
Distancia Promedio Km	500
TT/Km Comercio Exterior 1996	<u>32,162,000,000</u>
Total	32,162,000,000
Mulas/Día/Año requeridas	29,779,630
Promedio de mulas por arriero	5
# de Arrieros comercio exterior 1996	5,955,926

El ejemplo puede parecer traído de los cabellos, pero ilustra las implicaciones de detener el cambio tecnológico: Los arrieros tenían bajísimos salarios y no requerían educación alguna para ejercer su profesión. Pero si Colombia hubiese mantenido este primitivo sistema de transporte hoy el país sería mucho más pobre y no estaríamos en condiciones de utilizar la mano de obra calificada que hemos educado y entrenado.

Pero el fenómeno de la sustitución de empleos por máquinas no se limita a estos episodios anecdóticos. La historia económica de los últimos 200 años muestra que, en cada una de las etapas de desarrollo se ha presentado la migración de unos sectores a otros.

A mediados del Siglo pasado, Cyrus McCormick inventa la máquina segadora y John Deere el arado metálico. Al poco tiempo aparece el tractor con motor de combustión interna. Eso llevó a que la proporción de la mano de obra nacional dedicada a la agricultura en Estados Unidos se redujera de tres cuartas partes a un tercio, en menos de cincuenta años, y hoy es sólo 3% de la PEA. Pero Estados Unidos tiene hoy más capacidad de producción agrícola que nunca antes en su historia y se ha convertido en el granero del mundo.

Sin embargo, los millones de trabajadores desplazados por las máquinas no está desocupado. Se movió a las nuevas actividades que ha creado la tecnología. Primero se pasó a la manufactura. En 1810 sólo había 75,000 trabajadores en esta actividad. Cien años más tarde la industria norteamericana absorbía 8 millones de trabajadores y en 1960 llegó a 16 millones. En términos porcentuales ésta llegó a representar el 40% del total de mano de obra. En Estados Unidos, el máximo de obreros llegó en 1979 a 32.5 millones. Pero este el proceso tampoco fue indefinido. Desde entonces comenzó a declinar en términos absolutos, mientras las innovaciones tecnológicas continuaron produciendo cambios de escala y procedimiento que llevaron a niveles inimaginables de producción.

Mientras crecían la industria y la agricultura y mientras la tecnología creaba y destruía puestos de trabajo en los sectores agrícola e industrial, se desarrollaba el sector de servicios como nueva fuente de empleo: Maestros, abogados, médicos, funcionarios públicos, artistas, programadores de computador, diseñadores y hasta peluqueros (que en mi caso no tienen mucho oficio)... Ya en 1870 había al rededor de 3 millones de empleados en este sector y en 1990 su número ascendía a los 90 millones. No es fácil pensar lo que sería nuestra sociedad actual sin los empleos generados por el sector servicios, que nos salvó de niveles explosivos de desempleo.

Esa visión de la sustitución de empleos en forma sucesiva por el cambio tecnológico, se ve reforzada por el análisis de Simon Kuznets, quien ha hecho una serie de estudios acerca de la composición del PIB y del empleo en más de cien países, según sus niveles de desarrollo. Ese análisis muestra que, en la medida en que aumenta el ingresos de los países, se fortalecen los sectores secundario y terciario, mientras se debilita el primario. Los siguientes cuadros resumen el análisis de Kuznets:

Distribución del PIB por sectores, según niveles de Ingreso per capita 1958			
Categorías	I	II	III
Ingreso Per capita en US Dolares	575-1000>	200-574	<100-200
Sector Agropecuario	17.4%	20.5%	46.0%
Sector Industrial	47.7%	34.0%	21.5%
Sector Servicios	34.9%	45.5%	34.6%

Como puede observarse, ya en 1958 se veía con claridad la forma en que se desplazaba la actividad productiva del sector agrícola al industrial y al de servicios. Desde luego, con posterioridad a esa fecha, como hemos visto arriba, el proceso continuó y el sector de servicios continuó aumentando su participación en la producción de los países avanzados, mientras el agropecuario pasaba a niveles de un dígito. Pero el mismo fenómeno se daba en la distribución de la demanda de mano de obra, tal como aparece en el cuadro siguiente:

Distribución del empleo por sectores, según niveles de Ingreso per capita 1958			
Categorías	I	II	III
Ingreso Per capita en US Dólares	575->1000	200-574	<100-200
Sector Agropecuario	0,193	37.9%	58.6%
Sector Industrial	46.2%	29.8%	18.5%
Sector Servicios	34.5%	32.3%	22.9%

Simultáneamente con estos procesos, al incrementarse el ingreso per capita, se modificaban los niveles relativos de productividad de los distintos sectores para buscar una nivelación, que, desde luego, se reflejaba en los salarios relativos y en la distribución más equitativa del ingreso. Veámoslo en el cuadro siguiente:

Productividad sectorial según niveles de Ingreso per capita 1958			
Categorías	I	II	III
Ingreso Per capita en US Dólares	575->1000	200-574	<100-200
Sector Agropecuario	0.90	0.54	0.78
Sector Industrial	1.03	1.14	1.16
Sector Servicios	1.01	1.41	1.51

Hoy el proceso no se ha detenido. La revolución informática ha llegado a las fábricas y a las empresas del sector servicios. La reingeniería y la reestructuración de las empresas ha colocado a cientos de miles de trabajadores de todos los niveles fuera de su empleo. Parecería que ha llegado la hora en que se cumpla la premonición de Simonde de Sismondi en 1820, cuando decía:

"¿Qué? ... ¿Ustedes creen que lo mejor que se puede desear es que el Rey, sólo en su isla, pueda producir todos los bienes de Inglaterra con sólo girar una palanca que active a unos autómatas?"

Esta es la visión de algunos de nuestros contemporáneos. Tal vez el principal exponente de esta escuela es Jeremy Rifkin en su libro : *Technology, Jobs and your Future. The End of Work. The Decline of the Global Labor Force and the Dawn of the Post-Market Era*. Según Rifkin, la etapa en que nuevos sectores y nuevas actividades podrán crear los empleos necesarios para mantener empleada la población está agotada. Por consiguiente es necesario encontrar nuevas soluciones. Según él los nuevos empleos se generarán en el sector solidario, dedicados al servicio comunitario, al que dedican parte de su tiempo cerca de 80 millones de norteamericanos. Este tipo de conclusiones surge de llevar la estática comparativa al extremo del

absurdo. Es un neo-Malthusianismo aplicado al mercado laboral.

Personalmente no comparto esa opinión. El crecimiento de la economía crea cada vez mayores oportunidades en campos que todavía no hemos descubierto. Hay una nota en el Times Fax del 3 de Septiembre, escrita por Robert Hershey que nos muestra algunas de las nuevas dimensiones. Señala Hershey que actualmente hay una multitud de nuevas oportunidades de trabajo. "El trabajador de la telefónica es hoy un especialista en comunicaciones". Eso sucede en otras muchas actividades. Los obreros se están desplazando de las actividades rutinarias de ensamble a otros muchos sectores que exigen al trabajador el uso de sus manos, pero también de su cabeza.

Esta situación ha llevado a un nuevo aumento en la demanda de obreros en Estados Unidos, que hoy ha sobrepasado ligeramente el nivel alcanzado en 1979 y ha conducido a una mejora de sus salarios, a pesar de que ya sólo representan 27% de la mano de obra, frente al 40% de hace dos decenios. Como resultado de esta evolución, se están cambiando los supuestos para proyectar los requerimientos de mano de obra. Ahora se piensa que va a seguir creciendo la demanda de trabajadores, en actividades tales como comunicaciones, transporte o seguridad. El hecho es que hoy, a pesar de toda la reingeniería, de las reestructuraciones y el *downsizing* la tasa de desempleo en Estados Unidos es una de las más bajas de las que se tiene registro.

En conclusión, el gran destructor de empleos es la innovación tecnológica. Pero ésta crea nuevas oportunidades de empleo, siempre que existan las condiciones económicas necesarias para que se hagan las inversiones y se desarrollen los mercados requeridos para las nuevas tecnologías.

Desde los tiempos de Adam Smith la teoría económica encontró que la división de los procesos productivos conducía a una mayor productividad y que aquella

requería escalas cada vez mayores para poder desarrollar productos más complejos. Por ese motivo, el comercio, tanto doméstico, como internacional, se ha considerado como el principal motor del crecimiento económico. Pero éste es indispensable para la creación de más empleos mejor remunerados.

Integración y Empleo

Me correspondió, entre 1989 y 1990, dirigir un ejercicio de prospectiva en Colombia denominado "Colombia Siglo XXI". Uno de los capítulos dentro de ese gran proyecto fue el correspondiente a la política macroeconómica, en el que examinamos cuidadosamente el modelo de desarrollo y sus implicaciones para el crecimiento de la economía en el decenio de los años 90's.

Para realizar esa tarea, estudiamos el comportamiento de la economía dentro de dos escenarios alternativos:

Uno en que la evolución de la economía internacional era **optimista** (crecía rápidamente y los precios de nuestros productos básicos de exportación eran altos);

· Y otro **pesimista** en que sucedía lo contrario.

Dentro de estos escenarios, ensayamos tres políticas alternativas:

- Una de "**inercia**", que implicaba mantener el modelo de sustitución de importaciones sin modificación y conservar las políticas tradicionales en materia monetaria y fiscal.
- Otra de "**encierro**", que consistía en mantener cerrada la economía, pero modificar las políticas domésticas para fortalecer el nivel de inversión.
- Y otra de "**apertura**" que buscaba aumentar la competencia internacional mediante la supresión los controles administrativos a las importaciones y

la reducción de aranceles de los niveles promedio existentes (45%) a unos del orden de 12% en promedio. Simultáneamente, se incrementaban los niveles de inversión y se aceleraba ligeramente el ritmo de devaluación del peso.

Como era de esperarse, cualquiera de los modelos económicos era viable dentro de un escenario **optimista**. Pero, aún en esta alternativa, los resultados en términos de crecimiento económico eran muy superiores cuando se utilizaba la política de apertura. En efecto, con este modelo la tasa de crecimiento al final del decenio era del 8.5% anual, mientras que con el encierro se obtenía una cifra inferior al 7%.

Las diferencias se hacían mucho más significativas cuando se aplicaban las diversas políticas en un escenario **pesimista**. En este caso aparecían las limitaciones del modelo de sustitución de importaciones en las condiciones de la economía Colombiana, porque se había agotado su potencial de promover la creación de industrias livianas y se requería de una economía de mayor tamaño para incrementar la escala de éstas o para crear nuevas industrias. Por consiguiente, los intentos de acelerar el crecimiento con estímulos a la demanda doméstica generaban presiones inflacionarias que obligaban a las autoridades a frenar nuevamente la economía.

En el escenario internacional pesimista surgía un problema adicional. Cuando se intentaba mantener el modelo de sustitución de importaciones y aplicar los niveles tradicionales de inversión, surgían unos inmensos requerimientos de financiación internacional que podrían llevar a Colombia a reeditar la crisis de la deuda que sufrió América Latina durante los años 80's y que, afortunadamente, no había afectado tan severamente a nuestro país.

En consecuencia, al reducir la inversión a niveles compatibles con un incremento neto anual de la deuda externa equivalente al 1.5% del PIB, apareció un escenario que denominamos de "**crisis**", porque la tasa de

crecimiento de la economía en esta hipótesis era de apenas 1.3% en promedio durante el decenio, es decir, inferior a la tasa de crecimiento de la población. La siguiente gráfica ilustra la situación:

Pero, con el proceso de apertura, se agravaban las vulnerabilidades de la economía Colombiana se hacía mucho más vulnerable. Por consiguiente, el éxito de esta política dependía de que se hicieran una serie de **reformas estructurales** fundamentales que incluían la supresión de los controles administrativos a las importaciones; la reducción substancial de aranceles; la aplicación de una política comercial activa para abrir y consolidar nuestros mercados, dentro de la cual se buscaría el fortalecimiento de los procesos de integración; la liberación del mercado de capitales y la desregulación del mercado de divisas; la reforma del mercado financiero; la privatización de muchos servicios públicos, y una inversión substancial en obras de infraestructura, muchas de las cuales podrían hacerse por concesión. Pero era también claro que la apertura debía estar acompañada de una reforma laboral que flexibilizara el mercado y que le diera mayor movilidad y que fortaleciera al mismo tiempo el movimiento sindical.

Otra condición esencial para el éxito de la apertura era la de aplicar una política económica severa que permitiera reducir el ritmo de inflación y mantener una tasa de cambio real de equilibrio. De lo contrario, la apertura haría muy vulnerable la producción interna de bienes transables y no podría mantenerse en el largo plazo.

Estas recomendaciones incluídas en el proyecto Siglo XXI fueron incluídas en aquella época en otra serie de análisis que se realizaron en la época por diversos organismos nacionales e internacionales. El país estaba maduro para este gran salto que tenía tan severas implicaciones de política comercial.

El gobierno que se posesionó en Colombia en 1990 resolvió acometer con firmeza las reformas estructurales que había comenzado tímidamente el anterior. En la

legislatura de Diciembre de ese año se aprobó la mayor parte de las leyes correspondientes a las reformas estructurales y en la Asamblea Constitucional del año siguiente se completaron estas reformas con la norma que obligó a la creación de una Junta Directiva independiente del gobierno en el Banco de la República (banco central de Colombia).

Así se logró que Colombia iniciara el presente decenio con una nueva política económica que le permitió lograr, durante los primeros años una tasa de crecimiento de cerca del 5% anual en promedio, al mismo tiempo que reducía el desempleo a niveles que son considerados estructurales y que requieren una mayor profundización de la inversión social y un esfuerzo adicional en obras de infraestructura.

Lamentablemente, la política macroeconómica no se ajustó a los parámetros recomendados por los diversos estudios que se hicieron al respecto, especialmente en lo que se refiere al control del gasto público, el cual, por el contrario, ha crecido a un ritmo que es considerado insostenible por muchos estudiosos. Por consiguiente, se ha producido una severa apreciación de la moneda y el control de la inflación no se ha reducido al ritmo que era recomendable. La falta de continuidad de las reformas ha ocasionado una frenada en el crecimiento económico y un peligroso aumento del desempleo. La reciente aceleración moderada de la devaluación representa una corrección parcial de ese problema.

Hoy Colombia está obligada a continuar su proceso de reformas, especialmente en lo que se refiere a la modificación de las normas que han ocasionado el acelerado crecimiento del gasto público y que están incorporadas en la Constitución nacional. Esta es una condición necesaria para volver a reducir el desempleo, continuar reduciendo la inflación y lograr las altas tasas de inversión necesarias para que podamos continuar compitiendo exitosamente en los mercados internacionales. Así podremos participar activamente en los procesos de integración que continúan desarrollándose en el Hemisferio y en los que hemos tenido un moderado

protagonismo.

Desde luego, en Colombia la opinión pública no ha sido unánime acerca de los beneficios de la apertura y de la integración. Las resistencias han venido del sector laboral que considera que la apertura reduce su capacidad de negociación, y de una parte sector industrial que había crecido dentro de un ambiente de alta protección que había permitido mantener amplios márgenes de utilidad, dentro de mercados oligopólicos.

Un argumento que se presenta con frecuencia y al que no le falta consistencia es el de que la apertura demasiado acelerada de sectores de alta tecnología, que requieren altos niveles de inversión y largos períodos de maduración, impedirá el desarrollo de estas actividades, debido a la competencia internacional. Nosotros pensamos que es necesario que en los procesos de integración se tengan en cuenta estas restricciones y se incluya un criterio de asimetría que permita incluir este tipo de criterios para regular los procesos de desgravación.

Pero el balance del ejercicio realizado en Colombia es positivo y ha logrado el apoyo de la mayoría de empresarios, al mismo tiempo que algunos de los líderes sindicales comienzan a aceptar las ventajas de la apertura, siempre que se cumplan una serie de condiciones, tales como las que enumeré arriba.

He hecho un recuento detallado del proceso Colombiano, porque estimo que nuestra experiencia, con sus éxitos y fracasos, es útil para interpretar las características que deben tener los procesos de integración económica, al mismo tiempo que muestran el inmenso potencial de la integración como motor del desarrollo económico y promotor del empleo productivo.

Alguien podría pensar que la experiencia Colombiana sólo es aplicable a economías pequeñas y con costos laborales bajos, en las cuales el tamaño del mercado no permite que se creen empresas de tecnología avanzada y que puedan beneficiarse de sus menores costos laborales para penetrar

con sus productos en las economías grandes con salarios elevados.

Eso parecerían indicar las posiciones de algunos sectores políticos y laborales de Estados Unidos durante el debate para la aprobación del NAFTA y ahora con motivo de la propuesta de adoptar una Ley de *Fast Track* para las negociaciones comerciales que conduzcan a la aprobación del Área de Libre Comercio de las Américas.

Esas opiniones parecen refutadas por el desarrollo de los acontecimientos. Una vez que entró en vigencia NAFTA, a pesar de que se presentó la gran devaluación Mexicana de 1994 que mejoró las condiciones competitivas de ese país, las exportaciones de Estados Unidos a México continuaron creciendo. Más aún, el mercado más dinámico de Estados Unidos durante los últimos años ha sido el de América Latina.

En un artículo de The Wall Street Journal Americas aparecido el 10 de Septiembre, titulado "En Washington se pelea, pero la gente apoya cada vez más el libre comercio", se informa:

"Solamente en el área de St. Louis, más de 1,200 empresas exportan parte de su producción. Hace cinco años la cifra llegaba apenas a 600... Casi tres cuartas partes son empresas pequeñas o medianas, entre ellas varias fabricantes de aparatos que no requieren alta tecnología, que parecían moribundas hace una década. Durante los últimos cuatro años las exportaciones de Missouri se han elevado un 56% y las de otros 46 estados también se han incrementado substancialmente... En un sondeo reciente (hecho a nivel nacional), el 78% de los encuestados respaldó la expansión de los vínculos comerciales sobre la base de la reciprocidad... Los economistas aseguran que el comercio con otros países ha creado un número mayor de empleos de

los que se han eliminado por su causa, y que los nuevos empleos tienden a tener salarios mayores.

"Debido a que en muchas áreas del país existe en la actualidad una escasez de mano de obra, en lugar de una eliminación masiva de empleos, la disposición de los trabajadores a aceptar el concepto de una economía globalizada aumenta al mismo ritmo que sus salarios... ¿Así es: el comercio elimina empleos hasta cierto punto, pero también los crea' dice Timothy Buck, un miembro de los Teamsters... ¿El Comercio es necesario', agrega Buck," quien ha trabajado durante 20 años en Multiplex Co., empresa que, en vista de que no han aumentado sus ventas domésticas durante los últimos 20 años, exporta el 40% de sus productos.

Estas observaciones encuentran respaldo académico en el informe conjunto del Profesor Raúl Hinojosa de UCLA, con J. Lewis del Banco Mundial y S. Robinson del International Food Policy Research Institute, quienes afirman:

"De todas las opciones regionales, un Acuerdo Hemisférico de Libre Comercio produce los mejores resultados para casi todos los factores y segmentos del mercado laboral de Estados Unidos. Esto se debe a la caída de los precios de los productos intensivos en mano de obra y el desplazamiento de la producción a actividades más productivas para los mercados de exportación."

El argumento que es válido para una economía mediana, como la Colombiana y para la de Estados Unidos, que es la más grande del mundo, es aplicable también al resto de economías del hemisferio. El mismo informe que

acabamos de citar examina detalladamente las consecuencias de las distintas alternativas de acuerdos internacionales en el hemisferio para los siguientes países: Estados Unidos, México, Argentina, Brasil, Chile y los cinco países de la Comunidad Andina.

Las conclusiones son contundentes: Cuando se tienen en cuenta las externalidades, la mejor alternativa, desde el punto de vista de crecimiento económico, comportamiento de la tasa de cambio real y aumento de exportaciones e importaciones, es, en todos los casos, la creación del Área de Libre Comercio de las Américas (ALCA).

Cuando el informe examina los resultados de las políticas comerciales alternativas sobre la remuneración de los factores de producción, incluyendo externalidades, encuentra que, en casi todos los casos, la fórmula más conveniente es el ALCA. Lo interesante es que los únicos casos en que el resultado es negativo son los de México y Venezuela para la remuneración de la tierra y del trabajo rural. En todos los otros casos y en todos los demás países examinados, el ALCA resulta en una mejor remuneración de factores que incluyen: el trabajo rural, el urbano calificado y no calificado, el profesional, la tierra y el capital.

Es interesante anotar que, de los países estudiados, los más beneficiados en términos de mayor crecimiento porcentual a consecuencia de la creación del ALCA son Brasil y México, con incremento anuales adicionales superiores al 3%; seguidos de cerca por Perú (2.8%) y Chile (2.4%). El crecimiento adicional ponderado para todos los países de la muestra sería de 0.53% anual.

Ahora bien, en América Latina se percibe que ha habido un deterioro en la distribución del ingreso y que ésta es atribuible a las reformas estructurales que se hicieron a finales de los años 80's y que incluyen la liberalización del comercio. Se dice, por consiguiente, que el deterioro en la distribución del ingreso es consecuencia de la apertura

económica.

Pues bien, Juan Luis Londoño y Miguel Székely hicieron un estudio en el Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo en el que se demuestra que el mayor deterioro en la distribución del ingreso y en la proporción de pobres en la población de la mayoría de los países de América Latina se registró en los 80's y en los 90's esta situación no se ha empeorado mantenido casi estática. Lo cual demuestra que la percepción popular es válida con un rezago. En lo que no corresponde la situación a la percepción es en lo que se refiere a sus causas. En efecto, el estudio encuentra que el crecimiento del ingreso per capita (así sea transitorio) y la inversión productiva contribuyen favorablemente a la distribución del ingreso; mientras la inflación, las diferencias en capital humano y en particular la desigualdad en educación la afectan negativamente.

Veámoslo en la gráfica siguiente :

Ahora bien, una vez controlados los efectos negativos del capital humano, es posible determinar el efecto neto de la apertura económica sobre la distribución del ingreso. El resultado del ejercicio demuestra que las reformas realizadas durante los años 90's y, en particular la apertura de la economía, neutralizaron el efecto negativo de las diferencias en capital humano y en educación durante el período. En síntesis, el efecto de la apertura ha sido favorable a la equidad en la distribución del ingreso debido a que ha neutralizado el poder de los oligopolios y ha permitido una reducción en los precios relativos de los bienes de consumo, mientras ha mejorado las oportunidades de empleo bien remunerado. Veámoslo en el gráfico siguiente.

Un reciente estudio confirma las conclusiones de Londoño y Székely y demuestra que el comercio exterior ha contribuido a mejorar la distribución del ingreso, tal como aparece en la siguiente gráfica, preparada con base en informaciones del Banco Mundial en el Informe de Desarrollo Humano de 1997, en la que se correlacionan el comercio per capita y el Índice de Desarrollo Humano

(HDI):

Puede concluirse del análisis que se ha presentado que la integración económica contribuye significativamente a mejorar la equidad, a generar empleos y a aumentar los salarios.

Más aún, cuando se observa la economía más integrada que hay en la actualidad, que es la de Estados Unidos, puede concluirse que su gran desarrollo se logró gracias a la integración de una inmensa área económica, que se inició en el momento de la Independencia y terminó de consolidarse a finales del Siglo pasado. Ese alto nivel de integración ha permitido que la economía de Estados Unidos haya sido líder en el desarrollo tecnológico, al mismo tiempo que registra en la actualidad altos niveles de remuneración al trabajo, acompañados de un bajísimo desempleo. El desarrollo tecnológico, y el acceso a un gran mercado que permita la utilización de grandes escalas de producción, destruye empleos, pero se convierte en gran generador de empleo bien remunerado. Lo que resulta más sorprendente es que la principal fuente de crecimiento económico y de generación de empleo en Estados Unidos han sido las exportaciones. De ahí el interés de las autoridades Norteamericanas en promover la integración que les garantice el acceso a los mercados del Hemisferio.

Una anotación final sobre la relación entre empleo e integración: Cuando se realizó el estudio de la Misión de Empleo en Colombia, en 1986, se presentaba un problema de desempleo entre los trabajadores calificados y aquellos con niveles más altos de educación. Ahora, en 1997, un informe de Planeación Nacional señala que hay un problema de desempleo estructural, debido a que, con la apertura económica y la integración, ha aumentado la demanda de trabajadores calificados, mientras que los que carecen de educación no encuentran trabajo.

Esta transformación del mercado de trabajo crea ciertamente una situación difícil para los más pobres, en el corto plazo, pero genera un círculo virtuoso debido a que la demanda de mano de obra calificada y educada se

constituye en gran estímulo para mejorar los niveles de educación. Por otra parte, tal como vimos al examinar los efectos de la apertura sobre la distribución del ingreso, este estímulo para mejorar los niveles educativos es la más vigorosa herramienta para mejorar la distribución del ingreso.

Es conveniente, sin embargo observar dos aspectos adicionales que tienen estrecha incidencia sobre la creación de empleo y podrían neutralizar los efectos favorables de la integración., como son las normas laborales y el ritmo de crecimiento de la economía.

Las Normas Laborales

Cuando se comparan los niveles de desempleo estructural de la Unión Europea (UE) y de Estados Unidos, aparece que éstos se encuentran al rededor del 4% para Estados Unidos, mientras que los de la UE superan el 7% de la población económicamente activa. Esta inmensa diferencia es atribuída en muchos estudios académicos a que la legislación laboral de la mayoría de países de la UE es sumamente rígida, mientras que la de Estados Unidos se caracteriza por su flexibilidad y por la movilidad que ésta genera en la mano de obra.

En el caso Colombiano, preparado por Eduardo Lora y Marta Luz Henao (1995) concluye con los siguientes párrafos:

"Resulta extremadamente interesante ... el hecho de que el cambio estructural (en la legislación laboral) que ... ocurrió a partir de 1991, ... elevó en forma substancial la demanda laboral... Si todos los coeficientes de la regresión se hubieran mantenido en sus niveles de los ochentas, la demanda laboral habría sido hasta **28% menor** de lo que fue realmente.

"Por consiguiente, la reforma laboral parece

haber evitado una severa reducción en el empleo industrial, que habría ocurrido como resultado de otras reformas, algunas de las cuales... (como) la reforma a la seguridad social... (que) aumentó fuertemente los costos laborales y, en combinación con las políticas que abarataron los bienes de capital, habrían conducido a una severa contracción del empleo, de no haber sido por la **reforma laboral**, que redujo la incertidumbre de los costos laborales por despido y cesantía y flexibilizó la contratación de trabajadores."

Estas conclusiones son especialmente significativas porque todavía en Colombia la indemnización en caso de despido unilateral del trabajador por parte de la empresa se encuentra entre los más altos de América Latina.

El informe del Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo de 1996, denominado Progreso Económico y Social en América Latina corrobora estas apreciaciones, cuando afirma:

"Las reformas laborales en América Latina y el Caribe han sido escasas y parciales... La legislación laboral no se ha adecuado con igual velocidad para proteger a los trabajadores ante estos riesgos (de desempleo e inestabilidad laboral) y para facilitar los procesos de ajuste de las empresas... La legislación laboral en la mayoría de los países (de la Región) presenta grandes deficiencias que dificultan la contratación y la movilidad laboral y que gravan el empleo, en vez de estimularlo

"Un adecuado funcionamiento del mercado laboral, tanto en su rol productivo como de asignación de ingresos, **es requisito** para el aumento sostenido de la productividad, el ingreso y la calidad de vida. Tal cosa **no**

implica la desregulación a ultranza, ni la desaparición de instituciones a cargo de las políticas laborales".

Las recomendaciones de este informe, orientadas a corregir estas graves deficiencias de la legislación laboral y sus efectos sobre el desempleo, se resumen así:

- "Aceptar como despido justificado aquél debido a condiciones económicas de la empresa y establecer en este caso un seguro de desempleo";
- "Reemplazar las fórmulas de cómputo de la indemnización por despidos basadas en múltiplos del último salario, por contribuciones acumulables en cuentas individuales";
- "En materia de contratación, optar por reformas integrales en lugar de introducir flexibilizaciones en el margen a algunos tipos de contratos"; y
- "Estrechar el vínculo entre las contribuciones y los beneficios de cada participante en los programas de seguridad social".

Debe, pues, concluirse que, para que se pueda desarrollar el potencial de la integración económica para incrementar la riqueza, el bienestar y el empleo y para que genere las mejoras en la distribución del ingreso correspondientes, es indispensable flexibilizar el mercado de trabajo, sin que ello implique "la desregulación a ultranza, ni la desaparición de las instituciones a cargo de las políticas laborales".

La Política Económica

Una de las conclusiones más vigorosas de los estudios sobre empleo que se han realizado en Colombia durante los últimos años es que éste es función de la tasa de crecimiento economía. En particular, en el informe de la Misión de Empleo de 1986, dirigida por el profesor Hollis Chenery, cuando el desempleo se encontraba en Colombia en su nivel histórico más alto (14.5%), se afirma lo siguiente :

"El crecimiento urbano requerido para reducir el desempleo cíclico en un plazo prudencial es superior al 4%. Con una expansión... del 5% la tasa de desempleo tendería a reducirse a 11.4% en 1990... Sólo una expansión económica a un ritmo medio del 6.2%... podría conducir, al final del período, a la eliminación del desempleo cíclico y a una reducción del número de desempleados."

Pero el crecimiento de la economía en Colombia está estrechamente relacionado con el manejo ortodoxo de la política económica. A ese respecto, se debe anotar que el excesivo crecimiento del gasto público o el mantenimiento de un déficit fiscal sostenido son incompatibles con el control de la inflación, con el mantenimiento de una tasa de cambio real de equilibrio y, a consecuencia de ello, con tasas de crecimiento aceleradas.

Más aún, los estudios recientes muestran que la revaluación de la tasa de cambio real, ocasionados por el aumento excesivo del gasto público y el déficit fiscal, está asociada con el crecimiento del desempleo, porque deteriora la competitividad de los bienes comercializables y porque genera una distorsión en los precios relativos del capital y del trabajo que hace que se adopten tecnologías más intensivas en aquel que en mano de obra.

En el estudio de Eduardo Lora y Marta Luz Henao citado arriba, se señala lo siguiente :

"La demanda de empleo industrial está relacionada positivamente con el nivel de producción y negativamente con el costo salarial real (incluyendo los pagos de las empresas por contribuciones a la seguridad social y otros impuestos a la nómina). La demanda de trabajo también está relacionada inversamente con el acervo de capital fijo de la industria."

Esta relación entre la política económica (con énfasis en el crecimiento económico) y el desempleo se presenta en la mayor parte de los países de América Latina. En el informe del Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo antes citado se dice textualmente lo siguiente:

"Los cambios que han tenido lugar en las tasas de desempleo durante los años noventa han estado influidos por las tasas de crecimiento económico de los países. En las Bahamas, Barbados, México y Nicaragua, donde la producción per capita disminuyó durante los años noventa, las tasas de desempleo se han elevado en 2 puntos porcentuales o más. Entre los países en los cuales el crecimiento económico ha sido negativo en términos per capita, sólo Jamaica ha evitado esta tendencia a un mayor desempleo. En el otro extremo, los países que experimentan un elevado crecimiento económico -como Chile, El Salvador y Panamá- han logrado reducir el desempleo... El caso más preocupante es el de Argentina, donde un crecimiento per capita de más de 3% anual ha estado acompañado de un incremento de casi 7 puntos porcentuales en la tasa de desempleo...

Recientemente la relación inversa que existe entre el crecimiento y el desempleo ha sido más estrecha. El creciente desempleo registrado en 1995 en Argentina México y Uruguay reflejó claramente el descenso en la producción."

Es conveniente señalar que, en el caso de Argentina, en donde el desempleo ha crecido en forma muy preocupante, mientras los salarios reales sufrían un deterioro significativo, a pesar del alto aumento del ingreso per capita, los fenómenos relacionados con el mercado laboral pueden estar asociados con dos rasgos importantes de la

política económica y social. En efecto, en Argentina se ha utilizado el ancla cambiaria como mecanismo de control inflacionario, lo cual ha resultado en una severa apreciación de la moneda ; pero, a diferencia de otros países del área, no se han realizado las reformas orientadas a flexibilizar el mercado laboral. Este último aspecto, como vimos en el acápite anterior, puede haber tenido gran incidencia en el fenómeno que analizamos.

Por lo demás, el desarrollo de nuevas actividades productivas necesarias para absorber la mano de obra desplazada por el cambio tecnológico requiere de inversión, ajustada a parámetros que reflejen la disponibilidad relativa de factores de producción. Pero esta inversión es función de las condiciones de la política económica. Con razón decía Karl Otto Pohl, expresidente del BundesBank de Alemania:

"Las inversiones tienen memoria de elefante, corazón de cordero y piernas de gamo"

CONCLUSIONES

El ensayo que acabo de presentar permite llegar a las siguientes conclusiones:

- El desarrollo tecnológico genera un proceso dinámico que fue denominado por Schumpeter "destrucción creadora", el cual hace que las empresas exitosas sólo puedan mantenerse en el mercado si adelantan permanentemente nuevas innovaciones, de lo contrario desaparecen y son sustituidas por empresas más eficientes. En ese proceso, se destruyen muchos empleos. Sin embargo, los avances tecnológicos generan progreso y crean nuevas oportunidades de empleo más productivo y mejor remunerado. Por consiguiente, la política económica no debe intentar congelar la estructura de la economía, sino facilitar su evolución.

- La integración económica contribuye a la creación de nuevos empleos, en cuanto ofrece mercados más amplios en los que pueden desarrollarse tecnologías más avanzadas que requieren mercados más amplios. La integración abierta permite además una fecunda competencia que impide la aplicación de prácticas restrictivas de comercio. Diversos estudios independientes demuestran que la integración contribuye a la mejor distribución del ingreso y a la reducción de la pobreza. Para lograr este efecto positivo, es indispensable que la integración resulte de la sinergia creadora de todos los sectores : empresarios, trabajadores, académicos, parlamentarios, gobierno, etc.
- Para que se cumplan estos postulados es indispensable que la inversión en capital humano y, en particular, en educación se convierta en un compromiso político y en un objetivo nacional; ya que, del esfuerzo que se haga en estos campos depende el éxito en términos de creación de empleo y mejora en la distribución del ingreso.
- Pero los desafíos de la integración requieren de unas normas laborales más flexibles. De lo contrario podrían resultar en pérdidas de empleos. Estas reformas no implican la desregulación a ultranza del mercado laboral, ni la desaparición de las instituciones a cargo de la política laboral.
- La integración económica requiere como complemento de una política económica ortodoxa, en la que la participación del Estado se concentre en sus funciones fundamentales, con el objeto de que sea posible controlar la inflación y mantener una tasa de cambio de equilibrio; condiciones ambas que son indispensables para lograr altas tasas de crecimiento. Estas, a su vez, están asociadas con la reducción del desempleo.
- Los beneficios de la integración deben distribuirse equitativamente entre empresarios, trabajadores y consumidores.
- El proceso de globalización de la economía es irreversible y la integración regional abierta es una herramienta indispensable para participar eficazmente en el proceso, dada la existencia de

poderosos bloques económicos en otras regiones del mundo.

HACIA LAS AMÉRICAS DEL 2005: DEMOCRACIA, DESARROLLO Y PROSPERIDAD

Las problemáticas y los impactos legislativos, políticos, sociales y culturales del proceso de integración económica de las Américas

Taller: Educación y Capacitación

"Educación y capacitación: entre la inevitable competencia y la igualdad de oportunidades.(1)"

Alocución de la Señora María de Ibarrola
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Introducción. Precisar el dilema y sus implicaciones.

Aunque los términos trabajo, ocupación, empleo, no aparecen en el planteamiento, el dilema que se propone en el tema de esta sesión supone la inevitable competencia alrededor del acceso al empleo; supone también los procesos de inclusión/exclusión que denota el término. La igualdad de oportunidades, por su parte, deberá centrarse en la educación y capacitación. Un último supuesto plantearía, finalmente, que la igualdad de oportunidades educativas y de capacitación, transformará la inevitable competencia y resolverá los problemas de exclusión.

Esta secuela de reflexiones exige un análisis fundamentado en la discusión y la investigación internacionales, que puede ser realizado por medio de la articulación de 5 tesis sobre la competencia por el trabajo, la igualdad de oportunidades educativas y la potencialidad de las relaciones entre educación y trabajo en nuestro Continente.

Sólo así será posible encaminar debidamente las posiciones y las funciones que los parlamentarios participantes de esta Conferencia decidirán impulsar como parte del proceso de integración de las Américas.

Tesis 1. La "inevitable competencia" se ha ido generando sobre la base de sectores productivos desiguales y heterogéneos, que se estructuran e interrelacionan al interior y entre los países del continente.

Como se observa en la gráfica 1, la precariedad en el ingreso (en ocasiones inferior a 300 dólares) y la desigualdad entre países y al interior de los mismos es el rasgo más evidente de América. Esta estadística es la punta del iceberg de las desigualdades en las estructuras productivas y las potencialidades de desarrollo económico de los países del continente.

GRÁFICA 1

Fuente: The World Bank Atlas, 1996

Simplificando las tendencias y los debates de este fin de siglo, es posible proponer dos grandes escenarios, dicotómicos en sí mismos, sobre lo que serán el empleo, la ocupación o el trabajo en el próximo siglo:

1) Un escenario, imaginado desde los países ricos del continente, centrado en los efectos de la globalización y los avances tecnológicos, que a su vez presenta dos polos, el optimista y el pesimista.

El primer polo, optimista, se ejemplifica en los programas de desarrollo económico, la firma de tratados para la configuración de amplias áreas de mercados comunes, los impulsos a la exportación en cada uno de los países. El optimismo se da en el marco de un sorprendente desarrollo tecnológico que convierte en realidad asuntos que hace apenas 20 años se podrían considerar de "ciencia-ficción": las potencialidades humanas de control y transformación de la naturaleza, (la biotecnología, las técnicas del DNA recombinantes al extremo de la clonación de seres vivos, los nuevos materiales) y de comunicación mundial instantánea, tanto material (rapidez de las comunicaciones) como simbólica (instantaneidad de la misma en varios puntos del planeta) y organizativa (poder ordenador de las computadoras). Estos avances transforman radicalmente las relaciones y las formas de producción, en particular a nivel internacional. Los productos se hacen cada vez más a la medida de los gustos diferenciados de todos los posibles consumidores a escala planetaria. Los procesos de producción se vuelven mundiales, la fuerza de trabajo de distintos lugares del mundo aportará partes completas y bien acabadas de productos cuya unidad se controla en los centros hegemónicos. La división de los procesos de trabajo en funciones individuales delimitadas y jerarquizadas resulta ahora completamente ineficiente ante la flexibilidad y la continua innovación que requiere y a la vez propicia la tecnología. En este escenario se aceptan como inevitables la globalización, la reconversión productiva y la competencia en el trabajo pero también como benéficas para el desarrollo de la economía en un marco de libre mercado.

La palabra competencia adquiere en ese contexto el significado poco usado en español de capacidad y aptitud, del saber y saber hacer. Lo imprescindible, en este escenario optimista, será "reconvertir" a la fuerza de trabajo, identificando las nuevas competencias laborales que deberá dominar, orientando al respecto los contenidos de los planes y programas de las instituciones educativas y abriendo las posibilidades de certificar los conocimientos adquiridos tanto en las instituciones

escolares como en los centros de trabajo.

El polo opuesto, pesimista, se ejemplifica en los trabajos de Rifkin(2) y de Aaronowitz y Difazio,(3) conforme al cual..."a medida que las máquinas sustituyen al hombre en cada sector industrial habrá que elegir entre un modelo en el que unos pocos estén empleados durante muchas horas, mientras que otros muchos se hayan en el paro a expensas del subsidio público, o un modelo en el que haya más trabajo disponible dando a más trabajadores la oportunidad de compartir semanas laborales más cortas." (Rifkin, 1992:273)

"La redefinición de oportunidades y de responsabilidades de millones de personas pertenecientes a una sociedad carente de empleo masivo formal será probablemente el elemento de presión social más importante del próximo siglo" (Ibidem:17).

"Muchos buenos empleos en las fábricas y empleos de cuello duro con buenos sueldos y prestaciones están dejando lugar a trabajos mediocres e inestables -citan Aaronowitz y DiFazio-. Eso hace la recuperación económica diferente de cualquier otra. Las tendencias que empezaron en 1980 han producido una nueva imagen de la América trabajadora: trabajos de tiempo parcial, trabajos temporales, trabajos que no pagan más que el salario mínimo federal, trabajos sin más beneficio que algunos días de vacaciones al año, están desplazando a los trabajos regulares que la gente perdió en la recesión pasada y que está reclamando desde que inició la recuperación". (pág. 1)

La propuesta central para la solución es disminuir el tiempo de trabajo legalmente establecido, con el fin de distribuir las oportunidades de empleo entre la población y por otra parte, atender la educación para el "tiempo libre" de que dispondrá esta última.

La palabra competencia adquiere ahí el significado de disputa o rivalidad y tiene como resultado la inclusión de algunos y como contraparte la exclusión de otros.

2) Un escenario centrado en la desigualdad y la heterogeneidad productiva al interior y entre países como rasgo distintivo de América.

Pero los datos sobre el ingreso per capita de los habitantes de América, expresan también que histórica y geográficamente, la situación laboral ha sido muy diferente a la imagen de empleos de tiempo completo y exclusivo, estables y duraderos a lo largo de la vida del individuo, con ingresos sujetos a la norma establecida por ley, a la obtención de prestaciones y beneficios tanto individuales y sociales, incluyendo el seguro de desempleo, y que aseguran niveles de vida acordes a los que en principio ofrece la tecnología.

El segundo escenario que interesa proponer también ofrece dos polos, el del sector formal de la economía, y el del sector informal. Esta dicotomía, descubierta desde hace varios décadas (los sesenta) por los investigadores de la CEPAL(4), descubre en América Latina una estructura dual: una parte moderna y otra muy tradicional, rezagada. El reconocimiento de esta estructura dicotómica, tan aceptada que se sigue usando como importante herramienta de análisis social(5), se fue modificando conceptualmente para identificar dos sectores de la economía, el formal y el informal, o finalmente la existencia de estructuras productivas heterogéneas, que interactúan entre sí con base en una muy desigual concentración del poder económico y de los ingresos.

No es todavía posible identificar estadísticamente la magnitud de esta heterogeneidad al interior de los países y entre ellos, por falta de información adecuada, aunque la heterogeneidad es visible a simple vista en las ciudades latinoamericanas en mayor o menor grado.

Por un lado, los enormes y modernos rascacielos, incluso algunos "edificios inteligentes", que albergan empresas incorporadas plenamente en la economía global, en plan de igualdad con las empresas de los países más desarrollados, en cuanto a la competitividad en precios, calidad, diversidad de productos, etcétera. Este tipo de empresas ha tenido la posibilidad de cumplir con la combinación de variables de organización interna y las exigencias formalmente planteadas por ley para otorgar empleo estable, salarios elevados, llevar su documentación, pagar impuestos, ofrecer buenas condiciones físicas de trabajos, cumplir con todas las prestaciones legales y muchas más. Cumplen también con las exigencias de calidad del comercio internacional. Aunque proporcionalmente son muy pocas empresas (podría decirse que entre un 3 a 5 por ciento según los países), emplean un porcentaje proporcionalmente elevado de la PEA industrial y de servicios y generan la mayor parte del producto interno bruto de los países. Sin embargo, apenas propician condiciones de vida propias de una clase media y alta para tal vez 15 % de la población, entre estas se pueden incluir algunas de las personas más ricas del planeta.(6)

En el otro extremo, la población en condiciones de pobreza, incluso de pobreza extrema, afecta cerca del 40% de la población latinoamericana. En las zonas rurales los campesinos, con formas ancestrales de producción y gravísimas limitaciones en cuanto a la propiedad de la tierra, el tamaño de las parcelas, el acceso a tecnología y créditos(7). En las ciudades se observan a simple vista los "autoempleados", por ejemplo, los que se instalan en los cruceros de las principales avenidas (y ya no tan principales) para vender toda suerte de mercancías baratas e innecesarias o lavar los parabrisas de los automóviles, con tal de no caer en una mendicidad directa, ya que es el único tipo de empleo que pueden autogenerar.

Entre ambos extremos, se localizan pequeños o medianos talleres y empresas, algunos articulados en la cadena de producción de las grandes empresas; los pequeños talleres; los pequeños comercios, los comercios ambulantes, los servicios domésticos, los servicios a domicilio e incluso parte de los servicios o trabajos desempeñados al interior de las empresas modernas más formales (limpieza, mensajería, vigilancia, que se subcontratan a empresas cuyo formalidad deja mucho que

desea, por no asumir los costos de las contrataciones legales). La migración del campo a la ciudad en los países latinoamericanos genera los dramáticos cinturones de miseria, villas miseria, fabelas, que acompañan el paisaje urbano de cualquier ciudad mediana o grande en la región.

El interior de este sector "informal", "no integrado", se conoce poco; se expresan en él muy distintas formas de trabajo y distintas lógicas de articulación de la actividad productiva de los individuos con otro tipo de actividades; coexisten en el sector la denominada "unidad doméstica de producción", pero más bien lo constituyen largas cadenas de relaciones poco conocidas entre individuos e incluso empresas, que culminan, por ejemplo, en la presencia visible de la infinidad de trabajadores ambulantes en las calles, cuya línea de abastecimiento en realidad no se ha estudiado y de cuyas condiciones de empleo e ingresos sólo se sabe que son extremadamente precarias. Esta población ha encontrado su sobrevivencia en la línea de los trabajos irregulares, temporales, sin prestaciones, sin salarios mínimos, sin vacaciones, con una exigencia muy elevada de horario en disponibilidad, muy superior al marcado por la legislación de los propios países, aunque poco productivo y saturado de horas ahorcadas o "tiempo muerto", más que "tiempo libre".

El futuro apocalíptico que temen los analistas pesimistas del primer escenario, ha sido una realidad cotidiana en América Latina. En los países desarrollados de América, esta realidad se empieza a concentrar en la población migrante.

El escenario de base sobre el que se está generando ya la inevitable competencia, disputa y rivalidad por el empleo es sumamente complejo:

En algunos países del continente el escenario dominante puede estar orientándose hacia la disminución del número de empleos y la profunda transformación de los contenidos, responsabilidades y funciones de los mismos. Para la mayoría de los países de América Latina, ese escenario se encuentra sólo en el sector formal de la economía. En este último, se genera ya una inevitable competencia para acceder al "empleo"; que significa la inclusión de unos y la exclusión de otros. La situación afecta de manera diferenciada en función de género y edad; paradójicamente, el gran logro histórico de incrementar significativamente la esperanza de vida de la población se enfrenta al hecho de que los años de vida ganados no se corresponden con una función laboral orgánica; por otra parte, entre los jóvenes que terminaron estudios de nivel superior, la dificultad de obtener un empleo se alarga por varios años. Disponer de seguros de desempleo no cubre a todos los que se pueden localizar en ese escenario.

Al centrar la mirada exclusivamente en este tipo de escenario, lo importante desde el punto de vista educativo parece centrarse en la "reconversión" de la fuerza de trabajo, mediante estrategias educativas que insistan en nuevas competencias laborales y en la preparación para el tiempo libre.

Lo que sucede en la mayoría de los países es la generación de dinámicas poco conocidas de sobrevivencia entre amplios sectores de población que nunca se incorporaron al sector formal de la economía y de dinámicas prácticamente desconocidas entre quienes quedan ahora excluidos del sector formal, sin seguro de desempleo. Entre todas esas dinámicas caben la generación de nuevos procesos de trabajo, sin duda, pero también la lucha violenta por los espacios disponibles en el sector informal (la lucha por las aceras y calles para la instalación de los comercios ambulantes); el ingreso a las cadenas laborales de la informalidad, de la franca ilegalidad, de la corrupción, incluso del narcotráfico.

Los autores norteamericanos identifican el incremento del "tiempo libre" como una de las principales transformaciones que la educación deberá atender. Sin embargo, otro dato que resulta indispensable derivar de la realidad es la desigual ocupación del tiempo entre la población de los distintos países del continente y al interior de los mismos. En el sector formal de la economía se observan dos situaciones: por un lado, la necesidad que han tenido múltiples sindicatos de aceptar una disminución de las horas de trabajo pero también de los ingresos que devengan los trabajadores, y por otro, el incremento de las horas de trabajo entre quienes quedan en el sector formal de la economía, o por lo menos de la intensidad del trabajo desarrollado, al incorporarse en menos personas y empleos las funciones que antes se habían distribuido entre varios. También se incrementan las horas de disponibilidad en el trabajo entre quienes deberán aceptar las diversas estrategias de sobrevivencia del sector informal, no integrado de la economía y la noción de "tiempo muerto" entre ellas, difícil de aprovechar.

Aparece en algunos países una categoría necesaria en los censos para clasificar a quienes "no hacen nada", en particular entre los jóvenes de escasa escolaridad, que ni estudian, ni trabajan, ni han estado ocupados en la última semana el número mínimo de horas que exigen los censos para asignar la categoría de "población económicamente activa", ni buscaron empleo, ni tampoco reciben ningún seguro de desempleo.

Finalmente, el panorama exige incorporar la noción de migración de la fuerza de trabajo. Entre nuestros países, la magnitud que está alcanzando este fenómeno, como movimiento demográfico fundamentalmente laboral, no puede quedar de lado en el análisis. Afecta a los países receptores, a los países expulsivos, a las familias y a los individuos. Es interesante señalar que en muchas ocasiones se trata de migraciones temporales que se reiteran año con año. En todo caso, la facilidad de las comunicaciones y la propia cercanía geográfica, permiten la perduración de lazos afectivos, lingüísticos, culturales y sociales que materialmente no fueron posibles para los migrantes del siglo pasado, pero que ahora afectan profundamente los ámbitos culturales de ambas naciones con el signo persistente de la diversidad.

Es indispensable señalar que, por lo menos en nuestro continente, la situación se complica sobre manera. Los dos escenarios, con sus respectivas dicotomías, son posibles; la situación de base de cada uno de los países modificará substancialmente la manera como evolucione la influencia de la globalización y de los avances tecnológicos en cualquiera de ellos. Los referentes para las oportunidades educativas no pueden entonces limitarse a la noción de "reconversión" de la fuerza de trabajo.

Resulta también fundamental conocer la interrelación entre los distintos sectores de trabajo identificados y los grupos de población que los conforman. Algunos autores(8) identificaron hace tiempo el concepto de "dinámicas de distanciamiento" económico y social entre países y grupos de población, que parecen agudizarse en la medida en que se acelera la rapidez y la velocidad del cambio tecnológico y que desde hace tiempo constituye uno de los problemas más graves por resolver y cada vez más difícil de lograrlo.

Tesis 2. La magnitud de las transformaciones exige hoy más que nunca que el desarrollo económico quede supeditado al desarrollo democrático y al respeto al medio ambiente.

Los acontecimientos y los descubrimientos que se han acumulado vertiginosamente a lo largo del siglo XX, especialmente en las dos últimas décadas, no afectan sólo a la economía y al trabajo; se acompañan de nuevas formas de concentración del poder económico y de los ingresos y de una cada vez mayor separación entre la producción de la riqueza y el control social posible sobre ella.(9) Transforman radicalmente las condiciones de vida y las previsiones de futuro de la población, y en particular las de las jóvenes generaciones. Los signos de los tiempos son objeto de amplio análisis y discusión en la literatura actual y no vale la pena detenernos en ellos en este momento. Destacan el cambio y la diversidad como los rasgos fundamentales. Respecto del primero, es evidente que la impactante penetración de avances científicos y tecnológicos afectan la rapidez y la profundidad del cambio en todas las dimensiones de la vida, no sólo la producción: la composición de las estructuras y relaciones familiares; los movimientos migratorios; la conformación de los procesos electorales; las expresiones culturales. Pero al mismo tiempo, la diversidad se expresa con fuerza en el resurgimiento incluso de corte fundamentalista y violento, de las reivindicaciones de todo tipo de grupos: de género, de edad, de etnia, de región, de lengua, de religión, de cultura.

Los desafíos son complejos. En el ámbito de lo económico, no se trata sólo incorporarse a la globalización, sino de construir socialmente las oportunidades de trabajo confiables y productivas como la única fuente de vida digna para toda la población; ello en el marco de cambios radicales en la división técnica y jerárquica del trabajo, nacional e internacional, que rigió la industrialización del siglo XX. El objetivo de estructurar oportunidades de trabajo para toda la población que asegure condiciones de vida digna obliga tal vez a preguntarse si el tipo y orientación que ha definido el crecimiento económico en el que se encuentra enfrascado buena parte de la población es el que hay que perseguir. Las discusiones acerca de la naturaleza del crecimiento económico no son nuevas. Aun ahora que el capitalismo y el liberalismo parecen haber ganado la lucha ideológica sobre la orientación del futuro, los nacionalismos y las autonomías regionales, consideraciones religiosas y étnicas están penetrando las decisiones sobre la naturaleza del crecimiento económico. Las decisiones de estos grupos, que podrían agruparse en la noción de desarrollo sustentable y respeto al medio ambiente, se basan en consideraciones ecológicas, estándares de vida diferentes, formas de vida basadas en decisiones comunales y democráticas sobre la distribución de la riqueza, ideas profundamente humanistas sobre la organización del trabajo etcétera. Estamos sin duda ante una revolución productiva y cultural de alcance no vistos. El grado de avance tecnológico, por un lado, y el conocimiento de la historia, por otro, deberían permitir mejores opciones de desarrollo para todos.

Sin duda el problema fundamental al que se enfrentan las nuevas generaciones **es el de tomar decisiones en todos los ámbitos de la vida** que requieren referentes tecnológicos y éticos de muy alto grado de complejidad y deben orientarse al reconocimiento de la democracia como forma de vida y esencia de los procesos para dirimir las controversias en todos los ámbitos ello, incluyendo el sentido y orientación que deberá tener el desarrollo productivo.

Tesis 3. La capacidad de tomar decisiones con un alto grado de complejidad técnica y ética constituye la esencia del desafío educativo y de la formación integral que demanda el futuro.

El conocimiento científico y tecnológico está ahora en el centro de las transformaciones laborales y es además el eje del dominio que las personas o las sociedades puedan tener sobre la tecnología y la modificación de las estructuras de trabajo. (10)

Desde el mundo del trabajo, el concepto de "competencias laborales" adquiere un lugar predominante; entendidas como "el conjunto de saberes puestos en juego por los trabajadores para resolver situaciones concretas de trabajo."

"La noción de competencia se sitúa a mitad de camino entre los saberes y las habilidades concretas; la competencia es inseparable de la acción, pero exige a la vez conocimientos. Una vieja definición del diccionario Larousse de 1930 decía: ? en los asuntos comerciales, e industriales, la competencia es el conjunto de los conocimientos , cualidades, capacidades y aptitudes que permiten discutir, consultar y decidir sobre lo que concierne al trabajo. Supone conocimientos razonados, ya que se considera que no hay competencia completa si los conocimientos teóricos no son acompañados por las cualidades y la capacidad que permita ejecutar las decisiones que dicha competencia sugiere" (11)

Cuáles son las competencias necesarias.

El Departamento del Trabajo de los Estados Unidos nombró una Comisión Secretarial en junio de 1991(12), para analizar lo que el trabajo requiere de las escuelas. Una de las conclusiones más claras fue que "el saber hacer laboral "requiere ahora dos componente básicos: competencias y fundamentos. Otra dramática conclusión es que la mayor parte de los jóvenes norteamericanos no las dominan.

Conviene analizar el tipo de competencias que identifica esta comisión y los contenidos de las mismas por el impacto que significan como referentes de los programas educativos. La comisión identifica cinco tipos de competencias:

1. Recursos. Identifica, organiza planifica y asigna recursos: de tiempo, de dinero, materiales y servicios y recursos humanos;
2. Competencias interpersonales: Participa como miembro de un equipo, enseña a otros nuevas habilidades, responde a las expectativas de clientes o consumidores, ejerce liderazgo, tiene capacidad de negociación.
3. Información: adquiere, evalúa, organiza, conserva, interpreta y comunica información. Utiliza computadoras para procesarla.
4. Sistemas: comprende interrelaciones complejas, sabe como operan las organizaciones sociales, los sistemas tecnológicos, distingue tendencias, predice impactos, sugiere modificaciones, desarrolla nuevos sistemas
5. Tecnología: selecciona tecnología, la aplica a las tareas, conserva y repara su equipo.

Los fundamentos de esas competencias son tres:

1. Habilidades básicas: lee, escribe, realiza cálculos básicos, escucha y comunica.
2. Habilidades de pensamiento: genera nuevas ideas, toma decisiones, resuelve problemas, organiza y procesa símbolos, adquiere y aplica nuevos conocimientos y habilidades, razona: descubre la serie de principios que sustentan las relaciones entre dos o más objetos
3. Cualidades personales: responsabilidad, autoestima, sociabilidad, autocontrol, integridad/honestidad.

La transposición pedagógica de las competencias

Es claro que la forma de concebir las competencias laborales propone también transformaciones profundas en las habilidades básicas que había asumido la educación.

Por ejemplo el concepto de "alfabetización" ha sido medido en las estadísticas educativas a partir de dos grandes criterios: entender un recado casero (escribir una carta sencilla, leer una receta), o haber cursado por lo menos tres grados de escolaridad. Es indudable que las habilidades que requieren las nuevas competencias laborales son mucho más complejas: la nueva alfabetización exige leer, entender e interpretar manuales, gráficas y agendas. Refiere también a las lógicas comunicativas de las computadoras y de los medios masivos. Otra habilidad cada vez más requerida es hacerlo por lo menos en dos lenguas; a través de la computadora, el inglés adquiere con más fuerza que nunca el carácter de lengua franca, aunque es importante señalar que para muchos grupos de población latinoamericana, el inglés no sería la segunda sino la tercera lengua.

La importancia de las matemáticas y de las ciencias exactas no admite ninguna duda en lo que refiere a su papel fundamental en las nuevas competencias laborales. Pero los educadores también hemos insistido en la importancia capital que adquieren la enseñanza de la tecnología como un elemento cultural más, y no como una derivación simple de las matemáticas y las ciencias exactas. Se trata de un concepto de tecnología que recupera la noción de estrategia humana para la solución de los propios problemas con el uso razonado, adecuado y potenciado de los recursos materiales y humanos disponibles y de una organización eficiente. Los avances tecnológicos plantean en realidad un triple desafío a muchos países: a) sin duda disponer de los grupos científicos de alto nivel que compartan la "tecnología y ciencia internacionales de fronteras"; b) contar con los grupos de ingenieros y tecnólogos que permitan orientar el conocimiento a la solución de los problemas propios, que siguen sin solución, por ejemplo para la población rural o para las pequeñas y medianas empresas; c) impulsar entre toda su población un conocimiento básico sobre la tecnología para evitar los errores y los horrores causados por los avances tecnológicos, como la destrucción del medio ambiente y la destrucción misma de la vida. Ello es así porque la tecnología afecta todos los grupos de población, pero el conocimiento sobre la misma, y en particular el dominio necesario para producirla y controlarla está muy desigualmente distribuido entre la población: ejemplo dramático de este triple reto es el envenenamiento de tierras, plantas, animales e incluso seres humanos que se da en algunos países por el uso de insecticidas prohibidos en los países que los generaron; envenenamiento derivado del desconocimiento generalizado de sus riesgos y de la incapacidad política de oponerse a su uso.

Las Ciencias Sociales y las Humanidades son tan importantes como las exactas en esta formación y no pueden ser minimizadas. La geografía, forma parte ya prácticamente de los conocimientos económicos indispensables a la globalización, pero también para el reconocimiento y el respeto a la diversidad; la Historia propia y mundial resulta insustituible para conocer el papel que las decisiones humanas han tenido en la orientación de la economía, en la generación de las desigualdades al interior y entre países; es además, la única fuente que permitirá valorar los efectos no sólo económicos sino sociales y culturales que los avances tecnológicos inéditos van teniendo sobre la Humanidad y el medio ambiente.

Finalmente queda clara la magnitud del problema ético que enfrentará toda la población, al entenderse como tal el que refiere a opciones de libertad del ser humano y a las razones que fundamentarán sus decisiones en todos los aspectos de la vida. (13) Nuevamente el reconocimiento y el respeto del otro y de su diversidad, y el respeto del medio ambiente como espacio propio y del otro, alcanza un lugar fundamental en el escenario democrático del futuro inmediato.(14)

Tesis 4. La igualdad de oportunidades educativas en América está muy lejos de haberse logrado, a pesar de un siglo de esfuerzos al respecto. La escolaridad se desarrolló a base de tensiones y contradicciones que condicionan de

manera heterogénea la igualdad de oportunidades y la calidad de las mismas. Se observan también serios problemas de competencia y exclusión en el acceso a la educación.

El análisis previo de lo que significan las nuevas competencias laborales, y la cercanía de éstas con una formación integral del muy alto nivel que permita tomar las decisiones democráticas que requieren los países en los albores del nuevo milenio, explican por qué el sistema educativo recupera a finales de siglo el lugar privilegiado para el desarrollo que pareció haber perdido en la década de los ochenta.

El sistema escolar es el que por vocación y definición se ha convertido en el instrumento social más importante para conservar, transmitir, procesar y crear el conocimiento y para igualar las oportunidades de acceso de los jóvenes al mismo, en particular de ese conocimiento científico y tecnológico que ahora resulta indispensable. Es necesario entonces conocer sus límites y sus posibilidades para encarar los nuevos desafíos en la formación integral que le depara la nueva era de la globalización y de la informática.

La formación general básica y común.

La educación básica, por lo menos de 5 o 6 grados, fue declarada constitucionalmente obligatoria en todos los países de la región a principios del siglo XX, en algunos países incluso antes. A fines del siglo, en todos ellos se observan avances importantes en la matrícula atendida; sin embargo, los datos del cuadro 1, reflejan una vez más los problemas de desigualdad entre los países del continente y al interior de los mismos. Aunque casi todos alcanzan actualmente una elevada tasa bruta de satisfacción a la demanda de escolaridad primaria (gráfica 2), persisten varios que no lo han logrado(15); la sobretasa indica que en casi todos ellos, el sistema escolar atiende población que está fuera de la edad en que se debe cursar este ciclo. Indica también las elevadas tasas de repetición. En muchos países persisten la deserción temprana y la ineficacia de la acción educativa para lograr la formación deseada. Sin embargo, un logro de América Latina, tal vez el más importante de la región, en particular comparado con los países de Asia y África, fue la distribución equilibrada de la matrícula entre hombres y mujeres.

CUADRO 1

Datos generales de escolaridad en los países de América

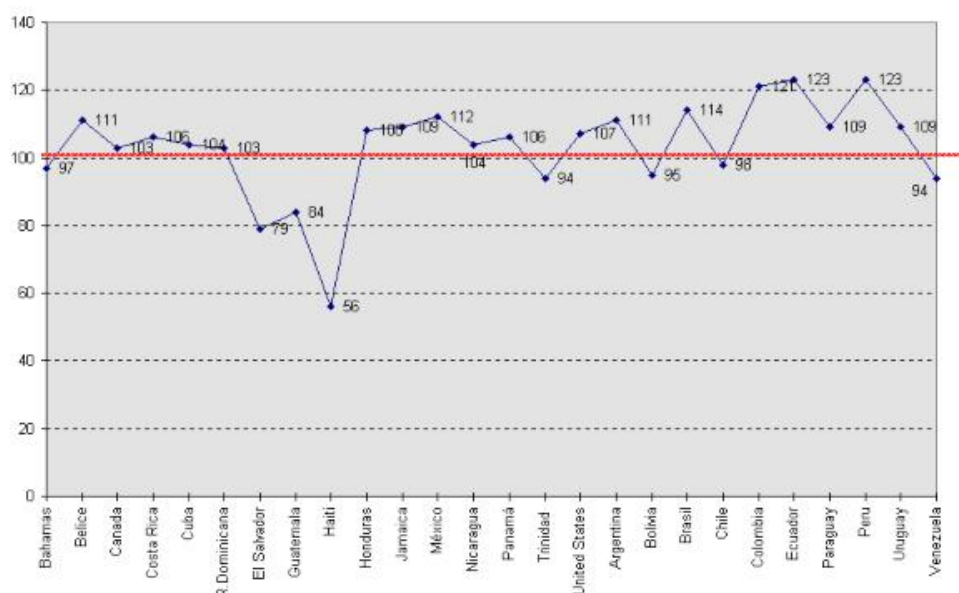
Países	Tasa de escalorización bruta en primaria	Tasa de escalorización bruta en secundaria	Tasa de escalorización neta en 3er nivel	Tasa de Repetidores en primaria (total)	Estudiantes de tercer nivel por 100 000 habs	Gastos totales en educación en % del PNB	Gastos totales en educación en % de los gastos totales del gobierno	Personal total en investigación y desarrollo
Bahamas	97	91			2 493	3.9	16.3	
Belice	111	49		7		5.7	15.5	
Canada	103	106	102.9		6 980	7.6	14.3	114,550
Costa Rica	106	49		9	2 767	4.7	19.2	1,722
Cuba	104	75	13.9	3	1 285	6.6	12.3	35,996
R. Dominicana	103	41		17		2.2	16	
El Salvador	79	29	15.4	8	1 598	1.6		655
Guatemala	84	24		16		1.6	12.8	858
Haiti	56	22		13		1.4	20	
Honduras	108	32	8.7	12	916	4	16	
Jamaica	109	66	5.9	3	668	4.7	12.9	104
México	112	58	13.8	7	1 509	5.8		12,920
Nicaragua	104	43		15	903	3.8	12.2	1,803
Panamá	106	66	27.5	10	2 721	5.2	20.9	
Trinidad	94	76	7.8	4	673	4.5	10.3	806
United States	107	97	79.7		5 546	5.5	12.3	
Argentina	111	67	35.8		3 076	3.8	14	22,855
Bolivia	95	37	22.2	3	2 214	5.4	11.2	
Brasil	114	46	11.4	18	1 081	1.6		
Chile	98	67	26.7		2 389	2.9	13.4	8,740
Colombia	121	64	17.5	7	1 703	3.7	12.9	3,618

Ecuador	123	55		7	2 012	3	19.2	
Paraguay	109	39		8	907	2.9	16.9	
Peru	123	74	30.9	14	3 240	2.9	15.7	7,467
Uruguay	109	81		10	2 179	2.5	13.3	
Venezuela	94	35	28.5	11	2 757	5.1	22.4	10,687

Fuente: UNESCO. Anuario estadístico 1996.

GRÁFICA 2

Tasa de escolarización bruta primaria



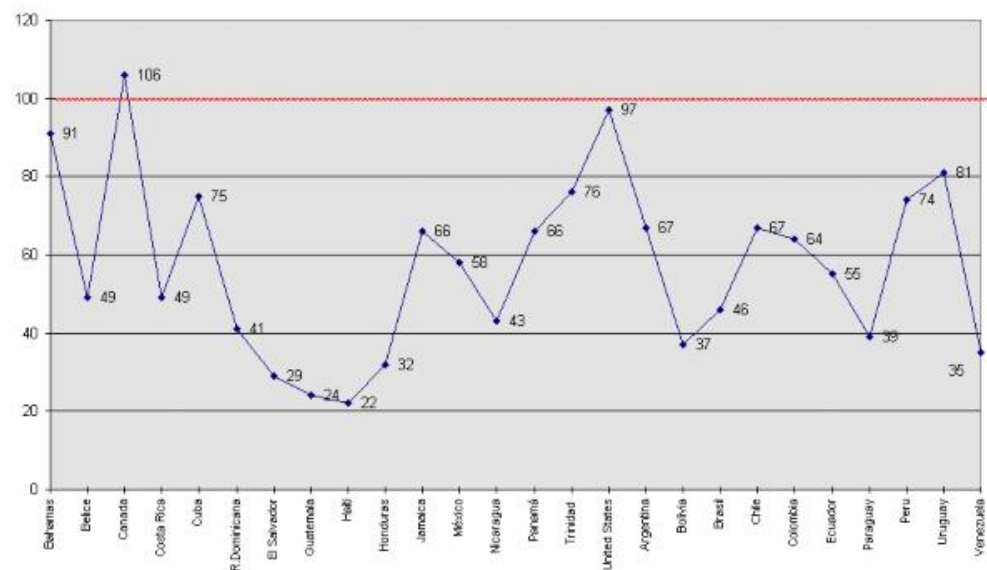
Fuente: UNESCO. Anuario estadístico, 1996

En los últimos años, a partir de la conferencia de Jomtien, los países de América Latina recuperaron la prioridad que habían asignado a la educación en la década de los sesenta y setenta. En prácticamente todos los países se han dado transformaciones educativas que se centran en incrementar los años de escolaridad básica obligatoria y en transformar los contenidos curriculares asignados a este nivel.

En la educación media y en la superior, las tasas de atención son muy inferiores a la básica. A diferencia de Estados Unidos y Canadá, que se acercan al 100% de atención a la demanda secundaria, la mitad de los países de América Latina se sitúa en el rango inferior al 50% y el resto, con excepción de Cuba y Uruguay no llegan al 70% (gráfica 3). En el caso del nivel superior, la distancia es aun mayor. Mientras que Estados Unidos y Canadá sobrepasan el 80%, los países de América Latina con excepción de Argentina, están por debajo del 30%, en incluso están por debajo del 20% (gráfica 4). Lo más impactante, sin embargo, dada la importancia que adquieren la investigación científica y el desarrollo tecnológico, es que casi la totalidad de los países latinoamericanos, con excepción de Cuba y Argentina, tienen menos de 10 000 personas dedicadas profesionalmente a estas actividades (gráfica 5).

GRÁFICA 3

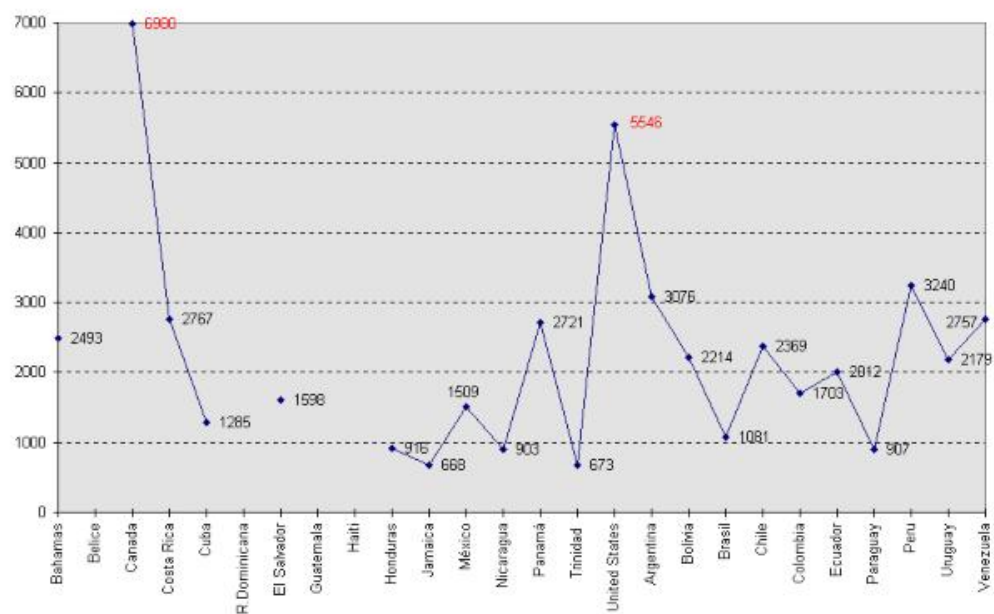
Tasa de escolarización bruta en secundaria



Fuente: UNESCO. Anuario estadístico, 1996

GRÁFICA 4

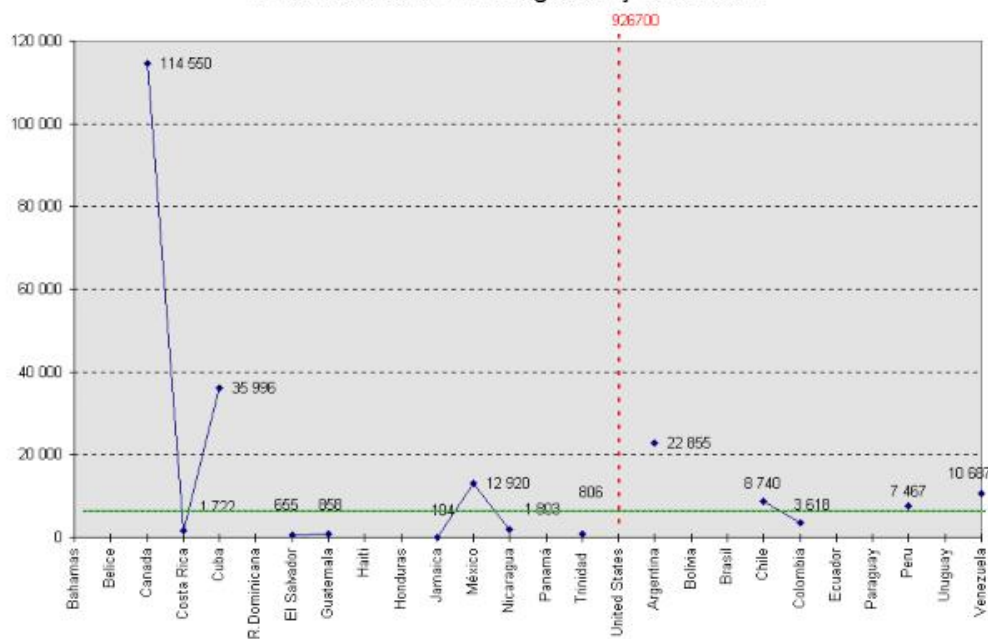
Estudiantes de tercer nivel por 100 000 habitantes



Fuente: UNESCO. Anuario estadístico, 1996

GRÁFICA 5

Personal total en investigación y desarrollo



Fuente: UNESCO. Anuario estadístico, 1996

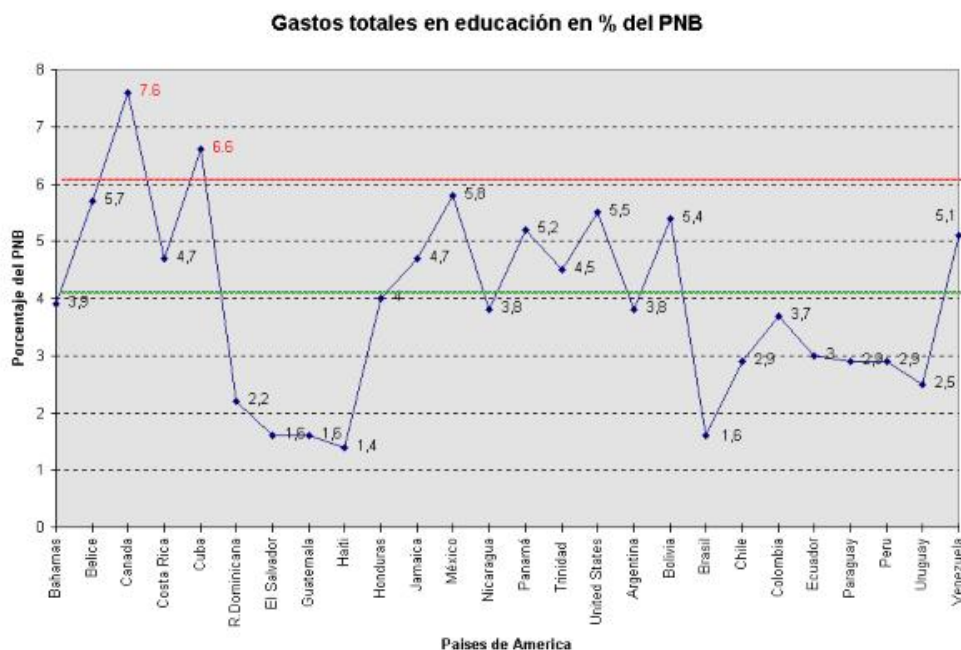
A diferencia de las políticas de impulso creciente a la escolaridad básica, para la educación media y superior las políticas actuales están defendiendo el acceso restringido, la aplicación de criterios de selección basados en una estricta y estandarizada competencia académica y la reducción de la gratuidad.

Esto afecta en particular a un grupo de población que está resultando sumamente vulnerable y desprotegido en los países de América Latina: los adolescentes y los jóvenes adultos que abandonaron la escuela después de tres, cinco, o incluso ocho años de escolaridad formal, cuya formación ya no es de ninguna manera suficiente para los conocimientos que ahora requieren los nuevos empleos en el sector formal de la economía.

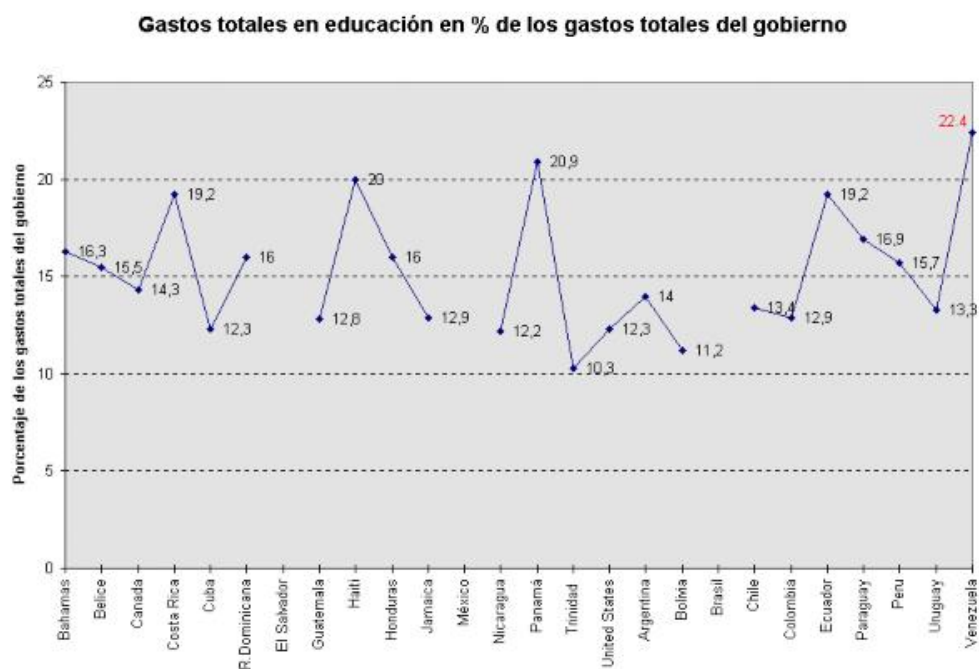
Los datos mismos de las tasas de escolarización en los tres niveles para cada país, indican la desigualdad interna tan grande en cuanto a la escolaridad lograda al interior de cada uno de ellos. Es importante señalar que la historia social y educativa de los países los llevó a no atender suficientemente la educación básica en su momento, y a priorizar el acceso de ciertos grupos socioeconómicos favorecidos a la educación superior; las estadísticas demuestran que el presupuesto público otorga una mayor atención relativa la educación gratuita, media y superior, de los sectores socioeconómicos de mayores ingresos.(16) En respuesta a esa tendencia, la política señala que ahora los gobiernos atenderán la gratuidad de la educación básica y dejarán la educación superior más librada a sus propias fuerzas y a las del mercado.

Los problemas de orden cuantitativo que se localizan con facilidad en las estadísticas internacionales, sólo superficialmente dan cuenta de los graves problemas de calidad de la educación. La escolaridad en América Latina se incrementó cuantitativamente de manera importante, mientras que el financiamiento que se le destinó no sólo no creció sino que en ocasiones disminuyó en términos relativos. En particular en la década de los ochenta, los fondos públicos se usaron para pagar la deuda externa(17). El dinero público nunca ha sido suficiente en América Latina, pero no sólo se trata de problemas de escasos recursos en países pobres. Las políticas fiscales han sido ineficientes, asignadas de manera inequitativa o injustamente evadidas. Otro problema constante y notorio ha sido la denuncia de graves corrupciones de alcance nacional e internacional y la riqueza inexplicada de muchos funcionarios públicos y empresarios privados. La disponibilidad de recursos adecuados para la educación constituye uno de los problemas más graves que no han resuelto los países del Continente (gráficas 6 y 7).

GRÁFICA 6



GRÁFICA 7



Fuente: UNESCO. Anuario estadístico, 1996

La ecuación incógnita entre el incremento de la matrícula y la disminución del financiamiento no es difícil de descubrir, pero en general se descarta como factor que explique las causas de la precariedad de la educación en América Latina. Hubo cinco estrategias principales: a) reducir los salarios magisteriales; b) reclutar profesores sin la preparación adecuada; c) doblar y triplicar el uso de los edificios o los turnos laborales de los maestros, reduciendo el tiempo asignado a la tarea educativa y asfixiando toda posibilidad de mejorarlo; d) permitir el deterioro persistente de las condiciones cotidianas de trabajo de los maestros; e) descuidar el impulso a la innovación, la investigación educativa, la formación de profesores, la evaluación. Por otra parte, la distribución de los recursos públicos para la educación siguió la pauta de las desigualdades socioeconómicas de los países y, por último, las decisiones y múltiples reformas sobre el tipo de educación necesaria cambian con tal frecuencia que no se permite la consolidación institucional de los proyectos que se emprenden, la mayoría de los cuales quedan en declaraciones.

Los problemas educativos no son exclusivos de los países latinoamericanos. En los Estados Unidos y Canadá,(18) con la atención a la demanda de los grupos de edad prácticamente cubiertas, los problemas de orden cualitativo de la escolaridad surgen con fuerza como para indicar que la falta de recursos no es el único problema que afecta a la educación. En esos

países, los problemas de aprendizaje efectivo(19), calidad de la educación, irrelevancia de la misma para los jóvenes,(20) inadecuada atención a la diversidad étnica, demográfica, religiosa, cultural, familiar; desempleo de los más escolarizados, también alcanzan proporciones muy significativas dentro del panorama propio de estos países más ricos del continente. Los resultados de la Comisión Secretarial descubren que los jóvenes norteamericanos no dominan las competencias necesarias que exige el mundo del trabajo.

La última década del siglo XX ha sido especialmente rica en propuestas y recomendaciones para reformar los sistemas educativos de América y del Mundo. En cierta medida coinciden por primera vez las recomendaciones de la UNESCO, con las de los organismos financiadores como el Banco Mundial o el Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.(21) Destaca la riqueza de la propuesta de la UNESCO "La educación encierra un tesoro", (22) que identifica cuatro pilares de la educación: aprender a conocer, aprender a hacer, aprender a vivir juntos, y aprender a ser. El documento señala entre otros que "la utopía que debe guiar nuestros pasos consista en lograr que el mundo converja hacia una mayor comprensión mutua", que la política de educación debe concebirse de modo que no constituya un factor adicional de exclusión", que debe pasarse de la noción de crecimiento económico a la de desarrollo humanos; que debe instrumentarse la educación a lo largo de toda la vida; que debe fortalecerse la relación entre la educación básica y la educación superior; que debe reconocerse y valorarse el papel de los maestros; que los políticos deben plantear claramente las opciones y regular el bien colectivo de la educación y no dejarlo en manos del mercado. Señala finalmente la importancia de la cooperación internacional.

Sin embargo, la propuesta del Banco Mundial es la que ha tenido mayor penetración en los países del continente, en particular porque viene acompañada de recursos financieros etiquetados de manera específica para impulsarla. De esta manera, en los países de América Latina se observa la tendencia a priorizar la educación gratuita para el nivel básico, en detrimento del papel que debe jugar la educación superior en el fortalecimiento de todo el sistema educativo; descuidar la formación de profesores y la revaloración de su función profesional; asignar los presupuestos de formación para el trabajo a los Ministerios del Trabajo, alejados de los Ministerios de Educación.

Otra importante propuesta para mejorar la calidad de la educación, que se ha convertido en política prioritaria en casi todos los países del Continente, ha sido la de transformar la gestión de las escuelas y del sistema educativo en su conjunto a favor de una descentralización de las decisiones de los gobiernos centrales y la apertura a una mayor participación social en la conducción de la educación. La mayor parte de los países se debaten ahora entre la búsqueda de la eficiencia que en teoría supone esa tipo de política, la incapacidad de la mayor parte de sus municipios y escuelas de asegurar una gestión eficiente y los riesgos de reducir las oportunidades educativas en los hechos y profundizar la desigualdad de los servicios educativos.

Tesis 5. Las relaciones entre el mundo de la educación y el mundo del trabajo no son lineales ni mecánicas. Su indudable articulación plantea los conflictos y tensiones en el tiempo y en el espacio que se derivan de la naturaleza propia de cada una de estas dimensiones humanas.

No cabe duda que la educación constituye una de las bases fundamentales para enfrentar los desafíos del futuro. Sin embargo, cuando se propone la igualdad de oportunidades educativas como una variable indispensable para enfrentar la inevitable competencia por el trabajo, es necesario tener en cuenta las consideraciones anteriormente planteadas.

En lo que refiere a la formación laboral, las grandes reformas educativas que se han impulsado en América Latina han tendido a ser orientadas por una visión optimista del desarrollo económico de la estructura y la organización laborales formales. Deberá ser ahora claro que si las estructuras laborales resultan tan heterogéneas y tan complejas, es de por sí difícil que el sector laboral pueda convertirse en un referente único y válido para planear la educación. Cabe recordar la naturaleza eminentemente competitiva y excluyente que está generando el desarrollo económico dominante y entender que si se convierte en el referente fundamental para planificar la educación, habría que restringir las oportunidades educativas y orientar los contenidos a la competencia más brutal. Tal parece ser, por cierto, la política que se está instrumentando para la educación media y superior en varios países del continente.

Las políticas que vinculan la educación con el crecimiento económico han existido para América Latina desde principios de siglo. A lo largo de la historia reciente, los diferentes niveles educativos han sido prioritarios, por lo menos en los discursos, en diferentes momentos: la alfabetización, la educación básica, la educación técnica, la educación general, la educación profesional. Al mismo tiempo, la investigación educativa ha podido proponer diferentes explicaciones acerca de los factores específicos que causan la correlación positiva generalmente encontrada entre niveles de escolaridad y producto nacional bruto: la disciplina escolar, los patrones de socialización, la selectividad que realiza el sistema educativo, las habilidades específicas adquiridas mediante la capacitación, la formación general, el conocimiento altamente especializados, y ahora las competencias básicas. Sin embargo, los cambios en las prioridades educativas se han dado sin que se hayan consolidado los logros previstos para las etapas anteriores y fortalecen la distribución tan desigual de la educación entre países y al interior de los mismos.

El análisis de cualquier proceso intencional de vinculación entre la educación y el trabajo permite descubrir un patrón de funcionalidad/ disfuncionalidad que se modifica en el tiempo y según los grupos sociales a los que se dirige. Un ejemplo claro es el de la educación técnica en América Latina. Durante la década de los sesenta, una importante recomendación internacional fue la de impulsar este tipo de educación para responder a las necesidades del desarrollo de la región, concebidas en esa época conforme a la idea de que en las estructuras productivas latinoamericanas hacía falta un tipo de trabajador muy necesario: "el técnico medio". Se promovió entonces la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de habilidades técnicas específicas propias de posiciones jerárquicas supuestamente bien delimitadas en el mercado de trabajo, tal como lo demostraban las pirámides laborales de los países de Europa y América del Norte. Se impulsó también dentro de las escuelas, el aprendizaje de la productividad impulsada con la tecnología más avanzada de la época, para lo cual se equipó a las escuelas con talleres y equipamiento sumamente costosos. La intención pedagógica y educativa propia de cualquier

proyecto educativo hizo que las escuelas técnicas se consideraron además como instituciones abiertas, democráticas, innovadoras y modernizadoras y procuraran dar cabida a un amplio número de estudiantes con la pretensión de propiciarles el acceso a un mejor empleo. Los resultados en el corto plazo dejaron mucho que desear y no fue sino hasta algunas décadas después cuando se descubrió que en buena medida, el fracaso de las escuelas técnicas radicaba en el hecho de que ese tipo de trabajos específicos con dificultad existían en algunas empresas del sector moderno de la economía. Otro de los factores del fracaso consistió en la inadecuada instrumentación del proyecto educativo, plagado de insuficiencias y deficiencias de tipo curricular, pedagógico, financiero, organizativo y en particular la desatención a su profesorado, que diferentes investigadores han descubierto para América Latina.(23)

En el largo plazo, sin embargo, la educación técnica alcanza una evaluación más favorable(24). Es necesario entender que los tiempos de las escuelas y los tiempos de la economía no coinciden. Aun en los casos en los que una demanda económica se identifica certeramente y se programa curricular y pedagógicamente con validez, la demanda estudiantil sobrepasará rápidamente la oferta escolar disponible. Esta última tenderá a ampliarse y diversificarse en escuelas diferentes, y lo más importante, en distintos niveles de calidad, que no se cuidan adecuadamente. Una vez que los egresados de estas escuelas satisfacen la demanda laboral existente, situación que se da con rapidez dada la naturaleza restringida y competitiva de las estructuras laborales, los egresados sobrepasarán el número de empleos disponibles, provocando las disfuncionalidades que se conocen como "desempleo ilustrado".

De lo que se sabe menos, es de la potencialidad viva que queda en las personas escolarizadas para transformar a su vez las estructuras productivas, de conformidad con sus recursos, en particular recursos de conocimiento disponibles. Algunas estadísticas señalan que en el largo plazo, la población con educación técnica tendría mejores oportunidades de empleo y de ingresos que la población con otro tipo de escolaridad. (25)

Por su parte, la capacitación para el trabajo se entendió durante muchos años y se sigue entendiendo como separada de una formación integral básica. En varios países de América Latina se diseñaron desde la década de los cincuenta importantes instituciones de alcance nacional, especialmente diseñadas para la capacitación en estrecha interrelación con las (reducidas) demandas de los sectores productivos de los países. La mayor parte de las instituciones atendieron exclusivamente a la población incorporada en las empresas participantes en su gestión; con dificultades empiezan ahora a ampliar sus poblaciones de referencia, en particular hacia los grupos desempleados, los campesinos, los sectores de extrema pobreza. Se cuestiona también la naturaleza tan centralizada de su gestión y se proponen alternativas muy interesantes de co-gestión local. Tal vez el aprendizaje más importante ha sido la estrecha interrelación que debe establecerse entre la capacitación y la formación integral. Los programas de capacitación no resultan eficientes cuando la población atendida no cuenta con una formación básica previa, tal como lo demuestran las estadísticas que señalan una mayor capacitación entre quienes tienen mayor escolaridad y la eficiencia de los programas para quienes cuentan con mayor experiencia laboral y con mayor escolaridad.

A pesar de los esfuerzos por la educación básica, el analfabetismo afecta todavía en promedio al 15% de la población adulta y en la mayoría de los países no se ha logrado que toda la población cuente con cinco o seis años de escolaridad. Los grupos de población que no cursaron la escolaridad básica en el momento debido, conforman una fuerza de trabajo en la que predomina el analfabetismo o apenas la educación primaria.

La certificación de las competencias

Un proceso que se está desarrollando a pasos agigantados en todos los países, incluyendo varios países latinoamericanos es el de responder a los problemas de migración y flexibilidad laboral mediante la certificación de las competencias laborales que ha adquirido la población. Lo interesante e innovador de este proceso para muchos países latinoamericanos es que introduce un sistema de certificación adicional e independiente del sistema escolar, que puede resultar sumamente positivo para la población tan elevada que no reúne los certificados escolares y menos aún acumula los años de escolaridad, que ha requerido tradicionalmente la certificación escolar. Sin embargo, el riesgo que tiene esta certificación de centrarse en las habilidades que exige el sector formal más avanzado de las economías y descalificar en consecuencia cualquier otro tipo de competencia, o de centrarse en las manifestaciones visibles de algunas competencias y simplificar los procesos pedagógicos que se requieren para alcanzarlas, puede resultar muy problemático para resolver las distancias que existen en la capacitación y calificación de la fuerza de trabajo.

El desarrollo económico y el desarrollo educativo entran en conflicto, en el corto y en el largo plazo porque se trata de dos empresas humanas diferentes en cuanto a sus objetivos, sus formas de organización, la naturaleza de sus insumos y sus recursos, los "productos" o finalidades que persigue, y los tiempos propios de su desenvolvimiento. Si no se interviene directamente en las dinámicas dominantes actuales, la educación prevista para todos, con muy escasos recursos y una notoria precariedad, se opone necesariamente a la existencia de una estructura laboral que prevé muy pocos empleos para personas con una calificación muy elevada.

La enseñanza de todas estas experiencias a lo largo de la segunda mitad del siglo, indican que no se puede someter la educación a las necesidades de la economía, menos aún a las de una economía estrechamente definida. Es indispensable, por el contrario, apostar el futuro de una educación integral de calidad para todos. Resulta interesante además, como se percibe al analizar las competencias laborales que recomienda SCAN, que por primera vez coinciden las demandas efectivas del trabajo y del desarrollo económico, democráticamente compartido y respetuoso del medio ambiente, con los grandes ideales de la educación.

6. Propuestas y prioridades.

- 1) Los países tienen que asegurar la educación con sentido público (oportunidades para todos) y de muy alta calidad **en todos** los niveles del sistema educativo. Desafortunadamente la alternativa de atender prioritariamente la educación básica ya no es válida, porque el problema fundamental es resolver distancias creadas, con el agravante de que cada vez serán mayores y más aceleradas.

Esta insistencia en que no hay alternativas a pesar de la necesidad de establecer prioridades por motivos programáticos o presupuestales, se fundamenta en varios argumentos: el papel del conocimiento científico y tecnológico en el desarrollo, la complejidad del mismo y la necesidad de atacar las dinámicas de distanciamiento. Si ahora los países latinoamericanos deciden restringir su educación superior dejándola en manos del mercado, no tendrán la posibilidad de fortalecer y sustentar un sistema de educación básica sólido, de formar a los profesores que requiere, de apropiarse de los avances tecnológicos, fortalecer su democracia, que requiere más conocimiento calificado para la toma de decisiones, defender su ecología, que requiere decisiones de muy alto nivel.
- 2) Todos los países han incrementado la escolaridad básica obligatoria a ocho o nueve años, aunque muchos de ellos no han logrado generalizar una escolaridad menor entre toda su población. Hay una sana discusión respecto de los contenidos de esa nueva educación básica, ya que se trata de una educación básica mucho más compleja que exige priorizar la formación integral para el trabajo desde los primeros niveles del sistema educativo. La alfabetización va mucho más allá de la comunicación escrita de mensajes sencillos y exige la capacidad de comprender manuales, agendas, gráficas, lenguaje computacional, el lenguaje de los medios y sin duda el inglés como lengua franca. Las matemáticas y las ciencias naturales tienen una elevada prioridad en el curriculum pero deberá ser claro que no son la única base para adquirir las competencias tecnológicas básicas. Es necesario incorporar la dimensión tecnológica como un tercer elemento fundamental del conocimiento humano, además de las ciencias y las humanidades. Rescatar la comprensión de tecnología no sólo como los desarrollos de avanzada sino como la capacidad de solucionar los problemas con base en los recursos propios y la necesidad de tomar decisiones éticamente fundamentadas en el respeto al otro y el respeto al medio ambiente. Se requiere articular eficientemente los contenidos sobre el mundo del trabajo en los contenidos curriculares de las instituciones educativas: comprensión de los asuntos económicos, la tecnología productiva y la organización del trabajo. Se requiere también una sólida enseñanza en las Ciencias Sociales, las Humanidades y en particular la Ética.
- 3) En muchos países se ha planteado ya con claridad la noción de que esta compleja educación básica tiene que ser alcanzada con equidad por toda la población. Se ha reconocido que el acceso a las oportunidades escolares no es más que el punto de partida; lo indispensable es el acceso al conocimiento y a la formación integral. Lo anterior requiere solucionar cuestiones sumamente complejas como el tipo de curriculum, la adecuación pedagógica a la edad y las características diversas de la población estudiantil, el diseño de textos, estrategias didácticas, formas de evaluación. Atender la diversidad exige dar la debida atención al principio pedagógico básico de partir de las necesidades de cada alumno, en el entendido que estas necesidades responden a una gran diversidad social, étnica cultural, de lenguaje, etcétera. No se trata ahora, de imponer la unidad de una lengua, una cultura, una nacionalidad, sino de alcanzar igualdad de oportunidades en el respeto a las diferencias.
- 4) De ahí que la prioridad a la profesión magisterial, recomendada en particular por la UNESCO y la CEPAL, no puede ser soslayada, como lo proponen diversas políticas del Banco Mundial. Es necesario entender que una transformación de la naturaleza planteada sólo se puede lograr con la amplia y calificada participación de los maestros.
- 5) Los países del continente no pueden descuidar la educación media, con el pretexto de priorizar la educación básica para todos. La demanda para este nivel educativo es más elevada que nunca, ya que es la única oportunidad social para los jóvenes. Es el momento en que se afianzan los valores democráticos y se alcanza la definición vocacional y profesional. Este nivel, en todos los países parece ser el que requiere la mayor transformación organizativa y curricular.

- 6) Se tiene que incrementar el esfuerzo público y el privado en educación superior y desarrollo tecnológico. Los datos sobre la escasa dedicación profesional a esta tarea en la que reside la clave del control del futuro son tal vez los más dramáticos de los datos ofrecidos, (aunque son consecuencia de las fallas en los niveles anteriores). De no ser así, la posibilidad de perder el dominio tecnológico para controlar y propiciar un desarrollo económico y democrático será muy alto.
- 7) Se requiere prestar especial atención al grupo de edad que resulta ahora más vulnerable: los adolescentes y los jóvenes adultos, identificar estrategias imaginativas y audaces que recuperen para los jóvenes el importante papel social a los que su energía y su creatividad les dan derecho, bajo pena de perderlas en las drogas.
- 8) Es necesario ampliar la noción de capacitación para el trabajo, antes tan restringida por la noción de análisis ocupacional, adaptarla a la nueva flexibilidad laboral y articularla a los programas de formación general, incluyéndola en la noción de educación para toda la vida. Es fundamental impulsar oportunidades y programas eficientes para los sectores de pobreza y desempleo.
- 9) Se requiere otorgar una atención especial a la población migrante. Existen ya programas y convenios entre países que será necesario conocer bien e impulsar. Es ahí donde cabe el mayor respeto a la diversidad al interior y entre países: conocimiento de los idiomas, de las culturas, intercambios.
- 10) Se requiere realizar investigación comparada, compartir experiencias en plan de igualdad, no de imposición. Impulsar el conocimiento interdisciplinario y comparado sobre el significado de la competencia por el trabajo en los países de América y en particular sobre las dinámicas de interrelación que se generen: ¿de distanciamiento? ¿de reducción de las desigualdades?
- 11) El problema de los recursos necesarios para impulsar esta enorme y trascendental empresa educativa parece ser el cuello de botella de cualquier intento de innovación y cambio. Los países tienen que entender a la educación como la inversión social y económica más importante y prioritaria. La falta de recursos continuamente argumentada por los países, pierde seriedad ante los datos continuamente revelados acerca de la ineficacia fiscal y de la corrupción en ellos. Se trata entonces de una decisión democrática y de un adecuado rendimiento de cuentas sobre el dinero público.

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- (1) Ponencia invitada por la Conferencia Parlamentaria de las Américas. Quebec, P.Q. Canadá 19 de septiembre de 1997
 - (2) Rifkin, Jeremy. *El fin del trabajo*. Paidós, México, Buenos Aires, Barcelona, 1996
 - (3) Aaronowitz, Stanley y William DiFazio. *The jobless Future*. University of Minnesota Press, 1994
 - (4) Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe.
 - (5) Véase por ejemplo el libro de Carlos Fuentes. *Por un progreso incluyente*. Instituto de Estudios Educativos y Sindicales de América, México, 1997.
 - (6) En 1994 la revista Forbes incluyó 24 mexicanos entre los 500 más ricos del mundo.
 - (7) Recuérdese que uno de los movimientos más importantes de los últimos días es el de los "sin tierra" de Brasil.
 - (8) En particular véanse las obras del brasileño Darcy Ribeiro
 - (9) Durand Ponte, V.M. Globalización, cultura política y educación en México. Documento de trabajo, México, 1995
 - (10) CEPAL/ UNESCO. *Educación y conocimiento. Eje de la transformación productiva con equidad*. Santiago de Chile, 1992
 - (11) Gallart, Ma. Antonia y Claudia Jacinto. Competencias laborales. Tema clave en la articulación educación- trabajo. en Gallart, Ma. Antonia y Rodolfo Bonticello. Cuestiones actuales de la Formación. Red Latinoamericana de Educación y Trabajo / CINTERFOR-OIT. 1997
 - (12) Comisión Secretarial para la Adquisición de las Habilidades Necesarias. Departamento del Trabajo de los Estados Unidos, junio de 1991. Lo que el trabajo requiere de las escuelas.
 - (13) de Ibarrola y Gallart. *Democracia y productividad. Desafíos para una nueva educación media en América Latina*. OREALC/UNESCO, Red Latinoamericana de Educación y Trabajo. Santiago, Buenos Aires, México, 1994. Lecturas de educación y trabajo no. 2

- (14) Son muchos los textos que reconocen la importancia fundamental de la formación ética y valoral como sustrato fundamental de la educación que requiere el futuro. Por mencionar algunos muy recientes: Eco, Humberto y Marini. En qué creen los que no creen. Sabater, Fernando, El valor de educar. Instituto de Estudios Educativos y Sindicales de América, México, 1997.
- (15) Fue necesario tomar como información para la gráfica la tasa bruta de escolaridad con fines de comparación, ya que los datos sobre la tasa neta no estaban disponibles para todos los países del continente.
- (16) Datos ofrecidos por CEPAL/UNESCO. *Educación y conocimiento. Eje de la transformación productiva con equidad*. Santiago de Chile, 1992. pag. 55
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- (24) de Ibarrola y Gallart, eds. Democracia y Productividad. Desafíos para una nueva educación media en América Latina, op. cit
- (25) En el caso de México aparece con claridad en las estadísticas más recientes.

VERS LES AMÉRIQUES DE 2005: DÉMOCRATIE, DÉVELOPPEMENT ET PROSPÉRITÉ

**Les enjeux et les impacts législatifs, politiques et
culturels
du processus d'intégration économique des Amériques**

Atelier: Éducation et formation

Gestion du changement et intégration

**Allocution de monsieur Pierre Van Der Donckt
Secrétaire général exécutif de l'Organisation
universitaire interaméricaine (OUI)**

J'ai intitulé ce bref exposé « Gestion du changement et intégration » et je tenterai le plus simplement possible de développer deux thèmes. Premier thème, tous les systèmes d'éducation de nos pays ont subi des transformations profondes depuis les années 60 mais devant les secousses tectoniques qui ébranlent le monde actuel, ces systèmes sont entrés dans une nouvelle phase de transformations inéluctables et encore plus profondes. Notre défi commun, c'est de gérer le changement.

Deuxième thème, tout projet de transformation de nos systèmes d'éducation doit tenir compte du contexte d'intégration qui caractérisera de plus en plus l'évolution des pays du continent américain. Ce contexte nouveau appelle la création de nouvelles formes de coopération entre nous. C'est pourquoi, l'Organisation universitaire interaméricaine (OUI) propose la création du Collège des Amériques.

Le premier thème porte sur la gestion du changement. Le Ministre de l'Éducation du Brésil, Paulo Renato de Souza affirmait récemment que le modèle universitaire est totalement épuisé et que, si on ne le change pas de façon radicale, la crise qui affectera l'université est inimaginable.

La gestion du changement résulte souvent de situations de crises. Déjà, dans les années 60, on parlait de crise, et on utilise encore ce mot pour qualifier l'état qui prévaut aujourd'hui dans le monde de l'éducation.

La rhétorique de la crise ne doit pas minimiser les progrès accomplis. Beaucoup de réformes qui ont été implantées dans nos pays ont produit des résultats très positifs. Les investissements massifs qui ont été réalisés ont permis de doter presque tous nos systèmes scolaires d'infrastructures suffisantes pour accueillir à l'école comme à l'université des millions de jeunes. Le taux de participation des femmes à l'éducation en particulier est une réalisation aux conséquences énormes dont tous nos pays ont bénéficié. Je pourrais citer plusieurs autres exemples semblables, comme le développement de la formation technique ou la création de centres de recherche de premier plan, y compris en Amérique latine et dans les Caraïbes. Mais malgré les résultats très positifs et parfois spectaculaires obtenus, des problèmes persistants demeurent et il faut s'y attaquer avec détermination même si les ressources financières disponibles ne sont plus aussi abondantes qu'autrefois.

Comme mes fonctions m'amènent à me déplacer constamment d'un pays à l'autre du continent pour rencontrer des leaders universitaires, je suis frappé par le changement d'attitude que je perçois chez eux depuis une dizaine d'années. La crise des finances publiques nous a rendus plus sobres et plus réalistes. Mais cela ne doit pas empêcher que l'éducation demeure la clé du développement économique et social et, par conséquent, une priorité dans nos choix collectifs. Il faut chercher des moyens plus efficaces pour lever les obstacles qui continuent de réduire l'accès à une formation de qualité, et à rechercher les consensus les plus larges possibles sur les meilleures stratégies à adopter. La moitié seulement des enfants qui entrent à l'école primaire en Amérique latine terminent ce cycle d'études. Cette performance est lamentable et honteuse. Beaucoup d'enseignants et de dirigeants acceptent maintenant le fait que trop d'étudiants entrent à l'université et y demeurent durant des années sans

avoir les aptitudes ni le goût de réussir. La prolifération d'institutions privées n'est pas accompagnée de processus suffisamment rigoureux et transparents d'évaluation de la qualité. Les interventions des gouvernements sont trop souvent indifférenciées et impuissantes à toucher ceux qui devraient en bénéficier le plus. Il faut, par exemple, se demander pourquoi les universités qui n'accueillent que 6% de la clientèle scolaire reçoivent, en Amérique latine et dans les Antilles, 25% des budgets consacrés à l'éducation? Manifestement, certaines couches sociales ne fournissent pas leur juste part.

Ce ne sont là que quelques-uns des problèmes pressants auxquels vous êtes confrontés. Mais gérer le changement ne consiste pas uniquement à gérer l'héritage du passé et les urgences du moment. Gérer le changement c'est aussi prendre en compte les tendances lourdes qui vont déterminer l'avenir de nos pays. Et ces tendances, vous les connaissez. Il est devenu banal de parler du phénomène d'explosion de l'information, de la transformation du marché du travail, de l'ouverture des économies, de l'émergence de nouvelles coalitions régionales, etc... Certains affirment que les changements que l'on vit ont plus d'ampleur que ceux qui ont eu lieu lorsque l'imprimerie a été inventée. L'école et l'université ne peuvent rester à l'écart de ces changements.

Nous sommes tous engagés dans une course sans pitié dans laquelle nos chances de succès dépendent de la qualité et du dynamisme de notre capital humain. Ici, au Canada, nous en sommes d'autant plus conscients que notre capacité de nous maintenir au premier rang de la course est directement proportionnelle à notre capacité d'innover, d'échanger et de gagner des marchés à l'étranger. Et cette capacité se développe dans nos écoles et nos universités.

Comme partout ailleurs sur notre continent, les systèmes d'éducation des dix provinces du Canada sont en train d'être revus et corrigés à la lumière des facteurs que j'ai mentionnés, ce qui entraîne l'adoption de mesures souvent douloureuses, de ce que l'on appelle communément de

réingénierie. Ce qui était tenu pour acquis ne l'est plus. Tout compte fait, je suis persuadé que nos institutions sortiront de cette difficile période revitalisées, davantage à l'écoute des besoins de la société et moins enclines à accepter des solutions de complaisance, à la condition que toutes les parties intéressées arrivent à déterminer ensemble des objectifs communs.

Gérer le changement donc, en matière d'éducation, repose sur un nouveau pacte entre la classe politique, la société et les éducateurs. Et ce nouveau pacte, pour être équitable, ne doit pas conduire à rendre plus vulnérables ceux qui le sont déjà trop. Tous doivent avoir accès aux outils essentiels à leur développement.

Cela dit, la réalité nous oblige à constater que, si on doit se préoccuper de ceux qui sont à la queue du peloton, il faut aussi penser à préparer ceux qui en sont à la tête. Et cette préparation ne peut plus se faire uniquement à l'intérieur de frontières nationales.

Une des idées dominantes qui se dégagent des débats en cours est certainement celle de l'impérieuse nécessité pour les institutions post-secondaires de s'ouvrir davantage au reste du monde. Dans le cadre interaméricain de notre rencontre, cela veut dire s'ouvrir aux pays des Amériques. Le processus d'intégration en cours sera long et difficile. Il est vital que nos populations en comprennent les fondements et les enjeux. Il y a une immense tâche d'éducation à réaliser. Il nous incombe à nous, éducateurs, de jouer notre rôle. C'est pourquoi l'Organisation universitaire interaméricaine (OUI) propose la création du Collège des Amériques.

L'Organisation universitaire interaméricaine a été fondée ici à Québec, en 1980, par 250 recteurs venant de tous les coins des Amériques. En 1980, on ne parlait pas de NAFTA, de MERCOSUL, de Sommet des Amériques. Les relations qui existaient entre les universités canadiennes et latino-américaines étaient épisodiques et basées sur les intérêts d'un nombre limité de spécialistes. Les fondateurs de l'OUI ont cependant décidé de former une grande

chaîne de coopération de l'Arctique à l'Antarctique.

[Haga clic para obtener la versión española de la última parte del texto.](#)

Aujourd'hui, l'OUI s'est transformée en une Organisation unique, qui compte 370 universités membres de 24 pays des Amériques. La coopération appuyée par l'OUI se fait entre institutions, non plus uniquement entre individus. Et cette coopération est horizontale. L'OUI fonctionne comme une coopérative. Tous ses membres sont des actionnaires.

Ce qu'il faut dire ici, c'est que l'OUI a pu se développer au même rythme que s'est développée l'idée d'intégration interaméricaine. Peu à peu, il s'est créé des liens de confiance entre nos membres et une volonté d'agir ensemble et de collaborer en vue de s'enrichir les uns les autres.

L'analyse que fait l'OUI du contexte que nous vivons l'amène à conclure qu'à des temps nouveaux doivent correspondre des instruments nouveaux. En d'autres termes, l'intégration entre nos pays ne peut reposer exclusivement sur des traités commerciaux qui déterminent des règles de fonctionnement de marchés plus ouverts. L'OUI partage la vision du Président Cardoso, du Brésil, qui affirmait, lors de sa visite récente au Canada, que la grande idée qui doit inspirer l'intégration de nos pays, c'est l'éducation. Le Président Frei du Chili l'a dit à sa façon à Washington il y a quelques mois. Notre vision des Amériques ne peut pas ne s'appuyer que sur la concurrence. Elle ne doit s'appuyer que sur la coopération. C'est pourquoi je dis qu'il faut inventer des mécanismes nouveaux pour soutenir une coopération en matière d'éducation qui soit véritablement interaméricaine. C'est pourquoi nous proposons la création du Collège des Amériques.

De quoi s'agit-il ? Nous nous sommes inspirés du Collège d'Europe créé à Bruges en Belgique, en 1950, au moment

où la Communauté européenne commençait à prendre forme. Il s'agissait alors de rassembler des jeunes de tous les coins d'Europe sur un campus pendant un an et de développer chez eux une vision de l'Europe qui ne soit ni allemande, ou française ou anglaise mais bien européenne. Nous nous sommes dits que le moment est peut-être venu de créer une institution similaire mais adaptée au contexte des Amériques. Nous avons tenu des consultations formelles à Rio de Janeiro, à Buenos Aires, à Santiago de Chile, à Caracas, à San José, à Mexico, à Miami et à Ottawa. Nous avons consulté des étudiants. Nous avons rencontré des hauts fonctionnaires de l'administration publique, des hommes d'affaires, des présidents de fondations.

Nous avons trois conclusions majeures de ces consultations : un, la création du Collège des Amériques répond à des besoins réels. Deux, il y a lieu de développer des stratégies de coopération fondées sur un modèle nouveau qui fait appel à la participation de tous les secteurs (universités, gouvernements, entreprises et ONGs). Trois, le Collège des Amériques, contrairement au Collège d'Europe, ne peut s'installer en un seul lieu physique et fonctionner selon des modes traditionnels. Il doit être un réseau de réseaux et fonctionner comme une coopérative dont les activités se déroulent dans un grand nombre de pays.

En partant de ces trois conclusions, quel sera le profil du Collège ?

En premier lieu, il sera dirigé par un Conseil composé de personnalités académiques reconnues et provenant de tous les coins des Amériques. Il sera chargé de mettre sur pied les quatre programmes que je décrirai plus loin. Le Collège fera toutefois partie intégrale de l'Organisation universitaire interaméricaine. Son siège sera situé au Canada. Un secrétariat de taille modeste assumera la gestion académique du Collège.

Les activités du Collège se caractériseront par leur interaméricanité, leur interdisciplinarité, le recours intensif

aux nouvelles technologies de l'information et la dimension appliquée du contenu des activités.

Les fondements du Collège seront constitués d'universités des Amériques travaillant ensemble dans quatre domaines :

La formation de professionnels dans le cadre de réseaux thématiques. Exemple : le droit des Amériques, le commerce interaméricain, la propriété intellectuelle, la gestion des services de santé, la gestion des transferts technologiques, la gestion des systèmes scolaires, etc.

Chaque réseau sera formé de cinq à 10 universités qui partageront leurs ressources pour renforcer leurs programmes de formation et introduire des dimensions interaméricaines dans ces programmes.

La mobilité étudiante dans le cadre du programme INTERAMÉRICA qui permettra à des groupes de jeunes venant de divers pays de s'inscrire à un stage d'au moins trois mois offert dans différents pays d'une année à l'autre, au cours duquel ils apprendront une autre langue, connaîtront le régime politique et économique du pays, analyseront les problèmes sociaux et s'initieront à une autre culture que la leur.

Les chaires de recherche sur l'intégration, c'est-à-dire un réseau de cinq à six chaires réunissant les meilleurs chercheurs qui se pencheront sur toutes les facettes, culturelles, sociales, scientifiques, politiques et économiques de l'intégration.

Le programme **de gestion et d'analyse de politiques publiques** qui s'adresse à vous de la classe politique ainsi qu'aux hauts fonctionnaires des administrations publiques. Ce programme est l'objet de discussion entre l'Université du Chili, de Buenos Aires, l'Institut d'administration publique du Mexique, l'École d'administration publique du Brésil et l'École nationale d'administration publique du Québec.

Nous sommes actuellement à mettre au point une stratégie

de financement du Collège. Les ressources proviendront des bénéficiaires des services du Collège, de bourses obtenues de la part de gouvernements et d'entreprises de la région, de contributions d'organisations comme la BID (espérons-le !) et de fondations. Un Fonds de développement du Collège sera créé et les premiers souscripteurs seront les membres de l'OUI eux-mêmes.

C'est à Salvador de Bahia au Brésil que nous présenterons le projet, lundi, le 10 novembre, lors du Xe Congrès Biennal de notre Organisation. Ensuite, nous présenterons le projet à vos gouvernements. Nous comptons sur votre appui pour intercéder en notre faveur.

En conclusion, j'ai voulu donner une touche concrète à ma présentation en vous présentant ce projet. S'il est ambitieux, c'est qu'il veut se situer à la hauteur des défis communs qui nous attendent, à la hauteur du défi central d'une Amérique intégrée autour de l'idée de l'éducation, comme moteur de développement et de coopération.

La réunion historique que vous tenez à Québec doit marquer une étape majeure des relations entre nos pays. Cherchons à identifier ensemble des objectifs communs et des entreprises communes. Faisons en sorte qu'à votre prochaine rencontre vous puissiez dire : comme pour l'OUI, c'est à Québec que tout a commencé !

Merci !

Versión española

La Organización Universitaria Interamericana fue fundada aquí, en la ciudad de Québec, en 1980, por 250 rectores llegados de todos los rincones del continente americano. En ese momento, no se hablaba ni del TLC (Tratado de Libre Comercio), ni del Mercosur, ni de la Cumbre de las Américas. Las relaciones entre las universidades canadienses y latinoamericanas eran esporádicas y dependían de los intereses de unos pocos especialistas. No

obstante, los fundadores de la OUI decidieron crear una gran cadena de cooperación universitaria, que abarque desde el Ártico hasta la Antártida.

Con el paso del tiempo, la OUI se convirtió en una organización única en su tipo, con 370 universidades miembros, originarias de 24 países. La OUI apoya la cooperación interinstitucional y no ya sólo individual. Dicha cooperación es horizontal. La OUI funciona como una cooperativa, en la que todos los miembros son accionistas.

Me parece conveniente subrayar que la OUI fue desarrollándose al mismo tiempo que la noción de integración interamericana. Tal como ocurrió a nivel político y económico, poco a poco, fue aumentando entre nuestros miembros la confianza mutua y se afianzó la voluntad de trabajar juntos para beneficio de todos.

El análisis que hace la OUI del mundo en que vivimos la hace pensar que a los nuevos tiempos corresponden nuevos mecanismos de cooperación. Dicho de otro modo, la integración de nuestros países no puede apoyarse exclusivamente en los tratados comerciales, que establecen cómo actuar en mercados más abiertos. La OUI comparte la idea del Presidente del Brasil, Fernando Enrique Cardoso, quien afirmó, durante una reciente visita al Canadá, que el afinanzamiento de la educación debe ser una de las aspiraciones fundamentales del proceso de integración. El Presidente Frei, de Chile, sostuvo algo similar, hace pocos meses, en Washington. Nuestra visión del continente americano no puede basarse sólo en la competencia económica. Debe basarse ante todo en la cooperación. Por eso digo que tenemos que inventar mecanismos nuevos, que nos permitan cooperar para brindarle a nuestros jóvenes una educación verdaderamente interamericana. Por eso mismo proponemos crear el Colegio de las Américas.

¿Qué es el Colegio de las Américas? En primer lugar, nos inspiramos en el Colegio de Europa, creado en Brujas, Bélgica, en 1950, cuando la Unión Europea empezaba a

tomar forma. Se pensó entonces en reunir jóvenes provenientes de toda Europa, en un mismo campus universitario, por un período de un año, para que adquiriesen una visión de su propio continente que no fuese ni alemana, ni francesa o inglesa, sino netamente europea. Nos parece que ha llegado el momento de crear una institución similar, aunque adaptada a la realidad de nuestra región. Hemos realizado una ronda de consultas formales, con reuniones en Río de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Santiago de Chile, Caracas, San José, México, Miami y Ottawa. En las consultas participaron estudiantes, funcionarios públicos de alto nivel, hombres de negocios y presidentes de fundaciones.

Estos encuentros nos permitieron llegar a tres conclusiones principales:

1. la creación del Colegio de las Américas responde a necesidades concretas;
2. es el momento justo para implantar estrategias de cooperación basadas en un nuevo modelo, cuya base sea multisectorial (participan universidades, gobiernos, empresas y ONGs);
3. el Colegio de las Américas, a diferencia del Colegio de Europa, no puede tener un campus único y funcionar de manera tradicional. Debe ser una red de redes y funcionar como una cooperativa, cuyas actividades se desarrollen en un gran número de países

¿Cómo será entonces el Colegio de las Américas?

En primer lugar, digamos que el Colegio de las Américas será administrado por un Consejo formado por personalidades del mundo académico, de reconocida trayectoria y originarios de toda la región. Este Consejo organizará los cuatro programas que describo más adelante. El Colegio será además parte integrante de la OUI. La sede estará en Canadá. Un secretariado de reducidas dimensiones se ocupará de la administración de

los asuntos corrientes.

Las actividades del Colegio se caracterizarán por ser interamericanas e interdisciplinarias, por estar orientadas hacia la resolución de problemas concretos y por hacer un uso intensivo de las nuevas tecnologías de la comunicación y la información.

El Colegio de las Américas estará constituido por un núcleo de universidades que, de manera concertada, realicen cuatro tipos de actividades:

1. La formación de profesionales en el marco de las redes temáticas. Cada red estará formada por cinco a diez universidades que compartirán recursos con el objetivo de mejorar sus planes de estudio y desarrollar la dimensión interamericana de los mismos. Se tratarán, entre otros, los siguientes temas: derecho en el continente americano, comercio interamericano, propiedad intelectual, gestión de los programas de salud, gestión de la transferencia tecnológica.
2. La movilidad estudiantil en el marco del programa " Interamerica ", que permitirá a jóvenes de distintos países hacer una pasantía de al menos tres meses, en un país que irá rotando, durante la cual aprenderán un idioma extranjero, conocerán de cerca el régimen político y económico del país receptor, analizarán sus problemas sociales y vivirán inmersos en una cultura diferente de la propia.
3. Las cátedras de investigación sobre la integración, es decir una red de cinco a seis cátedras que reúnan a los mejores investigadores y se dediquen al estudio de los diversos aspectos de la integración (culturales, sociales, científicos, políticos y económicos).
4. Programa en gestión y análisis de las políticas públicas, dirigido a Uds., la clase política, así como al personal del Estado. Este programa está siendo

diseñado por las universidades de Chile y de Buenos Aires, el Instituto de Administración Pública de México, la Escuela de administración Pública de Brasil y la Escuela de Administración Pública de Quebec.

En este momento, estamos preparando la estrategia de financiamiento del Colegio. Los recursos serán aportados por quienes soliciten sus servicios, habrá también becas ofrecidas por los gobiernos y las empresas de la región, contribuciones de organizaciones como el BID (¡esperemos que así sea!) y fundaciones. Se creará un Fondo de Desarrollo y los primeros en aportar serán los miembros de la OUI.

En Salvador de Bahía, Brasil, el lunes 10 de noviembre, presentaremos el proyecto a todos los miembros de nuestra Organización, reunidos en su X Congreso Bianual. Luego lo presentaremos a los gobiernos, para lo que esperamos contar con el apoyo de todos Uds.

He querido que mi presentación sea lo más concreta posible. Si el proyecto es ambicioso, es porque queremos que responda a los desafíos que tenemos por delante, que esté a la altura del desafío que constituye unir a las tres Américas teniendo a la educación como eje del desarrollo y la cooperación.

Esta historica reunión, en la que Uds. están participando hoy en Québec, es un hito importante en las relaciones entre nuestros respectivos países.

Definamos juntos cuáles son nuestros objetivos y nuestros proyectos comunes. Trabajemos para que en el próximo encuentro que tengan Uds. puedan decir: " ¡Como en el caso de la OUI, lo nuestro empezó en Québec! "

¡Muchas gracias!

TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR 2005: DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY

**The Issues and the Legislative, Political, Social and
Cultural Impacts of the Economic Integration Process
of the Americas**

Workshop: Cultures, Languages and Communications

**"Four Languages in the Integrated Americas:
Richness through Diversity"**

**Speech by Madam Nadia Brédimas-Assimopoulos
President of the Conseil de la langue française du
Québec**

The economic integration now under way in the Americas compels us to rethink and redefine the ways we work, do business and communicate. We have an opportunity to develop a new intercontinental solidarity in order to affirm and bolster our cultural identities and national languages and to avoid the standardization of cultural values and content. Language and culture, just like health and the environment, can certainly be covered by international strategic alliances.

The communications technologies, combined with the opening of markets, are making it possible to transcend borders as never before. We are exposed to an unprecedented, ever growing flow of products, information and social values from numerous sources. Mass tourism has made the world smaller.

Telecommunications and the Internet offer a Peruvian and a Quebecer the same information and entertainment, while consumers in Mexico, Brazil or California shop in the same stores and buy the same products made by the same multinationals.

However, this apparent homogeneity does not mean that we must apprehensively take refuge in our cultures, shut the door to the diversity that others can offer us, and combat English, which has become the modern *lingua franca*. Human history is full of these transfers, interactions between people and cultures, and enrichment from external sources.

What we must protect and promote is what makes a people, its singularity and unity, within a vast political or economic whole, that is, its language and culture. In other words, we must protect and promote what gives a nation its strength and, therefore, its ability to integrate new information or products without renouncing its intrinsic nature.

It may well be that such protection must be achieved by means of legislation. This is what happened in Québec and I believe that our experience over the past 20 years is germane to our deliberations. In recent decades, Québec has opened up more than ever to the world while seeking to preserve its identity, culture and language.

Twenty years ago, the Québec National Assembly adopted the *Charter of the French language*, which seeks to protect the French language and foster its development in North America, that is, on an essentially English-speaking continent, without isolating Québec. The legislation, which you have perhaps heard referred to as Bill 101, confirms the determination of Quebecers to make French the usual language of work, education, communications, commerce and business.

French is the mother tongue of over 80% of Quebecers. Today, the proportion of the population that claims to know French is even higher, that is, nine people out of ten, which, it should be noted, is a direct consequence of the adoption of the language legislation.

The situation in the Greater Montréal area is different. French is the mother tongue of 68% of Montrealers and nearly 75% of English-speaking Quebecers and 85% of

allophones live in the area. Through force of circumstances, Montrealers, especially French-speakers, account for one-third of bilingual individuals in Canada, well ahead of Torontonians, who account for only 7% of Canadians who speak French and English.

Given that the Greater Montréal area is also the centre of business and industry, much of it multinational, it is essentially in Montréal that the question of the predominance of French in all spheres of activity will continue to arise.

How has the language legislation succeeded in revitalizing French in a country surrounded by English-speaking neighbours? It has done so by focusing on all facets of public life, for example, education, administration, the work place and communications and by making French the official, common language. The legislation does not affect the private lives of individuals.

The spirit and objectives of the *Charter of the French language* are clear, that is, to officialize the predominance of French, to recognize and maintain the established rights of the English-speaking community, notably with respect to its schools, from kindergarten to university, and to display openness to the other cultural communities and recognize their contribution to Québec society.

French is the language of instruction in Québec. However, Québec has for a long time maintained a parallel public education system in English, in which the children of citizens who have attended English-language elementary schools in Québec or elsewhere in Canada may enroll.

In areas such as legislation, justice and health, Quebecers may choose the language in which they wish to be served, that is, French or English.

Quebecers work in French. Since the adoption of the *Charter of the French language*, English-speaking and foreign firms operating in Québec have enjoyed increased productivity and profitability. It has been proven that

productivity is higher when the language used in a business is the one that employees master best.

The management and staff of companies employing 50 or more people must know French and be able to use it in their everyday discussions. All notices displayed in the work place must be in French, without excluding other languages, as is the case with internal communications and administrative documentation, among other types of communication.

Any business operating in Québec must be able to inform and serve its Québec customers in French: administrative, commercial and advertising documents as well as information accompanying products must be in French, except as specified in special agreements concluded with the government.

The language legislation also stipulates the rules of use for public notices and commercial signs, company names and product labelling. These provisions ensure respect for the majority of Quebecers and protect the French character of Québec.

Twenty years after the legislation's adoption, an assessment of the *Charter of the French language* is positive. The key objectives of protecting and bolstering the French language have been largely attained by means, among other things, of the francization of businesses and the redirection of immigrants to the French-language school system.

Québec's experience has made it possible to establish important distinctions concerning what should be done to protect a language against a backdrop of the globalization of markets and to protect the internal interests of a nation while satisfying its external interests. These distinctions may be relevant to our discussions.

It should be noted that there is a clear difference between private communications and public communications, that is, between communications within a family, a group of

friends or a cultural community, for example, and communications that occur in conjunction with public events, such as work, education, commerce or business.

There is also a difference between the institutional multilingualism inherent in a supranational organization, for example, and individual multilingualism, that is, the knowledge of several languages. The latter is an occupational qualification in the same way as a technical or university diploma. The Québec government encourages individual multilingualism and has decided, under the ongoing reform of the education system in Québec, to make compulsory the learning of a third language in addition to French and English.

We have also noted that, in light of the globalization of the economy and given the introduction of new technologies dominated by the use of English, it is necessary for the non-English-speaking nations to define the meaning of working in French, Spanish or Greek, for example. The necessity is even more pronounced in sectors such as tourism, aeronautics and communications, where it may seem "easier" and more "convenient" to adopt English because these sectors, by their very nature, extend beyond national boundaries.

It is also necessary to protect national languages in order to protect consumers. This question has also been raised in the European Union, which has adopted supranational economic and political structures. In the field of product labelling, for example, the following rule has been adopted: products must be identified and explained in one of the three main languages, that is, English, French or German, *and* in the national language of the country. Most big companies have simply adopted a single label in seven languages, which reduces their costs while satisfying the requirements of individual nations and consumers' needs.

Economic development over the past century has revealed that any market develops over a long period, during which compromises are established between various powers and countervailing powers and between economic, political

and social factors.

These compromises must reflect a constantly changing world. At present, it is obvious that the prosperity of nations depends less and less on the raw materials they possess and more and more on the ability of enterprises to produce and collect information, which cannot exist without language. For this reason, the economy, information, knowledge and language are inextricably linked.

Information has become a basic strategic resource, the new focal point of any socioeconomic system. It is at once:

- an economic phenomenon: information is a commodity;
- a technical phenomenon: its content and form change with the medium;
- a social phenomenon: it refers to groups of individuals;
- a political phenomenon: it involves relationships of power;
- a cultural phenomenon: it refers to an established system of symbols; and
- a linguistic phenomenon: it must be understood and provided or made accessible in the recipient's language.

With the new technologies, this basic resource, information, knows no boundaries.

We have a choice. We can let information to circulate in the modern *lingua franca* that English has become and thereby allow the other official languages of the Americas, whether Spanish, Portuguese or French, to lose their utility and be confined to use in the home.

Or, we can take advantage of the new technologies and quickly develop communications tools, such as interfaces or Internet software, in the four official languages of the Americas.

In other words, we can either adopt a passive approach, which can only be negative in the long run, or a dynamic approach to information and its dissemination and, consequently, to culture in the broadest sense. Our historic and humanitarian responsibility is to ensure that national cultures develop despite the trend toward the development of a globalized and homogenized market-driven cultural industry.

The advent of a veritable information society in which the recipient will also be a supplier of information is an objective that we share. In such a society, culture will be an economic issue. The new technologies must not become the instruments of the mass dissemination of a single body of information by means of a single language, but the instruments of the *communication* and transmission of various cultures.

Each of our countries must orient the effects of technological resources and ensure that they serve our collective objectives. It is up to us to choose the methods and means of intervention.

We can achieve this end through language legislation. France recently declared French to be the sole official language in its territory. In the United States, a proposed amendment to the Constitution to make English the official language of the country has been tabled in Congress. It might be thought that neither country was "threatened" by other languages. However, they have nonetheless felt the need to proceed in this manner because the officialization of a common national language is necessary for the smooth functioning of society.

National language policies have traditionally sought to reconcile two concerns, that is, the promotion of a common language and the management of the use of other languages. This is what Québec, the United States and France have done. However, from now on, it will also be necessary to take into account the broader use of the *lingua franca* that predominates in numerous fields, such as the sciences, technology, information and the work

place.

Respect for the use of national languages should be a key issue in the discussions leading to the economic integration of the Americas. Our task may be facilitated because there are only four official languages.

Managing the use of these languages will satisfy the interests of citizens, national governments and, it should be emphasized in the case of economic integration of this scope, the interests of enterprises that will broaden their markets through the adoption of a multilingual approach.

The development of innovative technological instruments and **the establishment of international standards in our four official languages** are of the utmost importance from the standpoint of the broadening of NAFTA.

It is equally important for the countries that participate in the new agreement to officialize respect for and the use of the four languages in the supranational organizations that may be established. In the integrated Americas, the citizens or institutions of the participating countries must, like the European Union member countries, be able to use their national language in written and spoken communication with these organizations.

Given the importance of the challenges we are collectively facing, I would like, in conclusion, to suggest the organization of a pan-American conference on the issues of language planning and respect for national cultures, which we are broaching here today.

The question has rarely been broadly examined, although the issue is a crucial one as regards the broadening of NAFTA and the development of our respective countries in the coming years. I believe it is important, from the outset, to display a sense of responsibility, far-sightedness and respect for each other in integrating the Americas with four languages.

It is my hope that a pan-American conference on respect

for the languages and cultures of the member countries of an expanded NAFTA will be included among the recommendations adopted at this conference.

RUMO ÀS AMÉRICAS DE 2005: DEMOCRACIA, DESENVOLVIMENTO E PROSPERIDADE

**Implicações e impactos legislativos, políticos, sociais e
culturais do processos de integração econômica des
Américas**

Grupo de trabalho: Culturas, línguas e comunicações

"Integração Econômica e as Culturas"

**Alocução do Prof. Luiz Felipe Perret Serpa
Reitor da Universidade Federal da Bahia
Salvador - Bahia - Brasil**

Quando convidado para participar desta Conferência, duas questões foram colocadas para nossa reflexão pelos organizadores:

1. Nas Américas, quais impactos que um processo de integração econômica hemisférica poderia ter na diversidade cultural e lingüística?
2. Será que, para mantermos essa diversidade, seria necessário submeter a cultura a cláusulas de exceção num acordo econômico?

As questões apresentadas têm subjacente o pressuposto da separação entre cultura e economia, quando interrogam sobre o impacto possível de uma integração econômica sobre as culturas e sobre a viabilidade de proteger as culturas em face da integração econômica.

Para analisar o nível deste pressuposto na contemporaneidade, faremos uma breve digressão sobre a formação do Estado-Nação moderno.

A gênese do Estado-Nação deu-se entre os séculos XIII e XVIII, na Europa, baseada na formação do território do

Rei. Este, expressão da vontade divina, personalizou o Poder através da delimitação e posse do território.

Optou-se por observar e recolher os vestígios das culturas locais, não para pensá-las em sua especificidade, mas para integrá-las no quadro de conjunto do território, isto é, do Estado- Nação, o qual estimulava a produção de bens em seu proveito, garantindo a dinâmica do mercado.

O expansionismo da Europa foi um dos fatores essenciais para a sedimentação do Estado- Nação e do mercado, através das políticas coloniais nas Américas, recalcando as culturas autóctones e transportando, do continente negro-africano, as culturas alóctones, em condições vis e, junto com elas, os braços escravos para o trabalho nas colônias.

Em sua gênese, o Estado-Nação integrou economicamente o território, assimilando culturas diversas, submetendo identidades e idiomas distintos à cultura do Rei, disso resultando as identidades nacionais instituídas, as etnicidades fictícias e homogêneas — ou seja, o ser francês, o ser inglês, o ser português, o ser espanhol e, assim, sucessivamente.

As Américas constituíram-se, enquanto colônias, como formas exemplares desse processo, com o sacrifício de culturas autóctones e alóctones. A integração econômica, através da garantia da dinâmica do mercado e da produção de bens, dentro de um determinado território, foi fundamental no processo de expansão dos Estados Europeus para "além mar". A diversidade cultural homogeneizada e a diversidade lingüística recalcada pela integração econômica, pela transposição, para o Novo Mundo ou para as velhas África e Ásia, da ordem social e política — ou da cultura do Rei — foram os elementos basilares que, modo geral, persistiram após a conquista da autonomia política pelas colônias.

No século XVIII, o século das luzes, o Estado-Nação transformou-se, por inspiração do ideário da Revolução Francesa, garantindo a liberdade do indivíduo, a igualdade de todos perante a sociedade política, o Estado, e o direito

de todos à propriedade. Assim, despersonalizou-se o Estado-Nação, tornando-se laico. A partir de então, formase o Estado- Nação moderno, no qual a cidadania e a democracia são pilares políticos, e o livre mercado, seu pilar econômico. Manteve-se o sentido do território e, nos séculos posteriores, o Estado- Nação tomou várias formas de acordo com cada sociedade e com a dinâmica do mercado.

A independência das colônias nas Américas produziu uma diversidade de sociedades correspondente às diferentes estratégias de colonização.

No Novo Mundo tivemos um dupla diversidade: àquela correspondente às diferentes culturas dos colonizadores e aos diferentes componentes autóctones e alóctones associa-se a diversidade de novos Estados-Nação correspondente às formas coloniais históricas de inserção no mercado.

Se os Estados-Nação europeus têm uma diversidade que chamaríamos de primeira ordem, os novos Estados-Nação das Américas apresentam uma diversidade de segunda ordem, na qual as desigualdades entre as sociedades e no interior de cada sociedade são mais intensas e extensas do que nos Estados-Nação colonizadores. Assim, a integração econômica das Américas apresenta-se muito mais complexa do que aquela realizada pelos Estados-Nação da Europa.

Com essa breve análise do processo de formação do Estado-Nação, pode-se compreender o nível das questões colocadas pela Conferência. Em primeiro lugar, como a integração econômica das Américas afetará o ser brasileiro, o ser canadense, o ser argentino, o ser haitiano, o ser norte-americano, etc.? Em segundo, como a integração econômica afetará a dinâmica da diversidade cultural e as desigualdades no interior de cada Estado-Nação?

Tais questões devem ser pensadas no âmbito da contemporaneidade.

Nas últimas décadas, a revolução tecnológica criou uma nova realidade, o mundo vive um processo de mutação. Duas são as características fundamentais desse processo de mutação: a instabilidade permanente e a desterritorialização.

É verdade que, no mundo moderno, essas características sempre estiveram presentes. A instabilidade, nas crises cíclicas do capitalismo e nas grandes guerras mundiais desse século; a desterritorialização, através da disseminação dos universais, propostos pelo Iluminismo, e do Capital.

O próprio Marx, autor do Manifesto Comunista, afirmava (apud Finkielkraut, Alain, *Le defeat de la pensée*, Ed. Gallimard, 1987): "A nacionalidade do trabalhador não é francesa, inglesa, alemã, é o trabalho, a livre escravatura, o tráfego de si próprio. Seu governo não é francês, inglês, alemão, é o capital. O ar que respira em seu país não é francês, inglês, alemão, é o ar das usinas."

No entanto, a instabilidade e a desterritorialização agora têm outra natureza, decorrente da revolução tecnológica das últimas décadas.

A tecnologia, na modernidade, expressão da razão instrumental, produziu bens materiais que se caracterizaram como extensão dos sentidos do homem. Nas últimas décadas, as novas tecnologias operaram sobre a razão, o pensamento, enfim, sobre as idéias, em consequência da resposta negativa, dada por Godel, na década de 30 desse século, à questão da decidibilidade sobre a verdade das proposições. Esta questão, proposta por Hilbert no início do século XX, indagava quais os critérios gerais que poderiam indicar se uma proposição, construída no interior de uma teoria matemática, era verdadeira ou falsa. A resposta dada pelos Teoremas de Godel consistia em mostrar que as teorias matemáticas não eram consistentes e nem completas. É a derrota da razão cartesiana.

Se não podíamos decidir sobre a verdade das proposições,

decidimos operar com as proposições, o que se tornou possível, primeiramente — e sob o ponto de vista teórico —, com as máquinas abstratas; depois, sob o ponto de vista prático, em face do desenvolvimento da micro-eletrônica, com o computador.

Estamos, hoje, operando e empresariando idéias, o que muda qualitativamente a dinâmica do mercado, aumentando os ritmos dos processos e liberando-os do território. Assim, a instabilidade permanente e a desterritorialização são, no mundo contemporâneo, estruturais ou estruturantes.

Com o enfoque contemporâneo, as questões colocadas pela Conferência devem ser abordadas pondo-se em dúvida a separação entre o econômico e o cultural.

Os empreendimentos mais significativos hoje envolvem mais as idéias no interior dos saberes, que se disseminam através de processos informatizados, em redes, democratizando a informação e a comunicação. Isto significa que a diversidade de saberes — sua pluralidade — é o maior capital econômico. O desenvolvimento humano na contemporaneidade funde, definitivamente, o econômico e o cultural.

Com esse enfoque, o nível de instabilidade permanente estrutural dar-se-á na dinâmica do mercado como um todo, auto-regulado pelos movimentos da diversidade de saberes produzindo bens; a desterritorialização estrutural será vivenciada em nível do Estado-Nação, o qual será mantido através da pertinência de tribos culturais, que partilham saberes comuns, mas que não mais têm como necessidade o território.

Exemplo histórico desse tipo de tribo é o povo judeu, que, durante milênios, sem território, manteve-se enquanto identidade cultural, uma identidade exemplar dos processos identitários em geral porque mais nitidamente imaginária, fracamente instituída, embora operante e eficaz.

Quanto ao mercado, pode-se fazer uma analogia com a Europa medieval, formada por um conjunto de feudos auto-suficientes. Agora, os saberes tribais produzirão idéias que serão informatizadas e disseminadas através de redes, produzindo bens, e a comunicação possibilitará a interação permanente das tribos. A auto-sustentabilidade ou a auto-suficiência do feudo corresponde à mesma característica para todo o planeta. O mundo passará a ser um único feudo, o feudo global.

Com este raciocínio, queremos afirmar que a tendência à integração é inevitável. Políticas deverão ser estabelecidas para propiciar um processo que assuma a diversidade de idéias no interior dos saberes tribais, como a riqueza mais significativa para o futuro da humanidade, inclusive para a economia de mercado.

Cito aqui um verso de um compositor e poeta brasileiro, Caetano Veloso, de difícil tradução para as línguas não latinas:

"Eu não tenho pátria, eu tenho *mátria* e quero *fátria*".

Se não pudermos alcançar o sentido de *fátria*, dessa derivação que as línguas latinas desenvolveram, continuaremos aprofundando o processo das desigualdades cada vez mais intensas e extensas, dividindo o mundo em consumidores e excluídos. Da parte dos excluídos, as necessidades propiciarão, cada vez mais, o aumento da fome, da violência, enfim, da barbárie.

Quanto aos consumidores, parafraseando Marx, diríamos:

"A nacionalidade do consumidor não é francesa, inglesa, alemã, é o consumo, o livre mercado, o tráfico da mercadoria. Seu governo não é francês, inglês, alemão, é a moeda. O ar que respira em seu país não é francês, inglês, alemão, é o ar do Shopping Center".

Se não compreendermos e interagirmos propositivamente dentro desse quadro, dimensionando, de forma positiva e

eficaz, o valor humano das culturas — ainda que mercantilizadas — a partir das suas diversidades, teremos um processo de regressão, não somente das culturas, das identidades nacionais, das línguas, da comunicação, mas da humanidade.

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VERS LES AMÉRIQUES DE 2005: DÉMOCRATIE, DÉVELOPPEMENT ET PROSPÉRITÉ

Les moyens d'action des parlementaires en matière
d'intégration dans l'exercice de
leurs fonctions représentatives, législatives et
interparlementaires

Atelier: Démocratie

Allocution de monsieur Kély C. Bastien
Président de la Chambre des députés de la République
d'Haïti

J'éprouve un plaisir immense aujourd'hui en intervenant en présence de cette auguste assemblée. Des parlementaires, de tous les États de l'Amérique, le Nouveau Monde, réunis pour partager, sous l'empire de la démocratie, un idéal commun: ***la volonté de permettre à nos peuples de jouir de la démocratie, du développement et de la prospérité.*** L'Amérique qui a donné naissance à Georges Washington, à Jean Jacques Dessalines, à Alexandre Pétion, à Simon Bolivar, à René Levesque, etc. se veut une terre d'accueil où l'être humain, la faune et la flore se sentent totalement en sécurité. Nous autres, parlementaires, avons un grand défi à relever, celui de jouer le rôle de porte-parole de nos peuples et de défenseur des droits fondamentaux indispensables au bien-être de l'homme. Charles-Louis de Secondat, le baron de Montesquieu, dans l'Esprit des Lois a clairement montré le rôle prépondérant du Pouvoir Législatif dont les acteurs doivent s'identifier à ce qui représente l'essence véritable de la raison d'être ou même de l'existence de l'Institution; il s'agit de veiller à l'application et aux fondements de lois. A l'aube du 21^e siècle le pouvoir des baïonnettes semble céder la place aux institutions démocratiques qu'il faut toujours à tous prix renforcer. La volonté seule ne suffira pour y arriver.

Des actions d'envergure doivent être entreprises,

notamment la mise en confiance de la population à partir des comportements dignes d'un défenseur de ses droits, la stimulation de la société civile en vue de sa participation dans les débats d'ordre national ou international, l'implication de l'opposition dont le rôle constitue un stimulus pour le progrès, l'établissement de mécanismes institutionnels de communication entre le Législatif et l'Exécutif, entre l'Exécutif et la population, entre le Législatif et les électeurs. L'Institution parlementaire est censée sensibiliser sur le rôle fondamental des institutions à vocation démocratique. Ces dernières s'inscriront dans les démarches socio-politiques avec pour corollaire un homme, une voix en marchant vers leur consolidation. Il ne faut pas que la démocratie soit l'unique point de ressemblance entre nos peuples. Nous autres parlementaires de l'Amérique devons lutter pour éliminer sinon réduire les écarts qui séparent nos peuples. Nous avons un rôle d'acteurs à jouer par des actions et des comportements dignes du mandat que nous avons obtenu de nos électeurs pour renforcer les espaces démocratiques et permettre une intégration réelle des nations arriérées dans le grand projet de Mondialisation de l'Economie. Certaines nations, malgré leur passé glorieux, malgré le rôle qu'elles ont joué dans le processus de libération des peuples sont traitées en parent pauvre ou tout bonnement sont mises en quarantaine.

Le renforcement des Institutions démocratiques passe par:

1. la satisfaction des besoins fondamentaux de tous les peuples de l'hémisphère. Comment renforcer des institutions démocratiques avec 80% d'une population ne pouvant pas consommer les 3000 calories indispensables au quotidien? Comment les renforcer avec une nation ne disposant que d'un médecin pour 10 000 habitants? Comment les renforcer avec un peuple à 70% analphabète? Comment les renforcer avec une population active à 70% de chômeurs?
2. la création d'espaces productifs où les États peuvent normalement contribuer aux différentes formes

d'échanges sur le plan international et les peuples cesseront d'être à la merci de l'aide internationale. Nous savons pertinemment que les budgets de certains États dépendent en grande partie de l'assistance de grands bailleurs de fonds. Ces États s'enfoncent davantage dans le sous-développement puisque, quelle que soit l'assistance, elle s'accompagne de contraintes et elle est liée. Les États doivent atteindre l'auto-suffisance et développer des capacités d'échange.

3. l'interdépendance entre les États qui doit être équilibrée. Qu'il soit un grand État avec toutes les structures dignes à son rang ou qu'il soit un petit État dont les ambitions sont limitées, il faut pas que l'un écrase l'autre, il faut pas que l'un soit la poubelle de l'autre. A tous les niveaux, dans tous les domaines, un État ne doit pas se comporter en patron, en magister dixit ou en gendarme.
4. l'auto-détermination des peuples qui doit être respectée. Tout en étant unis par la mondialisation, par les échanges économiques et culturels, les peuples peuvent décider eux-mêmes de leur destinée. Aucun État ne saurait imposer manu-militari à un peuple des dictats. Il faut tenir compte, et ceci en priorité, de toutes les attaches culturelles d'un peuple, de son patrimoine, de son histoire et de la façon dont il décide de vivre. Dès que les droits fondamentaux des citoyens sont respectés les relations entre État ne doivent en aucun cas contribuer à perturber la vie socio-culturelle d'un peuple.
5. Le rétablissement et le renforcement de la morale politique qui doit tapisser la vie de tous les secteurs politiques. Dans la mesure où les peuples ne sont pas capables de prendre pour modèles les institutions étatiques devant offrir l'image de probité, d'honnêteté, de justice, les parlementaires en premier chef commenceront par mettre en question leur état de dégradation, d'immoralité, de corruption et par dénoncer cette situation ignoble et

indigne.

Dans cette Amérique où nous vivons, le caudillisme doit définitivement disparaître dans la vie politique des partis politiques. En dehors des présidents à vie des États, nous assistons à leur resurrection à travers les secrétaires généraux à vie, les coordonnateurs généraux à vie des partis politiques. Le culte de la personnalité et de la féodalisation s'impose au point où avec la disparition du chef à vie du parti, l'institution s'effrite et s'effondre. Quand il s'agit de parler de démocratie pour tous, tous les dirigeants y adhèrent. Qu'il s'agisse de rendre opérationnels par l'institutionnalisation les rôles et devoirs de la majorité et de l'opposition dans une assemblée parlementaire, tous les partis et dirigeants y adhèrent. Cependant, la démocratie véritable qui veut que l'alternance et la rotation soient rigoureusement appliquées pour assurer la bonne santé des partis n'est jamais adoptée puisque les dirigeants sont tellement accrochés à leur poste.

En cette fin de millénaire nous vivons avec amertume le triste et sombre tableau de la misère de nos peuples. L'Amérique, désormais doit se réveiller pour lever l'étendard de la démocratie et ouvrir la voie à l'élimination des fléaux qui ravagent ses peuples. Nous, parlementaires, sommes et serons responsables de tous les maux de nos mandants dans la mesure où nous ne défendons pas les principes, les droits, les projets qui auront conduit à leur bonheur. Le monde d'aujourd'hui ne permet à aucune nation de vivre en vase clos. De plus en plus un mouvement international tend à faire sauter toutes les frontières. De grands projets économiques: les différents marchés communs, régionaux, continentaux exigent une indispensable intégration de quiconque. Diverses actions peuvent se révéler très efficaces dans le cadre d'un processus d'intégration.

Normalement des mouvements peuvent avoir un caractère national, d'autres, une orientation régionale ou internationale. Un parlementaire qui se sent concerner par la menace de la dégradation de l'environnement a toute la latitude de toucher à plusieurs niveaux les institutions

étatiques, les organisations de la société civile, les organisations écologistes, les différents regroupements de parlementaires depuis son propre parlement jusqu'à l'Union Interparlementaire, AIPLF, Action Mondiale des Parlementaires. L'Environnement, sa protection dépend de tous les États sur la planète. Une question nationale s'internationalise par la propagande et les agitations réalisées autour d'elle. Le Parlementaire dispose des voies et moyens pour orienter ses vues et sensibiliser l'opinion publique nationale et internationale. Pour une intégration réelle, efficace et sans discrimination sur le plan économique au niveau hémisphérique il faut:

1. l'organisation des regroupements parlementaires sur le plan régional, sur le plan international.

Le domaine économique touche tous les peuples et leur survie en dépend. La problématique du développement durable est l'une des préoccupations des États. Mais les Parlementaires ne se sont pas donnés à fond pour formuler des propositions et défendre des points de vue et des intérêts liés à leur mandat. Au niveau de la Caraïbe, de l'Amérique Centrale, de l'Amérique du Sud et de l'Amérique du Nord, quatre unions interparlementaires déjà se formeront et porteront leurs revendications par devant les marchés communs déjà existant dans ces différentes régions. A travers les conférences de ces regroupements des résolutions seront adoptées et proposées à être mises en application. A la conférence des Parlementaires des Amériques où tous ces regroupements se feront représenter, au nom de la coopération et de la solidarité internationale l'écho des recommandations se produira et les représentants des Parlements en prendront acte pour en faire le suivi.

2. L'organisation de forum, colloques, débats, etc. autour de grands projets socio-économiques d'un État.

Des projets économiques d'un État trouveront des interlocuteurs valables à travers les parlementaires.

La viabilité et la fiabilité de tels projets suscitent des actions parlementaires efficaces. Sur le plan national, chaque parlementaire, dans sa commune ou dans sa circonscription organisera des conférences, des débats avec ses mandants pour leur montrer l'importance d'un programme économique sur le plan local et la possibilité qu'il offre sur le plan international. Chaque parlementaire devra développer ses capacités de persuasion pour convaincre même les récalcitrants. Les organisations internationales de parlementaires prouveront leur solidarité en intervenant auprès des pays bailleurs pour trouver le support financier devant permettre la mise en chantier de projets facilitant l'intégration dans le système économique hémisphérique.

3. L'aménagement de programme d'échange d'expériences entre les Parlements.

De nos jours, dans le cadre de la coopération inter-parlementaire, les institutions telles que l'Assemblée Interparlementaire, l'Union InterParlementaire, l'Assemblée des Parlementaires de la Communauté des Caraïbes, etc. mettront en place un réseau de communications, d'informations qui viseront un système d'échanges entre les Parlements où les commune/circonscription organiseront des débats critiques et formuleront des suggestions/recommandations. L'objet des thèmes sera inépuisable étant donné que tous les aspects de la vie nationale ou des relations internationales seront envisagés. Ce procédé évitera que certains parlements de façon unilatérale s'imposent de fait par leurs propres visions. Les institutions parlementaires à caractère international cesseront d'être dominées par une poignée de représentants issus de pays économiquement puissants. De plus, des parlementaires feront le déplacement vers d'autres pays pour rencontrer des électeurs, des peuples de cultures différentes. Dans certains pays, les mandants envoient leurs parlementaires soit pour défendre des projets socio-économiques pour

la commune, soit pour leur venir en aide au cas où des difficultés d'ordre économique se soient présentées, soit pour leur trouver du travail, etc. Ainsi le plus fort du temps la réélection se révèle impossible selon que les mandants n'aient pas été satisfaits. Ce qui peut parfois compromettre la réélection de certains parlementaires dans certains pays où la démocratie n'est pas encore institutionnalisée. C'est aussi l'objet d'un débat qui suscite beaucoup d'interrogations quand on sait que cette tradition s'incruste dans le quotidien du peuple et est liée à une réalité socio-économique. La tradition a la vie dure et la lutte à mener pour la déloger exige de grands sacrifices.

Peut-on parler d'une intégration économique hémisphérique réelle et voulue? Les États de l'Amérique sont tellement différents par leur culture, leur niveau de vie et leur capacité de participer valablement dans un programme d'échange sur le plan économique. Les bailleurs de fonds semblent à l'avance définir un plan économique pour chaque pays en fonction de sa position géographique, de la culture de son peuple, de ses ressources minières, de ses ressources humaines, etc. En tout cas, cette question pose une autre problématique: le mode de relations entre les pays de l'Amérique.

Les Parlementaires ont cette grande possibilité de mobiliser les électeurs autour de projets prévus pour leur pays et des propositions d'orientation économique qui, sur le plan international ouvriront la voie de la compétitivité. Mais un fait important demeure, les peuples ont aussi leurs propres propositions, il faut les écouter et tenir compte de leur vision. Vouloir faire d'un État, un peuple de consommateurs et d'ouvriers, est-ce là une forme d'intégration économique hémisphérique? Nous Parlementaires, nous sommes en droit de penser d'abord à intégrer les peuples dans les débats sur quel choix économique vers l'intégration économique hémisphérique.

La popularité des institutions parlementaires est relative d'un pays à l'autre. Elle est fonction de la tradition et des

efforts de modernisation réalisée par certains États et des nouvelles orientations données aux actions et discours parlementaires. Quand il faut dépasser le stade de la démagogie, les initiatives positives et louables contribuent le plus souvent à faire taire le conservatisme. Nos peuples ont des habitudes séculaires dont la rupture exige un dépassement de soi, une renonciation d'avec ses propres réflexes chimériques. Ainsi l'institution parlementaire malgré sa légitimité peut être l'objet de critiques qui puissent contribuer à ternir son image et à développer un climat de méfiance du peuple. Pendant des années, les parlementaires ont toujours sollicité le bulletin des électeurs en faisant toutes sortes de promesses. Pendant ces mêmes années, la qualité de vie de la population ne cesse de dégrader. Le dénuement des peuples est révoltant: rareté de l'eau, sécheresse, famine, chômage, dégradation et pollution de l'environnement, l'inaccessibilité à l'éducation, à la justice, aux soins de santé, violence contre les femmes, exclusion discriminatoire contre les enfants. Nous ne pouvons jamais construire un monde démocratique d'ici l'an 2000 si ces droits sociaux, ces droits civils ne sont pas satisfaits. Le Parlementaire, inlassablement s'attachera à:

1. faire son autocritique par rapport à son programme quant à son application;
2. informer ses mandants ou électeurs des projets et travaux entrant dans ses prérogatives;
3. ouvrir des débats sur des thèmes à caractère national/international;
4. soumettre des projets à l'approbation, aux critiques, aux suggestions du peuple.

Ainsi l'institution parlementaire s'ennorgueillira d'avoir, par ses actions, maintenu ou obtenu le respect du peuple.

Parler de démocratisation dans les Amériques n'est pas un projet chimérique. C'est l'idéalisation d'une vision de grandeur chère à tout démocrate. Nous héritons d'une légitimité qui nous confère des droits et qui nous impose des devoirs. Il nous revient de chercher les voies et moyens indispensables pour conduire nos peuples vers ces

sommets lumineux où les maux qui les rongent seront désormais, à la fin du premier quinquennat de l'an 2000, remplacés par: Démocratie, Développement et Prospérité.

MERCI!

HACIA LAS AMÉRICAS DEL 2005: DEMOCRACIA, DESARROLLO Y PROSPERIDAD

**Los medios de acción de los parlamentarios en materia
de integración en el
ejercicio de sus funciones representativas, legislativas e
interparlamentarias**

Taller: Democracia

**"Los Parlamentarios, Actores de la
Democratización en las Américas
y su Función en los Procesos de Integración"**

**Alocución del Señor Carlos Valle
Presidente de la Comisión de Paz del Parlamento
Centroamericano**

En el famoso pensamiento que reza que la Democracia es el gobierno del pueblo, para el pueblo y por el pueblo, Abraham Lincoln legó al continente Americano en forma concreta, la esencia del ineludible compromiso de todo Estado: el autogobernarse. Dentro de este contexto, una de las instituciones democráticas mas plenas consiste en la representatividad, la cual se manifiesta en forma concreta en los Parlamentos y Asambleas Legislativas, que se erigen como foros de deliberación, discusión y diálogo político y jurídico; en cunas de los ordenamientos que rigen los destinos de nuestros pueblos. De esta manera, nosotros, los aquí reunidos, constituímos una parte proporcional de la Democracia Americana, pues representamos a nuestros electores, y más que a ellos, a sus esperanzas y anhelos de paz, prosperidad y desarrollo. Aquí estamos haciendo tangible y presente la Democracia.

Al hablar de la Democracia, no puedo menos que sentir una gran satisfacción al tener presente que nuestro Continente Americano, aún con toda su diversidad, tiene hoy como denominador común de todos sus integrantes: La Democracia, porque, salvo las excepciones que la

confirman, la regla general de la América actual es vivir democráticamente. Sin embargo, no podemos dejar pasar de lado el hecho de que, ante el establecimiento reciente de algunas instituciones democráticas, todavía existen aisladas intenciones de aprovechar su juventud y fragilidad para quebrantarlas. Se hace necesario entonces implementar mecanismos interparlamentarios de Integración Democrática para apoyarlas y darles la oportunidad de fortalecerse, sobrevivir y cumplir con sus objetivos.

No pretendo ni siquiera insinuar, riesgo alguno para la Democracia Hemisférica; sin embargo, ésta tampoco puede considerarse un patrimonio exclusivo e inalienable de un Estado en particular. Sólo el Pueblo que la conoce, la disfruta; y sólo el Pueblo que la conserva y la defiende, la merece. Cómo podemos entonces, nosotros, los parlamentarios, coadyuvar a que la Democracia -en algunos casos incipiente y en otros consolidada-, de los pueblos americanos permanezca?

El Proceso de Integración Económica del Hemisferio - como todo proceso integracionista-, implicará cambios importantes en ciertas estructuras de los Estados. Es importante que, como Parlamentarios, estemos preparados para contribuir directamente en la implementación de dichos cambios, anteponiendo siempre los valores democráticos a las necesidades absolutas del mercado. Debe ser un compromiso nuestro impulsar la Integración Democrática justo delante de la Económica, en una efectiva y coordinada relación que tenga como producto el bienestar de nuestra gente. Ningún ápice de desarrollo económico vale el precio de la mas ínfima restricción de nuestras Democracias. El desarrollo económico pagado con la moneda de la libertad terminaría en un subdesarrollo peor que el que tratamos de superar: El subdesarrollo humano.

Por otra parte, debemos ser lo suficientemente visionarios para no caer en la trampa de la falsa cesión de soberanía o la restricción de autoridad, que terminarían por marginarnos de nuestros hermanos Americanos en la

conquista de la plenitud humana de nuestros representados. Integración debe significar respeto, reconocimiento y mutua colaboración entre nuestros Estados.

La ampliación y apertura de nuestros mercados y de nuestros intereses económicos provocará gran necesidad de manifestación por parte de los sectores involucrados; debemos entonces, como Parlamentarios, ser muy receptivos, coordinadores y conciliadores para lograr mecanismos de Integración que sean producto de grandes consensos, lo cual nos acercaría más al éxito deseado. Tenemos que utilizar creativamente nuestra representatividad para aglutinar las ideas en derredor de los intereses de la Nación, aunque con ello cedamos o compartamos nuestra propia representación.

Vemos en la Integración un fenómeno irreversible que puede ayudarnos a consolidar la Democracia en nuestro continente si somos capaces de convertirnos, más que en voz, en oídos de nuestros pueblos. El éxito de la Integración va a depender en mucho, de cuánta habilidad tengamos los Parlamentarios para hacer trascender la tradicional lucha político-partidista y nos unamos en la tarea de fomentar la Cultura Integracionista, haciendo comprender y asimilar a nuestros representados la Integración como la única forma de hacer frente a los desafíos económicos, sociales, culturales y ambientales de cara al Tercer Milenio. Es importante propiciar la convivencia pacífica, el bien común y el respeto a los Derechos Humanos a través de la práctica personal y comunitaria de una Cultura de Paz.

El alto grado de representatividad de los Parlamentos y la necesidad jurídica de su intervención directa en la creación de la normativa que debe regir la Integración, hace necesario que nosotros los Parlamentarios Americanos diseñemos y establezcamos vínculos interpalamentarios sólidos y eficientes que nos permitan coordinar estrategias legislativas comunes, en materia Integracionista, para garantizar el respeto, la igualdad de tratamiento y la solidaridad entre nuestras Naciones. Asimismo, debemos

coordinar la promoción de legislaciones que hagan prevalecer, por sobre todas las cosas, la libertad del individuo y el respeto a sus Derechos Humanos. Estemos claros que la Integración debe constituir un generador de bienestar común, que prevalezca sobre el bien particular, pero sin menoscabar ni la dignidad de nuestros pueblos ni la de sus pobladores.

Como Diputado al Parlamento Centroamericano y representante de un Organismo Político de Integración en el que están representados más de treinta Partidos Políticos, estoy convencido que la Integración tiene, en los Parlamentarios de Foros Regionales, su más valioso aliado. Son estos foros los que deben asumir un papel protagónico en la discusión y definición de los mecanismos de Integración, dada su amplia representatividad y su función supra-nacional. Nuestros gobiernos deben tomar en cuenta la capacidad de consenso de los foros regionales, apartados de las discusiones políticas domésticas, para lograr instrumentos jurídicos de Integración hondamente Democráticos y nunca restrictivos o discriminatorios.

Quisiera comentar, que en el caso particular de la República de Guatemala, recientemente hemos empezado a vivir una nueva fase de avance dentro del proceso de transición democrática iniciado hace ya más de diez años. Los guatemaltecos nos sentimos orgullosos de mostrar al mundo, a nueve meses de la Firma del Acuerdo de Paz Firme y Duradera, no un país perfecto, pero sí más democrático y libre de conflictos armados internos. Es emocionante recordar, como Diputado y más aún como guatemalteco, el 29 de diciembre de 1996, fecha que jamás será olvidada por nuestro pueblo, pues representa el final de más de 36 años de guerra fratricida y el inicio de un proceso de diálogo, de reconciliación, de silencio de las armas, de perdón sin olvido. Con esta firma terminó, y esperamos que para siempre, la guerra en la región Centroamericana y se abrió la puerta de la oportunidad para la Integración real y consistente. Nos corresponde a los Parlamentarios Centroamericanos y, en segunda instancia, a los Parlamentarios de las Américas, velar

porque esta puerta no se cierre jamás y que por ella ingrese el bienestar de nuestra gente. Hacer esto es hacer Democracia.

De la firma de los Acuerdos de Paz en Guatemala se desprenden compromisos democráticos de suma importancia, tales como la aceptación de otras culturas y la preservación de su identidad; la mejor distribución de los recursos naturales y económicos del país; la reforma de la Ley Fundamental del Estado; la incorporación de los ex-miembros de las fuerzas rebeldes a la legalidad; la recuperación de la memoria histórica, etc. En resumen, constituyen compromisos serios y valiosos aportes a la Cultura de la Paz y a la estabilidad democrática.

Como Parlamentarios Americanos, estamos obligados a trabajar tesoneramente por erradicar todo rasgo de enfrentamiento, discriminación, violencia y muerte en nuestro Continente, para construir una Cultura de Paz, Democracia y Desarrollo. Se lo debemos a las próximas generaciones.

Tenemos una gran tarea por delante: resolver los conflictos a través de mecanismos pacíficos de negociación; impulsar la inserción de las economías de nuestros Estados en el concierto hemisférico del desarrollo, por medio de marcos jurídicos justos y democráticos; lograr la pacificación total de nuestro continente, y una vez conseguida ésta, luchar porque esa llama de esperanza que significa La Paz, no se extinga nunca, sino por el contrario, arda más y se convierta en una hoguera permanente de felicidad en el corazón de nuestros pueblos hermanos.

Muchas Gracias!

VERS LES AMÉRIQUES DE 2005: DÉMOCRATIE, DÉVELOPPEMENT ET PROSPÉRITÉ

**Les moyens d'action des parlementaires en matière
d'intégration dans l'exercice
de leurs fonctions représentatives, législatives et
interparlementaires**

Atelier: Droits de la personne

**Allocution de monsieur Hélio Bicudo
Député à la Chambre des députés de la République
fédérative du Brésil**

Concernant la discussion de la problématique des droits de l'Homme dans la perspective du troisième millénaire, il convient avant tout de rappeler les mouvements et les documents qui peu à peu se sont consolidés en une véritable doctrine des droits de l'Homme, et dans un champ d'action que nous pourrions qualifier d'universel.

Ainsi, bien plus tard après la Charte de 1215, sont apparues les déclarations des droits de l'Homme adoptées aux États-Unis à la veille de la Déclaration d'indépendance de 1776 et en France, à partir de la révolution de 1789, symbole d'une nouvelle dimension dans la vie juridique des relations entre le peuple et le pouvoir.

Lorsque l'on parle de la reconnaissance des droits des personnes en tant qu'individus ou en tant que peuple, il est intéressant de relever l'influence de la pensée philosophique dans les discussions qui eurent lieu à l'Assemblée nationale française et qui, plus tard, inspirèrent la propre Déclaration des droits de l'Homme et du citoyen alors ainsi promulguée.

Il est intéressant de signaler à ce propos, l'influence révolutionnaire de la pensée romaine qui se faisait sentir de manière évidente à la fin du XVIIIème siècle, et plus

particulièrement dans l'oeuvre de Rousseau. Nous trouvons, dans le livre IV du Contrat social, l'idée d'un modèle constitutionnel inspiré des institutions du peuple romain. Modèle déjà défini dans le Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes (modèle de tous les peuples libres). C'est de ce modèle que les jacobins s'inspirèrent avec quelques adaptations.

Au XIXème siècle, l'histoire juridique de l'Europe continentale se caractérisa, c'est certain, par le rejet du droit public romain, ainsi que l'utilisation du droit privé romain, avec diverses déformations et amputations. Ceci est un des aspects de refus que la bourgeoisie opposa à la révolution républicaine jacobine et celui que Volney avait défini comme une hostilité à «l'adoration superstitieuse des romains».

Ce refus du modèle constitutionnel romain par la bourgeoisie trouve ses racines théoriques dans la pensée de Benjamin Constant qui prétend différencier la «liberté des antiques» (participation du pouvoir) à la «liberté des modernes» (droit individuel), considérant par là même la liberté des «antiques» comme dangereuse pour les modernes.

Ainsi, le modèle constitutionnel démocratique de même que ses origines romaines, furent condamnés à l'oubli par les intellectuels de la bourgeoisie dominante après le «Thermidor».

C'est à partir de cet instant que ces droits commencèrent à être transcrits dans les lettres politiques des nations occidentales. Néanmoins, l'évolution de l'humanité démontra que, pour son perfectionnement, l'inscription des droits et des devoirs dans ses codes de conduite ne suffisait pas aux peuples. L'exigence des nouveaux droits et devoirs apparaît dans la mesure où l'homme s'insère dans la société - qui n'est pas statique, mais toujours plus dynamique -, et se qualifie comme citoyen.

Ces droits furent anéantis, plus spécialement durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale, par les dictatures qui

s'installèrent en Allemagne, en Italie et au Japon en même temps que s'oubliaient, pour des intérêts politiques immédiats, les atrocités qui avaient lieu en Union soviétique, comme l'implantation du régime staliniste.

Ils reviennent, maintenant, à être médités non seulement comme des droits personnels mais comme les droits des peuples, bien que cependant, certains pays considèrent les droits des peuples, très souvent en contradiction avec les droits des personnes. Si des exigences déterminées de développement et d'intégration nationale sont réelles, comme l'affirme Roberto Papini (droits des peuples, droits de l'Homme) dans l'introduction de l'étude du thème guidé par ces principes, certains États peuvent présenter leurs propres droits particuliers comme si ceux-ci étaient les droits des peuples dans son aspect le plus général. D'une coïncidence similaire peut naître un tragique maquillage.

En réalité, nous sommes en train de vivre - et voici donc les conclusions de la Conférence sur les droits de l'Homme présentées par l'Organisation des Nations unies (ONU) réalisée à Vienne en 1993 - une transition de la problématique des droits de l'Homme au niveau national, où ils sont restés bloqués à un niveau international. Cette transition trouve son origine avec la Charte des Nations unies de 1945, où cependant les normes de conduite n'apparaissent pas clairement, mais au contraire subsistent encore dans un état fluide et nébuleux. D'une époque pendant laquelle ces droits étaient suffisamment protégés par les États, nous sommes passés à une période où les États eux-mêmes sont mis en question, car c'est d'eux, très souvent, qu'il est nécessaire de protéger l'être humain.

Il paraît donc évident, que se pose un problème de relation entre les droits de l'Homme et des peuples et ceux de l'État. Une conception probatoire de la souveraineté de l'État constitue un obstacle pour l'exercice normal de ces droits, tandis qu'une conception de service, «instrumental» de l'État (comme le disait J. Maritain), constitue sa présupposition naturelle.

Aujourd'hui, nous avons une situation, pour ainsi dire,

paradoxale : les États sont en même temps les juges et les accusés dans les cas de violation des droits de l'Homme.

Ainsi, si nous reconnaissons le droit des peuples à disposer d'eux-mêmes, il est nécessaire non seulement de reconnaître leur droit d'exister comme entité politique, mais encore d'admettre qu'ils peuvent choisir librement le statut de la personne, conformément à ses traditions culturelles et religieuses. Pour ne prendre qu'un exemple, la règle de l'égalité des sexes devra céder le pas devant la réalité de la polygamie. D'une manière générale, entre l'univers juridique et le pluralisme culturel qui s'impose, si nous souhaitons respecter l'identité ethnique et politique des communautés, la conciliation paraît difficile. Les systèmes des valeurs sur lesquelles repose la civilisation de ces communautés sont quelques fois trop différentes pour être réduites à une union sur certains points importants.

L'action internationale, dans ces cas, comporte sans aucun doute, des risques de manipulations politiques. Les récentes interventions américaines en faveur des droits des minorités au Moyen Orient - comme le démontre ce qui arriva pendant la «guerre du Golfe» et ses dédoublements - prennent les droits de l'Homme comme prétexte et ont comme objectif, en ultime analyse, la défense des intérêts américains, surtout dans le domaine du pétrole et de ses dérivés. La garantie des droits suppose que soient mis en pratique des mécanismes adéquats, tels que la possibilité d'appropriation des ressources et l'organisation de juridictions spéciales, l'adoption de sanctions et des moyens de contention. Plus tard nous reviendrons sur ces points.

Ainsi, en l'absence d'instance internationale supérieure, toute intervention dans le domaine des droits de l'Homme peut être une pure manoeuvre politique, ou un geste très souvent inutile.

Néanmoins, il est nécessaire de ne pas sous-estimer l'envergure de la question. En vérité, la solution du problème dans les cours internationales, dépend de la prise

de conscience de la dimension politique du problème. Cela ne signifie pas pour autant, que l'on doit penser seulement aux sollicitations, ou aux procédés politiques ayant en vue la résolution de cas particuliers, mais avant tout, que la défense des droits de l'Homme et des peuples existe en fonction du développement d'une conscience universelle. Déjà dans les années 60, l'on cherchait à passer la barrière imposée par les frontières des nations, pour atteindre une interprétation de plus grande amplitude, qui dépasse les limites nationales, c'est-à-dire, une interprétation qui devrait avoir pour objectif l'indivisibilité et l'interdépendance des droits de l'Homme, priorisant les droits sociaux et les droits collectifs en général. A partir de là, nous assistons à une affirmation progressive de la part des États, comme il est possible de le constater dans la Déclaration des Nations unies, concernant la sécurité nationale, et de même, dans la Charte des droits et devoirs des États ou même dans l'Acte final d'Helsinki.

Au Mexique, en 1947, lors de la 12ème Conférence internationale de l'UNESCO, Jacques Maritain s'interrogeait sur les «possibilités de coopération dans un monde divisé». Il développa sa doctrine sur la nécessité d'un accord «pratique» concernant les principes fondamentaux universellement reconnus, formulant ce que nous pouvons appeler une «liste» des droits de l'Homme, qui sera adoptée plus tard comme philosophie de base de la Déclaration de 1948.

Bien qu'il reconnaisse l'importance d'une réflexion fondamentale capable de mener une conviction à une doctrine générale et cohérente, Maritain pensait que l'accord sur l'action pratique commune pourrait se constituer «non sur une pensée spéculatrice commune, mais sur une pensée pratique commune, non sur une même conception du monde, de l'homme et de ses connaissances, mais sur l'affirmation des convictions pratiques communes».

Il est sans aucun doute important de réfléchir sur le contenu de ces «convictions pratiques communes», auxquelles se réfèrent Maritain, pour mieux en

comprendre le contenu, l'interdépendance et l'indivisibilité des droits de l'Homme, ainsi que sur la nécessité de se mettre d'accord sur une certaine hiérarchie des valeurs nécessaires à l'exercice et à l'organisation concrète des divers droits.

Il est ainsi indispensable de procéder à une classification anthropologique. «Comment revendiquer» écrit Etienne Borne, les droits de l'Homme contre les pouvoirs ou contre les contre-pouvoirs absolutistes et terroristes, sans une référence concernant la vérité de l'homme, et que l'homme n'ait pas le pouvoir de transgresser ? Et l'expérience montre que les oppresseurs de n'importe quelle race ne peuvent pas manipuler les hommes et les consciences, sinon avant d'avoir manipulé la vérité (La Croix, 16 octobre 1982).

Comme l'écrit Roberto Papini, il est l'heure de revenir au travail avec de nouveaux moyens pour mieux comprendre qui est l'homme contemporain, au travail pour développer une culture personnaliste, personnalisante et non pas pour aliéner la vie de l'homme et des peuples. Revenir aussi à une culture qui développe des conditions adéquates - culturelles, politiques et sociales - pour la promotion des droits de l'Homme, sans lesquelles, l'invocation du respect à ses droits n'a pas de réel support. (Droits des peuples, Le Centurion, p. 18).

Bien, voilà.

La Communauté internationale est en train de s'efforcer de construire tout un système qui permette, d'une part, la promotion de ces droits, et d'autre part, leur protection, et elle souhaite les fondre dans un système global.

Selon José Augusto Lindgren Alves, qui dirigea la Division des droits de l'Homme du ministère des Relations extérieures du Brésil, une fois éliminé le simple partage du monde en deux grands blocs stratégiques, il fut possible de vérifier avec plus de clarté, l'état déplorable du respect des droits de l'Homme dans de vastes zones territoriales et le degré de menace que cela signifiait pour la stabilité

internationale.

En vérité, comme le signale le lucide diplomate brésilien, alors que le choc des conceptions idéologiques de la période de la Guerre froide permettait à certains États, d'affirmer que l'obtention d'une meilleure situation économique et sociale était la condition préalable pour que les populations respectives puissent profiter des droits fondamentaux, aujourd'hui, la pensée prédominante est que les droits de l'Homme, incluant ceux de la première génération, civils et politiques, sont les facteurs essentiels au développement (cf. Les droits de l'Homme comme thème global, édition Perspectiva, p. 3/4).

Ici, une réflexion à propos du dénommé «droit international humanitaire», aussi appelé «droit de la Haye» ou droit des conflits armés, s'impose pour vérifier son approximation graduelle ou sa convergence, en direction de la protection des droits de l'Homme, quoique sur des plans distincts, bien qu'il n'y ait aucune raison plausible à la séparation prétendue encore aujourd'hui par les juristes ou les politiciens.

Le droit humanitaire n'est, sans aucun doute, qu'un chapitre dans le grand horizon des droits de l'Homme. Les principes communs, mentionnés par Jean Pidet et rappelés par Cançado Trindade, comme par exemple le principe de l'inviolabilité de la personne (incluant le respect de la vie, de l'intégrité physique et mentale, et des attributs de la personnalité), le principe de la non-discrimination (de n'importe quelle nature), et le principe de la sécurité des personnes, comprennent l'interdiction de représailles, de peines collectives, de prises d'otages, les garanties judiciaires, l'inaliénabilité des droits et la responsabilité individuelle. Ceux-ci sont des présuppositions des propres droits de l'Homme, considérés alors du point de vue de son universalisation (cf. Cançado Trindade, Evolution et renforcement de la protection internationale des droits de la personne humaine dans sa plus large dimension, en publication de l'IIDH/1992, page 43 et suivantes).

Dans ce plan global, selon l'énoncé de la disposition du

2ème article du Pacte des droits civils et politiques des Nations unies de 1966, les États membres assument l'obligation de respecter et d'assurer les droits protégés. Cela nécessite, de la part des États membres, des actions spécifiques, de manière à laisser aux individus la jouissance de leurs droits. Une position similaire peut inclure une adoption de mesures pour éliminer les obstacles gouvernementaux et probablement aussi privés de l'usufruit de ces droits. Elle peut encore solliciter l'adoption de lois et d'autres mesures contre l'interférence privée, qui empêche la réalisation de ces droits par exemple.

Droits de l'Homme et protection suprême (Erga Omnes)

De ce fait, comment respecter et assurer les droits, sans que soit donnée aux traités, pactes et conventions, une protection suprême (erga omnes) ?

Cette obligation, consacrée dans les traités de protection des droits de l'être humain, comme le Pacte des droits civils et politiques (article 21), la Convention sur les droits de l'enfant (article 2), la Convention européenne des droits de l'Homme (article 1er), la Convention américaine des droits de l'Homme (article 1er), les Conventions de Genève sur le droit international humanitaire (article 1er), peut être comprise comme déterminante de la juste action des États membres dans la prévention et la punition des violations des droits de l'Homme ici reconnus.

La question est d'une très grande pertinence, puisqu'il existe des situations, courantes dans les pays du tiers monde, comme par exemple les activités de groupes d'extermination, très souvent liés aux organismes de sécurité publique des États. Si l'on n'admet pas une interprétation plus vaste des limites relatives aux conventions internationales, les efforts qui sont faits pour la reconnaissance de l'universalité et l'internationalisation des droits de l'Homme n'obtiendront pas de bons résultats. Si les décisions des tribunaux internationaux sont à peine considérées comme des déclarations de principes, leurs

violations pures et simples sont alors stimulées. Si, par exemple, les organismes des droits de l'Homme - gouvernementaux ou non gouvernementaux - ne peuvent pas agir au sens strict, et si l'État comme tel se refuse à le faire, pire que cela, il prend part aux violations des droits de l'Homme. De même si l'on ne reconnaît pas le pouvoir de répression des décisions des cours internationales, celles-ci en arrivent à se refermer sur elles-mêmes, affaiblissant leur rôle principal.

Il est évident que les États, bien que, encore souscripteurs de ces conventions, se protègent derrière le principe de souveraineté, pour ne pas reconnaître aux tribunaux internationaux cette compétence contentieuse. Cette compétence, dans le cas de Cour interaméricaine des droits de l'Homme, créée par le «Pacte de San José» et ratifié par le Brésil, n'atteint pas pour autant notre pays du point de vue contentieux, puisque notre reconnaissance expresse à ses clauses est nécessaire, ce qui jusqu'à présent n'est pas arrivé. Ce n'est pas pour un autre motif que la plus grande activité de la Cour se concentre autour de la juridiction consultative.

Nous devons, à ce stade, valoriser l'activité de la Commission interaméricaine des droits de l'Homme créée en 1959. Dans ce cas aussi, le principe de souveraineté apparaît comme le paravent derrière lequel se cachent les violations des droits de l'Homme. La Convention américaine établit la reconnaissance obligatoire, par les États membres, de la compétence de la Commission interaméricaine des droits de l'Homme, pour considérer les plaintes individuelles, tandis que - comme cela arrive avec la Cour - les plaintes inter - États, pour être recevables, nécessitent la déclaration de l'acceptation expresse. Nonobstant cette petite grande entrave, la Commission interaméricaine des droits de l'Homme possède un large champ d'action. Elle recherche, avant tout, une solution amicale entre les parties. Si l'État désigné comme violeur, n'adopte pas dans un délai raisonnable, les mesures recommandées, la question va au domaine public, généralement sous la forme d'une résolution incluse dans le rapport annuel. Ces décisions, quand elles jugent les

plaintes présentées, ont une configuration presque judiciaire, car elles déclarent les cas de culpabilité et indiquent des mesures concrètes pour sa réparation, cela, après des audiences individuelles ou même des investigations dans les pays incriminés.

Dans le plan global, avec la promulgation de la Charte des Nations unies du 26 juin 1945, la communauté internationale alors organisée, s'est engagée à implanter la proposition de «promouvoir et d'encourager le respect des droits de l'Homme et des libertés fondamentales de chacun, sans distinction de race, sexe, langue ou religion». A cette fin, la Commission des droits de l'Homme, principal organisme des Nations unies en la matière, a reçu la charge d'élaborer une Charte internationale des droits.

Le 10 décembre 1948, l'Assemblée générale des Nations unies proclamait la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'Homme, qui définissait pour la première fois au niveau international les droits de l'Homme et les libertés fondamentales, comme «un modèle commun de réalisation pour tous les peuples et les nations». Ces notions étaient jusqu'alors traitées de manière diffuse dans des déclarations et des législations constitutionnelles ou infraconstitutionnelles des États.

À partir de là, la Commission des droits de l'Homme de l'ONU se fit remarquer par la dénommée internationalisation et universalisation des droits de l'Homme. Ce long périple s'acheva à la Conférence de Vienne en 1993 qui chercha, par le moyen de mécanismes et suite aux décisions de ses Assemblées générales, à implanter les trois générations des droits de l'Homme : le droit à la liberté (civils et politiques); le droit à l'égalité (économiques et sociales); le droit à la solidarité (paix, développement, milieu ambiant sain, jouissance des biens définis comme patrimoine commun de l'humanité). Si l'inclusion des droits de la «seconde génération» aux côtés des droits civils et politiques ne fut obtenu qu'après une dure opposition, ceux de la «troisième génération» rencontrèrent des objections encore sans réponses.

Sont à noter les initiatives et le travail de la diplomatie brésilienne pour l'insertion dans la Déclaration de Vienne, de la recommandation pour que soit établi un programme dans le champ d'action des Nations unies, visant à aider les États dans leur effort à créer et renforcer les structures nationales adéquates ayant un impact direct sur le contrôle du respect des droits de l'Homme et le maintien de l'État de droit.

Les contributions à l'accomplissement de ce programme, qui devra offrir assistance technique et financière aux projets nationaux de réforme des établissements pénaux et correctionnels, de l'éducation et de l'entraînement des avocats, juges et forces de l'ordre dans les droits de l'Homme, et à des projets de n'importe quel autre type d'activité en relation avec le bon fonctionnement de la justice, ne sont pas attendues pour l'instant, car elles dépendent de la volonté des pays plus riches d'y prêter leur contribution. Mais il paraît évident qu'il s'agit d'ouvrir la porte à une coopération plus large, afin que les pays qui sont à la recherche de la solidarité universelle puissent développer l'infrastructure nécessaire à l'accomplissement des devoirs que le respect aux droits de l'Homme impose.

Mais, le point essentiel de la Conférence de Vienne se situe sur la reconnaissance de l'universalité des droits définis dans la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'Homme de 1948. Comme affirme encore José Augusto Lindgren Alves, il s'agit d'un fait de très grande signification parce que, face à lui on ne peut plus être cohérent. Accuser les droits proclamés en 1948 d'ethnocentriques, et faire usage du relativisme culturel comme justificatif de non-respect comme l'affirme l'Article 1er de la Déclaration de Vienne selon lequel «la nature universelle de ces droits et libertés n'admet pas de doutes», rend «indisponible son essence» (op. cit. , p. 139).

La protection internationale

Au Brésil jusqu'à cette dernière décennie, la protection des droits de l'Homme, se faisait en fonction de l'activité des organismes internes, principalement non

gouvernementaux, et revint à être assumée par le ministère Public, selon les instruments que la Constitution brésilienne de 1988 que lui conféra l'institution (article 129). Cette même protection est aussi établie par les commissions des États et des municipalités des droits de l'Homme, coordonnées, jusqu'à un certain niveau par la Commission des droits de l'Homme de la Chambre des députés. Après la lente acceptation de la généralisation de cette protection, elle gagna du terrain au niveau national et international, face à l'unité conceptuelle des droits de l'Homme.

La Déclaration universelle des droits de l'Homme de 1948, comme on l'a affirmé, fut la base initiale d'un mouvement qui continue encore aujourd'hui, précisément dans sa ligne de protection au-delà des frontières des États. De cette date jusqu'à nos jours, «les moyens qui ont pour objectif commun la sauvegarde des droits de l'Homme, forment un ensemble de règles très complexes». Ces règles d'origines diverses (Nations unies, agences spécialisées, organisations régionales), de différents champs d'action (global et régional), distinctes aussi concernant ses destinataires ou ses bénéficiaires, et de manière signifiante, différentes aussi dans leurs contenus, dans leurs forces et leurs effets juridiques (depuis les simples déclarations jusqu'aux conventions officiellement ratifiées) et aussi des organismes exerçant des fonctions distinctes (information, instruction, conciliation, et prise de décision). Sont également distinctes, les techniques de contrôle et de supervision (réclamations ou pétitions de diverses modalités, rapports périodiques, investigations) (cf. Cançado Trindade, *La Protection internationale des droits de l'Homme*, 1991, p. 3).

Le professeur Cançado Trindade relève que, malgré la diversité des traités et des moyens des droits de l'Homme, ceux-ci ont un trait distinct de rationalité qui est le fait de se diriger à la protection des êtres humains sur laquelle doit se baser toutes les réclamations existantes dans ce domaine (cf. *op. loc. cit.*).

La vérité est que, peu à peu, fut dépassée l'idée même que

la protection des droits de l'Homme menée par les États n'est pas suffisante, dans ce que Cançado Trindade nomme «compétence nationale exclusive», qui atteint le dénommé «domaine réservé de l'État».

Selon l'illustre auteur, cette ligne de pensée n'est qu' «une réflexion, une manifestation ou une particularisation de la propre notion de souveraineté, entièrement inadaptée au plan des relations internationales», car conçu à l'origine, ayant à l'esprit l'État in abstracto (et non dans ses relations avec les autres États), et comme expression d'un pouvoir interne, d'une suprématie propre d'une méthode de subordination, clairement distincte de la méthode internationale, de coordination et de coopération, dans lesquels se trouvent tous les États, d'indépendance, juridiquement égaux (op. cit., p. 4). De là il conclut : «il n'est pas possible d'affirmer que la protection des droits de l'Homme reposerait sous le dénommé - domaine réservé de l'État -, comme le prétendaient certains cercles il y a trois ou quatre décennies» (id. ib.).

En conséquence, dans le processus d'activité et non seulement dans l'interprétation internationale des documents internationaux - comme ceux des traités en général - il ne devrait pas y avoir de place pour l'invocation du dogme de la souveraineté.

Le même Cançado Trindade, dans un rapport de la Commission juridique du ministère des Relations extérieures du Brésil (rapport MRE - CJ/01), apprécie avec une grande acuité la problématique que souhaite imposer un concept de la souveraineté déjà dépassé, aux principes universellement acceptés de la protection des droits de l'Homme, pour affirmer qu' «il n'existe pas de raison de nature vraiment juridique qui justifient la position statique et mécanique de non-adhésion aux traités relatifs à la protection internationale des droits de l'Homme». Il n'y a pas de raison de discuter l'outrage de leur adhésion, sauf si l'on a la prétention de maintenir l'attitude d'inviolabilité qui ces dernières années et, jusqu'à présent, a été quelques fois maintenue .

Des juristes brésiliens, de renommée internationale, comme Clovis Bevilacqua, Hildebrando Accioly et Raul Fernandes avaient déjà averti que la notion de souveraineté, acceptée et reconnue par le droit des peuples au sujet de l'ordre interne de l'État, devenait inadéquate pour fonder l'ordre international, qui trouverait seulement une base solide dans la notion qui n'est pas éthique de solidarité.

En vérité, dans l'appréciation du développement historique de la protection internationale des droits de l'Homme, l'on vérifie la séparation graduelle des barrières, dans la compréhension de ce que la protection des droits basiques de l'être humain ne se perd pas dans l'activité de l'État, ni dans la prétendue et démontrable «compétence nationale exclusive» (Cançado Trindade, op. cit. p. 4).

De là, on commence à admettre que les normes de droit international soient dirigées directement aux individus en tant que personnes protégées au niveau international.

En conséquence, si les personnes sont sujettes à la protection internationale, on ne peut pas les exclure de l'accès aux tribunaux internationaux, ni négliger, d'aucune manière, la reconnaissance de la large juridiction de ces cours, au droit positif national.

La tradition brésilienne s'affirme dans cette direction, car, se référant à la IX Conférence internationale américaine de Bogota de 1948, c'est justement la délégation brésilienne qui proposa la création d'une Cour interaméricaine des droits de l'Homme. Cette proposition approuvée et adoptée comme la XXI résolution de cette Conférence, mis en évidence la nécessité de création d'un organisme judiciaire international pour rendre adéquat et efficace la protection juridique des droits de l'Homme internationalement reconnus.

Plus tard, l'Assemblée constituante de 1986 / 87 affirma, dans l'Acte des dispositions constitutionnelles transitoires, que «le Brésil proposerait la formation d'un tribunal international des droits de l'Homme» (article 7).

Ce tribunal existe déjà et le Brésil y participe. Comment alors, réduire sa compétence à ce qui s'harmonise avec notre droit positif ?

Quand la Constitution brésilienne propose la création d'un tribunal international pour la protection des droits de l'Homme, sans aucune distinction, il est évident qu'elle se soumettra à sa juridiction. Ce tribunal ou ces tribunaux existent déjà : la Cour internationale de la Haye et la Cour interaméricaine. Ainsi, il n'y a pas moyen d'y échapper, et selon les intérêts des États, si tel est le cas, cela dénonce un concept de souveraineté, entièrement dépassé de nos jours.

Droits sociaux et économiques

Pour conclure, il convient de relever la plus grande importance de l'insertion du droit au développement, dans toute son extension, comme l'un des droits fondamentaux de l'Homme. C'est dans ce sens que l'Assemblée générale des Nations unies, lors de sa réunion en décembre 1986, adopta le projet de la déclaration sur le droit au développement. Une consultation mondiale fut organisée à Genève, du 8 au 12 janvier 1990 et en 1993, sous l'influence des idées de la Conférence de Vienne, la Commission des droits de l'Homme de l'ONU nomma un groupe de travail pour sécuriser l'application de cette même déclaration.

D'après ce groupe de travail, il s'agit d'un droit inaliénable de l'homme, un droit multidimensionnel, dynamique, progressif et qui suppose :

- le droit à une participation effective sous tous les aspects du développement et à tous les niveaux des prises de décision;
- le droit à l'égalité pour l'accès aux ressources;
- le droit à une répartition équitable des produits du développement;
- le droit au respect des droits civils, politiques, économiques, sociaux et culturels;

- le droit à un environnement international, où tous les droits peuvent être pleinement réalisés;

C'est de là que les droits de l'Homme et le «laissez-faire» économique radical adopté actuellement sont incompatibles.

Notant à cet instant que la fin de la Guerre froide a apporté un nouvel élan à la cause des droits de l'Homme dans le monde entier. Cet élan a même élevé les droits de l'Homme au plus haut niveau de l'agenda international, ce qui a été confirmé par la Conférence de Vienne en 1993.

Ce fait-là, duquel nous nous réjouissons, implique, pourtant une contradiction dans le monde d'aujourd'hui, qui se rattache à la situation économique, non pas seulement internationale, mais aussi dans presque tous les pays.

En même temps que les droits de l'Homme sont envisagés comme des moyens à atteindre les objectifs de liberté et de paix sociale dans le monde entier, la majorité des hommes et des femmes, sujets de ces droits universels, n'ont pas les conditions minimales à la jouissance de ces droits. Cette triste réalité, si connue dans tous les pays en voie de développement, n'est pas une exclusivité du Tiers Monde. Il suffit de lire les journaux, ou de voir les journaux télévisés des chaînes internationales, pour noter à quel point le chômage, la détresse et le nombre de personnes sans abri sont répandus même dans les sociétés les plus avancées.

Face à cette situation généralisée, on peut justement se demander quels sont les droits de l'Homme qui méritent tant d'attention dans l'agenda international. Apparemment, il ne s'agit que des droits civils et politiques.

Bien sûr, les droits civils et politiques sont essentiels n'importe où et ne peuvent être bafoués sous aucune excuse. Cela a été écrit dans la Déclaration de Vienne, adoptée par consensus par tous nos pays. Mais cette Déclaration établit aussi l'interdépendance de tous les

droits de l'Homme - civils, politiques, économiques, sociaux et culturels. Et elle le fait sagement, puisque nous savons, comme tout le monde, que sans un minimum de conditions matérielles, les droits en général, même les civils et politiques, deviennent fiction.

La cause de cette contradiction dont je parle, se rattache à un fait bien connu et peu affronté : les droits de l'Homme et le laissez-faire économique radical qui prévaut à l'époque contemporaine sont incompatibles. Il faut donc s'intéresser en même temps à toutes ces questions- là si on veut vraiment accorder une force nouvelle à la lutte internationale pour les droits de l'Homme.

Plus que reconnaître l'interdépendance de toutes les catégories des droits de l'Homme, la Déclaration de Vienne a réaffirmé, par consensus aussi, le droit au développement. Dans ses dimensions individuelles et collectives, le droit au développement est, d'une certaine façon, et par une autre approche, ce que Hanna Arendt appelait «le droit d'avoir droits». Car c'est le développement, aussi bien que l'appartenance reconnue à un État, qui assure à chaque individu la jouissance de la totalité de ses droits fondamentaux, en commençant par les droits économiques et sociaux. Sans un minimum de conditions pour subvenir à ses besoins fondamentaux au sein de la collectivité, il est bon, mais presque inutile, d'offrir l'accès à la justice pour les défenses des droits de l'être humain. C'est le développement qui permet, en plus, aux individus d'accéder à la communauté internationale, en partant de sa collectivité d'origine.

L'intention de maintenir un État capable de rompre le pouvoir des syndicats et, en même temps, de contrôler la masse monétaire, lorsque que cet État investit peu dans les dépenses sociales et dans les interventions économiques, revitalise le système de domination des riches sur les pauvres. La stabilité monétaire - objectif suprême des gouvernements - implique le contrôle des dépenses pour le bien-être et la restauration du taux naturel du chômage, le retour d'un exercice de réserve des travailleurs pour briser les syndicats.

C'est dans ce sens que la globalisation ne pourra pas être considérée seulement en termes économiques et ne pourra pas être affrontée, sans prendre en compte la nécessité d'accords basés sur la justice sociale internationale, dans lesquels on ne résoudra pas les problèmes de faim, de pauvreté, des inégalités sociales dans la distribution des revenus, de la détérioration de l'environnement et, finalement, de la propre stabilité des institutions démocratiques.

En conséquence, la communauté des hommes doit affronter de grands risques à cause de l'absence d'une entité démocratique qui agit comme régulateur et stabilisateur des relations commerciales entre les États.

On voit donc que le modèle de croissance économique de l'Amérique latine nécessite égalité et équilibre social. De même que la consolidation démocratique impose l'élimination de la pauvreté et de l'exclusion sociale, elle impose aussi des systèmes de participation efficaces, et un juste équilibre dans la distribution de la richesse. Il est évident que les futurs accords de coopération économique et sociale soient accompagnés de protocoles financiers qui incluent une augmentation substantielle des ressources destinées à la collaboration avec les pays de l'Amérique latine. Ces accords supposent aussi une ouverture négociée et réciproque des marchés. Je souhaite rappeler ici les conflits qui se trament pour rendre non viable le Mercosur, afin de maintenir le pouvoir des États-Unis sur le marché des Amériques.

Et de même, toujours dans cette idée, il est nécessaire d'examiner la possibilité d'appliquer des formules nouvelles pour solutionner le problème de la «dette externe» des pays sous développés d'Amérique latine, afin qu'à partir du siècle à venir les pays endettés puissent progresser dans leurs projets relatifs à l'environnement, la santé, l'éducation et que soit donné priorité aux luttes contre la pauvreté et l'exclusion sociale.

Mécanismes de protection

Dans le domaine des Amériques et en particulier de l'Amérique sous-développée, nous sommes d'accord que l'observation des droits de l'Homme se constitue sur la base de l'État de droit démocratique.

De cette façon, on ne peut pas accepter que les décisions relatives à ces droits - qu'il s'agisse des droits sociaux ou des droits économiques - reposent sur la volonté des États plus avancés.

Dans ce sens, il est de la plus grande importance que s'établissent des organismes qui puissent intervenir dans le processus d'intégration politique et économique, non seulement pour établir des propositions d'action, mais aussi pour agir par l'intermédiaire de procédés d'aide technique et économique, semblables si nécessaire, et en relation aux pays qui, pour ainsi dire, détiennent les filets du pouvoir économique.

D'un point de vue des droits et libertés individuelles, la Commission et la Cour interaméricaine des droits de l'Homme peuvent contribuer efficacement pour qu'ils soient respectés, dès lors que leurs pouvoirs sont reconnus, ce qui n'est encore le cas, puisque différents pays d'Amérique n'ont pas souscrit au Pacte de San José et ceux qui y ont souscrit ne lui reconnaissent pas son pouvoir, comme c'est le cas entre autres du Brésil.

Dans le domaine de l'intégration économique, tout reste à faire. Cela peut paraître utopique, mais la création d'une entité de notables des États américains pour qu'ils puissent évaluer et imposer des mesures correctives qui empêchent que le processus d'ouverture des économies soit négatif devant les droits de l'Homme, serait un moyen habile de mesurer jusqu'à quel point l'abolition des tâches et la compétitivité accentuée interférerait et violerait l'observation des droits à la citoyenneté. Que représente en vérité, la technologie perfectionnée et sophistiquée face à la croissance du chômage et de la misère ?

Finalement, il est important de signaler la tâche importante

qui reste à développer par les parlements de nos pays. Au Brésil, dans la mesure où la Chambre des députés a institué, il y a moins de deux ans, sa Commission des droits de l'Homme, cet événement contribua à stimuler la création de commissions dans les assemblées législatives des États, de même que le Secrétariat des droits de l'Homme de la présidence de la République. Le Plan national des droits de l'Homme, signalé par le décret de 1996, pris en considération les résultats de la première Conférence nationale des droits de l'Homme (avril 1996), convoquée par la Commission des droits de l'Homme de la Chambre des députés. Son suivi, à travers la seconde Conférence nationale des droits de l'Homme, elle aussi convoquée par la Commission des droits de l'Homme de la Chambre des députés (1997), marqua la nécessité de réajustements indispensables à son perfectionnement.

Ces commissions sont des organismes collectifs, qui reçoivent les plaintes, investissent, organisent des événements, débats, conférences, simulations de jugements, organisent des groupes d'étude pour la formulation de politiques et de projets capables d'implanter des mesures protectrices des droits de l'Homme.

Dans ce sens, elles se constituent en organismes de fiscalisation, et par conséquent de pression pour que les pouvoirs exécutif et judiciaire travaillent dans des domaines en accord avec le respect pour les droits à la citoyenneté.

Ce sont des problèmes d'aujourd'hui et de demain. De notre volonté dépend la construction d'un monde juste. Si l'on continue de rester inactif face aux problèmes, les relations entre les peuples se détérioreront ainsi que nos idéaux de justice, qui sont les produits mêmes de la paix.

HACIA LAS AMÉRICAS DEL 2005: DEMOCRACIA, DESARROLLO Y PROSPERIDAD

**Los medios de acción de los parlamentarios en materia
de integración en el
ejercicio de sus funciones representativas, legislativas e
interparlamentarias**

Taller: Derechos Humanos

**"La fuerza del dialogo parlamentario para
fortalecer los derechos humanos"**

**Alocución del Señor Ricardo Hormazábal Sánchez
Senador de la República de Chile**

Introducción

Me encuentro entre los que creen que los derechos humanos emanan de la naturaleza de las personas.

Para usar la antigua enseñanza, encuentro su fundamento en el derecho natural.

Pero, recordando a Maritain , creo que si personas de diversas visiones culturales coincidimos en una enumeración de derechos humanos que debemos promover y respetar, no es necesario debatir sobre el porqué, sino trabajar para que se respeten.

La primavera democrática que se vive en América Latina aún está afectada por hechos y situaciones que se arrastran desde el invierno dictatorial que con tanta fuerza y por tanto tiempo afectó a numerosos países, particularmente el mío, Chile.

Sobre nuestra experiencia quisiera aportar algunas reflexiones :

Radomiro Tomic nos enseñaba :

"Sin una clara percepción de la realidad de la cual se parte y dentro de la que se opera, el idealista no se distinguiría del fanático".

LOS PRINCIPIOS RECTORES Y LA POLITICA DE LA CONCERTACION Y SUS GOBIERNOS EN MATERIA DE DERECHOS HUMANOS

La transición de un régimen autoritario a la democracia es básicamente un cambio de la forma de gobierno : vuelve la soberanía al pueblo y cambia la relación entre gobernantes y gobernados, que pasa a fundarse en los derechos humanos y la libertad. En la medida en que se produce tras un período de quiebre de la convivencia y transgresiones sistemáticas a los derechos humanos, se constituyen en período de reconstrucción moral basados en principios, que deben servir de referencia y orientación, aunque las limitaciones legales o institucionales no hagan posible que se cumplan íntegramente.

Según lo expresaba el Presidente Aylwin : "Nostros tenemos que conjugar la exigencia de justicia, que es un imperativo de conciencia, con la exigencia de estabilidad del sistema democrático, que es la garantía mayor de que en el futuro no vuelvan a haber violaciones de derechos humanos".

LOS DESAFIOS DEL PRESENTE

Si bien el pasado doloroso sigue presente, también hay temas actuales que hacen indispensable el accionar de todos los ciudadanos en defensa de los derechos humanos.

Los parlamentarios tenemos una tarea privilegiada en este ámbito.

Primero, ayudando a crear la cultura de los derechos humanos a través de nuestra acción, sea en los medios de comunicación, en las reuniones con ciudadanos, en el

trabajo legislativo nacional o en las organizaciones internacionales en que trabajamos.

Los organizadores nos plantearon 4 preguntas :

1. ¿ Cómo asegurarse qué los Estados adapten sus legislaciones a sus obligaciones internacionales ?
2. ¿ Cómo podemos asegurar los derechos humanos en las discusiones sobre la integración ?
3. ¿ Cómo interpelar a otros sectores para garantizar el respeto de estos derechos ?
4. ¿ Cómo fortalecer la acción parlamentaria en la elaboración de mecanismos qué aumenten el respeto por estos derechos ?

En el último mes la Sala del Senado rechazó una propuesta de su Comisión de Legislación para aplicar la pena de muerte en algunos nuevos tipos penales, basado en el pacto de San José.

Debe tenerse en cuenta que la mayoría del Senado, ha rechazado la eliminación de la pena de muerte en todos los casos.

Asimismo, se está discutiendo la aprobación del Convenio No 151, de la O.I.T. sobre los derechos de los empleados públicos de sindicarse y a negociar colectivamente.

Creo que los parlamentarios deberíamos jugar un rol más activo en las actividades previas y en los debates de la O.I. T., buscando la ratificación más masiva de los convenios y resoluciones más relevantes.

Compartiendo el compromiso adoptado en la Cumbre Social de Copenhague de 1995, debemos impulsar, principalmente, los convenios referentes a la abolición del trabajo forzoso y del trabajo infantil, a la libertad sindical, el derecho de sindicación y negociación colectiva y el principio de no discriminación.

Asimismo, deberíamos evitar la irresponsabilidad de

algunos gobiernos que promueven y votan convenios y resoluciones que luego se olvidan de hacer ratificar en sus propios países.

Principal relevancia le asigno a nuestro apoyo a la Unesco. La Conferencia Interparlamentaria sobre la educación, la ciencia y la cultura y la comunicación en el Siglo XXI, celebrada en París, en junio del año pasado, fué una valiosa contribución.

Se nos exhorta a los parlamentarios para difundir la fuerza y contenido de valores de los cuales depende la cohesión e integración de las sociedades.

En mi opinión, nuestra tarea esencial es para colaborar para responder positivamente las tensiones que, según Jacques Delors, están en el centro de la problemática del Siglo XXI :

Preocuparnos en todos los frentes para la promoción de los derechos de los trabajadores, de la preservación del medio ambiente y de las medidas para ayudar a los sectores afectados y enfrentar el desafío de la competencia legal.

Hacer efectiva las responsabilidades políticas de los que violan esos derechos a través de los mecanismos del juicio político. Asimismo, promover normas legales que favorezcan su respeto.

A. Politizar la política

El Presidente Frei en la VI Cumbre Iberoamericana de Jefes de Estado y de Gobierno celebrada en 1996, afirmó : "El verdadero norte de nuestra cooperación es afirmar la continuidad del régimen democrático y elevar la calidad de nuestra política. Buscamos reforzar y enriquecer, desde una perspectiva política, los procesos de integración económica que han dinamizado nuestros lazos en los últimos años".

Creo que los parlamentarios debemos enriquecer nuestra

participación en el debate nacional e internacional.

Debemos politizar la política, rescatándola del economicismo.

Ello implica valorar los acuerdos de libre comercio, pero tener presente la advertencia de Lester Thurow, decano del MIT "las áreas de libre comercio nunca han durado mucho tiempo".

Preservar los intereses sectoriales, pero sin convertir a los parlamentarios en agentes o gestores de muy distinguidos y respetables sectores económicos.

Evitar que los neoliberales o los pragmáticos hagan realidad la afirmación de Engels : "El gobierno sobre las personas es sustituido por la administración de las cosas y por la dirección de los procesos de producción. El Estado no será abolido; se extingue".(1)

George Soros ha escrito :

"Hay una creencia dominante en nuestra sociedad que se traduce en la convicción de la magia del mercado. La doctrina del laissez faire capitalista sostiene que el bien común se sirve mejor por la irrestricta búsqueda del propio interés. A menos que sea atemperada por el reconocimiento del bien común que tiene que tener preeminencia sobre los intereses particulares, nuestro actual sistema - que, aunque imperfecto, califica como una sociedad abierta - está destinado a desintegrarse.(2)

y agrega una advertencia profunda :

"Donde el mecanismo de mercado ha extendido sus dominios, la ficción de que la gente actúa conforme a un determinado conjunto de valores no mercantiles se ha ido progresivamente haciendo más difícil de sostener. Inseguros de lo que realmente quieren, la gente progresivamente se ha basado en el dinero como criterio de valor. Lo que es más caro es considerado mejor. La

gente merece respeto y admiración porque son ricos. Lo que solía ser un medio de intercambio ha usurpado el lugar de los valores fundamentales, trastocando las relaciones sostenidas por la teoría económica. Las que solían ser profesiones se han transformado en negocios. El culto al éxito ha reemplazado a los principios. La sociedad ha perdido su ancla."

En una vertiente de principal relevancia para mi, se señala :

"Todo sistema según el cual las relaciones sociales deben estar determinadas enteramente por los factores económicos, resulta contrario a la naturaleza de la persona y de sus actos."

Es el Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica el que trae este escrito y ahí también se dice : "Una teoría que hace del lucro la norma exclusiva y el fin último de la actividad económica es moralmente inaceptable."

SANTURAI O VACIO

El núcleo espiritual del capitalismo es una ética individualista conforme a la cual cada uno se encuentra ante su propia verdad, diversa de la verdad de los demás. Aquí no son los valores universales del bien común, sino la libertad del mercado, desarraigada de toda objetividad, la que decide lo que es bueno y lo que es malo. En el capitalismo no existe ninguna verdad trascendente, no existe ningún principio permanente. Su núcleo espiritual es un santuario vacío, donde no hay palabra, imagen o símbolo que encarne lo que todos buscamos. Y "esa vaciedad - nos dice francamente Novak - representa, entonces, la transcendencia a la que las conciencias libres se aproximan desde un número virtualmente infinito de direcciones".

Es precisamente aquí donde anida la intrínseca inhumanidad del capitalismo. Pues, si no existe ninguna verdad trascendente sólo quedan intereses de individuos, de clases, de grupos, de naciones, contrapuestos inevitablemente unos con otros. Si no existe una verdad

trascendente, tampoco existe ningún principio seguro que garantice relaciones justas entre los hombres. Entonces triunfa la fuerza del poder, donde cada uno tiende a utilizar hasta el extremo los medios de que dispone para imponer su propio interés o la propia opinión, sin respetar los derechos de los demás.

La Democracia : El Mejor Sistema para los Derechos Humanos.

De lo que se trata es de buscar un proyecto común de sociedad éticamente regulada, misión que no se agota en un moralismo fácil que reivindique la pura observancia de las normas de honestidad y decencia. "Se trata de recrear instituciones y virtudes ciudadanas que protejan a las personas de la violencia y el desprecio por la vida, la tortura, la droga, las rapiñas y los excesos del poder político, la corrupción y el fraude fiscal, el desfalco de dinero o la malversación de los fondos públicos, el abuso del poder económico y político, el peso discrecional de los medios de comunicación".(3)

La Democracia es el mejor sistema para el respeto de los Derechos Humanos cuando germina con el aporte de diversos humanismos que el ortorgan su base valórica.

Una verdadera democracia es aquella que logra mantener separados, aunque interdependientes, los poderes político, económico y moral-cultural. La alianza entre el poder político y el poder económico pervierte la representación de intereses y el principio de un hombre un voto. No es bueno para la democracia que el poder económico distorsione la voluntad popular a través de su incursión en el financimientto de las campañas, provocando presiones indebidas, reivindicando privilegios por encima de los canales legítimos de participación y de concurso a la gestión política, o beneficiándose improcedentemente de la mixtura de intereses privados y públicos.

Hay que romper los vínculos entre la política y los negocios, para lo cual no basta que las empresas sean transparentes en sus cuentas, o que sus directores dejen los

cargos cuando asument responsabilidades políticas. También se precisa que los partidos políticos establezcan límites claros y definidos al uso de los recursos de origen privado y dispongan de instrumentos contralores dotados de suficientes autonomía y autoridad. Al mismo tiempo, deben surgir instituciones que estimulen la participación y la información de la gente. Para ello es menester tomar medidas objetivas de descentralización del poder, de información y de transparencia en la justicia. La política debe conciliar en todo momento la fuerza del poder y la fuerza de la razón y de la justicia, porque, según la sabia expresión de Pascal : "sin la fuerza la justicia es impotente; sin la justicia la fuerza es tiránica".

(1) Engels, Anti-Dühring

(2) George Soros, La Amenaza Capitalista.

(3) Conferencia Episcopal de Brasil 1993.

**HACIA LAS AMÉRICAS DEL 2005:
DEMOCRACIA, DESARROLLO Y PROSPERIDAD**

**Los medios de acción de los parlamentarios en materia de integración en el
ejercicio de sus funciones representativas, legislativas e
interparlamentarias**

Taller: Libre comercio y empleo

**Alocución del Señor Jorge Roig
Diputado de la Cámara de Diputados de la República de Venezuela**

**Acuerdos existentes de comercio
Multilateral en el hemisferio occidental**

Nombre	Fecha Inicio	Países que agrupa
GATT		Iniciaron : -USA, Canada, Brazil y Chile Hoy : -115 Signatarios - 27 del hemisferio occidental
FTA	- Enero 1989	USA - Canada
NAFTA	- Diciembre 1992	USA - Canada - Mexico
MERCOSUR	- Marzo 1991	Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay y Uruguay
CARICOM	- Agosto 1973	Países del Caribe
GRUPO ANDINO	- 1969 - Revisado en 1987 - 1990	Colombia, Venezuela, Perú, Bolivia, Ecuador y Chile
GRUPO DE LOS TRES	- Junio 1994	Venezuela, Colombia y Mexico
Existen adicionalmente numerosos acuerdos bilaterales		

**INTEGRACIÓN ECONÓMICA
VS
DESINTEGRACIÓN SOCIAL**

**EL RETO :
ES HACER UNA**

INTEGRACIÓN ECONÓMICA

**COMPATIBLE
CON LAS**

POLÍTICAS SOCIALES LOCALES

**REFORMAS INSTITUCIONALES
DURANTE EL
PROCESO DE INTEGRACIÓN**

	Calidad Justicia		Transparencia Del Gobierno		Calidad de la Burocracia		Derechos a la Propiedad	
América Latina	1990	1997	1990	1997	1990	1997	1990	1997
Argentina	4	8	6	2	4	4	7,5	7,5
Bolivia	0	4	2	4	0	2	5	5
Brazil	6	4	6	4	6	6	5	5
Chile	6	8	4	6	4	6	10	10
Colombia	0	2	4	2	6	2	5	5
Ecuador	6	6	4	4	4	4	5	2,5
Mexico	4	4	4	2	4	4	7,5	5
Perú	0	4	4	4	2	2	5	2,5
Venezuela	6	6	4	4	4	4	5	5

FUENTES :

IBC INTERNACIONAL COUNTRY RISK GUIDE

DATOS DE JOHNSON Y SHEENY (1995, 1996)

HOLMES 1997

TRABAJO DE SEBASTIAN EDWARDS (Agosto 1997)

INTEGRACIÓN Y EMPLEO

FUENTES DE TENSION :

GLOBALIZACIÓN CREA MAYOR ELASTICIDAD EN LA DAMANDA

CONSECUENCIAS :

- a. TRABAJADORES TENDRÁN QUE PAGAR UNA MAYOR PARTE DE LAS MEJORAS Y EN LAS CONDICIONES DE TRABAJO Y BENEFICIOS
- b. MAYOR VOLATIBILIDAD E INSEGURIDAD DE PUESTOS DE TRABAJO
- c. NEGOCIACIONES CONTRACTUALES SE EROSIONAN. LO CUAL IMPLICA MENORES REIVINDICACIONES POR LA VÍA DE LAS NEGOCIACIONES CON SINDICATOS.
- d. GLOBALIZACIÓN INCREMENTA LA DIFICULTAD PARA LOS GOBIERNOS DE PROVEER SEGURIDAD SOCIAL.

DOS NUEVAS CLASES :

- ¡LOS QUE PROSPERAN EN LA GLOBALIZACIÓN !
- ¡LOS QUE NO !

SE REQUIERE IMAGINACIÓN Y AMPLITUD EN LOS PROPULSORES E INICIADORES DE POLÍTICAS

CONSECUENCIAS PARA EL MERCADO DE TRABAJO Y LAS RELACIONES LABORALES POR LA INTEGRACIÓN

USA

- SALARIOS REALES HAN SUFRIDO CAÍDA
- JÓVENES CON 12 AÑOS O MENOS DE EDUCACIÓN
 - CAÍDA DE 20 %

EUROPA

- AUMENTOS SALARIALES Y AUMENTO DESEMPLEO

PROBLEMAS ALEGADOS

- MAYOR COMPETENCIA PAÍSES CON MENORES SALARIOS

- MUDANZA DE INVERSIONES A PAÍSES CON MENORES SALARIOS
- TECNOLOGÍA VS DESEMPLEO
- AMPLIA DIFERENCIAS SALARIALES ENTRE CALIFICADOS Y NO CALIFICADOS
- DIFERENCIAS ENTRE TRABAJADORES DE MANUFACTURAS Y TRABAJADORES DE SERVICIOS

MITOS DESTRUIDOS POR NAFTA

TOTAL DE COMERCIO EN NORTE AMÉRICA

1993	1996	%
\$ 293 BILLIONES	\$ 420 BILLIONES	43

TOTAL CRECIMIENTO DE PUESTOS NUEVOS DE TRABAJO

USA

- TOTAL 12 MILLIONES
- INDUSTRIA 1,4 MILLIONES
- TASA DE DESEMPLEO 5,3
- **MITO 1** EL SECTOR EXPORTADOR DE MEXICO ESTÁ LIMITADO A OPERACIONES DE BAJA TECNOLOGÍA Y BAJA PRODUCTIVIDAD
- **MITO 2** BAJOS SALARIOS NO SON YA IMPORTANTES EN MANUFACTURA DE ALTA TECNOLOGÍA
- **MITO 2** PRODUCTIVIDAD DE CLASE MUNDIAL GENERA SALARIOS DE CLASE MUNDIAL

HACÍA UN NUEVO MÓDELO DE DESARROLLO

PLANES

CORTO PLAZO

- PROTECCIÓN DE LA PEQUEÑA Y MEDIANA INDUSTRIA
- CREACIÓN DE MICROEMPRESAS
- EL AUTOEMPLEO

MEDIANO PLAZO

- DE LA MANUFACTURA A LA MENTEFACTURA
- DE LAS PYMI A LAS PYME

LARGO PLAZO

- LA SECTORIZACIÓN DE ACTIVIDADES
- NUEVAS TENDENCIAS DE DESARROLLO
- BIOTECNOLOGÍA, ECOTURISMO, PLANTAS MEDICINALES
- SILVICULTURA SUSTENTABLE

Sr. Jorge Roig

Quebec, Septiembre 1997

**TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR
2005:
DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND
PROSPERITY**

**The Means of Action of Parliamentarians as Regards
Integration in the Exercise of their Representative,
Legislative and Interparliamentary Functions**

Workshop: Education and Job Training

**Speech by Mr. Daniel Bosley
Chairman of the Committee on Government
Regulations
House of Representatives of Massachusetts**

First, let me say that I am thrilled to be able to participate in this historic event, the Conference of the Americas. I would like to thank our hosts from le Province du Quebec for their hospitality and their leadership in sponsoring this conference. It is not only proving to be very interesting and worthwhile, but I also feel as if I am making many new friends here in this beautiful city.

In my remarks, I will reference programs that we have initiated in Massachusetts and will give you some statistics as background from the United States. I hope to use these in an expository manner to outline some of the challenges that we all face. I hope that I can offer some interesting suggestions from these that each of us can utilize as we confront the challenge of a new global economy and new technologies. These are two themes that I will refer to many times in the next few minutes. That is because I believe that the challenges facing us in the areas of education and job training are not a result of increased trade with one another. I believe that new technologies have changed the way that business is conducted, and it has given rise to many more global competitors. That has necessitated our changing economies which brings us to the challenges that we need to address at this conference.

We need to realize and accept that the world has changed. Twenty years ago, the prototypical industry in the US, it could be argued, was the steel industry. Miners in the midwest mined iron ore; truckers transported that ore to the Great Lakes; and it was moved on barges over the lakes to steel mills, where steel was made from the ore. This was transported throughout the US to factories such as those in Michigan where automobiles were made. These were sold throughout America. All of these jobs all the way throughout this process added value to the end commodity. All were jobs that created the backbone of the United States economy. But the world has changed. Today, Bill Gates, the owner of Microsoft Corporation, is worth \$20 billion dollars because he is able to put knowledge on a four cent piece of plastic. There are very few value added jobs in this process.

Our old economy is in the process of disappearing. Since 1979, the United States has lost 43 million jobs in our traditional industries. Every fourteen seconds, a Fortune 500 company loses a job. These are not all old manufacturing jobs; A.T.&T. has shed 40,000 jobs; Sears, 50,000; IBM, 61,000; GM 74,000; to name a few.

It is not just that new industries are being created, and the old are closing however. There is a radical change in the businesses that continue to exist and compete. About fifteen years ago I was working as a vice-president in a manufacturing firm. Today, I wouldn't be able to work there due to the changes in technology in that industry. Today, machines talk to one another with laser beams. Parts are designed automatically and viewed as three dimensional holograms to insure accuracy. This was science fiction when I worked in the industry.

We, as legislators, are responding to the situation created by the loss of employment in our traditional job base and have scrambled to ensure a climate to create new jobs. But we are stuck with a 1960's approach to a year 2000 problem. We need to prepare a new strategy to encourage the creation of jobs with our evolving economy. How do we do this? What can we do?

That we need to change our thinking is clear. As old businesses downsize and new types of industries take their place, it is apparent that we need to retrain even those workers who currently have employment. According to the National Center for Work and Learning in Washington, DC, the average person who graduates from high school today will have to be trained or retrained for the workplace up to seven times in their career to keep up with changing technologies and the new work environment. Learning has truly become a lifelong experience. We can no longer think of learning as kindergarten through high school or even through college.

A study in my home state of Massachusetts was issued two years ago which indicated that 80% of the jobs created by the year 2000 would require some post secondary education, either college, technical training, or vocational training! This is key. Most of our present workforce training monies and their programs are designed for displaced workers; employees who have already lost their jobs. This makes little sense for two reasons. First, we are spending far more money to retrain workers after the jobs have left rather than retain those jobs by helping provide a trained workforce; and secondly it ignores the needs of the remainder of the American workforce. While unemployment has been low in the US, for example, many workers are finding themselves underemployed. Their wages are stagnant because there is little opportunity to retrain for better positions.

If this is not overwhelming enough, there are also studies that indicate that as many as up to one out of six people in the United States cannot read beyond a sixth grade level of comprehension. This means that as our economy is demanding more technical skills from our workforce, we are struggling to keep up with the demands for basic education. We need to address this. If we do not, we are threatened with a potential schism in each and every one of our nations, between those countries who have the skills to survive in this new economy, and those countries who, not only form an underclass of unemployed and

underemployed, but will lack the basic skills necessary to give their workforce any opportunity to work their way out of their social and economic situations. I don't mean to sound an alarm or to appear bleak, there is a lot of good news about our economies. Every 3.5 seconds a business is formed in the US. We can compete in the new economy. In fact, in the steel industry that I have mentioned, there are some firms that are competing in the new market. However, they operate with more technology, far fewer people, and a majority of those who work there are far more educated. As they have learned to adjust, so must each of us. Our economies can only remain vibrant if we adjust our thinking and lend support to both worker and employer.

The fact is that we need to reassess our educational systems if we are to avoid creating a permanent underclass of people who lack the basic skills to compete in our societies. 80% of these newly developing businesses are in companies of 7 employees or less. They have little capacity to deliver the necessary training for their employees. We need to match their expertise in their industry with our ability to enact strong job training and educational initiatives.

It is also a fact that we are slowly changing. Each country has recognized the need for increased education in response to business needs. But the change is slow and technology is changing the face of our economies at the speed of light. We must adapt.

Basically there are two kinds of training that is being developed. The first is job specific; it is training that is used in a specific industry or industrial cluster responding to a specific need. These are training programs that will develop as need arises for them from the industries created in our economy, or from the need to change old industries as new technology develops.

The second direction is a general or basic training, building the foundation of knowledge. This is important. Business may not necessarily require employees who are

trained, but it is essential that they have employees that are trainable. General education has changed. It is no longer merely reading and math skills, but computer skills, total quality management, problem solving, and communications networking. Consider that in 1983, 25% of the US workforce used a computer at work. In 1993, that figure was up to 50%. By 2003, the estimates indicate that up to 95% of us will use a computer on our job.

New production techniques stress that employees will be trained to work in teams. They will learn to be more versatile, filling in the demands that the workplace now requires. Performance based ratings for production dictate that workers find themselves able to do many jobs in the workplace. Indeed, some workplaces, such as the Toyota automobile plant in Lexington, Kentucky are requiring that their workers exchange jobs on a regular basis in order to vary the daily routine, cross train to learn more than one job, and fill in to meet the demands in the production line.

It is clear that, as I talk about this, we can not enact change by ourselves. It is important for government to work closely with the business community. Business must be an equal partner in any initiatives that we enact. We can not dictate their needs, yet they can not effectively operate in the new economy without the incumbent training. We need to stop business from playing regions off of each other, and accept their role in this partnership.

Early in his administration, President Clinton proposed a plan that would have mandated all businesses to spend 1.5% of payroll on continuing education and job training. We need to revive this idea. Training should not be something that business turns to in times of need, but should be a normal part of their operation. Remember business, like government, has a vested interest in training. Better education means more production and a competitive edge by keeping up with technology and new production techniques.

There is another factor that has resulted from increased technologies. More companies and more importantly,

more people are finding that increased technology means greater ease in entry to the marketplace. It no longer takes massive infrastructure investment or geographic proximity to compete in a marketplace. This means greater competition for our businesses. Additionally, deregulation of the banking, airline, electric, gas, trucking, and telecommunication industries have given rise to new ways of doing business as well as increased competition. As we say in the US, if you snooze, you lose.

Rob Shapiro of the Progressive Policy Institute in Washington, DC has suggested that tax policy be rewritten to mandate that all businesses that take tax credits for job training must offer job training to all of their employees, rather than just their upper management or more skilled workers. The Institute also suggests that business sign contracts with workers to prevent them from leaving after training as an incentive for businesses to spend more. This is in reaction to a trend in business to hire away employees after they have been trained, rather than enact their own programs. While it is a radical idea to believe that all employees have to sign long term contracts in order to receive job training, the issue is a solid one. Business must have a certain level of comfort with job training. They will not participate in job training initiatives if they feel that they will not derive the benefit from such training. This issue needs to be addressed. Personally, I believe that business needs to be less paternalistic with their employees. You cannot insulate them from the marketplace. Business needs to build loyalty by treating training as a course of business and not as a perk.

We could and should encourage businesses to form cells of workers. Experienced or retrained workers would work in conjunction with apprentice workers to educate and train in the workplace. This has been a cost effective method of training for many businesses.

There are, of course, other benefits of collaborative training programs. They allow businesses to exchange information and encourages businesses to utilize one another in a like industrial cluster. Why buy products

elsewhere that you use in a business if such products are available at a comparable price in the businesses' locality? It allows us to build clusters of businesses regionally that trade with one another in mutual support.

Another benefit is that businesses use the training program to do such things as safety training or instruction encouraging and educating on export trade.

By the way, there is another partner in this collaborative between business and government. That is the employee. The individual also has to take more responsibility. The employee must take initiative to enroll and attend training seminars. Anyone who does not, will find themselves increasingly out of the market and out of a job. But it is up to government to foster an educational system by which students have instruction and exposure to the changing marketplace, new technologies, and hands-on training. It is up to government to work with the business community to ensure that training and retraining becomes a common practice in all industries. Government is the strongest link in this chain of cooperation. We interact with all of the parties. Lifelong learning must cease to be a catch phrase of the 90's and become a reality in the twenty-first century.

This brings us back to the role that government must play in this process. What can we do to enhance this process?

First we need to look at Adult Basic Education. Nationally, the US budgets \$345 million for adult basic education. This gives Massachusetts \$6 million in federal funding toward literacy, English as a second language, and basic adult education programs. It is not enough. In Massachusetts alone, 16,000 adults are on waiting lists. Due to the inefficiency of funding from the federal government, Massachusetts decided to increase funding toward adult basic education in each of the last four years. This year, we budgeted almost \$20 million towards these courses of study. Even this is not enough. Of the 42,000 adults that will apply for adult basic education each year, only 27,500 people will be enrolled. This is like calling E-911 and being put on hold! We need to address this, and I

will talk more about this in a few minutes.

In Massachusetts, we have decided that education is one of the most important items that state government can fund. Last year we spent, out of the state budget, over \$2.3 billion on education. That does not count the money spent by local cities and towns. We have made tremendous strides in the funding of our system. However, we still do not know the results of this increased funding. The increased funding has taken place over the last few years, so we have not been able to measure the results.

Nationally, President Clinton has proposed voluntary standardized testing in reading and mathematics. There is considerable resistance to this among the states. It has been called national intrusion on the state's rights to control their individual school systems. I would argue that any state that does not encourage testing as a means of measuring their ability to compete in the new economy is ignoring the fact that the world has changed. It is essential that we continuously reexamine our curriculum in order to ensure it's timeliness and viability.

With regards to job training programs in the US, these programs are too many and too scattered. There are 154 different training programs that are funded. These programs are, for the most part, very narrowly focused on certain groups that have been impacted by some event or circumstance. Examples would include plant relocation, welfare recipients, or people with a certain categorical disabilities. We need to be more focused both on demand in the marketplace and in realistic courses of study that will be applicable to all who need it and not just those in certain categories of personal need. These programs need to continue on an ongoing basis rather than putting something in place and declaring victory, and it is essential that we put a structure in place that will be flexible enough to meet the continually changing demands of the economy.

Education and the transfer of new technologies to new applications is the new industrial revolution. And the cycle of new revolutions will become quicker and quicker as new technology is developed. The one constant from this

point forward in the foreseeable future is change. Changes in technologies, changes in markets, and changes in the kinds of skills that our workers will need.

In order for us to achieve successful education and training programs, we need to establish concerted collaborative multidisciplinary training networks. There are some existing examples of programs that are already working. We should build on these efforts. For example, we have seen a marked change in the role of community colleges in the United States from regional educational centers to adoptive job training centers. There are 1500 community colleges in the US and over one half of the 10 million students attending these institutions are non-traditional.

There are many more instances of training at home through the use of computers in either the home or the workplace. This is not only more convenient, but saves money by relieving the student from the need for transportation and the like.

One of the most common methods of job training is the community based organization. These agencies remain key actors. They are convenient for the person who needs to increase their knowledge or training; they are relatively inexpensive as compared to larger, more traditional institutions; and they have the advantage of, in many places, being managed by people who know the community or neighborhood in which they are placed. This gives people who use these organizations a level of comfort and familiarity that is missing from the larger, more traditional, institutions. It also gives the training center an opportunity to outreach to the community that is not available in other venues.

It is clear to those that have studied job training that we need a bifurcated system. I mentioned earlier that it should divide into general and job specific training and education programs. It also divides along programs that are specific for employers, and those that are designed not for any particular business, but are designed to benefit the individual. In many cases, such as those individuals on a

social support program, there may not be a specific employer. It is important to give these individuals an opportunity to gain an education or a skill in order to make them more attractive to the job market. Of course, in many instances, the lines between these categories blur. Government can help to coordinate efforts between each of these categories.

Again, let me stress that no one group, the individual, government, nor business can achieve our goals of a new system by themselves. No one has all the resources. No one has all the answers. We need to work together. Can we work together on this? I think that we can. Government can provide that coordination of effort. One example of this private-public partnership is the School to Work initiative. In 1993, Massachusetts, as part of the massive education bill, established a school to work initiative that created partnerships in the work place. In 1994, the Congress of the United States approved the national School to Work Opportunity Act to be jointly managed by Labor and the Department of Education. Massachusetts won \$33.5 million in that first round. The school to work grant and the education reforms work collaboratively on the local school district level. Federal funds have been awarded to local partnerships that include both schools and businesses. Tens of thousands of young people and thousands of businesses are engaged.

While there was doubt from all parties that this would work in the beginning, the program has become very successful. In Boston alone, over 2,000 students are engaged in ten different "career pathways" from banking to environmental engineering, with well over 100 businesses participating.

Let me give you one example of how this works. Boston has many teaching hospitals that are always in need of technical employees. Nearly 300 juniors and seniors from a local high school are now following the health career pathway. Many of these students spend two or three afternoons each week working and learning at Massachusetts General Hospital or the New England

Medical Center. They begin their junior year with a rotation among all of the departments and then settle into one department, say surgery or radiology or the hematology lab. By integrating hands-on learning with traditional secondary education curriculum, many more students are succeeding rather than in the traditional classroom.

Again, I come back to my question; what can the state do to enact changes in our job training and education. School to work is one specific example. There are several general steps that we can take to start to effectuate such changes.

We can:

1. shift focus from degree programs at our educational institutions toward credential or credit programs more in line with lifelong learning practices. Employees should be able to move in and out, as necessary, to training programs, for short periods, thus enabling us to add value to our workforce.
2. form alliances to make skills portable; and standardize skills so that a profession such as a computer programmer in the southern most tip of South America has the same credentials as one from the northern reaches of Canada. We can standardize curriculum or, at the minimum, set standards that will ensure that our schools are all teaching at the same levels. Does this mean a standard curriculum? No, but it does mean that we all understand that there are certain levels of attainment that must be equal in all regions.
3. develop rapid response teams to deal with changes in employment.
4. develop lifelong learning goals and standards and coordinate training programs. This is more cost effective than the present system.
5. develop partnerships with the private sector. We must change our old mentality and so must they. It

is essential that we maximize resources by initiating new programs that are useful and not duplicative.

6. identify industry clusters of manufacturing or other industries, especially small businesses. Training of multicompany collaboratives can become more cost efficient.
7. lower and/or subsidize the cost of training.
8. develop standards of measurement on the effectiveness of job training programs. Measurement of outputs on performance will help us to constantly adopt our training programs to new needs.
9. educate employers to take advantage of new emerging export markets. One of the ways that we can improve our position is to have more firms explore new markets. For example, China has expanded their international trade roughly twelvefold in the last 15 years. We need to educate firms to take advantage of this. If we do not compete in their markets, foreign competitors from Europe and Asia will be in our markets. As an aside, the increase in technology has had a few interesting side effects. It has greatly increased world wide competition from sources that a few years ago were not able to compete. There are very few trade secrets these days, competition has learned new ways to make old products, or has developed new products. We need to be able to compete in this new global economy. I know that there is a plenary on this subject, but it is important as we talk of training to realize that it is not simply employees that need training. Training can mean employers being educated about new emerging markets, or maximizing old markets.
10. We must think about this area of education and job training in light of the other changes in our marketplace. This sounds simple, but we are still,

as I said, using 1960's thinking about a twenty-first century problem. We need to be innovative and think outside of traditional systems.

These are some of the directions that we must take. But these steps lead to more questions. Where do we start? What can we take from this Conference of the Americas to help us to begin to change our systems? I would like to suggest several starting steps in this process.

A) We need to emphasize a standard and set goals for dealing with illiteracy. This should be goal one. All else springs from this effort and how we deal with this problem. We need a resolution from all of our countries to work collaboratively to wipe out illiteracy over the next twenty-five years. The next generation cannot survive without the basics. There should be nothing short of a wartime like effort to mobilize for our new economy. Consider these statistics in Massachusetts, a state that has arguably one of the best educational records in the Americas. Out of our six million citizens, over 900,000 have not completed high school. 19% of our adults, 877,000, lack functional literacy skills. Another 1.2 million have skill levels that are below high school equivalency. 66% of our incarcerated adults and youths have skill levels below high school, and more than 50% of those adults on public assistance lack a high school degree. Remember, I said earlier that 80% of the jobs in Massachusetts by the year 2000 would require some training in excess of high school!

This is not a problem exclusively in Massachusetts. It is endemic in our societies. Without a concerted effort to wipe out illiteracy and establish basic skill levels upon which to build, we cannot compete in the global economy, and the need to provide social services to those people who cannot find a job will continue to drain our budgets.

B) I would argue that we need to set standards for our education and job training programs just as we have done with the manufacturing and quality standards with such programs as ISO 9000-9002. Considering the enormity of

the challenge to provide training to our human resources, this is even more important than the international standards that we have adopted in these other areas. Again, to compete with those around us, we need to have standards for work that is done and for the skill levels that we hire to do such work.

C) We need to emphasize learning a second language as part of our core curriculum. The US is far behind in this. We cannot ignore the globalization of our economy. It is as common today to trade worldwide as it is to trade in our neighborhoods. With an entry point to the internet, we can instantly communicate with people from around the globe. With so many barriers going down, we cannot afford to allow language to remain a barrier between us.

D) We must upgrade our telecommunication capabilities to respond to the growing demand for more service. It is a myth that you can start a business anywhere by just plugging a computer into a phone line. You need to have the bandwidth, or the capacity to communicate. Over the last ten years, the need for increased capacity has exploded. Instead of relying on a phone in our offices, we now have phones, beepers, cellular phones, fax machines, and computer terminals tied to the internet. Instead of one phone line, we need several. And the activities that occur over the telephones have changed. We now use the phone lines in our hospitals to consult with doctors in another continent by sending tests, pictures, and x-rays, over the phone lines. Interactive media firms send animation and special effects over phone lines to customers. We received specifications and in some cases, machines call one another to initiate production, download information, or trouble shoot a problem. The product that we send over these lines make our communication highways as important as our traditional transportation highways. We need to keep up with demand by improving our delivery system, and by training people to utilize this new industrial sector.

In closing, let me say that I look forward to working with all of you as we press ahead as legislators and public

officials to deal with these problems. Whatever our individual feelings are on various training methods or individual programs, these problems will need to be addressed. We need to take action in order to grow in the new economy.

We must work for universal access to education.

We must set standards that give each of our citizens a basic education upon which they can build.

We must provide an adequate investment in our human resources, constantly changing our offerings to keep pace with the changing demands of new technologies and the expanding global economies. In this competitive world, the edge will go to those with the best prepared human resources.

Once again, thanks to le Province du Quebec for their leadership on these issues.

Thank You

HACIA LAS AMÉRICAS DEL 2005: DEMOCRACIA, DESARROLLO Y PROSPERIDAD

**Los medios de acción de los parlamentarios en materia
de integración en el
ejercicio de sus funciones representativas, legislativas e
interparlamentarias**

Taller: Protección Social y Políticas de Salud

"Los Procesos de Integración"

**Alocución de la Señora Graciela Fernández Baca de
Valdez**

Miembro del Congreso de la República del Perú

Señor Presidente, Colegas Expositores, Honorables
Parlamentarios:

Felicito al Sr. Jean Pierre Charbonneau, Presidente de la Asamblea Nacional de Quebec, por organizar esta Conferencia Parlamentaria, que nos permite detenernos para mirar ese futuro no tan lejano, por el cual somos responsables. Y me parece aún mucho más acertado que lo hagamos con el tema "Hacia las Américas del 2005: Democracia, Desarrollo y Prosperidad", porque inspira actitudes que, como legisladores podemos ser protagonistas HOY y tratar de cambiar muchas cosas para el mañana.

Mi exposición la realizaré con la ayuda de cuadros y cifras. Sé que una imagen puede más que mil palabras. Comentaré situaciones sobre Protección Social, enfoques sobre Políticas de Salud y finalmente compartiré algunas Reflexiones.

1.1 El necesario equilibrio entre la Política Económica y la Política Social

En el siglo XX, la revolución informática estrecha distancias y facilita los procesos de integración. La globalización, obliga a pensar y actuar en términos mundiales, y al mismo tiempo obliga a resolver problemas de nivel continental y nacional.

El éxito de los gobiernos radica en lograr, simultáneamente, un Crecimiento Económico sostenido y sustentable y el bienestar de la población junto con la disminución de la pobreza. La lucha contra la pobreza ya está a la cabeza de la lista de prioridades de los países de las Américas, pues de otra manera sería muy difícil sostener un crecimiento económico.

La identificación de bienestar, hasta inicios de los años setenta, estaba centrada en realizar programas de asistencia social, protegiendo a los que se encontraban en situación de necesidad. Posteriormente, tanto en los debates académicos, como en los informales, la definición de "bienestar de la población" debemos entenderla como progreso social, y mejoramiento de las condiciones de vida de las personas. Con objetivos referidos a salud, educación, vivienda y sus servicios, además de ingresos adecuados para las familias y las provisiones para las pensiones de jubilación.

Una estrategia para lograr el equilibrio entre lo económico y lo social puede diseñarse en torno a cuatro ideas eje:

- En lo **POLITICO**, con la existencia de la democracia representativa y dentro de un Estado de Derecho, con respeto a las instituciones.
- En lo **ECONOMICO**, consolidar la economía de mercado, con disciplina fiscal, privatización y liberalización del comercio.
- En lo **SOCIAL**, promover medidas **de bienestar** general, con igualdad de oportunidades para toda la población y la defensa de sus derechos humanos.
- Y en lo **GLOBAL**, lograr LA PAZ y buscar procesos de integración.

1.2 Las grandes diferencias entre los países de las

AMERICAS

Dentro del sueño de Integración Económica Hemisférica, es necesario tener presente que los cuarenta países del continente tienen muy diversas características. Los sistemas políticos tienen diferencias. También el nivel del desarrollo económico y social. Nuestras culturas son diferentes. El número de habitantes por país difiere notablemente. Y hablamos cuatro idiomas distintos y muchas lenguas aborígenes.

En medio de discursos de modernización y globalización, varios de nuestros países se encuentran sumergidos en el atraso social. Para ellos, lo moderno es consumir lo nuevo, no el producirlo. Mientras tanto la real modernidad crece en otros países con pasos gigantescos, avanzando en sus procesos de ciencia y tecnología, incrementando la productividad en beneficio de su mejor capital: el humano. Mencionaré algunas cifras y datos que permitirán identificar algunas de esas diferencias.

Población.

A inicios del siglo XXI, sólo un país tiene cerca de 268 millones de habitantes (Estados Unidos). Dos, pasan, o se acercan a los 100 millones (Brasil y México). Seis países se encuentran dentro de un rango mucho más pequeño, entre 13 a 39 millones (Colombia, Argentina, Canadá, Perú, Venezuela y Chile). En 17 países, el número de habitantes fluctúa desde 1 millón hasta menos de 13 millones. Finalmente quince países tienen menos de un millón de habitantes. En resumen, en ocho países vive el 86% de la población de las Américas, mientras que en 32 países, reside solo el 14% de la población total.

Producto Bruto Interno Per-Cápita.-

El crecimiento económico de la mayoría de los países de las Américas, en los últimos años, es positivo. Según la CEPAL, no obstante el crecimiento del último quinquenio, que para la región es del 3%, no ha sido suficiente para superar el desempleo laboral que llegó al 8% y los salarios

reales de la mayoría de los países se han reducido. Las diferencias en este indicador son impresionantes. En 1995, Estados Unidos mostró un PBI per cápita cercano a los 27 mil dólares, le sigue Canadá con \$19,380. Al otro extremo, siete países de América Latina tienen un PBI per cápita por debajo de los 1000 dólares.

Alfabetismo.

Este indicador, que representa la proporción de quienes saben leer y escribir y tienen más de 15 años de edad, es muy favorable para Canadá donde todos saben leer y escribir. En Estados Unidos la tasa llega al 99%, debido a la alta corriente migratoria que recibe. Casi la totalidad de los países de las Américas tienen tasas entre el 80 y 95%. Sólo tres países se encuentran por debajo del 66% (Nicaragua 65%, Guatemala 63% y Haití 48%). En todos los países es mayor el número de mujeres analfabetas que el de varones

Exportaciones e Importaciones.

Las diferencias más pronunciadas se observan en el comercio exterior. Estados Unidos exporta más de tres veces que su competidor más cercano: Canadá; y casi nueve veces más que su segundo socio en el TLC: México. La comparación resulta extrema si recordamos que en 1995 Estados Unidos exportó poco más de 584,000 millones de dólares, mientras que Haití exportó 100 millones; Nicaragua 520 y Panamá 625 millones. La mayoría de los países, en 1995, tuvieron balanzas comerciales **negativas**. La excepción: Canadá, México, Venezuela, Argentina, Trinidad Tobago, Chile y Ecuador.

1.3 Avances de la lucha contra la pobreza en América Latina la evolución del gasto social

En los últimos años los niveles de pobreza en América Latina se están reduciendo. Los gobiernos mejoran sus políticas sociales y además han logrado recuperar su crecimiento económico, después de la "década perdida" de los ochenta. Sin embargo, aún no existe un proceso de

integración social, que supere las causas de la pobreza y la erradicación de la extrema pobreza. Por el contrario, este problema se ha agravado en diversos países y son cientos de millones, las personas que se encuentran inmersas por debajo de la línea de pobreza.

Los niveles de Pobreza

Información de la CEPAL afirma que para América Latina la magnitud de la pobreza que llegó al 41% en 1990, se reduce al 39% en 1994. Esta baja sin embargo, no contrarresta el fuerte aumento entre 1980/1990 que pasó del 35% al 41%.

De un total de 19 países conocemos lo siguiente: Argentina y Uruguay registran un nivel de pobreza menor al 15 por ciento. Chile, Costa Rica y Panamá, se sitúan en una franja media que fluctúa entre el 15 y el 30 por ciento. Nueve países tienen un rango alto, entre el 31 y el 50%, Brasil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, México, Paraguay, Perú, República Dominicana y Venezuela. Finalmente Bolivia, Nicaragua, Haití y Honduras tienen un nivel muy elevado, pues más del 50% de su población son pobres.

El Gasto Social La CEPAL proporciona información comparada de la evolución del gasto social real per cápita (en \$ de 1987). Entre los bienios 1994/95 y 1990/91, quince países de América Latina, aumentaron su gasto social, 50 dólares per-cápita en promedio. En Uruguay y Argentina, el incremento supera los 155 dólares, tres veces más del promedio. Al otro extremo se encuentran Nicaragua y Honduras, donde el gasto social del bienio 1994/95 fue menor al de 1990/91. Destaca el alto incremento de Paraguay y Perú, países donde el gasto social casi se triplica durante el período comentado.

No es suficiente saber que la cifra del gasto social se incrementa o disminuye. Es más importante realizar un monitoreo permanente sobre las mejoras efectivas de lo gastado. Contestar preguntas específicas como: ¿Mejoraron las condiciones de vida de la población?... ¿La escolaridad es mayor? ¿disminuyó la tasa de mortalidad

infantil?.. Esta tarea de fiscalización corresponde también a los parlamentarios. En esta misión legislativa debemos ser justos, premiando cuando existen méritos para ello, o sancionando severamente toda clase de corrupción.

1.4 Principios básicos para una estrategia eficiente del Gasto Social

Dentro de una estrategia técnicamente diseñada, los expertos están de acuerdo con identificar, como principios básicos más importantes, los siguientes:

A-Un entorno económico estable y de crecimiento sostenido. Sin crecimiento económico no es posible realizar un gasto social eficiente. Por ello se requiere que los países mantengan una economía sana, mediante:

- Disciplina fiscal y monetaria, sin riesgo inflacionario.
- Equilibrio en la balanza de pagos.
- Normas legales estables, principalmente en lo tributario y laboral.
- Promover el sector privado, incluyendo la privatización de actividades no estratégicas.
- Modernizar los sectores clave del aparato productivo y de infraestructura.
- Insertar a los países en la globalización comercial y evitar el aislamiento.
- Promover Incentivos para las inversiones, tanto la extranjera como la nacional.
- Garantizar la ausencia de riesgo de la violencia, principalmente de la violencia terrorista.

B.- La Aplicación de un eficiente programa de inversión social.

Concentrarse en las áreas impostergables en cuanto a justicia social. Atender a los grupos poblacionales mas vulnerables. Seleccionar aquellas en las cuales se tendrá efectos concretos. Algunos países desarrollaron planes asistencialistas y de emergencia social (de corto plazo).

Ello debe ser superado y pasar a la inversión social (plan de mediano y largo plazo) como palanca de creación de oportunidades, de modo tal que la población en situación de pobreza pueda ser incorporada a la economía competitivamente. (Ya lo han hecho Chile, Panamá y Venezuela).

C. Considerar las particularidades regionales en las acciones de Inversión

- Los problemas son de carácter nacional, pero la realidad social difiere en cada localidad y por lo tanto las respuestas deben ser diversas.

D. La estrategia debe ser de UN COMPROMISO NACIONAL

- La tarea social demanda articular esfuerzos públicos y privados y enfrentarlos como un desafío nacional y no solo gubernamental. Exige la participación positiva de todos los sectores de la sociedad civil, los gobiernos locales, las iglesias, las ONGs, incluyendo, por supuesto, la participación comprometida de los propios beneficiarios.

E. Fijar Metas y Evaluar periódicamente los resultados.

- Es incuestionable señalar metas para mejorar las más elementales deficiencias, como son: alimentación, salud, saneamiento básico, educación básica, disponibilidad de servicios de recreación y cultura.
- Periódicamente, se debe verificar si las metas se cumplen y en su caso tomar las medidas correctivas pertinentes, en forma oportuna.

1.5 La Red de la Seguridad Social de Pensiones y las Reformas en América Latina

Los sistemas de Seguridad Social de pensiones tienen

como objetivo principal proteger la vejez, la invalidez y la viudez. Un estudio del Banco Mundial "Envejecimiento sin Crisis" distingue tres Planes de financiamiento de los Sistemas de Pensiones:

a) Los Planes Públicos de Reparto.- El gobierno ordena, financia, administra y asegura las pensiones de los trabajadores a través de una institución directamente responsable. Se financian con un impuesto o contribución sobre la nómina o planilla mensual, que puede ser pagada sólo por el empleador o en forma mixta por el trabajador y empleador. Es el sistema tradicional más común y es obligatorio.

b) Los Planes Ocupacionales.- Los empleadores privados con el fin de atraer y retener a sus trabajadores constituyen fondos de pensiones bajo su administración. Estos Planes a veces tienen concesiones tributarias. Son reglamentadas por los Gobiernos. Los beneficios se determinan por los aportes más la rentabilidad de las inversiones.

c) Los Planes de Ahorro Personales y de Rentas Vitalicias.- Los trabajadores ahorran mientras trabajan y son jóvenes, para mantenerse cuando ingresen a la tercera edad. Estos Planes son financiados totalmente y con aportes definidos. El ahorro personal es o voluntario u obligatorio. Son administrados tanto por el Gobierno (Malasia y Singapur), como por diversas compañías privadas sobre una base competitiva (Chile, Argentina, Colombia y Perú). Los beneficios no están definidos por anticipado y los trabajadores y los jubilados asumen el riesgo de inversión de sus ahorros.

El Banco Mundial sostiene que "los programas de seguridad económica en la vejez, deben ser un instrumento que busque ayudar a los ancianos, y también aporte a la economía en su conjunto".

Situación en América Latina

La limitación más relevante es la falta de cobertura que no ha variado mucho desde hace 25 años. Así lo demuestran

cifras de la CEPAL a través de las cuales se puede concluir que las dos terceras partes de la población en la tercera edad no gozará de ninguna pensión. Existiría pues la inseguridad económica de la vejez, puesto que en promedio actualmente sólo el 35% de la PEA está cubierta por un sistema formal.

Los gobiernos de A.L. ya están llevando a cabo modificaciones en sus sistemas de pensiones tradicionales, que hasta hace unos años se basaban exclusivamente en Planes Públicos de Reparto.

La modernización del Sistema, ingresa al financiamiento, de "capitalización individual" con administración privada. Los montos aportados, como un fondo de ahorro individual, se convierten en cotizaciones previsionales para la vejez. En sus inicios, el sistema no incluyó un componente de solidaridad, posteriormente, en algunos países el cotizante, además de su cuota, aporta una cantidad adicional, pequeña, para solidarizarse con las afiliados a instituciones estatales.

II. LAS POLITICAS DE SALUD

Desde épocas lejanas se conocía el dicho "Mens sana in corpore Sano". Los romanos tenían claro el concepto de que no podían hablar con una mente clara, si el cuerpo no estaba sano. En la actualidad entonces es inaceptable que se pretenda hablar de haber logrado calidad de vida de los habitantes de nuestros países - lo que sería la mente sana de nuestras sociedades - si nuestro cuerpo social, nuestro pueblo está enfermo; si los indicadores de salud general no mejoran en el transcurso de nuestra gestión como parlamentarios; si en particular, los indicadores de mortalidad infantil y los de morbi-mortalidad de las mujeres continúan altos por falta de acceso a servicios pre-natales y de salud sexual y reproductiva adecuados.

Según la organización mundial de la salud (OMS) en su Informe "Para combatir las enfermedades y promover el

desarrollo" (Ginebra 1996), se afirma que *"En los países de las Américas están cambiando los perfiles de población y los problemas de salud que la aquejan. En casi todos se ha logrado reducir la tasa de mortalidad infantil y aumentar la esperanza de vida, principalmente gracias al control de las enfermedades infecciosas en los primeros años de vida..... Durante los años noventa, se ha ido tomando mayor conciencia acerca de los factores que contribuyen al bienestar humano, así como la capacidad de los enfoques integrados para mejorar la situación de salud de la población".....*

Por otro lado UNICEF en un Informe reciente "El Progreso de las Naciones -1997" dice *"Los niños del mundo se están beneficiando por décadas de progresos en salud sin precedentes"... y continúa... "enfermedades infantiles mortales están sucumbiendo ante campañas de vacunación y remedios de bajo costo, reduciendo las tasas de mortalidad y mejorando la calidad de vida jóvenes..."*

Leer estos informes me alegró, porque mi visión de la vida es esencialmente positiva. UNICEF tiene razón, se ha progresado en el campo de la salud del niño, pero millones de niños y adultos aún necesitan ayuda... Soy de los parlamentarios que visita periódicamente los llamados "pueblos jóvenes" de Lima en el Perú, mi amado país y reconociendo que hay mejoras, observo aún el drama latente de los asentamientos humanos, drama que a su vez reconozco existe en todas las periferias de las ciudades grandes de América Latina... Sin agua ni desagüe. Sin luz, Sin posta médica cercana,... Y menciono también cómo en las zonas rurales las necesidades siguen esperando el progreso logrado en otros lugares .

Debemos admitir que es necesario seguir invirtiendo considerables recursos financieros y humanos. La cuenta de salud a pagar es aún alta. Tener un pueblo sano cuesta mucho. Pero tener un pueblo enfermo no sólo que cuesta aún mucho más sino que es una violación a los derechos humanos.

Los Gobiernos están tomando acciones para que el sector

privado participe en los sistemas de salud, reconociendo que sólo el Estado no puede enfrentar los diversos problemas creados, en cuanto a costos, calidad de atención y cobertura. Existe un segmento de la población "los más pobres de los pobres" a quienes el Estado sí debe siempre ayudar a través de medidas directas de atención gratuita y real y con modalidad de atención humanizada.

2. 1 Los gastos en salud en países de América Latina

En los países de las Américas, se prestan los servicios de salud mediante diferentes actores: por el sector público, por los sistemas de seguridad social, por el seguro privado y por particulares.

Información de la base de datos BID, para 1995, dice que Costa Rica, Guyana, Jamaica y Uruguay, para atención en servicios de salud, destinan el 9% o más de su PBI. Al otro extremo y por debajo del 4% están Paraguay, Ecuador y Perú.

Las diferencias del gasto per cápita, son impresionantes. Mientras algunos países gastan en servicios de salud por encima de 580 dólares (Bahamas y Barbados), al otro extremo se encuentran Perú con un gasto per cápita de 82 dólares y Haití con 62 dólares.

2.2 Los resultados en Salud y los Indicadores

En la mayoría de los países de América se observan cambios positivos en los indicadores tradicionales que miden los avances en salud, principalmente en la tasa de mortalidad infantil y la expectativa de vida. No obstante, se debe reconocer que los indicadores promedio ocultan las realidades existentes dentro de los países, en las zonas urbanas, rurales y marginales.

Las tasas de mortalidad infantil se están reduciendo, gracias a una mejor atención de los recién nacidos, la cobertura de las indemnizaciones (vacunas), la atención y control de las enfermedades infecciosas en los primeros años de vida, la educación de la madre, los programas de

planificación familiar que incluye el conocimiento de la importancia del ingreso al matrimonio, del espaciamiento de los hijos y del conocimiento de anticonceptivos, entre otros.

Las tasas de mortalidad infantil, (número de fallecidos menores de un año, por cada mil nacidos vivos), así como la esperanza de vida al nacer, tienen también grandes diferencias entre los países. En Canadá y Estados Unidos las tasas de mortalidad infantil son de 7 y 9 por mil. Por otro lado, en Haití y Bolivia la tasa de mortalidad es de alrededor de 80 por mil. En cuanto a la esperanza de vida, la diferencia es casi de 20 años. Resulta muy diferente nacer en Canadá o en Estados Unidos, donde la expectativa llega a cerca de los 80 años, o en Costa Rica, donde es 76 años, que nacer en Haití o en Bolivia, donde la esperanza de vida se acerca a tan sólo los sesenta años.

2.3 Un enfoque para tomar decisiones en Políticas de Salud

Como protagonistas del proceso legislativo de revisión y aprobación del presupuesto nacional y como participantes en el diálogo nacional sobre desarrollo social, tenemos que pensar en encontrar alternativas que armonicen la solución a los problemas pendientes. Se trata no solamente de buscar medidas para añadir años a la Vida, sino también añadir VIDA saludable a esos años.

Creo que para abrir el debate y buscar soluciones, debemos identificar los problemas por resolver. A continuación planteo algunos pendientes de solución, para los cuales debemos buscar respuestas conjuntas, modernizando las políticas de salud.

Principales Problemas Pendientes

Debemos conocer la situación demográfica de nuestros países. Dónde está su población y las proyecciones de su crecimiento; su distribución por ingresos y sus necesidades específicas.

- Asignar mayores recursos hacia la salud pública. Trabajar con organizaciones competitivas que presten servicios con técnicas y tecnologías modernas.
- Debemos perfeccionar la contabilidad de costos en el sistema público, para una mejor atención en los segmentos de: Servicios de salud personal; salud pública; e inversión en equipos, recursos humanos e investigación.
- Debemos coordinar con la sociedad civil, es decir, con las Organizaciones no- gubernamentales (ONGs), las que pueden ser utilizadas como sub-contratistas del Estado, para servir a quienes pueden pagar por lo menos en promedio un 50% del costo de los servicios de atención.
- Debemos establecer programas y ejecutar la inversión social en forma permanente y evitar la tendencia de aumentar el gasto en períodos electorarios.
- Mejorar las condiciones de atención de salud preventiva y buscar el acceso universal con enfoque de calidad de servicio.
- Dar un papel más relevante a la educación en salud, a través de los medios masivos de comunicación y dentro del sistema escolarizado. Es mejor prevenir que curar.
- Enfocar soluciones particulares, para cada uno de los problemas específicos que tienen que ver con la salud, focalizando el gasto: las carencias nutricionales, la desnutrición infantil, el déficit de servicios de agua potable, las enfermedades inmuno prevenibles, la enfermedad diarreica aguda, el cólera, la neumonía en niños, la tuberculosis, la malaria, el dengue, la rabia, deficiencias en la prevención de salud ocupacional y el SIDA, entre otros.

REFLEXIONES FINALES

Las Conferencias mundiales de las Naciones Unidas que se han venido realizando en esta década, han destacado la importancia de la participación de los parlamentarios y de

las instituciones de la sociedad civil en el proceso de desarrollo socio-económico.

Esta Conferencia de Quebec, por estar dirigida a Parlamentarios de todo el Hemisferio Occidental del mundo, fortalece la democratización y abre las puertas para que podamos mejorar las relaciones y la cooperación regional.

Después de esta presentación espero haber aportado algo más a vuestros conocimientos en el campo Social y específicamente en el área de Salud. Todavía, señores parlamentarios tenemos MUCHO POR HACER .

Creo que debemos concentrarnos en las áreas incuestionablemente impostergables en cuanto a justicia social. Tratemos de madurar nuestra comprensión de los problemas y ayudar en la búsqueda de soluciones que produzcan efectos concretos a través de acciones realizables.

No puedo dejar de expresar que a nivel de las Américas, es todavía difícil pensar en una integración real y de prosperidad hemisférica, mientras las diferencias internas de calidad de vida y oportunidades, tanto dentro de nuestros países, como entre los países, sean tan profundamente agudos y en muchos casos hasta crueles.

Sin embargo, busquemos en el tiempo, con armonía y serenidad, esa integración tan necesaria para emerger como una región fuerte, de rico potencial, y crear un mundo nuevo y más igualitario para los habitantes de las AMERICAS.

Muchas gracias por vuestra atención.

VERS LES AMÉRIQUES DE 2005: DÉMOCRATIE, DÉVELOPPEMENT ET PROSPÉRITÉ

**Les moyens d'action des parlementaires en matière d'intégration dans
l'exercice
de leurs fonctions représentatives, législatives et interparlementaires**

Atelier: Protection sociale et politiques de santé

**Allocution de madame Monique Simard
Députée à l'Assemblée nationale du Québec**

Chères et chers collègues parlementaires des Amériques,

C'est avec le plus grand plaisir que je vais vous présenter la protection sociale et les politiques de santé au Québec. Ce plaisir est d'autant plus intense que ce thème rejoint le sens de l'engagement que je pense toujours avoir respecté tout au long de ma carrière tant comme syndicaliste dans un passé pas encore si lointain et encore aujourd'hui comme femme politique. Je crois en effet profondément que ce qui donne un sens à notre action comme parlementaire c'est le désir et la possibilité de jouer un rôle dans l'amélioration de la qualité de vie et finalement du bonheur des personnes que nous représentons dans nos institutions parlementaires respectives.

Ce n'est pourtant pas une tâche facile dans le contexte actuel. La mondialisation d'une partie substantielle de l'économie accroît en effet la course effrénée à l'amélioration de la compétitivité et à l'intensification de la compétition dans les pays eux-mêmes mais surtout entre les pays. Cela se traduit par une pression sans précédent sur les gouvernements nationaux pour réduire l'importance de leurs programmes sociaux afin, suppose-t-on, de rendre les produits nationaux plus compétitifs, d'accroître la production nationale et à moyen terme d'améliorer le niveau de vie de la population. En même temps et pour les mêmes raisons, les pressions s'intensifient sur les gouvernements pour qu'ils assainissent leurs finances publiques. Mais est-ce là une illusion? Est-ce qu'on finira vraiment ainsi à améliorer le sort de tous les membres de nos sociétés? La question ne se pose évidemment pas de la même façon selon qu'on fait partie de la minorité privilégiée qui profite davantage de cette compétition internationale ou qu'on n'en fait pas partie.

Mais cette question de la redistribution des produits de la croissance économique se pose avec de plus en plus d'acuité aujourd'hui dans la mesure où l'on constate que les écarts internationaux s'accroissent entre les pays riches et les pays pauvres mais tendent aussi à s'accroître au sein de ces mêmes pays entre les plus riches et les plus pauvres.

Cela n'est pas sans conséquences puisqu'on constate aussi que l'espérance

de vie ainsi que le niveau de santé et de bien-être des populations varient en fonction directement inverse à celui des écarts de revenus entre pays riches et pays pauvres mais aussi, dans ces mêmes pays, entre les mieux nantis et les moins bien nantis. Ces constatations sont importantes car elles nous amènent à nous poser des questions fondamentales sur le sens que nous voulons donner collectivement au développement dans chacun de nos pays respectifs.

Lorsqu'on parle de «développement» d'un pays, on le fait généralement en comparant les pays entre eux. Mais il faut alors être bien sûr qu'on compare les mêmes choses. Par exemple, la Grande-Bretagne semble bien performer quant à la lutte au chômage depuis une quinzaine d'années, mais il faut aussi comprendre qu'on y a modifié 32 fois la définition du terme de chômeur et qu'aucune de ces modifications n'a eu pour effet d'en accroître le taux, au contraire. Le Canada performe bien selon l'Indice de développement humain de l'ONU (IDH), mais cela serait relié en bonne partie au fait qu'il sous-estime le nombre d'adultes analphabètes. Aux États-Unis, la définition d'une personne en emploi est plus élastique qu'ailleurs puisqu'il suffit de travailler une heure pour être déclaré en emploi. En France, c'est le degré d'inégalités dans la redistribution du patrimoine qu'on tend à sous-estimer. Bref, il faut se méfier à cet égard des manipulations de chiffres qui ne reflètent pas la réalité.

Une autre façon de mesurer l'écart qui peut exister entre le niveau de développement économique et la qualité de vie de la population consiste à regarder aussi le niveau d'Espérance de vie moyenne qu'on a réussi à atteindre dans chacun des pays. Ainsi, les États-Unis occupaient en 1991 le 2e rang mondial en termes de PIB per capita derrière la Suisse (les États-Unis ont depuis été dépassés par quelques autres pays), mais ils n'occupaient que le 10e rang mondial en termes d'Espérance de vie. Par contre, si le Québec avait été un pays souverain, il aurait occupé le 9e rang en 1991 en termes de PIB per capita mais il aurait été au 4e rang en compagnie de 5 autres pays en termes d'Espérance de vie.

C'est là une illustration du fait qu'il est possible pour un pays qui n'est pas nécessairement le plus riche de tous de réussir à améliorer de façon sensible la qualité de vie et le niveau de bien-être de sa population. C'est une réalisation collective dont nous sommes fiers. Elle tient principalement à deux facteurs à mon avis, soit la présence au Québec de programmes de services publics forts et une certaine efficacité dans la redistribution de la richesse au sein de la société québécoise. Il s'agit là de deux dimensions sur lesquelles j'aimerais élaborer rapidement.

Quelques mots d'abord sur la présence d'un secteur public fort au Québec. Historiquement, le Québec n'aurait pas connu une évolution et une telle croissance économique et sociale sans la présence d'un secteur public fort. Les Québécois francophones n'exerçaient en effet que peu de contrôle sur le développement économique du secteur privé au Québec et cela pendant deux siècles, soit depuis la conquête de 1760 jusqu'au début des années

1960. Au début de ces années 1960, le Québec a connu ce qu'on a appelé la «Révolution tranquille». C'était le début d'une ère de modernisation, de croissance et de progrès social sans précédent pour la société québécoise. Cela n'a été possible qu'avec le développement du rôle de l'État comme levier de développement économique et de progrès social. Cela s'est traduit par exemple, par la nationalisation de l'hydro-électricité et la création d'Hydro-Québec, la mise sur pied d'un ministère public de l'éducation et d'un réseau scolaire public, universel et accessible pour toute la population, la mise sur pied de la Caisse de dépôt et de placement qui contrôle aujourd'hui des épargnes collectives de plus de \$57 milliards, par la mise en place d'un régime public de services de santé et des services sociaux et par la mise en place aussi de toute une gamme de programmes de protection sociale contre la perte de revenus en cas d'accidents du travail ou de la route, d'aide financière de dernier recours, etc. Il s'agit là de réalisations collectives dont nous sommes encore aujourd'hui très fiers et sans lesquelles nous ne serions pas aujourd'hui collectivement ce que nous sommes.

L'État a donc joué un rôle particulièrement important au Québec en matière de développement économique et de développement social. Or cette place importante de l'État dans notre vie collective est aujourd'hui largement remise en question dans le contexte de la mondialisation de l'économie et des pressions accrues qui s'exercent sur les États pour l'assainissement de leurs finances. Or notre rôle, comme parlementaires québécois, est donc particulièrement crucial et ardu dans ce contexte puisque nous devons chercher à maintenir un équilibre délicat entre, d'une part, la préservation et le maintien des acquis collectifs qui constituent une partie intégrante de notre qualité de vie et, d'autre part, la nécessité de s'adapter au nouveau contexte mondial. Il nous faut donc à la fois chercher à préserver l'essentiel de nos acquis tout en faisant les réformes nécessaires pour alléger le rôle de l'État. J'aimerais ici prendre quelques instants pour essayer d'illustrer la façon dont nous cherchons actuellement à concilier ces exigences dans les secteurs les plus importants.

Au Québec, le «filet de protection sociale aux personnes et aux familles» est assuré de façon partagée par le gouvernement du Québec et celui d'Ottawa. Ce dédoublement entraîne une plus grande complexité et parfois des chevauchements mais, de façon générale, l'ensemble de ces régimes assure une protection étendue contre les principaux risques de la vie. Certains de ces régimes sont assumés directement par les fonds publics tandis que d'autres font l'objet de prélèvements spécifiques auprès des employeurs et/ou des employés. Plusieurs programmes publics comme l'assurance-santé, la sécurité du revenu et les dépenses d'éducation faisaient historiquement l'objet d'un partage fédéral-provincial. Mais dans son effort d'assainissement de ses finances, le gouvernement fédéral s'est délesté de plusieurs de ces responsabilités vers les provinces mais sans maintenir le niveau de financement, ce qui a largement contribué aux problèmes budgétaires au Québec. Mais voyons brièvement ces programmes.

- Notre *régime de santé* est pour l'essentiel public, universel et gratuit. Sont cependant exclus du régime public les services qui apparaissent moins essentiels comme par exemple les soins esthétiques, etc. Ce régime est financé par des contributions des particuliers et par celles des employeurs. Dans le cas des salariés cependant, elles ont été intégrées aux échelles de l'impôt sur le revenu.
- *La protection du revenu contre les aléas de la vie* comporte plusieurs volets:
 - a) *La protection du revenu contre la perte d'emploi* est assurée par le régime fédéral d'assurance-chômage ou d'assurance-emploi comme on l'appelle maintenant, qui est financé par des cotisations des employeurs et des employés. Ce régime a connu des resserrements importants au cours des dernières années: la proportion de chômeurs qui ont droit à ces prestations est tombée à 97% en 89 à 48% en 97.
 - b) *La protection du revenu en dernier recours* pour les personnes qui n'ont accès à aucune autre source de revenu est assurée par un régime québécois de sécurité du revenu plus communément appelé «d'aide sociale», financé à même les fonds généraux. Ce programme faisait l'objet jusqu'à il y a peu d'un partage fédéral-provincial assez rigide. Il a maintenant été transféré aux provinces.
 - c) *Le soutien du revenu aux familles*. Cela comprend un ensemble de mesures. Certaines, comme les allocations familiales provinciales, étaient universelles. D'autres, comme la prestation fiscale fédérale, sont plutôt établies en fonction du revenu de la famille. Il y a aussi des mesures d'aide financière pour faciliter l'accès aux services de garde et des mesures de remplacement du revenu en cas de maternité. Ces mesures sont toutes assurées par les fonds généraux des gouvernements. Le Québec a récemment amorcé des changements importants dans les programmes qui relèvent de sa juridiction avec la mise en place progressive d'une ambitieuse politique familiale qui permettra par exemple de rendre disponible progressivement à tous les enfants d'âge préscolaire des services de garde à coût réduit (5 \$ par jour plutôt que 20 \$ ou 25 \$). De nouvelles allocations familiales unifiées qui intègrent aussi une partie du programme d'aide de dernier recours qui servait à soutenir et à compenser la présence d'enfants dans les familles défavorisées viennent aussi d'entrer en vigueur. Ces nouvelles allocations sont établies en fonction du revenu des familles. Elles ont l'avantage de ne pas être discriminatoires envers les familles des petits salariés qui

recevront désormais des prestations aussi élevées que celles qui dépendent du programme du dernier recours. Enfin, un des volets de cette politique, soit l'amélioration de congés parentaux, est retardé à cause d'une mésentente avec le gouvernement fédéral.

d) *La protection du revenu à la retraite* est assurée par un Régime public des rentes qui verse une rente fixée à 25% de la moyenne mensuelle des gains de travail pendant la période où le travailleur a cotisé. Le financement de ce régime, qui a été récemment ajusté à la hausse pour faire face au vieillissement appréhendé, est assuré par des cotisations des employés et des employeurs. Ce régime est québécois. Il y a aussi un régime fédéral de pension de la Sécurité de la vieillesse encore universel jusqu'à l'an 2000 et financé à même les fonds généraux du gouvernement fédéral. Pour les personnes âgées plus démunies, ce régime fédéral est complété par un programme de Supplément de revenu garanti. La combinaison des régimes québécois et fédéraux fait en sorte que le taux de remplacement du revenu des travailleurs âgés est de 70% pour les plus démunis et de 40% pour un travailleur gagnant le salaire industriel moyen.

e) *La protection du revenu en cas d'accidents du travail* est entièrement à la charge des employeurs. Ce régime est de juridiction québécoise.

f) Nous avons aussi un régime de *protection contre les pertes de revenus qui résultent d'accidents automobiles*. Ce régime est basé sur le concept du «no-faults» et son financement est assuré par des cotisations des usagers de la route lors de leur renouvellement de permis de conduire ou de certificat d'immatriculation de leur véhicule.

- Il faut enfin mentionner l'existence d'un *régime d'assistance juridique* qui assure la gratuité des services d'un avocat pour les personnes les plus démunies de la société, afin que l'administration de la justice soit un peu plus égale pour tous et ne soit pas entravée uniquement par des considérations d'ordre financier.

Les dépenses totales de santé représentent 10% du PIB québécois. C'est une proportion plus élevée que dans certains pays européens mais beaucoup plus faible que celle de nos voisins américains. Le maintien d'un secteur public fort dans ce domaine nous a historiquement permis de mieux contrôler l'évolution des coûts de santé que la population doit finalement finir par assurer d'une façon ou de l'autre. Mais la proximité du modèle médical américain basé en grande partie sur le développement de pointe de la technologie médicale coûteuse exerce aussi de fortes pressions

chez nous.

Ainsi, le secteur public assume aujourd'hui 73% des dépenses totales de santé au Québec, soit environ 10% de plus qu'il y a dix ans. Cette pression vers la privatisation croissante des services de santé va probablement continuer à demeurer préoccupante au cours de la prochaine décennie. La stratégie adoptée par le gouvernement québécois a été de maintenir un régime de soins de base qui demeure public, universel et gratuit, laissant au secteur privé ce qui semble moins essentiel comme par exemple les soins esthétiques, les soins de confort, etc.

Le système de services de santé et de services sociaux du Québec est aussi confronté à une autre tendance importante, soit celle du vieillissement rapide de sa population. Cette évolution qui a débuté il y a déjà plusieurs années se fait ici à un des rythmes les plus rapides des pays occidentaux. La population âgée de plus de 65 ans était de 11% en 1991; elle sera de 17% en 2016. Si les façons d'intervenir auprès de cette partie importante de la population ne changent pas, ce processus de vieillissement entraînerait à lui seul une hausse de 1,8% des coûts totaux de santé à chaque année.

Mais dans le contexte actuel de restrictions des dépenses publiques, le secteur de la santé qui compte pour 31% du budget québécois doit aussi faire sa part. Au cours des deux dernières années, le réseau des services de santé et des services sociaux a ainsi dû absorber des compressions équivalentes à 8,6% de son budget. Le même effort de restriction des dépenses de santé devra se poursuivre au cours des trois prochaines années.

Ces efforts de rationalisation ont d'abord porté sur la réduction de l'importance relative de l'encadrement administratif dans les services et sur la réduction de certains programmes complémentaires comme les services optométriques aux adultes qui étaient jugés moins essentiels. Mais un changement plus fondamental devenait nécessaire pour atteindre les économies visées mais aussi pour prévenir un accroissement trop rapide des coûts, notamment avec le vieillissement de la population. Ce sont nos façons de dispenser les services à la population qu'il fallait aussi revoir en profondeur. Depuis 1995, le gouvernement s'est donc engagé dans la voie de ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler chez nous «le virage ambulatoire», c'est-à-dire la réduction, voir l'élimination, d'une part de la durée moyenne des séjours en milieu hospitalier et le transfert d'autre part des services vers des services ambulatoires, les services de maintien à domicile, la promotion de la santé et du bien-être ainsi que des efforts de prévention, etc.

Cette opération ambitieuse qui a entraîné la fermeture d'un certain nombre de centres hospitaliers ne s'est pas faite sans heurts qui se sont évidemment répercutés sur la scène politique. Les populations des territoires touchés par ces fermetures, alimentées et soutenues cependant par divers groupes d'intérêt, n'appréciaient guère dans l'ensemble la fermeture ou la

transformation d'institutions publiques auxquelles elles s'étaient attachées avec le temps. La vie de certains de mes collègues parlementaires qui avaient été élus sur ces territoires n'a pas été particulièrement facile au cours de cette période. Il s'agit nettement là d'un exemple des situations difficiles que doivent vivre les parlementaires lorsqu'ils doivent demeurer solidaires des réformes nécessaires de leur gouvernement en même temps qu'ils doivent faire face au mécontentement de leurs électeurs pour qui les avantages à court terme l'emportent souvent sur les bénéfices à plus long terme.

Cette ambitieuse réforme du réseau de services de santé n'a été possible qu'en opérant en même temps une importante décentralisation régionale des pouvoirs de planification et d'allocation des ressources vers des régies régionales jouissant d'un assez large degré d'autonomie.

Cette transformation des services va se poursuivre au cours des prochaines années. L'objectif en effet est de réduire encore la durée moyenne de séjour dans les hôpitaux de courte durée et de ramener le nombre de lits nécessaires de 2,5 à 2,0 lits par 1 000 habitants. Une transformation équivalente est aussi en train de se faire en matière d'utilisation des lits psychiatriques, ce qui ne sera possible qu'en développant davantage les services disponibles dans les communautés elles-mêmes.

Le Québec peut aussi s'enorgueillir de posséder un réseau complet d'institutions publiques de services de première ligne, soit les Centres Locaux de Services Communautaires (ou CLSC) qui dispensent les services de première ligne en matière de santé et de services sociaux, de prévention, de vaccination, de maintien à domicile, etc. Le ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux déploie actuellement ses efforts pour accroître la coordination des services généraux disponibles sur les territoires des CLSC, soit les services généraux des petits centres hospitaliers, les services dispensés dans les cabinets privés de médecins et les services d'hébergement aux personnes âgées en perte d'autonomie, etc. On compte actuellement 154 CLSC ou centres de santé à travers le Québec et qui couvrent l'ensemble du territoire. Leur fonctionnement correspond d'assez près à ce que l'OMS (l'Organisation mondiale de la santé) entendait par «services de première ligne» dans sa désormais célèbre déclaration d'Alma Alta en 1977.

Le gouvernement québécois a aussi instauré en 1996 un régime général d'assurance-médicaments afin de procurer à tous un accès équitable aux médicaments requis par l'état de santé de chacun. Ce régime assure la gratuité des médicaments pour les enfants alors que tous les adultes doivent déboursier 25% du coût de leurs médicaments. Les adultes doivent aussi payer une prime d'assurance individuelle dont le coût varie selon le revenu de chacun. Ce nouveau régime assure une protection à plus d'un million de personnes qui n'étaient couvertes par aucun des régimes existants jusqu'alors. Une bonne partie de ces personnes sont des travailleurs à faibles revenus qui n'étaient couverts par aucun des régimes

d'assurance collective. Ces petits travailleurs vivaient une situation injuste dans la mesure où ils devaient payer eux-mêmes complètement le coût de leurs médicaments alors que les personnes qui vivaient à l'aide sociale n'avaient rien à déboursier puisque leurs médicaments étaient jusque là complètement gratuits. Cet avantage constituait même un puissant frein au retour sur le marché du travail puisqu'en quittant l'aide sociale, elles perdaient cet avantage.

L'instauration de ce régime universel d'assurance-médicaments illustre aussi le fait que, même dans un contexte budgétaire difficile, il peut devenir nécessaire et désirable pour l'État d'intervenir pour assurer une meilleure équité entre les personnes. Le secteur des médicaments est un de ceux dont la croissance des coûts pour les personnes était la plus rapide dans le domaine des services de santé. C'est aussi un des secteurs qui est appelé probablement à connaître une expansion phénoménale dans les années à venir avec la recherche constante de nouvelles molécules plus efficaces contre les nouvelles maladies mais aussi de plus en plus onéreuse. On en a un bon exemple avec le coût des médicaments que doivent assumer les personnes qui sont atteintes du SIDA par exemple.

La mise en place d'un tel régime d'assurance-médicaments constitue aussi, pour le gouvernement québécois, une façon de se donner un moyen de contrôler l'expansion des coûts de santé dans un domaine qui échappait jusque là à toute forme de contrôle sur les coûts. Désormais, le gouvernement québécois aura les moyens de négocier les coûts de façon plus sérieuse avec les différents producteurs de médicaments.

Un autre secteur important de l'intervention de l'État au Québec concerne toute la question de la sécurité du revenu et de la redistribution de la richesse. C'est une question d'autant plus importante chez nous pour le maintien de la cohésion sociale que nous sommes encore affectés par des taux de chômage encore largement supérieurs à 10%. Ce taux a même atteint un sommet de 13% en 1995. Nous ne sommes pas encore vraiment sortis, au plan de l'emploi, de la dure récession de 1990. La durée moyenne du chômage s'est aussi allongée à 28 semaines en moyenne. Le chômage frappe aussi plus durement les jeunes dont l'entrée sur le marché du travail devient plus difficile ainsi que les travailleurs moins scolarisés.

Au Canada, nous avons cette particularité d'un partage des responsabilités en matière de sécurité du revenu entre les deux paliers de gouvernement. Ainsi, le gouvernement fédéral est responsable du régime d'assurance-chômage ou maintenant, comme on l'appelle désormais avec une certaine ironie compte tenu de la situation difficile de l'emploi, «le régime d'assurance-emploi», alors que les provinces sont responsables des régimes de sécurité du revenu. Or il y a une nette tendance depuis plusieurs années à restreindre l'accès au régime fédéral et donc par conséquent à en transférer une partie croissante des coûts aux provinces.

En 1991, soit en pleine récession, les prestations versées à des Québécois

en vertu du régime fédéral d'assurance-chômage et par le régime québécois de sécurité du revenu ont dépassé les 8 milliards de dollars. Le Québec assumait 33% de cette note. Avec les restrictions récentes à l'accès au régime fédéral d'assurance-emploi, le Québec doit assumer une partie croissante des coûts. Ainsi avant la dernière réforme du gouvernement fédéral en la matière, 85% des chômeurs recevaient des prestations d'assurance-chômage. Cette proportion n'est plus que de 30% aujourd'hui. Lorsqu'elles n'ont pas d'autres ressources, ces personnes sont donc de plus en plus nombreuses à demander une aide de dernier recours au régime québécois de sécurité du revenu, ce qui a entraîné avec le temps, un changement profond dans la composition de cette clientèle. Ainsi, en 1960, 20% des bénéficiaires de ce régime étaient des chômeurs ou des personnes «aptes au travail». Aujourd'hui, cette proportion est complètement inversée: 80% des bénéficiaires sont des chômeurs qui n'ont plus accès au régime fédéral.

Cette situation difficile a amené le gouvernement québécois à élaborer une série de réformes successives pour adapter ses programmes à cette nouvelle réalité difficile. Une première réforme a ainsi été mise en place en 1989 pour faire face à l'accroissement du nombre de personnes aptes au travail qui se présentaient à l'aide sociale. La philosophie sous-jacente était la suivante: le passage à l'aide sociale devait être considéré, pour le plus grand nombre, comme une période d'acquisition ou de mise à jour de leurs compétences, de reprise des habitudes de travail ou encore d'exploitation vocationnelle.

En remplacement des mesures antérieures, trois aspects de cette réforme de 1989 méritent d'être soulignés. Un premier programme accordait une aide variable aux personnes aptes au travail en fonction de leur participation à des mesures de préparation et/ou d'intégration au marché du travail. Un second volet accordait une aide financière accrue aux personnes dont le degré d'employabilité éventuel était fortement réduit à la suite par exemple, d'un handicap ou d'une maladie. Enfin, le troisième volet mérite d'être souligné. Le programme «Aide aux parents pour leur revenu de travail» (APPORT) introduisait une innovation, soit la mise en place d'un mécanisme d'incitation financière au travail qui faisait qu'il était toujours plus avantageux pour une famille de continuer à travailler, même lorsque les gains de travail étaient modestes, plutôt que d'être tentée de demeurer à l'aide sociale. Ce programme faisait suite à une première expérimentation d'un tel mécanisme qui avait été instaurée par le gouvernement du Parti québécois dès 1979 sous le nom de SUPRET ou de «supplément au revenu de travail». Cette innovation avait été saluée à l'époque par le Conseil économique du Canada et quelques années plus tard par l'OCDE.

En 1996, le gouvernement vient de soumettre à la consultation une nouvelle proposition de réforme en profondeur du régime d'aide sociale. Les besoins des enfants seront désormais couverts par une allocation unifiée pour enfants, laquelle variera selon le revenu familial mais sera

désormais indépendante du statut de travailleur ou de non-travailleur des parents. Les enfants des travailleurs à faibles revenus ne seront donc plus pénalisés. Cette nouvelle réforme vise notamment à mieux intégrer les prestataires aptes au travail qui sont de fait de véritables chômeurs de longue durée qui ont épuisé les autres sources de prestations d'aide, donc de mieux les intégrer à la main-d'oeuvre. Ces prestataires seraient appelés à définir un parcours personnel en vue de leur insertion ou leur retour sur le marché du travail. Des conseillers pourraient les aider en la matière afin de choisir les mesures les mieux appropriées comme par exemple la formation requise, les stages en milieu de travail ou des emplois subventionnés. On propose aussi d'abolir les barrières entre ces chômeurs à l'aide sociale et les autres chômeurs en permettant aux premiers d'avoir accès aux mêmes programmes que les seconds. Une partie des sommes consacrées à des mesures passives de sécurité du revenu pourra aussi éventuellement être transformée en mesures actives qui favorisent la création ou le développement de l'emploi.

Les services publics d'emploi qui sont actuellement éparpillés en trois réseaux distincts seront réunifiés dans une seule structure qui portera désormais le nom de Centres locaux d'emploi ou CLE. Le milieu sera aussi appelé à élaborer un Plan local d'action pour le développement de l'économie et l'emploi qui fera appel au dynamisme des communautés locales. Le milieu deviendrait ainsi responsable de déterminer les mesures qui favoriseront le développement socio-économique de son territoire et aideront à terme les prestataires à intégrer le marché du travail.

Enfin, le dernier Sommet socio-économique qui a regroupé tous les grands acteurs sociaux et économiques de la société québécoise en octobre 1996 a aussi permis la création par consensus d'un Fonds de lutte à la pauvreté par l'insertion au travail. Ce Fonds disposera au cours des trois prochaines années de quelque 250 \$ millions qui proviendront à part égale des particuliers et des entreprises.

Cette question de la sécurité du revenu et de la redistribution de la richesse au sein de la société québécoise est une question fondamentale. Ainsi, en 1993, les revenus avant impôts et transferts des 20% les plus riches de la société québécoise étaient 197 fois plus élevés que les gains des 20% les plus pauvres. Mais la structure progressive de notre système d'impôt et les programmes de transfert des gouvernements viennent heureusement atténuer ces écarts. Ainsi, après transferts et impôts, les revenus des 20% les plus riches ne sont plus que 7 fois plus élevés que ceux des 20% les plus pauvres.

Et je vous prie de croire que ce n'est pas simplement une manifestation d'un socialisme attardé et nostalgique. Non, c'est plutôt, selon de plus en plus d'experts internationaux, une mesure de progrès social et économique inévitable. Ainsi, il est désormais acquis que les pays comme la Suède et le Japon qui connaissent une espérance de vie plus élevée sont aussi les pays où les écarts de revenus entre riches et pauvres sont les plus faibles. Mais

cela a aussi des répercussions économiques. Ainsi, selon monsieur Jean-Paul Fitoussi, président de l'Observatoire français des conjonctures économiques, «les pays qui connaissent les plus bas taux de chômage sont ceux où la cohésion sociale est forte et où l'échelle des rémunérations est la plus resserrée» («Le pacte social oublié» dans *Libération*, 25 février 1994).

Enfin, en terminant, je voudrais seulement évoquer deux domaines où l'appui des parlementaires peut s'avérer essentiel au cours des prochaines années au Québec pour l'évolution de notre société, soit d'une part la montée du Tiers-secteur et de l'importance de la participation à la société civile et d'autre part le développement d'un nouveau secteur de l'économie, soit celui de l'économie sociale. Il ne s'agit pas de tout remplacer ce qui existe par de nouveaux dieux, mais simplement de reconnaître que de nouveaux instruments d'intervention et de développement peuvent nous faire évoluer plus rapidement et plus harmonieusement et cela pour le plus grand bien-être de nos populations. Mais il faut aussi pouvoir apprécier à leur juste valeur l'importance de ces nouveaux instruments. Par exemple, si le taux de chômage est de 12% au Québec actuellement, c'est donc d'une certaine façon que le secteur privé de l'économie et le secteur public sont à eux deux en mesure de procurer des emplois à 88% des personnes qui veulent travailler. Si par le développement de l'économie sociale, on arrive à réduire la proportion des chômeurs de 4,5 ou même 6% nous aurons alors accompli un immense pas en avant. Notre population sera plus heureuse et en meilleure santé. N'est-ce pas là finalement l'objectif ultime de notre engagement comme parlementaire?

Comme vous voyez, même si les temps sont difficiles, il y a encore des lueurs d'espoir et des raisons de demeurer optimistes. Des termes comme «engagement», «responsabilisation» et «prise en charge» doivent continuer à vouloir dire quelque chose de significatif pour notre avenir à tous. C'est la grâce que je vous souhaite à tous et je vous en remercie sincèrement.

HACIA LAS AMÉRICAS DEL 2005: DEMOCRACIA, DESARROLLO Y PROSPERIDAD

**Los medios de acción de los parlamentarios en materia
de integración en el
ejercicio de sus funciones representativas, legislativas e
interparlamentarias**

Taller: Culturas, Lenguas y Comunicaciones

**"La preservación del patrimonio cultural de los
pueblos indios de América,
en el marco de la globalización económica"**

**Alocución de la Señora Laura Pavón Jaramillo
Senadora de la República de México**

El proceso de globalización constituye uno de los elementos significativos de fines del siglo XX. Los continentes asiático y europeo, así como América del Norte son los casos más evidentes de integración económica de las naciones, en una época dominada por la estrategia de diversificación de las relaciones exteriores de los países y una mayor vinculación con el mundo.

La ampliación súbita de los mercados y el incremento del intercambio comercial entre las naciones; las posibilidades de los países para insertarse, con alta eficiencia, en economías de escala; y el fortalecimiento de sus finanzas, debido a las exportaciones crecientes, constituyen elementos básicos en los que se sustenta la nueva estrategia de desarrollo económico de la comunidad de naciones.

La estrategia económica de integración internacional de las naciones ha generado una transformación de la noción de desarrollo. Con la globalización se descalifica la concepción política y económica que propone un desarrollo integral fundado en el proteccionismo comercial, a fin de garantizar la consolidación de las soberanías, y se fortalece la idea de que el intercambio

comercial y la fuerza de los sectores externos constituyen los pilares del nuevo vigor de los Estados nacionales.

En la actualidad, pareciera que la firmeza y solidez de los países se sustenta en exportar en condiciones ventajosas e importar lo necesario. La interdependencia entre las naciones deja de ser considerada como una prueba indiscutible de su debilidad, cuando las negociaciones comerciales y de gran escala entre países constituyen un elemento sustantivo de la dinámica mundial.

Sin embargo, el proceso de integración comercial y globalización económica que marca el fin de siglo, no está libre de conflictos y problemas de gran alcance. La acelerada configuración de bloques económicos, donde la premisa del libre comercio es esencial, contiene en su interior la amenaza de nuevos proteccionismos; aunado a ello, se destaca la demanda, cada vez más consensada en las sociedades modernas de colocar al hombre y sus necesidades como centro del desarrollo y; en ese contexto, se hacen patentes las reivindicaciones culturales de diversidad de pueblos que fueron integrados, bajo diferenciadas formas y mecanismos de dominación, a una unidad territorial, política y cultural.

Es imperativo reconocer que el proceso de integración económica a escala mundial ha dejado de lado las reivindicaciones de los pueblos y regiones autónomos, de sus derechos, de su cultura; generando separatismos violentos y nacionalismos extremos.

Ante el riesgo que implica la fragmentación de los Estados nacionales, que crean vacíos en todo el proyecto de integración global y provocan perplejidad entre la población, debemos reivindicar la soberanía, la unidad nacional y la integración territorial de cada país. Ello significa garantizar que la cultura se enmarque dentro de los límites de la nación. Sin embargo, de esta afirmación no debe desprenderse una idea monolítica de la cultura nacional, sino una concepción basada en el reconocimiento a la pluralidad cultural, el respeto a las libertades individuales y el fortalecimiento de la democracia política

y de la impartición de la justicia; con pleno conocimiento y aceptación de que el desarrollo no es sólo proyecto económico, sino de cultura.

En este sentido, la cultura indígena implica una profundización de la preservación y el desarrollo de las iniciativas de promoción social: Ampliación de la actividad comercial y mejoramiento de la cooperación económica y del desarrollo sustentable, aspectos que incluyen prioritariamente el combate a la pobreza, así como la instrumentación de medidas de perfeccionamiento y consolidación de la vida democrática nacional.

El reconocimiento de la sociedad a las reivindicaciones justas de los pueblos indígenas hizo necesario que el constituyente permanente de México reformara en 1992 el texto constitucional, para establecer en la Ley Fundamental de la República el carácter indiscutible de la composición pluriétnica y pluricultural de la identidad nacional del pueblo mexicano, cuyos orígenes se encuentran en la diversidad de los pueblos indígenas.

Al precisarse en la Carta Magna la composición pluricultural de México, se reconoce que la cultura nacional se sustentó, originalmente, en los pueblos indígenas, y se propicia la armonía de lo diverso, además de afianzarse el respeto y la tolerancia, sin distingo de superioridad, entre las diversas raíces de nuestra actual composición poblacional.

Con ello, se busca establecer un reencuentro de la nación mexicana consigo misma, para hacer frente a los retos que en el plano cultural le plantean las relaciones económicas internacionales y el encadenamiento de los procesos productivos, en una etapa signada por la globalización de la economía.

Por la importancia política y el significado cultural de la reforma constitucional, transcribo el artículo de referencia:

"Artículo 4º. La nación mexicana tiene una composición pluricultural sustentada

originalmente en sus pueblos indígenas. La ley protegerá y promoverá el desarrollo de sus lenguas, culturas, usos, costumbres, recursos y formas específicas de organización social, y garantizará a sus integrantes el efectivo acceso a la jurisdicción del Estado. En los juicios y procedimientos agrarios en que aquellos sean parte, se tomarán en cuenta sus prácticas y costumbres jurídicas en los términos que establezca la ley."

Esta reforma constitucional es producto de un largo proceso de maduración social y constituye la más clara voluntad política del Estado mexicano por reconocer una realidad y normarla. Aunque por una parte es necesario reconocer que la norma por sí misma no resolverá la compleja problemática de las comunidades indígenas, por la otra no puede negarse el importante avance logrado en el marco de la Ley Suprema de México.

El cotidiano sacrificio de los indígenas mexicanos para producir en condiciones adversas, para preservar, defender y enriquecer su patrimonio natural, histórico y cultural, y para ejercer la convivencia comunitaria y con el país, constituye y es una clara expresión del indisoluble vínculo con los valores más arraigados del pueblo mexicano.

La diversidad de lenguas indígenas que se hablan en México y que requirieron de milenios para su formación, se consideran parte constitutiva del patrimonio cultural de la nación. Las más de cincuenta lenguas diferentes que se hablan entre los indígenas mexicanos se inscriben dentro de un contexto cultural más amplio. A través de él, se manifiesta un sistema de conocimientos específicos sobre la existencia y la naturaleza que se expresa en tradiciones que lo transmiten y perpetúan.

Asimismo, este contexto cultural también se concreta en formas de organización social e instituciones comunitarias características que ordenan, ofrecen protección y norman la vida de sus integrantes.

Desde esta perspectiva, lenguas, culturas, tradiciones, costumbres, organización social y otros factores, cristalizan en identidades que conforman las relaciones entre los que compartimos ese contexto cultural y respecto a otros grupos de la sociedad.

De ello se desprende que el componente indígena de la población es una constante en el pasado y presente de la nación. Su presencia, que aporta diversidad y riqueza cultural para todos los mexicanos, se reconoce en términos de igualdad, con lo que se rechaza toda postulación de superioridad racial o cultural, tanto hacia adentro como hacia afuera del país.

No obstante la igualdad en términos culturales, los indígenas mexicanos, como consecuencia de dilatados y accidentados procesos históricos, se encuentran en una posición objetiva de desigualdad económica y social.

Los rezagos y las carencias sociales que afectan este significativo sector de la sociedad, son graves, conformando un círculo vicioso en el que la pobreza se reproduce y perpetúa. Todavía nos falta mucho para erradicar la intermediación que medra con la desigualdad y se opone al progreso de los pueblos indígenas. Asimismo, la justicia encuentra barreras en las condiciones de aislamiento, pobreza y exclusión en que viven los indígenas mexicanos.

Ante esta realidad, es una cuestión inaplazable corregir la injusticia y promover su desarrollo; se cuenta con el reconocimiento legal y constitucional de los pueblos indígenas, así como con el mandato para que la ley prevea los instrumentos adecuados para garantizarles el pleno e igualitario acceso a la jurisdicción del Estado y para proteger y desarrollar sus culturas, organizaciones sociales y recursos que las sustentan.

México no ha resuelto el difícil equilibrio entre el peso de la globalización y las justas demandas de sus pueblos indígenas, el movimiento zapatista es un ejemplo de ello.

Para avanzar en su solución se requiere disminuir la desigualdad y la pobreza que no son solamente indígenas, y sensibilizar a la sociedad de que sus causas nos atañen a todos y forman parte de las posibilidades y limitaciones de nuestro proyecto común.

La inclusión de los pueblos indios en la Constitución General de la República es una síntesis de la voluntad de cambio y de conservación que los propios grupos, pueblos y comunidades indígenas, en su proceso de desarrollo, han escogido para preservar y mantener vivas sus tradiciones, sus formas de organización y sus modalidades para vincularse y relacionarse con la naturaleza. Rehuye toda forma y vestigio de paternalismo, reafirmando el respeto a la libertad y plena ciudadanía de los indígenas; constituye una base jurídica para proteger las diferencias que enriquecen al conjunto de la nación, sin crear ningún privilegio ni establecer una categoría diferente entre los mexicanos.

Por otra parte establece, con toda claridad, que el reconocimiento de los pueblos indígenas no significa la balcanización ni la desarticulación de la unidad nacional, la integridad territorial y la soberanía de la nación.

Esta es la base, el punto de partida y el sustento legal para la construcción de un pacto social integrador, de una nueva relación entre los pueblos indígenas, la sociedad y el Estado Mexicano, bajo los principios de pluralismo, sustentabilidad, integralidad, participación y libre determinación; con respeto a sus formas internas de convivencia y de organización social, económica, política y cultural, en el marco de la unidad nacional.

Dicho lo anterior, es oportuno comentar las acciones que a mi consideración es menester impulsar -como legisladores- en nuestro continente, de cara a la conservación y fortalecimiento de la cultura nacional y específicamente por lo que hace a la cultura de nuestras comunidades indígenas, la cual, frente a la globalización, requiere indudablemente de una atención especial.

En el contexto de la globalización, el camino hacia la nueva relación Estado - sociedad, pasa por la revaloración y reivindicación de esquemas y conceptos fundamentales como son - entre otros- el de la incorporación plena de los pueblos al proceso de desarrollo, la mayor participación y representación de los indios; el impulso a la conformación de esquemas regionales para el tratamiento de la problemática indígena; la defensa de los derechos humanos y en especial los que asisten a mujeres y menores; el respeto al trascendental vínculo que ha existido entre el indio y su tierra, y de manera fundamental, el perfeccionamiento de la democracia.

La nueva relación debe ser garante de la superación de los inveterados rezagos que han sufrido el indio y su cultura.

Deben de impulsarse dos estrategias en la nueva relación sociedad - Estado: la participación y la representación de los grupos indios.

La participación debe entenderse -desde la perspectiva del proyecto de desarrollo nacional- como la incorporación de las propuestas, capacidades y recursos de toda índole de los pueblos indios, reconociendo sus derechos y considerándolos como protagonistas de su propio desarrollo.

Por lo que hace a la representación, esta se refiere a la incorporación que deben de tener los indios y sus legítimos representantes a las esferas políticas y sociales de toma de decisiones, pues frecuentemente hemos constatado que una de las pobreza más lamentables en el indio -además de la económica- es la pobreza de su participación política. Aparentemente esa marginación se nutre en un paternalismo que niega al indígena su capacidad de representación en las instancias públicas del poder, en los ámbitos nacional y local.

Sería deseable retomar las iniciativas de grupos de trabajo como el que impulsaran las Naciones Unidas y conformar un sólido sistema interamericano, auspiciado por los Congresos de América, que asumieran el compromiso de

promover, difundir y defender -en el espacio de su competencia- los derechos humanos indígenas, realizando reuniones periódicas de legisladores preocupados por el diseño de políticas públicas que aseguren su plena vigencia.

Debemos prestar especial atención a las condiciones de la mujer y menores indígenas, en quienes se acentúa frecuentemente la marginación y explotación. Para la preservación y desarrollo de su cultura, se hace necesario intensificar las acciones institucionales de conservación lingüística en todas sus manifestaciones.

Debemos tener en cuenta que la reivindicación agraria de los grupos indígenas es y ha sido prioritaria. Se hace necesario proteger la integridad de las tierras de los pueblos y comunidades indios. No debemos olvidar, como lo señala ⁽¹⁾Stavenhagen que

"... uno de los elementos fundamentales de la identidad india en América es su territorialidad, es decir, pertenecer a un grupo indígena significa tener la conciencia de poseer un territorio y mantener vivo un vínculo especial con la tierra".

El abatir el rezago social de los grupos indígenas, representa un esfuerzo que convoca a todos los sectores sociales: la sociedad civil, los organismos no gubernamentales, el sector privado y público. El esfuerzo conjunto y coordinado de estos actores debe ser llevado a cabo con imaginación, creatividad y un profundo sentido humanitario. En este sentido se advierten estrategias como el fortalecimiento del federalismo -cuando este es el sistema político en vigencia- o bien las medidas de devolución de responsabilidades o reubicación de agencias hacia los gobiernos locales, mediante acciones de descentralización y desconcentración de la administración pública central. En el ámbito eminentemente político, el indígena debe ser tomado en cuenta en los procesos de fortalecimiento democrático; en especial, debe tener participación en los procesos electorales, propiciando la

representación de los grupos y las condiciones para ejercer libremente su sufragio.

En síntesis, los esfuerzos gubernamentales en general, y legislativos en particular, deben privilegiar sistemas participativos en el diseño de las políticas y de los programas.

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1. Stavenhagen Rodolfo. Derecho Indígena y Derechos Humanos en América Latina. México, El Colegio de México, 1988. P. 341

HACIA LAS AMÉRICAS DEL 2005: DEMOCRACIA, DESARROLLO Y PROSPERIDAD

**Los medios de acción de los parlamentarios en materia
de integración en el
ejercicio de sus funciones representativas, legislativas e
interparlamentarias**

Taller: Culturas, Lenguas y Comunicaciones

**Alocución del Señor Ramón Francisco Giménez
Presidente de la Comisión de Cultura de la Cámara de
Diputados de la Nación
de la República de Argentina**

Sabemos que el lenguaje es instrumento y a la vez bagaje cultural esencial en la conformación de una comunidad estrecha la relación entre el dominio de la palabra y el ejercicio de la participación.

Cada miembro de una comunidad lleva en sí una serie de saberes que son los que realmente lo hacen pertenecer a dicha comunidad: hábitos, costumbres, realidades, historia, actividades... y eso le permite actuar naturalmente. Uno de esos saberes, y el que más lo inserta en su grupo, es el saber lingüístico.

De este modo se ve la importancia que adquiere el idioma, entendiendo el lenguaje como un medio privilegiado de comunicación que le permite al hombre el intercambio y la interacción cultural y social que regula la conducta propia y ajena en el juego de la democracia, sin perder de vista que la lengua no constituye un código homogéneo, sino que presenta una diversidad regional, social, generacional, y cultural, como lo advertimos en las poblaciones americanas integradas originariamente por indígenas a los que luego se sumaron ulteriores corrientes migratorias progenientes de todos los continentes. Como lo saben los aquí presentes de cualquiera de los países representados en esta conferencia.

Con respecto a la suerte de las lenguas les diré, tal como nos aseguran los especialistas, que cada dos semanas muere una lengua o un dialecto en algún lugar del mundo. Lo cual se considera catastrófico. Cientos de idiomas en todo el planeta están siendo jaqueados por la globalización tecnológica que privilegió un solo idioma ecuménico: el inglés.

Cada vez que un idioma deja de hablarse, afirman los filólogos, desaparece con él toda una cultura. Por eso, preservar la diversidad idiomática es tan importante, sostienen como defender el medio ambiente.

No sólo hay que salvar al panda o al cóndor andino, ejemplifican, también hay que hacer lo posible para conservar el multilinguismo. La UNESCO, en El Libro Rojo de las lenguas en peligro, calcula que de los 5 o 6 mil idiomas que hay en el mundo, casi la mitad corre riesgo de desaparecer en el siglo que viene. En Europa, por ejemplo, se hablan 94 lenguas diferentes y se estima que casi el 60 % está en proceso de extinción.

De las 77 que son autóctonas de la Europa del este de los Urales, 5 están potencialmente amenazadas, 26 gravemente, 9 casi se han extinguido y 13 se han perdido para siempre. Si se tiene en cuenta que se trata de un continente donde no se ahorran esfuerzos para preservar la identidad cultural, no costará mucho imaginar que en el resto del planeta el panorama es bastante peor.

La situación más dramática se registra en África, donde no se sabe a ciencia cierta cuántas lenguas y dialectos existen, ya que no hay estudios lingüísticos ni registros sonoros. En América, más de cien lenguas están en situación crítica, todas con menos de 300 habitantes, mientras que muchas ya han desaparecido. La UNESCO calculó que en todo el mundo «sólo 138 lenguas son habladas por más de un millón de personas, 258 son el medio de expresión de más de 100 mil personas, 708 son empleadas por más de mil personas y 409 solo son conversadas por alrededor de 100 individuos.»

Los expertos de la UNESCO señalan que es muy importante comprender el daño que se infiere a toda la humanidad cada vez que desaparece un idioma. Este proceso, sin embargo, no es inevitable, como el caso del hebreo que al ser rehabilitado por una decisión política se convirtió en el modo de expresión de todo el pueblo de Israel.

¿Que significa decir que una lengua está amenazada o en peligro?

La UNESCO sostiene que «de manera general, cualquier idioma de una comunidad que no se enseña más a los niños, o al menos a una gran parte de los niños (30 % como mínimo) debe considerarse en peligro o potencialmente amenazado. Si una gran proporción de eso significa que será cada vez mayor la cantidad de niños que haga esto, hasta que ya no habrá niños que hablen dicha lengua y ésta desaparecerá eventualmente con la muerte de los últimos habitantes. UN IDIOMA SE VUELVE PODEROSO CUANDO LA NACIÓN QUE LO HABLA SE VUELVE PODEROSA.

Los idiomas son como organismos vivos que se modifican continuamente y se enriquecen con el uso diario. Cuando alguno de ellos muere, es una parte del hombre que desaparece. Según todos los indicios, a fin del siglo que viene el mundo hablará en inglés. No porque sea un idioma mejor que los otros, sino porque la sociedad anglosajona motoriza los principales avances científicos y tecnológicos y tiene éxito en difundir, de manera mundial, las pautas culturales que le son distintivas.

Hoy el 75 % del correo que circula en el mundo está escrito en inglés. La cifra sube a un 80 % si se computan los mensajes que circulan por Internet. El inglés es un idioma de ortografía y pronunciación caprichosas, lo cual los convierte en algo muy difícil para quienes no lo tengan como lengua materna. Los nuevos hablantes no tienen otro remedio que adaptarlo a sus necesidades vocablos de sus lenguas nativas.

Nosotros, en Argentina y en especial en mi Provincia - Formosa , ubicada en su costado Norte, -tenemos una población aborigen muy importante, a la que tratamos de preservar, a través de distintas acciones, ya que son comunidades que soportaron y sobrevivieron a la colonización desde hace 500 años, queremos y debemos revalorizar y rescatar la filosofía de vida de las naciones indígenas que habitan el territorio americano, que abarca numerosas etnias determinadas a lo largo y a lo ancho de nuestros suelos patrios y que constituyen una de las vertientes que nutren nuestra identidad nacional, nuestra cultura y nuestra historia, porque la cultura se encarna en el hombre concreto, en cada hombre, cualquiera sea su raza y color, y por su inescindible vida en comunidad, en el pueblo, que es el creador de la cultura.

La unidad cultural de un país es preexistente a la unión nacional, de la cual es sustento y motor. Las culturas regionales se suman y dan por resultado la cultura nacional. **La identidad cultural argentina se define, se expresa y vigoriza en la reafirmación de la identidad cultural de cada región.**

Es fundamental para el crecimiento de los pueblos, el conocimiento de sus orígenes, el amor a su gente y el respeto a su identidad cultural, como se lo expresara el Santo Padre: «Ustedes son los preferidos de la Iglesia, y ocupan un lugar de privilegio en el corazón del Papa». Así mi Provincia de Formosa, en Argentina, a partir del año 1983, con el advenimiento de la democracia y durante los sucesivos gobiernos del mismo signo político, fue dándole fundamental importancia y preferencia a la recuperación de la comunidad en situación de abandono, empujada y arrinconada por la civilización hasta circunscribirla en espacios denominados con el eufemismo de «reducciones», aislándolas del contexto social.

A través de una política de respeto, se busca interpretar y dignificar esta situación de desigualdad que existe con el hermano aborigen, rescatándolo del olvido, acompañándolo con solidaridad en su crecimiento. Así se ortogó, a través de la «Ley Integral del Aborigen» No 426

sancionada en el año 1984, a estas comunidades el carácter de personas de derecho público, con la creación de un Instituto de Comunidades Aborígenes, y que apunta a la «preservación social y cultural de las comunidades aborígenes, la defensa de su patrimonio y sus tradiciones, el mejoramiento de sus condiciones económicas...»; esta normativa les da participación en el proceso de desarrollo nacional y provincial, favoreciendo su acceso a recursos productivos en igualdad de derechos con los demás ciudadanos y a un régimen jurídico que les garantice la propiedad de la tierra: hecho concretado, por ejemplo, con la transferencia de tierras de dominio fiscal a 64 comunidades aborígenes, en una superficie de más de 326.000 hectáreas, lo que representa poco más de la quinta parte de la superficie total de Formosa.

Es nuestra Constitución Provincial, dice expresamente que: **la educación impartida por el Estado en las comunidades aborígenes se realice en forma bilingüe e intercultural**; que más tarde se engarza con la reforma de la Constitución Nacional y la Ley Federal de Educación, cuando establece el **«derecho de las comunidades aborígenes a preservar sus pautas culturales y el aprendizaje y enseñanza de la lengua, dando lugar a la participación de sus mayores en el proceso de enseñanza»**.

Hoy la realidad histórico-socio-cultural nos plantea el desafío de encontrar nuevos enfoques integradores en lo cultural, lingüístico con la presencia de las comunidades aborígenes desde el principio, como los primeros habitantes de la América, tal como lo indica el significado de la palabra aborígen: «desde el origen», «nacido en esta tierra» y que forman parte de las Naciones representadas hoy en este encuentro.

En la recordada Conferencia Mundial sobre Políticas Culturales y educativas, realizada en México unos años atrás, se convino en definir el concepto de Cultura en un sentido amplio, que la puede considerar como el «conjunto de rasgos distintivos, espirituales y materiales, intelectuales y afectivos que caracterizan una sociedad o

un grupo social.

Ahora bien, cabe aquí hacer una disgresión: el término CULTURA tiene variadas definiciones que tratan de precisar su significado y alcance, pero no entraremos en este momento a hacer análisis conceptuales, que son por ustedes conocidos.

Los poderes públicos y particularmente los parlamentarios que integramos uno de dichos poderes, bajo estas premisas y en función de nuestro mandato representativo, asumimos el deber de estimular las condiciones de acceso al goce de los bienes y servicios requeridos, de acuerdo con el reconocimiento en el plano jurídico del derecho individual a la cultura y del derecho a las culturas nacionales, a su propia **identidad**. Quiero enfatizar que la identidad nacional y su reconocimiento son esenciales para lograr una buena legislación cultural.

La Cultura tiene asentamiento de hecho en la vida nacional, se desarrolla y cambia, y sus fragmentos antagónicos y recurrentes fecundan y hacen circular nuevos productos y formas creativas.

Cada pueblo tiene sus propios valores, sus costumbres y esto hace a su identidad, que está dada por su patrimonio cultural compuesto de bienes materiales e inmateriales, que nos muestran el pasado y nos orientan el futuro.

El Patrimonio cultural no se compone sólo por el patrimonio nacional, sino que lo conforman la multiplicidad de identidades locales y regionales.

Por ello los legisladores tenemos el compromiso de formular normativas genéricas sobre la distintas vertientes, manifestaciones, esferas de interés y facetas que componen el quehacer cultural y el patrimonio cultural subyacente y emergente.

Por su parte, las leyes sectoriales tienen su importancia, porque solucionan problemas o aspectos puntuales, y al respecto puedo mencionar para el caso de mi país, la Ley

de Cine, la Ley del Teatro, la Ley de Libre Circulación de Obras de Arte, la Ley de Disposición de Edificios Públicos Antiguos, la Ley de Extensión de la Propiedad Intelectual y otras que han brindado soluciones genuinas a problemas de larga data.

No obstante, la labor parlamentaria debe velar para que estas normativas sectoriales no constituyan un rompecabezas de normas que incluso hasta pueden ser contradictorias, porque esta situación haría perder la visión de conjunto.

La institucionalización a que aludía recién debe ser vista como garantía de la libertad creadora, y debe recorrer un doble camino:

1. El del resguardo general; desde la acción parlamentaria, dictando medidas de orden legal, desde una Ley de Cultura, hasta el ordenamiento normativo de protección, resguardo y preservación del patrimonio cultural.
2. El correspondiente al fortalecimiento de la trama social que sirve de soporte a una Nación, es decir un cuerpo de medidas que refuercen dicha trama a través de los distintos niveles de integración de la acción cultural: en las diversas jurisdicciones: municipios, en las provincias, en las regiones, en las naciones y en américa.

Una adecuada y correcta legislación cultural, es de suma importancia para la aplicación de una política cultural de lengua y comunicación; para fijar las competencias con respecto de las jurisdicciones provinciales, tendiendo a establecer criterio de jurisdicción convergente.

Es de gran importancia también definir el rol del sector privado en el mundo de la cultura abrir vías de intercambio interamericano a través de pautas para la circulación de bienes culturales, de recursos humanos vinculados al área y de un accionar conjunto enriquecedor de la unidad latinoamericana y panamericana.

En este abordaje es fundamental incorporar los conceptos propios de la cultura de la tolerancia, para revitalizar en esta construcción del futuro de las Américas, aquel legado de nuestros padres: el trabajo, el progreso, la ética y la solidaridad, frente al consumismo, frente al salvajismo del capitalismo decimonónico que los traficantes del hedonismo ofrecen masivamente a las sociedades del mundo entero. Tendremos así una alternativa, un marco superador que servirá para humanizar las tendencias que agresivamente se nos quieren presentar como propuestas válidas para el milenio que se inicia.

En este punto, debemos reflexionar acerca de estos aspectos que parecen querer arrancarnos de nuestras raíces y transplantarnos a otras (anglosajonas), donde nunca floreció la coexistencia, la tolerancia, la convivencia pacífica, la igualdad racial, económica, etc... en aquellas colonias o territorios en que así sucedió.

La Argentina hoy y este representante parlamentario que les habla de los intereses de los ciudadanos desde la perspectiva del MERCOSUR, habrán de eliminar la desconexión, las concepciones y esquemas mentales estructurados heredados, el quehacer cultural y los ecos sociales que suscita, deben abrir caminos nuevos que deberemos atrevernos a recorrer, para hacer frente al futuro y al mundo, caminando hacia el 2005, y no malograr nuestro destino.

LEGISLAR es tener la mirada puesta en el mañana, para que la cultura que es la raíz, la característica fundamental que le da personalidad a un pueblo, se perserve, pero se acreciente. LEGISLAR para que nuestra cultura se enriquezca y se integre a las culturas de los pueblos hermanos de América en un respeto irrestricto a las particularidades locales, provinciales, regionales y nacionales, que en su conjunto dan un carácter distintivo a los americanos frente a los demás pueblos del mundo. Entre otras cosas, como tierra de pueblos amantes de la libertad, del libre albedrío, de las formas democráticas y republicanas de gobierno. Como tierra de oportunidades que generosamente cobijara desde siempre a quienes

recalaron en sus playas y a sus descendientes.

Quizás toda la fascinación que el hombre pueda despertar hacia sí mismo resida en la posibilidad de multiplicar el ángulo de su mirada y de verse sorprendido por lo que aún podrá llegar a ser.

La legislación cultural debe velar por la conservación del patrimonio cultural todo: museos, cerámica, el nuevo enfoque del teatro, del cine nacional, de la artesanía, debe apoyar la acción de los cultores nacionales, tanto en la literatura, poesía o canto, por ejemplo, porque le interesa apuntar al hombre.

Los Legisladores debemos propender a elevar la dignidad del hombre. Entender la cultura desde lo existencial, desde lo concreto, ya que la cultura nace del hombre y la potencia, haciéndolo trascender a través de la creación.

El proceso de integración regional y el horizonte latinoamericano iniciado abren nuevas perspectivas para pensar y trabajar en el campo educativo y cultural, con miras a la integración americana.

El nuevo escenario genera demandas inéditas a los sistemas educativo-culturales y científico-tecnológicos que guardan profunda relación con las tendencias más significativas del mundo actual. Dar respuesta a estos desafíos y demandas implicará ampliar la mirada y asumir los requerimientos más permanentes de las sociedades latinoamericanas y panamericanas, en camino al Siglo XXI.

En este momento histórico de América Latina escuchamos el grito de los pueblos indígenas, que se eleva desde los cuatro puntos cardinales de nuestro continente. Es el grito que exige el reconocimiento y la garantía al derecho inalienable de poseer sus tierras. La tierra para ellos es no solamente un territorio geográfico o un medio de producción, es sobre todo un espacio religioso con el que mantienen relaciones místicas, lugar de sus mitos, de su historia y de sus antepasados, de sus celebraciones y

fiestas. Finalmente, el lugar de su esperanza y de su identidad.

Escuchamos también el clamor de los pueblos indígenas por su autodeterminación, y nos conmueve el grito de sus líderes asesinados, mártires que se empeñaron en la articulación de alianzas entre todos los oprimidos.

Estos gritos por la sobrevivencia y por la vida nos hieren profundamente, porque queremos ser pastores comprometidos en búsqueda de «vida en abundancia» (Jn 10,10) para nuestros pueblos indígenas. (CELAM).

**TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR 2005:
DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND
PROSPERITY**

Speech delivered during the Inaugural Session

**Speech by Mr. Gildas L. Molgat
Speaker of the Senate of Canada**

Check against delivery

Speaker Charbonneau,
Your Worship the Mayor of Quebec City,
Esteemed fellow parliamentarians from all over the
Americas,
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am sure you will allow me to begin by saying how
delighted I am, and how aware of what an honour and
privilege it is, to speak to you today on the occasion of the
opening session of the Parliamentary Conference of the
Americas.

The Conference is a first in the history of our hemisphere.

For the first time, parliamentarians from Latin America
and the Caribbean are joining their counterparts from
North America to debate issues of common interest arising
from this grand proposal for economic integration of the
Americas.

On behalf of the Parliament of Canada and of my
colleague at the House of Commons, Mr. Speaker Parent,
who will have an opportunity to address you later on, I
would like to thank most warmly the Speaker of Quebec's
National Assembly, Mr. Jean-Pierre Charbonneau. He
deserves the credit for conceiving this conference and for
its realization here today.

We have all noticed and appreciated the warmth of the welcome we have received.

I would also like, on behalf of my colleagues in the Parliament of Canada, to extend our own enthusiastic welcome to all participants.

If the Free Trade Zone of the Americas (FTAA) -- a vast project first discussed in 1994 at the Summit of the Americas in Miami -- comes into being, we will see the emergence of the largest free-trade zone in the world.

It would comprise more than 750 million people and represent a total production worth almost ten billion American dollars.

Already the FTAA is seen as a process in motion.

Extraordinary progress has been achieved over the past ten years toward making trade freer and integrating markets within the hemisphere.

Canada has put its money on free trade, as can be seen from its agreements with the United States, Mexico and, most recently, Chile.

Each time a free-trade agreement has taken shape, the Canadian Parliament has been the scene of vigorous and impassioned debate about the anticipated consequences of these critical political choices.

Canada believes that the establishment of strong continental economic partnerships is in the best interests of all concerned.

And there now a broad consensus here that considerable economic benefits would flow from hemispheric integration.

But as parliamentarians and representatives of the people

we have a duty to remain vigilant.

Hemispheric free trade is neither Eldorado nor a panacea for all the problems of our societies.

Would a wide-ranging economic integration that took place without concern for the economic, political, social and cultural characteristics of each partner-country even be viable?

That is the central question that we will be trying to answer in the coming days.

As parliamentarians of the Americas, we represent vastly different economic, political and cultural environments.

The whole aim of this Conference, in bringing us together, is to make us cooperate, despite our differences, on shaping the integration processes so that they will produce beneficial outcomes for all the peoples it is our privilege to represent and serve.

At stake here for our constituents are the democratic way of life, standards of living, health, education, the environment and culture.

Parliamentarians have a sacred duty to consider all these issues most carefully.

The citizens of Canada have certain principles and values that are dear to them and that will guide them in examining the issues involved in integration.

Tolerance for diversity, democracy, fairness and human rights, the market economy, social justice, sustainable development and combating poverty are all regarded as essential by Canadians, and they will not be prepared to put them at risk for the sake of a theoretical or utopian free trade.

On the other hand, Canada does not seek to impose its

values on others.

If our partners in the Americas are willing to share their own values with Canada, they will find in us an eager and open partner, ready to work with them in establishing guidelines for a hemisphere built on the great universal values of social justice, freedom, democracy and respect for our human heritage.

In the final analysis, we have to feel fully persuaded that the fundamental purpose of public policy and international agreements, including trade agreements, is to ensure social progress, security and improved living conditions.

It is above all the poorest, the most disadvantaged members of our societies, who must benefit from our grand plan for the hemisphere.

The exceptional Conference that has brought us here today offers us a unique opportunity to think seriously about the future prospects of the American continents.

Personally, I think the Americas are destined for a bright and exciting future.

In that spirit I voice the hope that the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas will be a great success.

Thank you.

TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR 2005: DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY

Speech delivered during the Inaugural Session

**Speech by Mr. Jean-Paul L'Allier
Mayor of Quebec City**

This document is a translation. The French version is the official text.

Honorary Co-Presidents

Mr. President of the National Assembly,

Mr. Speaker of the Senate,

Mr. Secretary General of the Organization of American States,

Members of the diplomatic corps,

Parliamentarians of the Americas,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Quebec City is a city of history. It is the oldest city north of the Rio Grande. Quebec City will celebrate its 400th anniversary in 2008. For a city, four centuries of history is not much, but to us, it is our entire history. Quebec City is a city of exchanges, a city of meetings, a city of tolerance and of openness, a city and a region 97% of whose population has French as its native language, a welcoming city, a city of sharing. It was here, during the final weeks, the final months of the war, of the last great World War, that Churchill and Roosevelt met to perfect the after-war plans and strategies. It was here that the FAO was created, fifty years ago.

You are therefore in a city that is most welcoming to those who wish to imagine the future, to those who wish to define and construct it, and for us, in the Americas, there is a future to define and build.

Quebec City is a city of convergence. And you will be

seeking convergence. You will be seeking complementarity. You will be seeking solidarity here. This convergence and solidarity, this complementarity are always throughout the world based on a better knowledge of others, on the respect of peoples and of societies and of persons.

I wish you an excellent meeting in Quebec City. And if I do not make a speech about the beauties of my city, it is because it is able to speak much more eloquently on its own behalf than I am. Thank you.

TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR 2005: DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY

Speech delivered during the Inaugural Session

**Speech by Mr. Cesar Gaviria
Secretary General of the Organization of American
States, OAS**

Mr. President of the Québec National Assembly and
President of this Conference,
Messrs. Co-Presidents,
Mr. President of the Senate of Canada,
Mr. Mayor of Quebec City,
Representatives of the diplomatic corps,
Ladies and gentlemen, Parliamentarians,
Distinguished guests,

I would like to begin by congratulating the organizers of this meeting, the National Assembly of Québec and its president, Jean-Pierre Charbonneau, for taking the lead in convening this inter-parliamentary Conference of the Americas. May I also acknowledge the honorary co-presidents of this meeting - former president José Sarney, and Edgard Leblanc Fils, the President of the Senate of Haiti. I know that this meeting will allow us to implement what, no doubt, constitutes one of the most important initiatives in the area of collective action in the Americas, since its purpose is to explore how our legislative bodies can help further the two great goals our peoples have targeted: democracy and integration.

Because it is everyone's responsibility in this new environment brought on by the end of the Cold War - now free from the fear generated by the confrontation between the superpowers - to fertilize the soil so that public freedoms may flourish: protect each citizen's rights; ensure that our development takes place without detriment to the environment; encourage the free movement of goods, capital, and persons; eliminate the scourges of

marginalization and poverty, and make justice, peace, and equality prevail.

Fortunately for all, in the Americas, we are barely in sight of the end of the millennium and already our continent is upon a new era full of opportunities, but also of challenges. Insofar as the opportunities are concerned, the most important is undoubtedly integration. And as for the challenges we must overcome, the most pressing ones are the problems that threaten our democracies.

Opportunities and challenges. Integration and democracy. Two great objectives that should inspire our efforts in an environment that varies between utmost enthusiasm over the radical changes that have been introduced in our economic institutions in the Americas to disenchantment and doubts that arise because in many of our countries reforms did not bring to the majority the benefits of growth, or because our democracy is at times identified with the ills that afflict it; drug traffic, terrorism, lack of public safety and security, marginalization and poverty. And these major questions are today - and rightly so perhaps - the main topics of public debate in our countries.

As I already noted, there was a kind of boundless optimism for a few years: However, we had some unpleasant surprises and harsh realities, and we discovered that there are no short cuts to either the path to economic development or the strengthening of political institutions; there are no miracles, nor are there simple or simplistic formulas. What does exist, as we have said, are opportunities, challenges, and good or bad policies. The future depends on our good sense to profit from them, face or choose them, and on the willingness and courage we might have to adopt the latter and persevere their pursuit.

And the debate on the relevance of economic reforms, the increasing role of the market, or the rapid rate of change, which emerges all of a sudden because of economic turmoil in some countries, no doubt causes perplexity and a certain paralysis, or even the temptation to regress. Every time that this happens, the societies and nations

quickly discover, both in the economic and political arenas, that the only way to confront these situations is with more reforms, more changes, more growth and with more democracy. And this is so because the vast majority eventually learns that their peoples do not wish to return to a past where results were unsatisfactory, if not calamitous, but would rather have these reforms affect public policies in those areas that bear most on daily needs or that are aimed at countering undesired consequences of reforms under way.

This is how a new agenda of issues and problems emerges, issues and problems that demand the increasing attention of both governments and congresses: the war on poverty, better income distribution, growth in the real income of workers, lower unemployment figures, an educational system that is consistent with the benefits of globalization and the revolution in telecommunications, the provision of infrastructure and the delivery of social services with private resources.

And as if this in itself were not a colossal undertaking for all, added to these tasks is another agenda that relates more closely to political institutions and the strengthening of the State in its regulatory and supervisory role, a greater political and administrative decentralization, greater involvement by the public and civil society, the search for greater balance among the branches of government, the fight against impunity and the enhancement of justice, the granting of increased supervisory capability to the legislative body, the search for employment flexibility, and many other issues. Evidently, this agenda is more complex, and it has wide and disparate objectives. It is more difficult to quantify and qualify as it evolves. It is far more difficult to develop or implement in political terms, and requires great negotiating capacity and powers of persuasion, and its outcome can only be measured over the years.

And so, when we speak of democracy, we refer to that broad set of activities related to political reform and institutional modernization taking place of being

demanded throughout the Hemisphere, and which represent the new setting in which integration takes place. The integration of the Americas is therefore a trend that is taking place amidst sweeping political changes. Thus, as I have said on many occasions in recent years, the primary concern of the OAS and its primary *raison d'être* is by far working to promote and strengthen democracy. The ills, weaknesses or the threats to which it is subject are harmful harm both to the quality of life in the Hemisphere and to the economic indicators. It is relatively certain that the dark eras of military regimes, or the bitter memory of hyperinflation and the dirty wars are a thing of the past. However, structural and functional weaknesses still persist in the democracies. There are still cases where the spectre of latent conflicts or of conflict that have recently ended, but that have not been fully resolved persist.

Also present are terrorism, attempts at military uprisings, the problems of marginalization and poverty, those of insecurity in cities, corruption, impunity, and drug trafficking. Who can deny that they undermine the confidence of our citizens in the system of government they have chosen. A hungry mouth, a corrupt government worker, a crime without punishment, an attempt against the life of someone, trafficking in illicit substances are all blows that are dealt to democracy as the best form of government.

Throughout all of the Americas, processes are at work to rid democracy of its legitimacy and credibility, and consequently diminish its capacity to achieve the objectives that are vital to the creation of well-established and lasting institutions. To strengthen and defend it, these threats must be confronted with the same vigour with which we displayed in due course in addressing the most pressing ills that beset our economies. They all require the attention and effort from our governments and of yourselves who are present here, members of our congresses, as well as a vigorous collective effort by inter-American institutions such as the OAS.

Hence, our task today is, on the one hand, to confront the

ills that affect our democracies, and, on the other, to focus our efforts on what we call the new agenda, which is nothing more than a set of new aspirations and new hopes. It is therefore our responsibility to find a response to them, and all of us present here today must articulate a political and social project that transcends our markets' integration of trade.

Within this context, the countries of Latin America have promoted vigorous collective action to defend democracy where it has been threatened. In the face of the war on drugs, at the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, we have agreed upon a balanced strategy with regard to the responsibilities of all parties with a view to the 21st century; we have also agreed, in Caracas, on an anti-corruption convention which is the first of its kind worldwide; and we have issued a Declaration and Plan of Action against terrorism which for the first time excludes any argument of a political nature to justify such acts.

We also held a regional conference of confidence and security-building measures that is helping to ease tensions and create a climate of cooperation between the military and civilians; we have worked intensely on the global elimination of anti-personnel land mines, following the guidelines of the Ottawa process; we are beginning a vigorous process aimed at strengthening our human rights system; and we have assembled the mandates from the presidential meeting in Bolivia to ensure that we are moving towards the criteria for sustainable development in the Americas.

While implementing these actions, we have become convinced that political and economic freedom are more closely intertwined in the Hemisphere than ever before. By working for democracy, we are working for integration. While the former is being perfected and consolidated, the way is being paved for the latter. While individuals are more free, are participating to a greater extent in political and social life, and have better tools with which to control power, room is being made for integration and globalization. Therefore, by working for institutional

modernization and political opening, we are working for economic integration. Nationally, this mission lies with the parliaments, before any other institutions. You, members of congress, with your legislative initiatives and your role of adopting laws, today hold the most important keys for promoting integration and consolidating our democracy.

Therefore, I believe that strengthening parliaments and the legislative role of the States is the most pressing of many public tasks we have described. True democracy does not exist without a strong parliament; strong in its mechanisms for controlling executive power; strong in its legitimacy with the citizens and in public opinion; strong in its representations of all social sectors and trends; strong in its assurance of the fulfilment of the State's social functions; and, of course, strong in the provision of institutional support for the fight against organized crime, terrorism, drug trafficking, and corruption and for the protection of human rights.

As great as the social and political leadership exercised in our countries by the media, unions, and business association is, they will never be able to replace parliaments in their democratic role of representing each and every one of society's interests, since parliaments are the setting for political debate, par excellence. What the Hemisphere needs is not to recreate the old forms of authoritarianism, but rather for the congresses and legislative organizations to move towards strengthening control and inspection mechanisms.

We are faced with a false dichotomy in many fora in the industrialized world when it is suggested that strengthening democratic values in the Americas must occur in civil society to the detriment of political parties and congresses, when they should be complementary efforts.

I believe that the organizers of this event have rightfully made one of the main issues of the consultations the discussion of parliaments' role and participation in the integration process in the Americas; and not only the

FTAA, but also NAFTA, MERCOSUR, the Andean Group, CARICOM, the Central American Common Market, the many bilateral agreements of Chile, and many others. Part of this task is achieved through strengthening congresses institutionally and organizationally, so that they are a true expression of all of society and have the support of the citizens. Much more so than in the past, for integration, it is essential to have the support of the citizens. Much more so than in the past, for integration, it is essential to have deliberating, legitimate, and strong parliaments in all nations of the Hemisphere, as a necessary condition for maintaining the accelerated pace of inter-American integration.

Mr. Chair of the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas, Parliamentarians from the Hemisphere:

In March of next year, the Heads of State from the Hemisphere and all the representatives of organizations in the inter-American system, have a rendez-vous that is key for the future of hemispheric integration. At the Summit of Santiago, Chile, following the 1994 Summit of Miami, the true progress of all these processes will be confirmed and all governments will reaffirm their political will to continue moving forward in the same direction, toward the economic integration of our economies, the strengthening our democratic institutions and the inter-American system for human rights, and giving education its rightful predominant role in the fight against poverty and in the elimination of inequalities.

With enthusiasm and dedication, with a sense of the future, and committed to these new ideals for change that have brought down walls and mistrust everywhere, the OAS will continue lending its support to this process and providing leadership for the actions that you, the representatives of our peoples, ask of us. We are committed to an extensive agenda of cooperation and change, where there is no room for memories of the past or for the inaction that for years made the dreams of American integration nothing more than impossible dreams. What is needed today is active diplomacy

enabling progress to be made on our initiatives, the promotion of negotiations and the overcoming of obstacles, and the adoption of formulas of action.

Without a doubt, to achieve this goal, your parliamentary action and that of the legislative institutions you represent are essential. As Secretary General of the OAS, I will be careful to gather the conclusions from this meeting, which will be a reflection of the thoughts of citizens from throughout the Americas. Not long ago, I was a parliamentarian in my country and President of the House of Representatives of Colombia. Although few years have transpired, those were different times, when expressions defending democracy were empty rhetoric in response to the Cold War and discussions on hemispheric integration were not about opening markets, but rather about closing them.

Today, without a doubt, the scenario is different. Now we speak of shared values, free trade, and the collective defense of the principles we hold dearest. The initiative lies equally with heads of state, parliamentarians, manufacturers, workers, and multilateral organizations. Collective action is made up of a wide range of issues and actions that contribute to the resolute will to find solutions to our aspirations, desires, and hopes.

I would like to thank the people and authorities of Quebec for receiving this select group which has come from the every corner of the Americas, filled with faith and expectations, because finally we are countries where democracy flourishes and which are building a Hemisphere where peace, social justice, and equality prevail.

Thank you very much.

**TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR
2005:
DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND
PROSPERITY**

Speech delivered during the Opening conference

**Speech by Mr. Oscar Arias Sánchez
Nobel Peace Prize Winner (1987)
President of the Republic of Costa Rica (1986-1990)**

This document is a translation. The Spanish version is the official text.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear friends,

I wish to thank the organizers of this meeting for the honour that they have granted me by inviting me to voice a few thoughts to you about democracy, development and prosperity in the Americas, on the threshold of the XXI century. I congratulate the National Assembly of Québec for having taken the initiative to convene this meeting of representatives of all the regional parliamentary organizations of our Hemisphere and for having had the suitable idea of holding it a few months before the Second Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Americas. It is indispensable for all the democratic forums of the continent to assess the progress made toward the integrationist objective announced at the First Summit.

We must ensure that the changes required, in order for a new phase of hemispheric integration to actually begin in 2005, occur with the necessary rapidity and degree of depth. Since it is an economic integration project, it would be lamentable for the leaders of the Hemisphere to concentrate merely on the technical aspects of the process, while denigrating the importance of the political, social and cultural prerequisites. We must combat the simplistic idea that economic integration will automatically bring the

combination of democracy, development and prosperity that we wish to see in this Hemisphere in the future. We must not forget that without democracy — and, as a result, without peace or stability — development and prosperity are not achievable.

The economic integration process in our Hemisphere must be designed while drawing on the lessons of nearly two centuries of political relations between our peoples, always united, despite their diversity, around aspirations and principles of justice and democracy. However, the American nations must not ignore the lessons bestowed upon humanity by the two greatest integrationist experiments of our century: the now vanished Soviet Union and the ever more vigorous European Union.

The basic common element in these two political experiences is a process of economic integration accompanied by profound political and social transformations. In the former case, there was a pretension of arriving, in the long term, at an egalitarian democracy, which was belied from the outset by the ignoring of fundamental freedoms, the violation of human rights and the militarization of society. In the latter case, the success of economic integration was the result of certain commitments with regard to peace, democracy and social justice, reasonably respected by the Western European societies.

While the Soviet integrationist attempt, condemned to failure, as we have seen, was based upon the totalitarian indoctrination of its societies, the European Union rigorously closed its doors to the countries governed by antidemocratic regimes. In this contrast, one can see evidence that the strengthening of democracy is a *sine qua non* condition for an economic integration process to succeed and to have the possibility of attaining permanence. Such a strengthening depends, in turn, on political system's ability to face the challenges of fighting against poverty, inequality and violence, which are among the most urgent for the majority of the countries of our Hemisphere.

Over the past two decades, our Hemisphere has embarked on a democratic adventure unprecedented in its history. For the first time, with a single exception, in all States of the Hemisphere there reigns a democratic state of law made concrete through periodical elections, pluralism and the respect of public freedoms. There even exists a consensus to refuse to accept the legitimacy of any government arising out of a military mutiny. This is reason for optimism. However, one may question the depth and viability of the new democracies in our region. In Latin America and the Caribbean alone, there are 200 million human beings living in poverty, of whom 100 million live in the most abject misery, and for whom the existence of suffrage and political rights have very little meaning. These millions of poor people, excluded from any participation in the political system and condemned to an existence as short as it is violent remind us that the fundamental dilemmas of our region are still waiting to be resolved, and that neither globalization nor economic growth, nor even the democratic institutions provide us with long-lasting solutions if our leaders do not opt for a new ethical approach and political rationale which, until now, have been missing.

How much irrationality can our democracies tolerate? We have long known that in this Hemisphere there are wide gaps between rich and poor. In one Latin American country, two dozen persons control more wealth than do their 24 million compatriots. In another, the incomes of the richest one-fifth of the population are 32 times as high as those of the poorest fifth of the population, a disproportionality unimaginable in the developed world.

Such disparity has made the political history of a large part of this Hemisphere into a prolonged succession of cycles of populism, political violence and authoritarianism. Despite the advent of democracy, our political systems, with rare exceptions, have been unable to create anything even remotely resembling a redistribution formula that

could satisfy the ethical imperative of achieving equality of opportunities between human beings and of protecting communities against the outbursts of violence provoked by inequality and impoverishment. Here, in this Hemisphere, Latin America is the region of the world where the least is paid in income taxes: 11.2% of the gross domestic product, or one third of what is collected in income taxes, on average, in the industrialized countries. For centuries, the elites of our countries have preferred to live in a permanent state of siege, at an incredible cost from an economic viewpoint, as well as catastrophic from a social and political viewpoint, rather than to practice an elementary solidarity and a rational and modern form of capitalism which considers workers as something more than just a source of low-cost labour.

We would all like to be certain that globalization will become the talisman that will help us to put an end to this perverse dynamic. We would like to think that the technological revolution and the global markets will force all countries to place priority on investing in education and the human well-being of the population, so as not to enter the XXI century with masses who use production methods and forms of subsistence that belong to the XVI century. But, unfortunately, the reality attenuates any optimism. Until now, globalization has confirmed the painful duality of our societies, split into two sub-cultures which are inexorably drifting apart: one a minority who exponentially broaden their access to technology and knowledge, and the other, the majority, who are condemned to look on from behind as the frontier of knowledge marches forward, while resigned to its members' being perpetually enthralled in subservience to the well-being of the others.

Indeed, the dominant discourse every day announces a future divided between the winners and the losers in the globalization process, a discourse through which we implicitly accept what previously seemed atrocious to us: that it is not humanity as a whole who will benefit from the spinoffs of economic progress; that development has now officially converted itself to a banquet exclusively

reserved for a chosen few.

It is unlikely that globalization could spontaneously provide the key to making social integration possible within this Hemisphere. We need much more. It is time to rethink, in a serious and unbiased way, several of the political and economic beliefs that irremediably hinder development. The time has come to draw the line and to sum up certain very clear lessons that recent history has to offer — lessons that can provide us with essential keys to our future development. We must certainly progress beyond the conservative ideological discourses which, given the failure of planned economies, now offer us a single path toward well-being; which propose the idea — garbed in the finery of modernity, yet atrociously reactionary — that history has a predestined course to which it only remains for us to yield.

It no longer suffices for us to admit that the economic models of centralized planning have failed lamentably in achieving economic efficiency, and more to the point, democracy. It must also be seen that in the greater part of this Hemisphere, capitalism has also, until now, been a resounding failure that has transformed our path toward development into an odyssey that has left most of its navigators marooned.

If we must rethink our path toward development, we must be able to perceive the distinctions and rid ourselves of false dichotomies. The most important of these concerns the role of the State and of the market in the economy. The vilification of the State by proponents of the market system, and that of the market by the partisans of State intervention, embody a twofold naivety that is fruitless and dangerous. It is indisputable that more than a half-century of State intervention in the economy, over a large part of this Hemisphere, has produced major benefits in terms of economic growth and modernization, although some observers prefer to forget this. Yet this has also contributed to creating protected and inefficient sectors of production, hypertrophied and often corrupt government systems, and the uncontrolled proliferation of lobby

groups continually questing for favours from the bureaucracy. The weight of the long-accumulated inefficiency showed through with brutal force in the economic recession of the early 1980s.

Thus it is an act of rationality to admit that it is indispensable to rectify the role of the State in our countries, that it is necessary to free the private sector from the constraints which, for a long time, have condemned it to inefficiency, and that it is healthy for private initiative to take charge of a number of productive functions previously assumed by the State. Such a statement is not connected to the defence of any orthodoxy in particular. It is simply a question of acknowledging the fact of the fiscal crisis that continues to stifle the majority of our countries and that the international economy today requires the productive sectors to reach levels of efficiency and flexibility that only the market can make possible.

On the other hand, it is irrational and risky to confuse the rectification of the role of the State with an indiscriminate mutilation of its capacities, including those necessary to properly carry through functions such as the redistribution of wealth, the fight against poverty, social integration, investment in human capital and in the infrastructure, which the market can hardly achieve. We have thus come to a point at which we must acknowledge a truth that never ought to have been controversial: the functions of the State and of the market are complementary and not opposed.

In summary, it is irrational and dangerous to confuse the reform of the State with the destruction of the functions in its domain. As was pointed out by author Octavio Paz, Nobel Prize Winner in literature:

"... the market is an efficient mechanism but, like all mechanisms, it is blind: with the same indifference, it creates abundance and misery. Left to move on its own, it threatens the ecological balance of the planet, pollutes the air and water, transforms the forests into deserts and, finally, causes harm to many living species, including man

himself. But, above all, it is not and cannot be a model of life. It is not an ethic, but simply a method for producing and consuming. It ignores fraternity, destroys social bonds, imposes uniformity in consciences and has made art and literature into a business. In what I have just said there is not the slightest nostalgia for any idolatry of the State. The State is not a creator of wealth. Many of us thus ask the question: is there no remedy to this situation? And if so, what is it? I would be lying if I said that I knew the answer. No one knows it.

Our century is ending on a huge question mark: What can we do? Offer our testimony. To state truthfully what we feel and think is already the beginning of an answer." (*Octavio Paz. Free translation from Vuelta de los Días [Return of the days], Mexico City, December 10, 1996, Vuelta, no. 242, p. 43*)

The dilemma that this poses for us is far from simple. It is not simple in the developed nations, and even less so in the poorer nations. Whatever the formula that we adopt to resolve it, we must always be aware of the need to face responsibly the problems of poverty and inequality or, in the opposite case, to prepare ourselves for the deterioration of democracy through being discredited.

This task takes the form of an ethical imperative, but also that of a political imperative. How much poverty will democracy tolerate? This is not a rhetorical question. The enthusiasm which greeted the arrival in power of new regimes elected under universal suffrage, in our Americas, over the past decade, has been subsiding, with a few exceptions, in a continual and generalized way. Our democracies are fighting a day-to-day battle to stay afloat, submerged as they are by uncontrolled levels of social violence and apathy which push them to the brink of ungovernability.

We, the inhabitants of this Hemisphere, have discovered that the end of war and subversion has not signified in an absolute sense the disappearance of violence in our

societies. Nor has violence retreated in areas where economic development has brought prosperity. The contradiction, each day more pronounced, between a system which creates appetites for consumption among individuals in an accelerated way, while at the same time denying the majority the opportunity to satisfy their basic needs, is no longer manifested through armed insurrection, but rather through delinquency. Social violence, the offspring of injustice, has simply changed its methods and been relocated in the printed press: it no longer appears in the political columns, but rather in the crime sections.

The political disenchantment of our peoples has as much to do with the worsening of poverty as with the corruption and cynicism of the leaders which every day disturb democracy. Corruption consists not only of using political power for illegitimate personal enrichment. Corruption is much more than a collusion between public servants and business people, or between public servants and delinquents, to gain illegal or morally questionable advantages. There are other facets to corruption which are not exposed to legal sanction, nor are they always submitted everywhere to the scrutiny of public opinion.

Corruption occurs when governing officials and political leaders renounce the exercise of the educational function that is incumbent on them in a democracy. Double talk, the fact of telling the governed only what they want to hear, and the fact of refraining, purely on the basis of electoral calculations, from telling things the way they are, are practices that corrupt and degrade individuals, societies and the democratic system.

It is corruption to interpret a political career as brilliant only because of repeated electoral victories, if to achieve these it was even necessary to conceal the truth or report it at a more convenient time, from an electoral viewpoint, without regard for the consequences of such concealment.

It is corrupt to forget that participation in political or governmental life requires a preparation, disinterest, a will to serve others, and consistency between what one

preaches and what one practices, between words and acts.

We have suffered from each of these types of corruption, in this Hemisphere. Thus it is hardly surprising that our political systems have reaped a harvest of low credibility. The political classes, with very few exceptions, continue with dogged enthusiasm, to dig the graves of their own prestige, by lying with impunity to gain a power that each time loses in importance, by dragging principles and doctrines through the mud of the most insolent demagoguery.

It appears that we have not had enough, after more than a century and a half of military despotism, innumerable military coups and brutal waves of repression, to persuade us that far from being bastions of institutionality, the armies of Latin America constitute a permanent liability against the political system, an antidemocratic tumour that corrupts the social organization, a powerful institutional anomaly that has hindered the democratic development of our peoples.

The fight to reduce military spending as much as possible in the underdeveloped countries and to allocate these funds to social investment of course originates in an ethical judgement. But its origin also takes root in the observance of a historical fact, which is now irrefutable: the importance of education in the development of peoples. Until such time as societies are prepared to make a massive effort in investing toward education, they will remain inevitably anchored in economic underdevelopment, political authoritarianism and social disintegration. However, to carry through with the educational revolution that we need on this continent, it is necessary to invest enormous resources. Such resources will not be available if we persist in the wastage that results from placing priority on military expenditures.

Today there exists a virtual consensus in the statement that the level of education is the most determining variable to predict the future economic prosperity of individuals and

nations. Similarly, the disparity of educational opportunities is the factor that has the greatest impact in generating social inequalities. If this is the case, then we, the Latin Americans, have lost entire generations while engaged in discussing, with desperate fastidiousness, the pros and cons of various development strategies, while depriving of resources and of efforts the most important channel toward economic well-being.

But it is also indispensable to educate to consolidate democracy, so that the inhabitants may transform themselves into citizens, so that we may rid ourselves once and for all of a fiction that has been perpetuated for two centuries: the belief that it is possible to found republics without republicans.

It is necessary to educate so that each citizen will be in a position to contribute in a creative way toward the progress of the society to which he belongs. It is necessary to provide education to prevent our peoples from easily falling prey to the beguiling speech of demagogues and despots, so that they will be aware of their rights and civic responsibilities, claiming the former and fulfilling the latter while fully informed of their meaning.

It is necessary to educate so that each inhabitant of our land will not lose, in the miasmas of ignorance, the opportunity to develop his unique and transcendent destiny, the basic axiom that underlies the entire doctrine of Human Rights.

The future of our continent depends more than any other factor on our societies' grasping the urgency of undertaking this crusade — on our leaders' understanding that this task requires an abundance of resources, the obtention of which, although not impossible, will certainly require the courage to make difficult political decisions, such as to reform the tax systems and to reduce military spending to a minimum. This will not be possible unless our politicians adopt a historical perspective, and unless they are able to extend their vision well beyond the next election. Politicians in the Americas must understand that

today, more than ever, to govern is to educate. *"After bread, education is the greatest need of the people"*, as Danton said, two centuries ago.

Currently, several of the poorest peoples in the world continue to suffer the effects of innumerable armed conflicts, exacerbated by the interests of arms suppliers, mainly the United States and Europe. I devote a large part of my time and energy to promoting the adoption of an international code of ethics on arms transfers. A number of individuals and organizations who are Nobel Peace Prize Winners have joined in this effort. Four months ago, in New York, we presented the text of this code, and we hope that it will be one day placed on the agenda of the United Nations.

I am well aware that it would be ideal to put an end to the arms trade, but objective reasons lead us to believe that in a first step, it is possible to substantially reduce the damage that this trade inflicts on humanity, by means of an international codification based on ethical principles. Similar initiatives, one national and the other regional, have been presented to the United States and to the European Union. The leadership shown by Canada to obtain a worldwide treaty banning the production of antipersonnel mines fills us with optimism. I thank Canada for placing human beings above weapons. I thank Canada for placing principles before profits.

Latin America and the Caribbean constitute the region of the world that has accomplished the most disarmament since the Cold War. But this fact must not serve as an argument to exclude further reductions in military spending, nor especially to justify the acquisition of high-technology weapons, which are likely to give rise to a costly arms race. There still exist today within the Hemisphere arsenals and contingents of exaggerated size, that are absolutely futile, and whose maintenance represents a lamentable diversion of the scarce resources that could be devoted to fulfilling the most fundamental

needs of our societies. In such circumstances, poverty, the greatest enemy of democracy and human development in our countries, continues to grow.

Nevertheless, in our region there are currently excellent conditions for the promotion of multilateral and regional agreements to limit arms acquisitions. We have always condemned arms-producing and -exporting countries, whose commercial avidity is the greatest cause of the high military spending in developing countries. Arms acquisitions in our region often result from the negotiation — often corrupt — of contracts on the part of producing industries, and in a number of cases, from the cynical diplomatic pressure of countries where these industries are established. It is paradoxical that the developed nations justify arms trafficking by presenting it as their natural response to an existing demand, whereas in the case of drug trafficking, they require supply-side restrictions to be implemented.

Late last April, in Atlanta, I proposed that the Council of Freely Elected Heads of Government ask the arms-exporting countries to halt the enticements to an arms race to which they have continued to subject the poorest countries in the world. At the same time, I pointed out that the time had come for buyer countries to make an effort on their side, by adopting over and above the marketing or diplomatic pressures, regional agreements to reduce and control arms purchasing. I proposed, as a result, that the Latin American countries adopt a two-year moratorium on the acquisition of high-technology weapons, a delay which should be used to negotiate a treaty binding the governments in the region to no longer acquire this type of arms. Such a treaty has as a precedent the Tlalelolco Treaty, which converted Latin America and the Caribbean into the world's first denuclearized region.

These initiatives, received by the Council, and immediately submitted for the consideration of the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean, are urgently needed, since unfortunately, the United States has just lifted the ban on supplying high-technology weapons

to Latin America. The lifting of this restriction, brought in by the Carter administration in 1977 when the countries of the region were under the dictatorial yoke, connected with the response of a democratic government subject to the irrational pressure of its military sector, could set in motion a tragic arms race within our Hemisphere. It would be tragic not only because of the reappearance of possibilities — that have today become almost nonexistent — of international conflicts breaking out in the region, but also because this would inevitably signify an increase in poverty and the deterioration of the living conditions of the greater part of the population. The democracies that have emerged in our region remain fragile. Our children need schools, not tanks or fighter planes.

It is lamentable that a decision so unjust toward the peoples of our Hemisphere, and so dangerous for the stability of the region, was adopted by a United States administration which, moreover, has undertaken to try to obtain from the United States Congress the authorization for fast-track negotiations toward trade integration with Latin America and the Caribbean.

There is an urgent need for fast-track negotiations which, I hope, enjoys the unmitigated support of the members of the United States Congress and Senate who are with us today. I ask the men and women parliamentarians from the entire Hemisphere for their support of the proposal, which has obtained the support of many Presidents and Prime Ministers of the Hemisphere, to control the introduction of high-technology weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Dear Friends,

I speak to you with the voice of one who considers that peace is an attainable goal in spite of all the obstacles. I speak to you as someone who believes in our capacity to learn, to change and to progress, so as to rebuild on the ruins and arrange it so that our homes will always be filled with the smiling of children.

The quality of our life is deteriorating as we become accustomed to the violence that surrounds us, which we have even come to accept as something natural. How is it possible to open the newspaper in the morning, to read an article about the killings of children in Rio de Janeiro and afterwards do nothing but turn to the next page? After seeing on television hundreds of Colombian children who were victims of injuries and burns, how can we simply change the channel as though nothing had happened? Does this mean that our mechanized world has eliminated our reason, that it has hardened our hearts and made us insensitive, even to the suffering of children?

We are at a crossroads in history. We have now reached a point when peace is finally a viable option. An era of oppression has ended, and many nations have declared their commitment toward democracy and development. Many countries, erstwhile plunged into militarism, are transforming their arms into tools and out of all this emerges a global community which is uniting in favour of human development and democracy, and against poverty and the vestiges of totalitarianism. We are united in opposing nuclear proliferation, deforestation and indigence. Yet while we have won a war, we have not yet won peace. We must do a little more than declare our commitment to fight against militarism, corruption, inequality and poverty. We must endorse these declarations in a sincere effort in the quest for peace.

Unfortunately, the world of economic and military powers is filled with cynicism and hypocrisy. The gaps between what is said and what is done are wider every time. Right while we are speaking about conserving the environment, we are causing even more pollution, noise and unhealthiness.

The time has come to place more importance on people than on arms, to arrange it so that our priority is human security, not military defence. In contrast with the traditional concept of security, connected with military

capacity and economic power, human security is not based on nationalistic or ethnocentrist connotations. In quantitative terms, human security represents the degree to which human beings are protected against ignorance, disease, famine, abandonment and persecution. It is the degree to which human life and dignity are respected.

We are all the victims of a mistaken, yet popular belief, according to which individuals fit into two categories: those who think and those who act. But reality is not so simple. The intellect is useless without commitments toward an ideal. Thought and ideas are fruitless if they are accompanied by a large degree of indifference. As was mentioned by my friend, Nobel Peace Prize Winner Elie Wiesel, the opposite of love is not hatred, but rather indifference.

I ask you to fulfill the leadership role that is incumbent upon you, by making human security your most universal priority. By uniting in this effort, we will define a new beginning, and by working together, we will achieve success. Human destiny must be changed not by chance, but by choice. And this choice must be inspired by a new ethic. The world of the XXI century cannot be governed with the ethic of the XX century. As far as our Hemisphere is concerned, this new ethic is not waiting to be invented, because its foundations are implicitly embodied in the universality of political, philosophical and religious ideas with which our history is filled — in the ideas that have just been defended and in those that have taken root — in those that appear on the fronticepieces of parliaments and houses of government, of churches and universities, and in those that have been written in catacombs, dungeons and places of exile. Jesus, Plato, Moses, Muhammad, Buddha, the anonymous agents of Popol Vuh, Saint Thomas, Rousseau, Locke, Kant, Adam Smith and Marx. The Fathers of the American Revolution, Emerson, Lincoln, MacDonald, Cartier, Bolívar, San Martín, José Cecilio Del Valle, Sarmiento, Juárez and Martí. In this century, Gandhi, Churchill, Keynes, Martin Luther King, Hayek, Karl Popper, Isaiah Berlin and Mother Teresa of Calcutta. These are a few of the members of a thick contingent of

minds whom we have received into the American pantheon of ideas.

The ethic that hemispheric democracy owes to itself encompasses everything from Plato's *good government of the city* to the "*thou shalt not kill*" of Moses, from the "*love one another*" of Jesus and the "*do not resort to violence*" of Gandhi, to the "*we are all equal*" of Mandela and Menchú. It can embody all of this because in our Hemisphere, as in no other, the races, the languages, the religions, the virtues, the weaknesses, the joys and the pains of the entire planet have converged. This new ethic, constructed on the basis of values rooted in all periods and originating from everywhere in the world, which can be summarized in the practice of solidarity, tolerance and respect for life, dignity and human freedoms, may also serve as the basis of a human and solidaristic rationality.

In the dense tropical forests of Central America, nature often provides us with an experience full of teachings: when a thunderstorm fells a tree, as its roots are torn out, they pull out the roots of other trees with them. In the same way, the world today is a dense forest of cultures, of States and of nations whose roots, beneath the surface, weave together inextricably, so that each root depends on the others. The rumbling of a culture or of a nation agitated by war, by oppression or by misery is like the first creaking of a tree about to be felled. This creaking foretells of danger for the entire forest. One of the great thinkers of Latin America, Pedro Henríquez Ureña of the Dominican Republic, taught us long ago of the historical import of the task that we must accomplish. He said the following:

"If our America is to be nothing but an extension of Europe, if our only action is to offer new territory to the exploitation of man by man (and, unfortunately, so far this has been our only reality), if we do not decide to make it the promised land of a humanity tired of seeking it in all climes, then we have no justification."

Indeed, it is time to find a justification for our America. Perhaps we will be able to achieve the hemispheric self-realization that we have been seeking for over two centuries.

Thank you very much.

**TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR 2005:
DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND
PROSPERITY**

Speech delivered during the Closing Session

**Speech by Madam Violeta Barrios de Chamorro
President of the Republic of Nicaragua (April 1990 to
January 1997)
Honorary Co-President of the Parliamentary
Conference of the Americas**

This document is a translation. The Spanish version is the official text.

In the Declaration of Principles of the Summit of the Americas celebrated in Miami, we, the assembled Heads of State and Government, expressed our commitment toward prosperity, and the democratic values and institutions of our Hemisphere.

We also showed that we were united in the search for prosperity, through the opening of markets, hemispheric integration and sustainable development. And we spoke about non- intervention, the self-determination of peoples and the peaceful resolution of disputes.

Friends,

I would like to take the opportunity provided today by the central theme of this Conference on "the Americas of the Year 2005", and by the presence of this illustrious audience, to focus my speech on the most sensitive subjects raised at the Miami Summit, namely: the eradication of poverty, and the environment.

In other words, I wish to focus my attention on the Human Being. On Humanity. On life itself. Because, without doubt, this will be the central theme of the XXI century.

Our concern for democracy, for economic integration and for the opening of markets is just. Yet we must not forget that at the end of the day, the recipients of the benefits arising from these initiatives are the men and women of our Hemisphere — men and women who think about and experience their own problems, and not those of everyone.

We must ask ourselves if in fact we are thinking of them when we speak of democracy, integration and markets. And we must ensure that it is really the case. We must be courageous enough to put into perspective the major economic interests that are at stake, which sometimes prevent us from making the appropriate decisions.

I feel compelled to tell you all this because I cannot avoid worrying about the results of the Second Earth Summit, which was recently held in New York, where no clear and satisfactory political declaration on these subjects was obtained.

At that Summit, we did not have the same degree of coordination as that which we enjoyed at the Rio Summit in 1992.

In the meantime, natural resources continue to be depleted, and poverty is worsening. We cannot flee our responsibilities in view of the challenges raised by climate change or the desertification of our countryside and forests. It is the survival of our planet that is at stake. It is a question of human poverty — of life itself.

We spend much time on reflecting to determine whether poverty is a cultural or a sociological concept. Poverty is not an intellectual concept; it is a reality, and it comes within the realm of experienced reality. Poverty is experienced by the poor.

What about poverty of peace and poverty of justice? And poverty of hope, and poverty of future?

If we are not able to answer the challenges of the present and assume the historical responsibility that is incumbent

upon us, what hope can we give to our peoples, and what future can we bequeath to our children?

It is right for us to concern ourselves with the standard of living and working conditions of people — for us to try to reduce unemployment. But we must not consider men and women only as factors in development and prosperity. Let us look upon ourselves for what we really are: human beings. We must try to provide our peoples not only with jobs, but also with well-being and happiness.

The industrialized countries consider that air pollution represents a danger to health; and that quality control of consumer products is fundamental. The concern of industrialized countries relates to the quality of life. On the other hand, the developing countries are generally concerned about life itself. For the poor countries, the priorities are related to survival. We can see in the opinion surveys, that the main concern of peoples in developing countries relates to employment — as though this were the solution to all their ills.

Up to what point is this culture of poverty caused by economic and social policies? Up to what point is it not in fact ourselves, with our formulae for progress and development, who conserve these paradigms, forcing poor people to desperately plead for work, for a job?

This is why, when we speak of hemispheric integration, of the free market, of prosperity and development, we must be clear and sincere toward our peoples regarding the concrete benefits that these objectives will generate for them. We must set objectives in the short and medium term — realistic and tangible objectives.

Each country may have its own human policy, but the basic principle must be the same: to place the individual at the centre of development, and to concentrate on his or her needs and potential — because human development encompasses the entire spectrum of human needs and ambitions. This is why, at the gateway to the third millennium, the human being has become the centre of the

debate on development.

Although the fertility levels and growth rates of the population are shifting downward, the demographic weight of the young generation will result in the world's population continuing to grow for some time. This will also inevitably result in the continuing growth of economic activity. Hence, we must seriously consider the impacts of this economic activity, particularly that which takes place in the industrialized countries.

Twenty-three percent of the world's population living in the industrialized countries absorbs 85% of the planet's income. The immense effort that this level of economic activity demands is felt particularly in the developing countries, through the reduction of their forests and of living species, and by the pollution of their rivers, lakes and oceans, as well as through the accumulation of greenhouse gases and the exhaustion of the ozone layer that protects life. The human species cannot continue to use the world's resources and dispose of its waste as it currently does.

It is not a question of criticizing the standards of living achieved by the industrialized countries, much less one of criticizing the just aspirations of these peoples toward a better quality of life. Rather, it is a question of becoming aware of the fact that the increasing gap between these two standards of living puts the very survival of the human race at risk.

The migratory flow, which continues to increase, constitutes a clear signal of despair and discontent. This signal must be interpreted in its true dimensions. It is a problem whose solution consists not in requiring compliance with migratory laws nor in deporting the families. It is entire peoples who demand the opportunity of enjoying this other life-style.

If we aspire to a vision for the millennium, let us be coherent and responsible toward the future of our planet. If we wish development to broaden the range of choices

available to people, we must act not only for the current generation, but also for those of the future. Development must therefore be sustainable.

Sustainable development implies a new concept of economic growth, which provides all individuals with justice and opportunities, without exhausting the world's non-renewable natural resources, nor shortening the Earth's life expectancy.

The World Commission on Environment and Development has defined sustainable development as that which is apt to satisfy the needs of the present, without limiting the potential to satisfy the needs of future generations. This definition, proposed in 1987, remains quite up-to-date and has obtained widespread approval.

Environmental protection and economic growth constitute means for the promotion of human development. The long-term viability of the world's systems of natural resources must be ensured, including its biodiversity. All life depends on this.

I am pleased to inform you that in my country, Nicaragua, under my government, Bill 217, the General Act Respecting the Environment and Natural Resources, has been passed and promulgated. This Act reflects our interest in the environment and in the issues related to it, with particular emphasis on the protection of the environment.

We, the poor and indebted countries, are required to undertake obligations that we must necessarily fulfil, in order to be considered by the international financial organizations. It is nearly always difficult, or even impossible, to fulfil these obligations, referred to as structural adjustment plans, which represent a tremendous social cost to the current generations.

Appropriate economic and social plans must be set in order to mitigate the effects of structural adjustments and State reforms. The participation of the community in the

design and implementation of any development project constitutes the key to its success and future viability.

This is why we often see those who propose global macro-economic reforms reacting with surprise when they see that the people and institutions do not follow. It is because a reform in macro-economic policy brought in without institutional development is bound to fail.

Friends,

My goal here is to launch an appeal for reflection:

— for us to think about what we are doing — for us to take a little distance from the economic paradigms, and for us to stop considering the market as an end in itself.

— for us to understand that democracy and economic integration must constitute a real benefit for our peoples. For all our peoples. For there to be a more equitable distribution of the benefits, and for us not to increase the social distance between the developed peoples and the developing peoples. We must understand that poverty of choices and of opportunities is even more dramatic than economic poverty.

— for poverty to stop being measured in terms of incomes or wages; because there are other essential aspects of human poverty that we must also place priority on combatting. We must focus our attention on these and on other aspects of poverty, not only on income.

— for us to understand that the total eradication of extreme poverty and the elimination of the gap between the developed peoples and those who are developing must constitute a legitimate and viable objective. The 1997 Human Development Report, produced at the request of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), concluded by saying that extreme poverty can be eliminated in the world early in the next century. This is very encouraging.

We must therefore concentrate our policies on the human being and on growth in favour of the poor, and reorient the course of globalization toward more just standards and toward better conditions so that the developing countries may gain access to markets with better opportunities.

Our era offers extraordinary opportunities to our peoples. We owe it to ourselves to face the problems of poverty and the environment now.

Let us review our macro-economic policy by making it more effective on the hemispheric scale; let us ensure that the markets work for the people, and not the people for the markets. Let us try to develop fairer world trade and a more egalitarian treatment of our countries, in which our developing peoples do not only serve as providers of low-cost labour for the benefit of industrialized countries.

Let us reduce or eliminate the foreign debt which renders the developing countries non-viable, and keeps them subject to the constraints and adjustment programmes of the international financial organizations. For example, I must tell you that the foreign debt of my country, Nicaragua, which was obliged to negotiate a new structural adjustment plan, is lower than the cost of a modern fighter plane. Under my government, thanks to a great effort and lengthy negotiations, we have succeeded in considerably reducing this debt. Nevertheless, it continues to place such a heavy burden on Nicaragua that it prevents the country from progressing. In such conditions, how can a country gain access to the market on an equal footing?

I would like to be able to encourage you, all of you as well as the rest of the world, to renew the alliance built in Rio. Our enthusiasm must not flag; let us have faith and confidence in our own abilities to face these challenges.

We have only this one world in which to live. And future generations will depend on what we do with it now. If we want economic integration and free trade to bring the expected benefits, and if we want our men and women,

whether in the developed world or not, to be the recipients of these benefits, then let us make a common effort so that it may be so.

Let us act for the future generations, though not to the detriment of the present generations. Let us work while thinking about these men and women, and especially these children, whose gaze is fixed on what we are in the process of doing.

May God light the way for us all. May He give us the necessary courage and guide us so that we may carry through with this huge task that has been given us not only by ourselves, but by history as well. And let us channel the advantages of integration and of the market to the benefit of all our peoples.

Thank you very much.

**TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR
2005:
DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND
PROSPERITY**

Speech delivered during the Closing Session

**Speech by Mr. Edgard Leblanc Fils
President of the Senate of the Republic of Haiti
Honorary Co-President of the Parliamentary
Conference of the Americas**

This document is a translation. The French version is the official text.

Mr. President of the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas,
Co-Presidents,
Vice Presidents,
Mr. Secretary General of the OAS,
Mr. Delegate of the ECLAC,
Mr. Mayor of Quebec City,
Honorable parliamentary colleagues of the Hemisphere,
Representatives of the Interparliamentary Organizations,
Distinguished guests and observers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the conclusion of this Parliamentary Conference of the Americas (COPA), held under the auspices of the National Assembly of Québec, about six months before the next Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Hemisphere in Santiago, Chile, I have the honour of expressing my most sincere congratulations to the President of the Conference, Mr. Jean- Pierre Charbonneau, Member of the National Assembly, for having carried through with the propitious initiative of bringing together, for the first time, delegates from such a large number of parliamentary assemblies and representatives of so many Interparliamentary Organizations.

This meeting, now a historic milestone, has provided an opportunity for the different delegations to discuss the problems raised in the perspective of the hemispheric integration set for 2005 by the Miami Summit.

On behalf of my parliamentary colleagues, I wish to thank the Governments and Parliaments of Québec and Canada for the concrete support that they provided for the staging of the event and for the reception that they were kind enough to extend to all the participants of the Conference.

My thanks are also due to the Secretariat of the COPA, to all those who, in one way or another, contributed to the remarkable success of this assembly.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Humanity as a whole, including the Americas, is at a crossroads — at a turning point of change in civilization and at the threshold of a new century.

During the past two decades, the Americas have entered into a series of reforms that have materially changed the trade structures and political conduct of the countries in the hemisphere. Allow me to very briefly underscore a few of these changes.

In the political field, nearly forty years after the signing of the Pact of Bogotá, Canada has become a full member of the Organization of American States (OAS). This situation reinforces the capacity of the OAS, by giving it the hemispheric nature that it was lacking, as well as the possibility of involving this great country directly in decisions on the future of the Hemisphere, by allowing it to contribute its experience, its scientific and technical knowhow, and especially the weight of its economic and cultural wealth. In addition, the resolutions adopted by the organization appear more balanced.

The substantial changes brought about in the Charter

through the Washington and Managua Protocols led the Americas to reconsider the concept of development and to restructure the organizations responsible for it. The concept of integrated development made its appearance, thus bringing to light new mechanisms that are more true to the political and socioeconomic reality of the countries of this Hemisphere.

The Santiago Resolutions, of June 1991, created a new precedent and reshaped the political habits of the region: henceforth, no government created out of a military coup or through the interruption of constitutional democracy will be recognized by the members of the Organization.

Its agencies may study any measures apt to guarantee peace and the return of constitutional democracy. The United Nations will lend its assistance to the regional organization in enforcing the measures enacted, if need be.

Hence, the field of activity of the OAS ranges from the monitoring of elections to assistance for the reinforcement of democratic institutions.

With respect to economic matters, Canada, joined with the United States through a bilateral agreement, underlined the necessity of extending this market and proposed the inclusion, for the first time, of a southern country in an agreement between two northern countries. Lengthy and in-depth negotiations took place, and a new economic space capable of competing with the others already existing in Europe and Asia came on the scene, at the same time as the idea of hemispheric integration.

Correspondingly, in South America, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay formed Mercosur to inject new energy into the process of regional integration, and this new mechanism enabled the region to gain appreciable trade benefits in its relations with the European Community, to the detriment of intra-hemispheric trade.

The smaller States also felt the need to group together to speed up their development, to present a larger space and

to conquer extra-regional markets: the founding of the CBI, the creation of the CSA and the strengthening of the Central American Common Market formed part of this strategy.

The United States of America took the initiative of convening the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Hemisphere in Miami, in December 1994, where the leaders of the Americas embarked on a partnership for the development and prosperity of the Hemisphere through democracy, free-trade and sustainable development so as to eliminate poverty and discrimination and to conserve the natural environment for future generations.

It was there that the idea took root of a general liberalization of trade through the creation of a hemispheric free-trade area, whose implementation by the year 2005 constituted a new challenge.

During that Summit, it became apparent that there was a need to establish a forum for uninterrupted dialogue and discussion between the legislative bodies of the Americas, which was important to supplement intergovernmental relations and render them more fruitful. This is the main goal of the Parliamentary Conference of the Americas (which we are concluding today).

Honorable colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

While at first glance the Americas constitute a community of democratic societies which, we must agree, face an array of different challenges, particularly with regard to development, the States which form the Hemisphere also present major contrasts in respect of their size, the degree of development of their economies, their societies and working conditions. How then can we succeed in integrating into one block these economies of such wide disparity, and distribute the advantages of this integration so that all may benefit from them?

Although representative and participatory democracy is founded, among other essential elements, upon periodical,

free and transparent elections, as well as on the renewal of the term of elected officials freely chosen by the people, it presupposes above all the right of all citizens to participate in the management of public affairs. It is also the expression of an endogenous situation. To attempt to implement it on inadequate structures and without an appropriate framework, without continuous education — without an ongoing dialogue between those who govern and those who are governed — can only lead to a series of crises which would inexorably lead to the rebirth of a more brutal and repressive authoritarianism that would endanger the progress already made at such a high cost in the area of Human Rights.

In addition, peoples are impatient and demand concrete and immediate results in the form of changes in their living conditions; they want to feel that the proposed new system better responds to their interests and expectations.

The democratic construction of the State must have as its basis the citizens, as they are the true protagonists of democracy. The reconstruction of public life means the creation of spaces for political participation, apt to educate citizens with regard to their responsibilities, in a context of full respect for all freedoms, and especially for freedom of expression.

The politics of the future must embody the day-to-day practice of democratic principles. The ongoing exercise of the principles of justice, freedom, equality and solidarity constitutes the beginning of a great turnaround, the shift from a civilization of war to a civilization of peace.

By providing education, by changing peoples' practices, by creating institutions founded on democratic principles, we will have kindled the fires of freedom. A new discourse does not suffice; values must be transformed, awarenesses must be aroused and especially, ideas must be preached by setting an example.

The old demons of authoritarian and autocratic power, disdainful of institutions, are tenacious. The establishment

of a true democratic society will always be a long-term and ongoing job.

Democracy is an all-or-nothing condition; this applies to democracy on the political, economic and social levels.

Parliamentarians, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over recent decades, the Hemisphere has been carrying on a battle to improve Human Rights. Nowadays, local and international groups that monitor the respect of Human Rights are being established in many places and are also collaborating so as to prevent and systematically report any violation of these rights. The respect of Human Rights constitutes a very important judgement criterion for the conduct of governments; it influences national and international public opinion and the policy of aid and assistance, not only of international financing agencies, but also of associations of States.

However, while this criterion alone was to constitute a source of pressure in the service of international relations, it would in fact become a complementary instrument of pressure in the hands of those who already possess force and means. Instead, the point should be to incite governments to respect and defend these universally recognized rights: civil, political, economic, social rights, etc.

Moreover, are the fundamental rights of man not above all the right to life, food, employment, health, education, etc.? Are all States able to provide these rights to their nationals and to ensure their respect?

The reinforcement of these inviolable Human Rights and values of life in the community must lead to the flourishing of the local, municipal authorities, to the modernization of parliaments and executive authorities, to the consolidation and democratization of the political party system, to the durability of society's organizations and to the recognition of the multiethnic and pluricultural nature of the Americas.

Yet large sectors of the Hemisphere's population, mainly women and children as well as victims of ethnic segregation, continue to face obstacles that are sometimes insurmountable to the exercise of their rights as citizens.

It is therefore the responsibility of the legislative authorities to fight against abuses and Human Rights violations, to report them, and to see to the protection, consolidation and promotion of these rights.

Honorable colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the century approaches its end, the Americas are participating in the globalization of the economy and are undergoing the effects of globalization, whose cost is sometimes so very high for small countries. This phenomenon gives rise to global problems to which global solutions must be found, which involve a sharing of responsibilities, and solidarity between advanced countries and developing countries in the Americas. Governments, Parliaments, NGOs, local communities, international organizations: all are involved and all must involve themselves.

Now that the Cold War has ended, the Americas also feel the need to set the record straight by means of a new pact endorsed by all countries of the Hemisphere and taking into account the needs and aspirations of their peoples. This could be a moral contract for peace and the development of an accord to make international economic fluxes more equitable, to control financial speculation and to democratize communications so as to construct this new order of shared development to free humanity from the social ruins of poverty, exclusion and inequality. This would be the expression of a frank and in-depth dialogue between those few States of the Hemisphere that enjoy the benefits of modernity and the immense majority that are excluded. To arrive at such an accord to orient globalization and preserve self-determination in the Americas, all potentialities must be drawn on and integrated.

Parliaments are also called on to place the full weight of their influence and their representativity into the balance for this pact to be sanctioned, taking into account the aspirations, interests and needs of the majority of the populations.

We would need a common agenda to face the problems that are most often confronted: the fight against drug trafficking, better conditions for our international trade, the elimination of trade barriers, an equitable sharing of the benefits of modernization, the fight against corruption and the squandering of the wealth of small countries, etc.

While it is true that nowadays, globalization and modernization seem to represent the unavoidable constraints of socioeconomic thinking, they should nevertheless take into consideration the local reality and the plans of a national and cultural nature: this is the key to their success in the smaller countries.

The less advanced countries are in danger of not being able to benefit from the integration process and from the globalization of the economy.

Their economies are characterized by a plurality of constraints and structural weaknesses that prevent them from intensifying and expanding their international trade of goods and services and from improving their access to investments, technologies and know-how.

The existing industrial enterprises will have difficulty in surviving the liberalization, since they are not in a position to face the competition due to a lack of efficiency, for many reasons: they suffer from a lack of skills. The technological capacities in many industries are quite rudimentary, a factor which, together with the low level of training of their employees, the adherence to outmoded marketing techniques, a lack of long-term financial resources, the high cost of credit, the obsolescence of equipment, a lack of investment, insufficient infrastructures and support services, a lack of transparency

and a shortage of information, etc., will hinder productivity gains and competitiveness.

The persistence of rigidities in the agricultural sector in relation to changes in the market is a handicap to the exploitation of new opportunities. The private sector is quite weak. Its growth is held back by various factors, particularly by economic policies that have not managed to provide the necessary incentives.

The worldwide demand for primary products is subsiding, as technological progress makes it possible to use fewer raw materials or to replace them with alternative products.

Prices for basic imports continue to rise, on account of the elimination of subsidies taking place in the framework of the liberalization process.

Since prices for primary products on world markets are decreasing in relation to those of manufactured items, there is a continual deterioration in the terms of trade.

Investment is discouraged by several factors, including the decrease in worldwide demand for primary products, the narrowness and stagnation of the domestic market, the insufficiency of the material infrastructure and the shortage of qualified labour.

In the current competitive context, a low-cost labour force no longer suffices to penetrate export markets; complementary production factors — qualified labour, material infrastructure, adequate technology and sound economic policy are indispensable.

In view of this revealing portrait of the major deficiencies in the economies of the less advanced countries, any attitude of refusal toward the integration process threatens to reinforce the marginalization and accentuate the cumulative lag in the areas of economic growth, investment, technology and social services. An integration without guard rails may very well lead to exclusion.

Honorable Parliamentarians, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we approach the new millennium, the democratization of the Americas is a fact in evidence, despite the fragility and youth of the democratic institutions in certain countries. Human Rights are being respected increasingly, even though major problems still arise in their overall implementation. Economic integration is being given a new start with the challenge of creating the free-trade area of the Americas by the year 2005.

The globalization and modernization of economies will be accompanied by efforts to make them more productive and prosperous. However, these phenomena must take into consideration the case of the non-structured economies, which have become disabled and atrophied or unable to increase production, in which populations continue to dwindle, and where chronic misery, poverty and illiteracy have set in.

The Americas must renew their efforts to fight all of these obstacles which make the road to development, harmonious growth, democracy, Human Rights, etc. so difficult.

The Parliamentary Conference of the Americas has enabled parliamentarians of the Hemisphere and interparliamentary organizations to discuss the various aspects of the problems raised by the integration of the Americas and the possible creation of the hemispheric free-trade area for the flourishing of democracy, sustainable development and prosperity of all peoples of the Americas.

Despite the tests of time, and true to the ideal of solidarity that has always inspired our actions and our lives as a people and which, at an earlier time, enabled us to release ourselves and to help our fellow citizens elsewhere in the Americas to shake themselves free of the colonial yoke, we, Haitian parliamentarians, share this Pan-American dream of hemispheric integration.

Thank you.

**TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR 2005:
DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND
PROSPERITY**

**A message from Mr. George E. Pataki
Governor of the State of New York
President of The Council of State Governments
Honorary Co-President of the Parliamentary
Conference of the Americas**

I regret not being able to join you in the beautiful city of Québec for the Conference. But I wanted you to know that I very much support the goals of the Conference and that I share your vision for a united economic effort among the Americas.

As we approach the new millennium, we must seize every opportunity to pool our resources, combine our efforts, and meet the challenges of the global economy together.

It's a historic effort and one that will benefit our children and the children of North and South America throughout the next century and beyond.

Please accept my best wishes for a successful and productive Conference.

The message from Mr. George E. Pataki was presented following the Inaugural Session.

**TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR
2005:
DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND
PROSPERITY**

Speech delivered during the Closing Session

**Speech by Mr. José Sarney
President of the Federative Republic of Brazil (1985-
1990)
President of the Senate of the Federative Republic of
Brazil (1995-1996)
Senator of the Federative Republic of Brazil
Honorary Co-President of the Parliamentary
Conference of the Americas**

This document is a translation. The Portuguese version is the official text.

Mr. President Jean-Pierre Charbonneau,
Mr. Co-President of the Conference,
Leaders at the head table,
Parliamentarians,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are arriving at the end of our meeting. We have been exchanging experiences, we have been coming closer together, we have been discussing problems, reflecting on our institutions and making decisions, and we have come to know one another better.

We all agree to involve our legislative assemblies in the integration process of the Americas that is currently under way. This meeting has proven to be a great success, because as it ends, we consider that we must not limit our efforts to the holding of this one meeting, but rather to set up an accompaniment and follow-up committee to ensure that the ideals that brought us here are carried forward.

The Americas who are gathered here, in the vision of our founders and in the vision of the Old World, were no doubt previously seen as one America. If we look attentively at the spirit of this meeting, we see that it has at its heart the renewal of the dream of the unity of America, a united America, one America.

That is doubtless a utopia, but it is within the realm of parliamentary life to discuss the impossible, to disagree so as to come to an agreement. In the past, Bolívar had heard this call. Monroe wanted to transform it into a precept and a proverb.

Today, however, we recognize that there exists a convergence that has never been lacking within the diversity of the Americas. It was the initial dream of America, namely the putting into practice of the highest ideals of humanity such as the sanctifying of freedom and the exercising of the fundamental human rights. The right to life, which now belongs to the world's history, was formulated here in our Hemisphere, and to this right Jefferson added that fundamental phrase: the pursuit of happiness. Let us disseminate these principles throughout the world!

To these, the New Deal added that freedom could not be limited only to individual liberty, but also that it would be broadened to mean freedom from famine, freedom from disease, freedom from illiteracy, freedom from unemployment, freedom from fear, and finally, freedom from all injustices.

And it is grounds for pride for all of us that crusades reaching around the world, and even the country that today exercises indisputable hegemony as an economic, military, cultural and political power, have come from this Hemisphere. But in order to exercise this mission in the world, the United States must have at its basis the foundations which made it so that America was always perceived as the land of liberties and of freedom.

Nevertheless, this strength that is ours as well as the size

of a country that is our brother are also reasons for weakness and grounds for concern. It is important that our responsibilities not cause us to lose sight of what inspires us in the context of this meeting, namely the sentiment of America. Let us not allow our energies to be consumed entirely by economic objectives, and in so doing, denigrate the human values that are the basis of our world leadership.

If we can change history, why would we wish to change only the economy today? This question must be answered by us all. Integration must include political, cultural, scientific and technical integration, as well as the search for a community of nations such as that which appears to be taking shape within the European model. Let us not become slaves to the accumulation of wealth, but rather let us constantly fight to ensure that the integration will create a more just society.

In the course of time, the economic model that we have adopted in our Hemisphere has, without exception, generated inequalities in income that are more tragic every time, even in the rich countries. We may observe that every time, in both the rich and poor countries, wealth is accumulated and channelled toward the wealthiest, and poverty toward the poorest. The middle class, as the holder and guardian of the most influential of our values, is gradually disappearing, absorbed by the tremendous gravity of poverty. In the poor countries, this trend presents a new and even more cruel facet, namely the terrible problems of social inequality. And clearly, to speak of social inequality leads us to talk of the height of this inequality: poverty.

However, it is not only a matter of seeing the word poverty but also the world of poverty, the world of misery, what happens in this world that is revolting to our spirits and with which we cannot live, a world contrary to the sentiment that brings us together here so that it can be spread across the Americas. The world of poverty is a dark one. It is a world of epidemics, diseases, violence, misery, malnutrition, lack of clothing, lack of housing, of abandoned and helpless youth that has already been

tragically described by Dostoyevski and Dickens in their most moving passages. It is a world of unemployment, of young girls in prostitution, of violent and drugged young boys, of beggary and of total human degradation.

Integration cannot be an end in itself. It must be a process that relies on a more profound and more important motivation than mere competitiveness between markets. Integration must be explained to our peoples through the voice of parliaments and parliamentarians. But how will we, in our different countries, explain to our peoples the need for integration, if we do not express the fact that it is a pathway whose aim is to make the life of everyone more just, more human and more fraternal? Let the world not see us as only seeking the achievement of economic ideals, stereotyped by a quest for and a sublimation of material pleasures, of profit, of material goods and of the consumer society.

The market economy, which is settling in, resolves many things, but does not resolve them all. We must have the conditions that will enable us to harmonize these conflicts, through a State that is not that gigantic State, that State to which we must put an end by removing from it the responsibilities that it should not have appropriated in sectors that are in the domain of private initiative, but rather a State that is qualitatively capable of providing services to society.

As a result of the conquests achieved in the field of information technologies, the world is becoming globalized. The financial markets are becoming globalized. Thus it is good that during this meeting, we have had the opportunity to mention what is the peril of financial speculation, of this financial market that today circles around the world twenty-four hours per day, this financial bomb beyond the control of the central banks, turning over a paper economy twenty times the size of the real economy. We have already observed what this peril signifies during the Mexican crisis, and today we observe that it is devastating Asia, from the Philippines to Thailand, by causing the Asian dragons, which we had

judged unassailable, to tremble.

We must prepare to defend ourselves against the distortions of the market, the tendency toward the formation of cartels, toward the dominance of knowledge — another important thing in the modern world — which we must prevent from happening and which creates a new inequality between those countries that master the technologies and those which, through failing to master them, are condemned to a cultural servitude that is much more intense than material servitude.

We parliamentarians face a great challenge: that of accompanying the integration process so that we may incorporate in it a vision of human problems, the social rights whose defence we alone, in our parliaments, can ensure in the diversity of our debates and in our mission to support democratic debates.

But speaking of the mission of parliament, it is also appropriate to emphasize that modern parliaments face a serious crisis, namely the crisis of legitimacy, the blocking of the values of representative democracy. The Berlin Wall did not fall only on the communist world; a little of it also fell on representative democracy. The media fight with us, in real time, over the representation of this new interlocutor in democratic society which is public opinion. And they ask: "Who represents the people, ourselves or those gentlemen the parliamentarians?" And they say to us: "We represent it better and we do not know what those gentlemen do". They declare us guilty of all ills and, as a result, we are going through an image crisis that the political class does not deserve, and which is damaging to all parliamentarians throughout the world.

What can we do? What can we do? Firstly, realize that in contrast to the decisions of the Executive and the Judiciary, our decisions are made in the light of day, with absolute transparency, and for this, we are the most vulnerable power, the power that is disarmed and is the most vulnerable! Secondly, we must realize that while working vigilantly, we must be vigilant toward ourselves

— we must be aware that in our work, we cannot forget to consider the organized civil society, the non-governmental organizations and the universe of the media. But all of these should be considered as collaborators in the mandate of the Congress, and not as competitors for our legitimacy. This message, this concept, must serve both sides, for ourselves and for those who, in reality, direct those organizations and participate in our legislative activity today.

Thirdly, it is very important for us to have a moral awareness of our duties, an unshakable ethical conduct, an ability to examine in depth the decisions that we must make quickly and competently. To fight against all types of corruption and to have the feeling of not being wrong. Three concepts: the actualization of our parliaments, modernization and morality.

The Free Trade Area of the Americas must be the instrument of construction for the ideals of the Americas. It must not be used to divide, to support arms races, to destroy efforts of regional integration considered contrary to hegemonic interests or the protection of markets. We are confronted with major problems of the survival of humanity. These problems, referred to as transnational, which threaten to destroy the planet, must be an instrument of our unity. The problems of nuclear weapons will continue as long as there exists a single nuclear weapon on the surface of the Earth, and as a result man, wherever he may be on our planet, cannot sleep without the threat of his own destruction. Pandemic diseases, unknown viruses, new diseases, AIDS, chemical and bacteriological weapons, drug trafficking, drugs, the environment, regional conflicts, massive migrations, ethnic conflicts, fundamentalisms, destabilizing nationalisms, organized crime on a global level, poverty and famine and the equilibrium of the food supply on the planet Earth — the simple fact of listing these problems frightens us. They are so huge that they warrant the entire human race hearing an appeal to unity for its own survival. The integration movements must therefore fit within a general strategy aiming to help humanity survive.

The motto of Québec is "Je me souviens" — "I remember". Hence, to conclude this conference, let us remember our duties. But to speak of memory is also to say not to forget. Not to forget the foundation of our work, namely the well-being of our peoples. Not to forget the fundamental mandate of parliaments, namely to seek to improve the quality of life of our populations. And, in keeping with the motto of Québec, to remember this Conference as a milestone for all of us, a milestone in our memory, marking the fact that it is always possible to dream, and we have dreamt here today in Quebec City. "Je me souviens! Thank you!"

TOWARDS THE AMERICAS OF THE YEAR 2005: DEMOCRACY, DEVELOPMENT AND PROSPERITY

Speech delivered during the Closing Session

**Speech by Mr. Jean-Pierre Charbonneau
President of the National Assembly of Québec
and President of the Conference**

This document is a translation. The French version is the official text.

Messrs. Co-Presidents of the Conference,
Distinguished guests and Dear friends,

I would like, in turn, to thank Messrs. Leblanc and Sarney for the extraordinary words that they have just pronounced, and for having shared with us, as did Madam Chamorro in her message, a few of their reflections on the Americas of tomorrow.

Distinguished guests, this great democratic event is indisputably a unique moment, and a precursor to other gatherings of parliamentarians of the Americas, to build together a more democratic, more prosperous and more just community of the Americas.

It is true that our project is ambitious, even bold. In Miami, when the Heads of State and Government expressed the wish for an intensification of the dialogue between parliamentarians, I do not know if they realized the full scope of that wish, but I feel that they understood the meaning of the word dialogue, and its importance.

Dialogue means communication. And the challenge to humans, the way in which they can solve their problems, the problems that afflict our countries, our peoples, is through communication, through dialogue. It is through dialogue and communication that respect is born, that we

make discoveries, that we learn to know and understand others, that we gain an awareness of what exists elsewhere, that we realize both our strengths and our weaknesses. When we know each other better, when we speak to one another better, we succeed in developing our understanding of the things to which we aspire, about which we have been making speeches for years, peace, prosperity, happiness progress and become accessible. If these things, these ideas have progressed more in some places than in others, it is because the people there have succeeded in more solidly establishing the foundations of dialogue and respect.

Elsewhere, it is not necessarily due to the lack of an internal will that dialogue was not possible; it is often because others have prevented it from becoming a reality. Between societies, between peoples, between political leaders, dialogue today becomes fundamental, indispensable. And it is because the National Assembly of Québec — because the 125 Members of this National Assembly — believe in the importance of dialogue, that we took the initiative to invite you here in order to instigate a new dialogue — more intense, with greater "linkage", more "ramified", between the men and women who represent the entire population of our Hemisphere. Very sincerely, on behalf of my colleagues of the National Assembly, I am most proud that we took this initiative and I am proud of the result.

During our discussions and our meetings in the months leading up to the Conference, I felt that this initiative was generating enthusiasm, that it answered a real need, that the timing was right. Today, we may say that our Conference has been a success, partly because you participated in large numbers, and also because it has led to concrete results. I am also glad of such a strong and excellent representation of non-governmental, intergovernmental and other organizations, as well as of their active participation in the discussions. This is an indication of the importance and of your recognition of the central role that parliamentarians play in society, and of the increasing place that they take on the international

scene.

We had big ambitions when we announced the idea of organizing this great parliamentary event. We wanted to offer you a lively forum of discussion, open and non-partisan; a forum allowing legislators of the Americas to take up the current challenges and to build a better future; a place for them to pool innovative and realistic ideas. We also wanted the Conference to be a time of fraternity and a prelude to frequent and worthwhile contacts.

Our Conference is a success for several reasons. First, because ninety-five percent of the population of the Americas is, in one way or another, represented here by a Member of Parliament, a Senator, whether provincial, federal or national. This means that finally, we were able to arrange things so that people who are fundamentally on an equal footing, in certain respects, because they represent the same people, would meet here to participate in this extraordinary democratic exercise.

You were there from the outset, and because we are now talking about something historical, people will remember that those who make history have names. They were men and women, those who were here in Quebec City, and you are those men and those women. Thank you very much for having accepted our invitation.

Because it set a precedent and we were off the beaten trail, this Conference would have been impossible without the assistance and support of many persons, and of several institutions. I would like first of all to express my sincerest gratitude to the Honorary Co-Presidents of the Conference, who were kind enough to associate themselves with this first gathering of the parliamentarians of the Americas: Mr. José Sarney, Mr. Edgard Leblanc Fils, Madam Violetta Barrios de Chamorro and Mr. George Pataki.

I would also like to thank the associated institutions and organizational partners of this Conference, who helped us to make known and to implement the project. The Council of State Governments, the first partner to offer us its

support, was joined by the Andean, Central American and Latin-American Parliaments, the Joint Parliamentary Committee of Mercosur, the Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians, the America Region of the International Assembly of French-Speaking Parliamentarians, and the Canadian Region of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

I would also like to acknowledge the support from our associate institutions, the Senate and the House of Commons of Canada, whose Speakers, Messrs. Molgat and Parent, I salute. I also wish to thank the 4 intergovernmental organizations who are partners of the Conference, who made their expertise available to us: the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Organization of American States and the Pan-American Health Organization.

Furthermore, my thanks and acknowledgements are due to all our guest speakers and rapporteurs who, through their knowledge and experience, have contributed to our reflections and have generated rich debates in our work sessions. I would also like to thank the participants who were kind enough to become actively involved as Chairs, Vice-chairs, Secretaries and coordinators of the workshops.

This Conference was also a success because the proceedings were conducted in a respectful and dignified manner, the two fundamental conditions for the establishment of a dialogue. We never thought — not being naive — that everyone would agree, that all would share the same ideologies. But what was important was that people accept to participate in this process while knowing that their national, local or regional interests could sometimes come into confrontation. They came into confrontation; and they will continue to confront one another in the future at our further meetings.

The idea is not to seek unanimity in dialogue. Rather it is to seek to come closer together — to seek to understand one another. The idea is to try to arrange it so that the

dialogue will give birth to something better and, because you have been disciplined, because you committed yourselves, because you are still here at the end of this Conference, and still as numerous, we have together succeeded in this remarkable achievement. Generally, in this sort of exercise — and I have seen more than one in my political career — the room is practically empty during the closing session. But as I speak to you now, the room is practically full with the majority of the parliamentarians, both men and women, who were at this gathering in Quebec City, and I am most pleased.

This Conference is as also fundamentally a remarkable success because we succeeded in producing something, a Closing Declaration, and the media that have taken the trouble, here or elsewhere, to interest themselves in our process, will be in a position to realize that this Declaration reflects the concerns and sensitivities of 775 million men and women who live in this Hemisphere. It is through the presence of their elected representatives, through yourselves, that this sensitivity to their problems, their concerns, their desires, their hopes, their anxieties, that all this finds its place in the Closing Declaration. I am of the opinion that having achieved this, by accepting that the things that would have compromised the dialogue be put aside for the moment, is in itself quite an achievement.

I believe that things should progress normally, calmly in some places, and at a more rapid pace in others. But in order for this exercise to succeed, it was necessary to have a concern to protect the consensus on the basis of which we had chosen to orient ourselves from the outset. We have succeeded in doing so with extraordinary maturity, and I know that it was not easy, for the different parties, to renounce certain proposals, to agree to wait to debate them later, to agree that what troubles them the most will not necessarily be written down in black and white, with all the boldface characters that they would have liked to see, in the final text.

But nevertheless, we have succeeded not only in reflecting the sensitivities, concerns and hopes of the people that we

represent, but we have succeeded especially in deciding, concretely, that the dialogue will continue. Not only will there be — and I announce this now for those who are listening — a new Parliamentary Conference of the Americas, a second one, probably in two years, somewhere, no doubt, based on the reactions this morning, in Latin America. There will be another gathering. And, at that time, there will be a proposal to have the next gathering followed by others, arranged within a mechanism, a structure, which will have the responsibility of seeing that this dialogue continues in the course of time.

For it would have been dramatic if all of the effort, not only that we made to organize this Conference, but all the efforts that you yourselves devoted during these few days, had been vain and without a future. It would have been dramatic for us to leave this forum finally, with no clear orientation for the following events and with no firm will to continue the dialogue in a structured, intelligent and articulate way. We have succeeded in taking up this challenge, and I believe that we all have reason to be proud of the result.

Moreover, I would like to remind you that what we have just done imposes duties on us. First, there is that of ensuring that our fellow parliamentarians — who let us represent them and thus let us represent the entire population of the Americas — are part of the game, that they are aware that what was done here at this Conference was important. This is the responsibility of the media and of the other parliamentarians, of our colleagues who are not here, to carry out this exercise and to get the information across. For there can be no true and healthy democracy if the people do not participate, if the people are not informed. This cannot be done behind closed doors, just among parliamentarians, however well-intentioned they may be.

We also have the responsibility to transmit this Declaration to our Heads of State and Government, who will be meeting in a few months for the second time, in their own forum, the Summit of the Americas. They will

be meeting, as we know, in Santiago, Chile, next spring. We have the responsibility to speak to them before, to take up the dialogue with them even more than we are doing so now — not only to transmit to them the Declaration but to ensure that they are consistent with themselves.

In December 1994, they expressed the wish that the dialogue between the people's elected representatives would be intensified. As of now, they will have to realize that the dialogue has been articulated and undertaken. And now, according to logic — and it is an implacable logic — let this dialogue be taken into account; let it be listened to.

The important, influential, indispensable technocrats who surround our Heads of State and Government must also understand what has been said and what has been done here in Quebec City. We ourselves, we parliamentarians, often say ironically that the real power is not ours, but rather that of the people in the public administrations. This is true to a large extent. And that is the way in which things ought to operate in any event. But those who hold power without being elected, and sometimes it is very substantial power, have as many obligations as do elected officials. I hope that those who are currently in the negotiation process for the integration of the Americas will understand that they are not the only ones to hold power, and that legitimacy is above all in the hands of the people who represent the populations and who will have to live with the consequences of what they are discussing and implementing.

In conclusion, I would like to say that as far as I am concerned, my responsibility will be to arrange it so that things will continue functioning afterwards. The decision, taken in a consensual manner, to set up a Follow-up Committee, reflects our commitment to continue the hemispheric interparliamentary dialogue. I thank you very sincerely for the trust that you have shown by accepting me and by proposing that I act as President of the Follow-up Committee.

I may say to you that the means deployed by the National

Assembly of Québec to organize this Conference, and to make it the success that you have seen, will continue to be made available to the Follow-up Committee. I announced that our Internet site would be transformed into a virtual parliamentary forum of the Americas. The Conference Secretariat will now be at the service of the Follow-up Committee.

I believe that what we have wanted to accomplish together is to orchestrate a collective achievement. In this regard, I hope, Ladies and Gentlemen, that we are all aware that we have taken a historic step and that our responsibility now is to arrange it so that one step will lead to a long walk, and an increasingly fruitful one.

To all of you, dear guests, on behalf of my fellow parliamentarians of the National Assembly of Québec, as well as on my own personal behalf, I say thank you. Thank you for having travelled such long distances and for having made this Conference a success. I hope that you will leave here glad to have experienced this first Parliamentary Conference of the Americas. I hope that we will all see one another again on the occasion of a second Parliamentary Conference of the Americas. Thank you. I wish you a pleasant trip home, and I will see you again.