

OAS ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL STRESSES IMPORTANCE OF THE UPCOMING HEMISPHERIC SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS

Organization of American States
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Assistant Secretary General Albert Ramdin of the Organization of American States (OAS) has stressed that the Fifth Summit of the Americas, which Trinidad and Tobago will host next year, must help establish a new agenda for the Americas, and must be results-driven and people-centered.

“It should make a real difference in the lives of the peoples of the Americas,” Ambassador Ramdin told the participants gathered Thursday at the 41st Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) meeting in Trinidad and Tobago. The meeting brought together national summit coordinators, representatives of member states, multilateral institutions, and the media.

The OAS Assistant Secretary General said the summit of heads of state and government, slated to be held in Port-of-Spain in 2009, “must continue the process of building trust and confidence, as well as contribute to the strengthening of collective action and cooperation among the member states of the Organization of American States.”

Ambassador Ramdin accentuated efforts to strengthen the integrity and credibility of the hemispheric summit process as a mechanism to improve the well-being of the citizens of the Americas. Noting the Fifth Summit of the Americas will be the first one to be held in the Caribbean, Ramdin praised the vision and leadership of Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Patrick Manning, and said the Summit will enable leaders to give special attention to issues specific to the small developing states of the Caribbean and Central America.

He acknowledged how vastly the hemisphere has changed since the first Summit, in Miami in 1994, citing the consolidation of democracy, the rule of law, human rights and democratic governance, among other factors.

Assistant Secretary General Ramdin used the occasion to announce the appointment of David Morris as the new Director of the OAS Summits of the Americas Secretariat, and Riyad Insanally as the new OAS Representative in Port of Spain, beginning April 1, 2008.