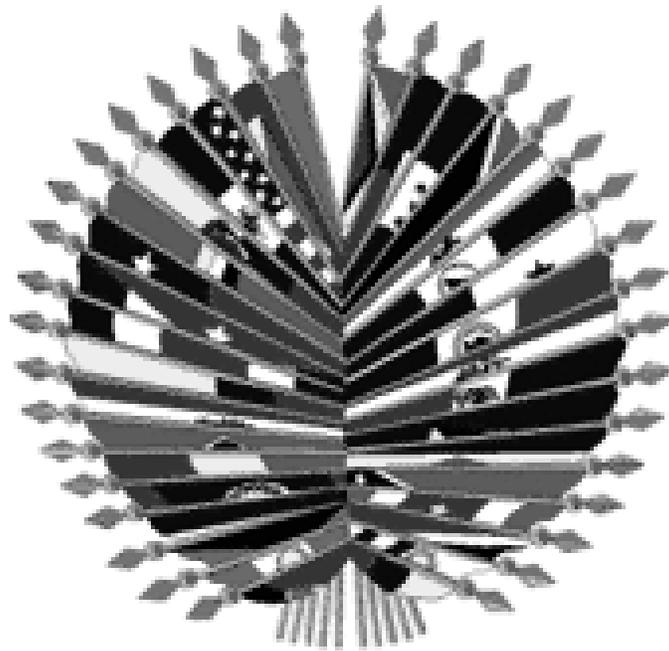


**2017 Washington Model Organization of
American States General Assembly**

OPENING STATEMENTS



OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF GRENADA

As a Caribbean state, Grenada has been deeply affected by climate change. Hurricanes, monsoons, droughts, and erratic weather have devastated our agriculture and tourism, the foundations of our economy. Grenada is committed to working with the OAS to combat climate change in ways that strengthen food, energy, and human security.

Ensuring every citizen's right to a productive and fulfilling life, regardless of race, gender, disability, or social status, is Grenada's top priority.

With 82% of Grenada's population of African descent, improving the lives of people of African descent is of great importance. The legacy of colonialism and slavery cannot be ignored, and the empowerment of people of African descent must be a priority. No nation can truly develop while intolerance and hate persist in its culture.

The cultures of the Caribbean have not historically embraced gender equality. Therefore, we must work together to promote gender equity and end violence against women. Grenada supports programs to include women in all aspects of life, protect them from violence, and provide them with the skills to achieve success.

Grenada recognizes the importance of improving the lives of persons with disabilities, and supports policies to ensure their full access to education and jobs.

Grenada has also reevaluated its approach to fighting drugs, and supports programs for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug offenders as alternatives to incarceration.

Grenada is a small island state, but we are prepared to make a substantial contribution to OAS efforts to improve the lives of all through collaboration.

OPENING STATEMENT REPUBLIC OF COLOMBIA

The Delegation of Colombia wishes to promote cooperation on several issues to benefit all peoples of the Hemisphere. The delegation will propose resolutions on the topics of drug cartels, the dramatic increase of incarcerated people, the promotion of geothermal energy, the preservation of our ecosystem in line with the Paris Agreement, and efforts to eradicate extreme poverty for women. By increasing the involvement from IGO's and NGO's alongside more rehabilitation programs and funding efforts, the issues with drugs in the hemisphere will diminish. Incentivizing the use of geo-thermal energy, while improving the infrastructure, will both benefit the ecosystem and stimulate NGO institutional involvement on the research of this type of energy. Opening a discussion on higher penalties for illegal mining and coca cultivation, in combination with creating more national parks, will reinforce advances made by the Paris Agreement in mitigating the effects of climate change. Finally, decreasing the gender disparity in wages while increasing the number of childcare programs and loan programs will diminish gender inequality throughout the Western Hemisphere. The Delegation of Colombia would like to thank all fellow delegates for their innovative ideas and looks forward to working with all delegations to realize a better future throughout the Americas.

OPENING STATEMENT
DELEGATION OF THE PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA

Honorable chair, fellow delegates, and distinguished guests,

The delegation of the Plurinational State of Bolivia stands before you with great pleasure. We would like to extend our gratitude towards all fellow delegations for their time and effort invested into this year's General Assembly. This delegation finds shared values with the OAS and is committed to protect the principles which it stands for. Furthermore, the delegation seeks to join efforts with other Member States in the regards of climate change, violence against women, energy security, health care and hunger, to ensure cooperation and hemispheric progress in the Americas.

The Plurinational State of Bolivia encourages everyone present here today to aim towards strengthening democracy, advocating for integral development, promoting solidarity and creating opportunities for everyone. The delegation is proud of the actions that all Member States have taken in favor of nature, and is eager to work alongside every nation that shares interests in the regards of interculturality; as we find Pachamama and other cultural expressions essential to the development and well-being of our Mother Earth.

Without further ado, the delegation recognizes the pressing issues presented to the Organization, and invites an open, communicative, and peaceful dialogue among Member States, in hopes of establishing a more inclusive framework that will help us solve them effectively.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF PANAMA

The delegation of Panama would like to formally welcome all present officials and Member State representatives to this celebration of democratic cooperation throughout the hemisphere. This year, the delegation of Panama is excited to participate in political discourse regarding transnational issues spanning vastly across an array of topics. The delegation of Panama has outlined objectives that it hopes will encourage deliberation between Member States. The Panamanian delegation has put forward resolutions that align with collective maintenance of our hemisphere.

With collective maintenance in mind, the Panamanian delegation proposed a formal regulatory administration for the management of specific migratory issues affecting the region.

The Panamanian delegation also aims to challenge the current standards of prosecutions to combat prison overcrowding by urging a collective reevaluation of prosecutions paradigms.

Furthermore, uniformity in our safeguards against cyber criminals in order to strengthen the regions connectivity, while also minimizing disturbances in online security is a major hemispheric security concerns of the Panamanian delegation.

Taking into account that adequate health care is essential for collective integral development, the Panamanian delegation encourages regionally distributed medical units which provide universal availability of preventative medicine for the hemisphere.

Concerning climate change reservations, the fruition of new private sector anti-deforestation techniques are being recognized by the Panamanian delegation in confidence that Member States will work to challenge current climate change standards on a regional level.

As a member of the Organization of American States, the Panamanian delegation will strive to promote its capacity for dialogue, consensus-building, and will act as an exemplary leader in the region for the sustainable global development agenda.

We look forward to collaboration with all Member States that seek mutual development on the above-mentioned transnational issues as well as comparable issues that work towards collective maintenance of our hemisphere.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

The delegation of the Commonwealth of Dominica is honored to share with you in this extraordinary Hall of the Americas. Hoping to have and to see debates with the democratic values we are continuously learning, to exchange ideas and to see the commitment we all have to safeguard and guarantee the welfare of our population and our entire hemisphere.

Following the words of JFK “When written in Chinese the word “crisis” is composed of two characters – one represents danger and the other represents opportunity”.

That is why the delegation of the Commonwealth of Dominica encourages you all to see the opportunities you might find in a crisis, getting through hard situations is the main pillar to develop our capacities and to show the world and ourselves that we can do everything.

The delegation of the Commonwealth of Dominica is promoting the “WARP Programme” which will prepare our people and us in climate change issues; promoting the democratic values to our children and teenagers through our Young Democrats Project; tackling cyber-security issues with Shark; promote poverty reduction through improvement of infrastructure and the establishment of Tansley Ecological Camp to promote climate change awareness.

This delegation is willing to have fluent debates which will end in progressive complete solutions for the problems to tackle in each committee, in order to show the effort our nations have made, comprehend the needs of our people and find the best solutions to our problems as an Organization of American States. This delegation believes that cooperation and the willingness to work together towards a goal will be the only way to follow the same path to a better continent, therefore lead with example to a much better world.

**OPENING STATEMENT.
DELEGATION OF THE ORIENTAL REPUBLIC OF URUGUAY**

The Delegation of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, conscious about the importance and challenges these topics bring to the Hemisphere: Cooperation for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, Judicial Reforms for Alternatives to Incarceration in Addressing the Drugs Problem, Multilateral Cooperation in Energy Security, Envisioning a Fair and Adequate Health Care System and Promotion of Clean Energy and Energy Efficiency, invites all Member States to meticulously discuss and, if feasible and agreed upon on, implement the different proposals brought by the Member States keeping in mind what unites us - the Charter of the Organization of American States and its principles of cooperation and solidarity.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF JAMAICA

Education is arguably one of the most important pillars of democracy, freedom, and the pursuit of happiness. As Franklin D. Roosevelt said, “Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choice are prepared to choose wisely. The real safeguard of democracy, therefore, is education.” We come from all over the western hemisphere--Argentina, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela—and we did this to learn. We are learning not only for the betterment of ourselves, but for the betterment of our societies as a whole. As the delegation of Jamaica, we recognize the importance of knowledge and learning, and how it’s a true source for positive change. That is why our team has decided to tackle the objectives of the committees with the tool of education and the power of knowledge as our backbone. Our resolutions call for skill and language training programs for stateless persons and citizens alike, police training to help prevent violence against women, classes for violent offenders to understand the very real effects of their actions, accessible knowledge on how to practice sustainable means of farming, and training for health care professionals to help reduce the incidence of non-communicable diseases. Using our resolutions to promote education as one of the best tools for the betterment of our societies, we believe that we can work with each and every one of you, cohesively, to create a better world.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF PERU

The Delegation of the Republic of Peru is honored to come together with its peers at the 2017 Washington Model Organization of American States. The OAS is a crucial forum for Member States to discuss the problems facing the Western Hemisphere, and the Delegation of Peru is excited to work closely with the other delegations present in order to cooperatively discuss the challenges outlined in the Agenda.

During this Assembly, the Delegation of Peru hopes to facilitate discussion on alternatives to incarceration for drug offenses, the reduction of gun trafficking in the hemisphere, the promotion of innovative healthcare systems, the expansion and promotion of sustainable and resilient cities, and the formation of a festival in accordance with the Decade for Persons of African Descent in the Americas. The Delegation hopes to support voluntary information sharing and conferences as means to improve the safety and well-being of peoples living in the Americas as well as the sustainability of its cities. The Delegation of Peru sincerely desires that the Assembly discuss ways to improve sustainability in the Americas, promote innovative health care systems, increase cooperation between member states in regards to reducing illicit arms trafficking, and a plan for the Decade for the Persons of African Descent in the Americas.

The Delegation of the Republic of Peru is pleased to be a part of the discussions of these and other hemispheric issues going forward. If its goals are met, the 2017 General Assembly will propose, address, and pass resolutions that will make our hemisphere a better, more sustainable, and safer place. The Delegation of Peru looks forward to working with other delegations in this forum.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUATEMALA

The Delegation of the Republic of Guatemala is honored to participate in the 2017 Washington Model of the Organization of American States (WMOAS) and would like to thank all attending delegations from across the Americas for participating in this diplomatic forum.

To the Assembly, Guatemala will bring forward crucial issues in order to share ideas and to build consensus among other Members States. Precisely, Guatemala will present resolutions that will focus on maternal health, sustainable development, microcredit access, cybercrimes, education reforms to prevent violence on women, criminal rehabilitation, climate finance mechanism for gender-responsive mitigation initiatives, micro-energy storage systems and protection for unaccompanied minors.

As many others states in the Americas, Guatemala is facing numerous challenges regarding security, education, migration, environment and justice. The Republic of Guatemala is also concerned with illegal migration issue and with the escalation of violence within criminal gang activities and drug cartels.

Taking into consideration that these issues that will be debated during this year's Model, the Delegation of the Republic of Guatemala would like to reaffirm its belief that this forum is a great opportunity for the emergence and the consolidation of essential cooperation programs and partnerships among the Member States.

The delegation looks forward to working alongside fellow Member States to improve hemispheric cooperation regarding this year's agenda.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Dialogue between Member States is essential for open communication to assess the diverse challenges faced day to day within the peoples in the hemisphere. The delegation of Dominican Republic embraces the generational shift to overcome past difficulties that have disheartened dialog between Member States and challenges that have continued to form part of the social fabric of Member States for many years.

The delegation of the Dominican Republic proposes to strengthen joint efforts of Caribbean States, as well to reinforce hemispheric collaboration. We seek to promote proactive measures for Member States to address issues regarding: integration and recognition of cultural diversity; inclusion of those underrepresented in democratic participation; tackling hemispheric issues alike gang violence and climate change; providing access to human services; and promoting sustainable development through comprehensive planning. The strength of integral development serves as a platform to promote social inclusion and human development for the peoples of the Americas to improve their quality of life. Additionally, through the participation of Member States in initiatives and dialog in regional and hemispheric struggles, solutions for future crises and be developed.

The Dominican Republic emphasizes the role of the Organization of American States as a key player for a more sustainable hemisphere, for integral development among all peoples of the Americas, and for democratic practices within the hemisphere. We must continue our efforts beginning with working at the community level, and then moving to the larger scale of regional and hemispheric efforts. The delegation of the Dominican Republic is willing to engage in providing stepping stones, viable initiatives and collaborations that give us direction, through fruitful discussions, to meet the multidimensional challenges facing our Hemisphere.

**OPENING STATEMENT
DELEGATION OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF BARBADOS**

The delegation of the Commonwealth of Barbados welcomes the efforts of the Organization of American States to bring together the countries in the Hemisphere to discuss critical issues, many of which are particularly relevant for the country and its sister-islands in the Caribbean. Barbados comes to this General Assembly convinced of the urgency of climate change, of the social and security challenges that prevent our populations to reach their full potential, and of the compelling mandate to achieve sustainable development for all.

To this end, the delegation of Barbados is introducing proposals that seek to support the countries in the implementation of the Paris Agreement, to recognize the linkages between this environmental threat and food security and migration, addressing the local and community levels of these challenges, to promote security in the region, and to provide new legal mechanisms to address the drugs problem and the incarceration of the related offenses. Furthermore, Barbados is strongly advocating for comprehensive solutions that guarantee the inclusion of children, and all vulnerable populations, in the program of action for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

As last year Barbados celebrated its 50th anniversary of independence and nationhood, in 2017 our country is celebrating its 50th anniversary of membership to the OAS. Today, Barbados stands even more firmly committed to the principles of multilateralism, collaboration, equity, and peace, and looks forward to work with its fellow Member States to enact resolutions that contribute to cooperation and democracy all peoples in the Western Hemisphere.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF ECUADOR

The delegation of Ecuador eagerly anticipates working with the General Assembly this week towards a more equitable, just hemisphere.

Ecuador is mindful that within our own borders, as well as across the assembly, policies regarding migration, climate change, and integral development are on the forefront of the minds of Member States. Though diverse in cultures and histories, this assembly has a shared interest in coming together to try and address these complex challenges. The delegation of Ecuador comes to the OAS this week with the intent of sharing best practices, and acknowledging the ways in which we can learn from our neighbors.

The draft resolutions that the delegation of Ecuador will bring forth this week call for tangible policy changes such as infrastructure investment in the form of roads in the region, the abolition of immigrant detention centers, and the creation of a OAS position for the advancement of democratic practices.

Just as importantly, the delegation of Ecuador will present resolutions that address issues in the realms of international law and multilateral cooperation: an expanded UN definition of refugees, punitive changes for gun traffickers and for perpetrators of violence against women, and a call for states to ratify the Paris Climate Change Agreement.

Ecuador strongly believes in the importance of the example that the OAS sets for the rest of the world. The diplomatic work that will be accomplished this week has the potential to positively impact the lives of many of our citizens, and the delegation of Ecuador congratulates its fellow Member States for their hard work and thoughtful preparation.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF ARGENTINA

After sixty-nine years of existence, the Organization of American States continues to be an efficient forum for collaboration, promotion of peace, justice, and security among member states in the American hemisphere. For the further development of American states and the tackling of regional issues, cooperation proves to be the most powerful and direct method of action.

For this reason, the delegation of Argentina is proud to be here today and ready to debate the most pressing issues plaguing the western hemisphere. From climate change to limited political participation, this year's agenda comprehensively addresses the obstacles that are threatening the stability and progress of the region. Before sessions commence, this delegation would like to remind you of Argentina's historical commitment to the four main pillars of the organization: democracy, human rights, security, and development. This year, the Republic of Argentina will continue leading the efforts towards sustainable cities and energy security. Moreover, the Argentine delegation is poised to participate in fruitful discussions about effective strategies to implement with regards to the inclusion of marginalized groups but also to consolidate the Program of Action for the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities.

In the hopes of strengthening collaboration, developing and implementing effective strategies for hemispheric issues, the delegation of Argentina welcomes all and looks forward to a successful assembly.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF NICARAGUA

Nicaragua is proud to stand before the assembly to bring forward new solutions to existing problems in our Hemisphere that we believe the OAS can work to resolve. The united fight for sustainable energy will be approached by our delegates in the General Committee. The plight of the women of the Americas will be addressed in the First Committee, while our Second Committee will work to reduce violence in the Hemisphere by offering sound steps toward gun control. Nicaragua's Third Committee delegates will work to ensure the rights of disabled persons, as well as providing healthcare services to individuals in rural areas in the Americas. Our Special Committee will offer bold initiatives for assuring food security in rural areas. Nicaragua's delegates have worked tirelessly to craft resolutions that will address these issues and encourages each Member State to adopt these progressive plans of action.

The delegation of Nicaragua believes that the OAS has excelled in its duties as the regional international body of the Western Hemisphere. It is only through the organization's crusade to ensure the four pillars of democracy, human rights, security, and development that we as a region have a global standing as leaders and progressive thinkers. Nicaragua believes that the cooperation that this organization has seen for so many years will surely be carried forward in our debates to make the changes needed to better the lives of the hundreds of millions of individuals in the Americas while always honoring the rights to non-interference, self-determination, and anti-imperialism. Together, with the help of friends new and old, Nicaragua believes that during our sessions, we can truly change the world now and forever more.

**OPENING STATEMENT
DELEGATION OF THE FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL**

The Federative Republic of Brazil is honored to participate in the Forty-Seventh Annual General Assembly. As a founding member of the Organization of American States (OAS), the Federative Republic of Brazil affirms the role that the intergovernmental organization (IGO) plays in our Hemisphere. Brazil has been considered a member in good standing since 1948 and remains committed to the principles framed in the Charter, particularly the ideals to “promote, by cooperative action, their economic, social, and cultural development.”ⁱ The Delegation of Brazil hopes to work with fellow member states, especially regarding the promotion of sustainability economic development, reinforcing and expanding democratic rights, and ensuring equality of all peoples in cooperation with the Hemisphere.

Endnotes

ⁱ Organization of American States [hereafter cited as OAS], *Charter of the Organisation of American States*, 30 April 1948, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3ae6b3624.html> [accessed 1 October 2016]

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION REPUBLIC OF HAITI

The Delegation of Haiti would like to express its gratitude to all the delegations present today for renewing the commitment to the OAS.

In the new, globalized world, it is essential to highlight the importance of this international forum, with the principal aim of granting all peoples of the Hemisphere the quality of life they deserve. This can be achieved by understanding the different upcoming issues of the Hemisphere and taking actions together, with respect, solidarity and transparency.

Several topics of this year's agenda are closely related to high priority circumstances in Haiti, such as strengthening democracy, security concerns in the Caribbean Region, adequate health care, food security and climate change. Towards feasible solutions to all these topics, this delegation has worked hard in terms of research and creative thinking.

Haiti has fought many battles. Over time, Haitians have grown stronger and learnt from their mistakes. Haiti is now more prepared to address the hemispheric agenda than ever before. It is this delegation's duty to promote cooperation among Member States without leaving behind Haiti's most treasured principles: Liberty and Freedom.

The delegation of Haiti would like to invite all delegations to join efforts to reach the best possible solutions to all the critical issues that the Hemisphere is facing. This delegation expects to have a rich debate with other delegations and hopes solutions can be reached to accomplish the wellbeing of the peoples of the Americas.

**OPENING STATEMENT
DELEGATION OF BELIZE**

The delegation of Belize is here today to reiterate its compromise with all of the members of The Organization of American States, this with the objective of strength our ties and achieve every goal that the organization has, such as watch for security in the hemisphere, protect our economy, democracy and, above all, people.

Is our obligation to watch not only for our interest, but also for the development of the Americas, contribute between every one of us to solve the problems that attempt against this region.

We are living hard times, but the delegation of Belize thinks that with the constant cooperation and good faith of every member we can improve our lives, assure human rights not regardless their raze, social and economic position; and make of this a better place to live.

So, finally, the delegation emphasize in its compromise with every member and wants to state that It is open to make closer links to improve the development of the Americas and support the resolutions that wants to ensure the previous points, always with good faith and a mood of respect.

Distinguished people in this assembly, thank you for your attention, the delegation of Belize wish you a good day.

**OPENING STATEMENT
DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY**

The Delegation of the Republic of Paraguay extends a cordial greeting and congratulates the Organization of American States and the Institute for Diplomatic Dialogue in the Americas for promoting the 36th model of the organization of the American states in order to provide a space for Dialogue on issues of global relevance, and extends its appreciation for the invitation to this prestigious academic event

In the same way, given the political situation in the Republic of Paraguay these days, we would like to state that, as a Republic we stand for peace and political and social stability of the member states, we consider primordial to reaffirm our commitment to the pillars of the Democratic Charter of the Organization of American States, such as human rights, social security, democracy and integral development in the Member States.

Therefore, we invite all member states to have a successful development of MOAS in the course of the next few days so this can reflect the work of a united team working together to strengthen security, consolidate democracy, promote peace, and encourage sustainable development in America.

As member states we fight for full respect and defense of human rights and we need to stand for sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of each nation, so as a consequence our future agreements can be strategic solutions that have a positive global impact.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF MEXICO

The Delegation of Mexico would like thank to the organization and our colleagues for the invitation to this General Committee session of the Organization of American States.

Without a doubt, the current migration situation on the continent requires our immediate attention; Due to the importance of this situation, it is essential to ensure and protect the human rights of migrants and, at the same time, to seek the guarantee of the rights of refugees and children who lack of legal representation.

That is why it is necessary to implement a strategy that allows dialogue and direct contact between states and communities of migrants and refugees, in order to establish the situations that are affecting those people in situation of vulnerability. These people have the right to express themselves, they have the right to have a voice, and to have a State that not only listens to them, but also seeks to ensure the guarantees of the protection of their rights.

Essential rights of man are not derived (deraivt) from one's being a national of a certain state, all persons are equal before the law, which means, they are entitled, without discrimination, to equal protection of it.

Mexico's main objective is to improve, strengthen and implement these strategies, is an objective that we need to achieve as a country; this process is of vital importance to all members of the Organization of American States in order to protect the human rights of these communities.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHILE

Good afternoon. Speaking on behalf of President Michelle Bachelete and the Chilean people, the Delegation of the Republic of Chile comes before our fellow delegates to develop solutions for the hemisphere's most pressing issues. These issues affect all member states and, consequently, it is the responsibility of all member states to take part in creating these solutions to propel our hemisphere to greater success.

Focusing these efforts, we recognize that our collective security must be addressed, an issue which goes beyond military threats, but looks to the technological advances producing cyber threats to state sovereignty. Additionally, the Delegation of Chile urges the member states to focus on the preservation of human rights and dignity within the hemisphere. The Republic of Chile is one of many states within our hemisphere who have endured vicious violations of human rights, and in our efforts to recover from these atrocities we must focus on the rights of all individuals.

Recognizing that each state is unique, the Delegation of Chile endeavors to work with each country—taking existing successful solutions and integrating them at a hemispheric level under the organizational structure of the OAS, whilst allowing for state independence in modifying these solutions to suit their needs. This requires a deviation from the Chilean motto, *Por la razón o la fuerza* (By right or might) and in this conference the Delegation of the Republic Chile will emphasize the importance of international cooperation to find successful solutions.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Delegation of the United States of America is pleased to be present in the 2017 WMOAS. Greetings to all present.

Important changes have taken place in the political scenery of the United States of America. This new government has been working very hard to make America great again.

In the 2017 WMOAS we will refer the following topics: the promotion of good governance for the prevention of Irregular migration, the strengthening of democratic participation, the implementation of Computer Security Incident Response Teams in all State members, the creation of jobs for the improvement of the livelihood of the hemisphere's population and the promotion of industrialization through capacitation and innovation.

The United States of America will have an economic revival. “ *...We have a bold, ambitious, forward-looking plan to massively increase jobs, wages, incomes and opportunities for the people of our country...*”.

We encourage all member states to support the United States of America in this journey that will benefit all.

The Delegation of the United States of America reiterates the belief in the importance of working towards a more democratic hemisphere highlighting that cooperation is the main path to reach the goals proposed.

“...If we can save American lives, American jobs and American futures, together we can save America itself...”.

**OPENING STATEMENT
DELEGATION OF HONDURAS**

Fellow delegates, the Delegation of Honduras looks forward to exploring cooperative solutions to the most prominent issues in the American and Caribbean region during this session. Regional unity springs from a shared colonial heritage and mutual enjoyment of unique national identities. The Delegation of Honduras would like to thank the Member States for an enduring commitment to international cooperation in order to achieve equality and prosperity for the American generations to come. The geography of this diverse region unites the Member States in such a way that few matters are solely national concerns. In Honduras, the necessity for regional cooperation on matters of climate change, migration, and violence is not only understood, but also the ideal. The Delegation of Honduras anticipates that regional cooperation on these pressing issues will bring prosperity to both Honduras and the rest of the Americas. Each Member State will enjoy greater food and resource security, citizens will enjoy opportunity in their homelands, and the threat of spillover violence will be diminished. Only through a united resolve to solve these problems together will the Member States achieve these ends—the ideal. Thank you, fellow delegates, for joining in cooperative efforts to enrich these lands with opportunity and security and equality. The Delegation of Honduras commends the OAS' past efforts while eagerly awaiting the fruits of this General Assembly.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF EL SALVADOR

The Delegation of El Salvador is deeply humbled to be in the presence of these esteemed delegations at the 2017 Washington Model Organization of American States, and would like to thank all Member States for valuing the importance of dialogue and cooperation in addressing the pressing issues facing the Hemisphere. This Delegation believes that it will require thoughtful analysis and the cooperation from all Member States to address the complex issue of unaccompanied child migration, an issue affecting many States in the region. In addition, the Delegation from El Salvador commends the OAS for emphasizing the severity of the transnational drug problem and seeks to promote alternatives to incarceration of drug offenders through the cooperation of Member States and the Drug Treatment Courts in the Americas; seeks to support the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network through innovative information exchange to promote energy security through diversifying energy access to the remaining 30-million citizens of the Americas; advocates that Member States expand on the OAS's commitment to promoting health care innovations, and encourages Member States to consider life-saving alternatives for access to primary healthcare; commends the Hemisphere's efforts to provide reliable and accessible environmental information, and encourages Member States to work to inform local industries about the negative impacts of current production practices on the environment. Cooperation and dialogue is the conduit through which our Hemisphere can thrive. The Delegation of El Salvador is committed to the progress that can arise from the dedication of all Member States at this model.

**OPENING STATEMENT
DELEGATION OF VENEZUELA**

Madam Chair, Secretary General, and esteemed delegates:

The delegation of Venezuela welcomes the opportunity to strengthen friendships and hemispheric solidarity while reaffirming the OAS's commitment to the prosperity and equality of the people of the Americas. The delegation of Venezuela is honored to work with the delegations here today to address the most pressing issues affecting the people around the world and within our hemisphere. In keeping with the spirit of the agenda, the delegation of Venezuela has developed draft resolutions that seek to protect the lives of those affected by refugee crises, to promote and strengthen democracy throughout the hemisphere, to diminish our dependence on genetically modified organisms, to decrease the suffering people experience due to the lack of affordable housing, and encourage regional cooperation for better control of our energy resources. The delegation of Venezuela understands we may not always agree on ideas and ideologies, but trusts that all of us present today advocate for world peace, democracy, and security. The delegation of Venezuela looks forward to this week of productive and meaningful cooperation that will surely result in progress and prosperity for the people of our great hemisphere.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF CANADA

The Delegation of the Canada believes in the importance of the Organization of American States in creating a better future for the Americas. The delegation of Canada is honored to be participating in this meeting, which offers an opportunity for states from around the Americas to gather in the pursuit of cooperation and consensus. The delegation acknowledges that with great commitment to the core principles of democratic institutions this model can be a showcase for great accomplishments. The delegation would like to bear in mind the principles on which the Organization of American States was founded and to seek to continue and develop that legacy. From this vantage, the Canadian delegation would like to place serious emphasis on the cooperation for the implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in the Hemisphere. The delegation of Canada would like to note the importance of an organized hemispheric-wide effort to continue the promotion of efforts regarding greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation and finance. At the conclusion of COP21, on 12 December 2015, the final wording of the Paris Agreement was adopted by consensus by all of the 195 UNFCCC participating member states and the European Union to reduce emissions as part of the method for reducing greenhouse gases; Canada would like to reaffirm its engagement with this agreement, its principles and mechanisms.

The delegation of Canada believes that the OAS is the institution most needed to promote the union of the Americas and should search for the integration of its members to work together in accomplishing goals that would be in benefit of the hemisphere.

OPENING STATEMENT REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

Guyana welcomes this gathering of delegations from the Americas and salutes the longstanding tradition of fraternity among our Member States that has proven so vital in producing fruitful agreements and fostering creative ideas for cooperation over the decades. We wish to share with those present our ongoing commitment to fundamental principles that guide the Organization of American States, including its commitment to sovereignty, democracy, diversity and equality. Respect for legal borders is fundamental throughout the world and the framing commitment in the OAS Charter, and necessary for pacific engagement. At the same time, our geostrategic location as a Caribbean nation integrated with the South American continent leads us to seek engagement across borders rather than isolation. Guyana stands at the crossroads of our hemisphere, a pathway for trade and for immigration between North and South. We are in sympathy with the challenges faced by small islands economies, including the ongoing demand for new sources of energy. We share the environmental challenges facing other Amazonian countries, and our Amerindian citizens have much to contribute to those conversations. We seek to work with our neighbors to secure democracy in accordance with the Inter-American Democratic Charter. In these and other endeavors we will bring our best to the enlightened discussions we hope to hold over the coming days, and we are grateful to all those who have worked to make this General Assembly successful.

OPENING STATEMENT DELEGATION OF COSTA RICA

The Delegation of Costa Rica is pleased to be working with the esteemed delegates from this historic and salient regional body. The delegation of Costa Rica in working with the esteemed delegates from the Organization of American States would like to convey its appreciation for current and future cooperation. In conveying this, the delegation of Costa Rica would like to convey its hope and wish to work with members within the OAS to address our most critical regional and national issues. We face a world beset and besieged by issues ranging from climate change, to faulty regional security, to declining economies. Together we can come together through regional cooperation and make not only the Americas a better place to live but also the world, with this the delegation of Costa Rica would like to begin our cooperation with this esteemed body.