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INDICE

	<u>Página</u>
Nómina de los representantes que asistieron a la sesión	1
Bienvenida al Embajador Representante de las Bahamas	2
Condolencia por el fallecimiento del doctor César Ordóñez Quintero, Juez de la Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos	4
Aprobación del orden del día	4
Aprobación de actas	5
Recomendaciones de la Junta de Auditores Externos	8
Plan de Acción para el Reordenamiento de la Secretaría General	8
Elección de un miembro por el Consejo Permanente en el Comité Ejecutivo de la Fundación Panamericana de Desarrollo	18
Palabras de agradecimiento del Representante de las Bahamas	20
Homenaje a las víctimas del hundimiento del cruceiro argentino <u>General Belgrano</u>	21

CONSEJO PERMANENTE DE LA ORGANIZACION DE LOS ESTADOS AMERICANOS

ACTA DE LA SESION ORDINARIA CELEBRADA
EL 5 DE MAYO DE 1982

En la ciudad de Washington, a las diez y media de la mañana del miércoles 5 de mayo de 1982, celebró sesión ordinaria el Consejo Permanente de la Organización de los Estados Americanos. Presidió la sesión el señor Embajador Francisco Bustillo del Campo, Representante del Uruguay y Presidente del Consejo Permanente. Asistieron los siguientes miembros:

Luis Marchand Stens, Embajador Representante del Perú
Alarico Silveira Junior, Embajador Representante del Brasil
Gustavo Santiso Gálvez, Embajador Representante de Guatemala
Carlos Bernal Téllez, Embajador Representante de Colombia
Pedro Daza, Embajador Representante de Chile
Eladio Knipping Victoria, Embajador Representante de la República Dominicana
Raúl A. Quijano, Embajador Representante de la Argentina
Raúl Falconí, Embajador Representante del Ecuador
Juan Manuel Castulovich, Embajador Representante de Panamá
Alberto Quiroga García, Embajador Representante de Bolivia
Keith Johnson, Embajador Representante de Jamaica
J. William Middendorf II, Embajador Representante de los Estados Unidos
Reginald L. Wood, Embajador Representante de las Bahamas
Luis E. Guardia Mora, Representante Interino de Costa Rica
Roberto Ramos Bustos, Representante Interino de Honduras
Dionisio Saúl Arana Castellón, Embajador Representante Interino de Nicaragua
Josefina de Rodríguez, Representante Interina de Venezuela
Marcelo Vargas, Embajador Representante Suplente de México
Teresa Ann Marshall, Representante Suplente de Barbados
Hector Denis, Representante Suplente de Haití
George W. McKenzie, Representante Suplente de Trinidad y Tobago
Edgar Hernán Varela, Representante Suplente de El Salvador
Denis Noel, Representante Suplente de Grenada
Agustín José Nogués Cassanello, Representante Suplente del Paraguay

También estuvieron presentes el Secretario General de la Organización, señor Alejandro Orfila, y el Secretario General Adjunto, señor Val T. McComie, Secretario del Consejo Permanente.

BIENVENIDA AL EMBAJADOR REPRESENTANTE DE LAS BAHAMAS

El señor PRESIDENTE: Declaro abierta la sesión ordinaria del Consejo Permanente. En primer lugar, deseo extender, en nombre del Consejo Permanente, la más cordial bienvenida al primer Representante Permanente del Commonwealth de las Bahamas, Embajador Reginald L. Wood.

El Embajador Wood, graduado en ciencias económicas y políticas, ha tenido una distinguida carrera al servicio de su país. En 1968, fue designado Tesorero de las Bahamas. De 1970 a 1980 ocupó la Secretaría del Ministerio de Finanzas, cumpliendo al mismo tiempo funciones importantes como las de Gobernador Alterno del Banco Mundial y del Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo, Director de la Junta Directiva del Banco Central de las Bahamas y Consejero y miembro titular de la Delegación de su Gobierno en las conferencias del Banco Mundial, del Fondo Monetario Internacional y del Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo.

Su labor como funcionario gubernamental ha sido altamente reconocida y se le ha distinguido con importantes condecoraciones. Desde marzo de 1980, es Embajador de las Bahamas ante el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos. Sin lugar a dudas, con tan valiosos antecedentes, el Embajador Wood será un factor importante en las labores de este Consejo.

Le reitero, Embajador Wood, el saludo de bienvenida del Consejo Permanente y le deseo éxito en las gestiones que le ha encomendado su Gobierno.

Tiene la palabra el señor Representante de las Bahamas.

El señor REPRESENTANTE DE LAS BAHAMAS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your very warm expressions of welcome as I take my seat as my country's representative in the Organization of American States. I am privileged and honored.

Mr. Chairman, on March 3 last the small island nation of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas took another step toward the fulfillment of its international obligations and the strengthening of its association with its neighbors.

The Commonwealth of The Bahamas became an independent and sovereign state on July 10, 1973. In September of that year, my Prime Minister, the Right Honorable L. O. Pindling, on the occasion of the acceptance of The Bahamas to membership in the United Nations said:

We realize that we can make a contribution to a better international understanding by sharing our experiences in human relations in effecting change without disorder, revolution without bloodshed, and in developing a stable economic and social order. We of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas are aware that it is indeed unrealistic to think that nation states can exist in isolation. No man, no nation is an island unto itself. There is a need for perpetual interdependence of the big and the small which will guarantee the perpetuation of the United Nations as the center for the harmonization of

the actions of nations concerned with international peace and security, equality and freedom, economic and social justice for all people.

Mr. Chairman, these sentiments apply equally to the OAS. They encapsulate all the principles in articles 2 and 3 of the OAS Charter. Bahamas will seek to play an active role in the affairs of this organization as well as in the various regional institutions and bodies which will establish, promote, and enhance cooperation among its members.

Mr. Chairman, no country in the world prizes its freedom, its independence, its sovereignty, its parliamentary democracy more than The Bahamas. The former colonial slave societies have evolved into multi-racial societies which have implicit in their existence some fundamental cultural contradictions and problems which have yet to be eradicated. The Bahamas is not unique in this, neither is it peculiar to us that the most urgent postcolonial task is the economic and social reconstruction of our societies. Our priorities must be of necessity somewhat different from the priorities of those countries whose colonial history is different and more remote or which never really had one.

While we are proud of the level of liberty and freedom enjoyed by the people of The Bahamas, we are not unmindful of the fact that that level of sovereignty is still denied to large numbers of persons in the world. Yet, everywhere today there is some movement, some overt some less open, of people attempting to secure a larger measure of political freedom and real control over their own affairs. No superpower, armed might, or economic authority can deter indefinitely the peoples' movements which we support everywhere, wherever man claims freedom from minority rule and economic oppression. These movements may take the form of a peaceful revolution, as we were able to achieve in The Bahamas. Others may be less fortunate and may choose a separate route, but so long as the ultimate objective is greater freedom by giving to the people the unfettered right to choose their own forms of government, we find no fault with it.

Mr. Chairman, history records The Bahamas as the gateway to the new world to the Americas, for it was on one of our small islands that the light of the New World shone on the night of October 11 and it was there that Admiral Christopher Columbus landed on the morning of October 12, 1492. Within one decade we will be celebrating the 500th anniversary or quincentennial of our discovery. It would not be unreasonable for this organization to set its goals and embark upon programs to eradicate poverty within all its member states, to raise to acceptable levels the standards of living for all its peoples, and to settle all border and other disputes between all its members, with the resulting peace, harmony, and tranquillity within our region, by the year 1992. I pledge my full support and that of my country toward the achievement of these goals.

Thank you.

El señor PRESIDENTE: Muchas gracias, Embajador Wood.