XXXIX GENERAL ASSEMBLY

REMARKS FROM
THE HEAD OF DELEGATION OF
THE PERMANENT OBSERVER COUNTRY OF

CHINA

JUNE 1, 2009
Intervention by the Delegation of China
Remarks by Ambassador Zhou Wenzhong
Permanent Observer of China to the OAS at the Dialogue between OAS Members and Permanent Observers.
San Pedro Sula, June 1st, 2009

Your Excellency Foreign Minister Patricia Isable Rodas Baca, Your Excellencies Heads of Delegations, Mr. Secretary General Jose Miguel Insulza, Mr. Assistant Secretary General Albert Ramdin, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I wish to express deep grief over the deaths, casualties and damages caused by the massive earthquake in the coastal region of Honduras, and extend my condolence and sympathy to the people who are suffering from the sudden attack of disaster. I am confident that under the leadership of their government, the people of Honduras will prevail.

It gives me great pleasure to come to San Pedro Sula for the 39th General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS). I wish to take this opportunity to express heartfelt appreciation to the government of Honduras for the gracious hospitality and to the OAS General Secretariat and all delegations from the OAS member states for their hard work in preparation for the General Assembly.

Here we gather for the grand annual event of the OAS, in order to explore ways to implement the consensus of the Summit of the Americas and build a better future together.

The current global economic and financial crisis remains severe. Amidst the complicated challenges facing the whole world, the young and dynamic continents of the Americas are playing a unique and significant role in meeting global challenges, from economic and financial crisis to climate change and epidemic diseases. I am convinced
that this year’s General Assembly will focus on pragmatic, effective and result-orientated discussions on regional and international issues of shared interests.

China is a developing country from the other end of the world. But, keeping in line with the trend of times and adhering to an open-up and win-win strategy, China is committed to developing all-dimensional, friendly and cooperative relations with the countries of the Americas on the basis of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit. The OAS has already become a useful bond between China and the Western Hemisphere and an important platform for increased cooperation in meeting challenges and achieving win-win results. To our satisfaction, China’s relationship with the OAS has made good and steady progress, and China’s cooperation with OAS member states has been mutually beneficial and effective since China became and OAS permanent observer five years ago. Increased mutual visits have enhanced understanding and shortened the distance between China and the OAS. The establishment of a China-OAS Cooperation Fund, with a five year term and one million US Dollar input, has led to more specific and pragmatic cooperation. In the past four years, China has assisted the OAS in over 30 projects that covered political, economic, security, education and social areas, benefiting all countries in this region and reaching out to more people in the Western Hemisphere.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Two thousand and nine is full of challenges and opportunities. The stronger exchanges and cooperation between China and the OAS are both important and realistic. China supports the vigorous efforts of the OAS to safeguard regional stability and security and promote social and economic development. In view of the shock from the current economic and financial crisis, China decided, after intense consultation with the OAS General Secretariat, to pool the limited resources of the China-OAS Cooperation Fund and use it on the following priority projects that focus on subsistence and protection of the vulnerable group while taking into consideration security and political concerns.
• Income generation and active employment policies for populations in conditions of poverty and vulnerability of the Americas;
• Fostering cultural diversity and creative expression through education: sharing good practices;
• Gender, violence and HIV in the Caribbean: building capacity and competency;
• Youth social inclusion and violence prevention program in the Caribbean and Central America via orchestral training;
• OAS Fund for Peace;
• Lecture Series of the Americas;

Some of the above projects are already implemented and others are being considered.

According to OAS-China Scholarship Program, the Chinese side will provide 6 scholarships to the countries in this region. In addition two senior diplomats and two junior government officials will be selected through the OAS General Secretariat to participate in exchange programs and training in China before the end of this year. The Chinese side will provide a total of four hundred twelve thousand US dollars, including scholarships, to support the above mentioned cooperation and exchange projects.

The Chinese Government values its friendly ties and cooperation with the countries of the Western Hemisphere and with the OAS, and speaks highly of the unremitting efforts of the OAS in the safeguarding and promoting regional peace and development. On that note, I wish to announce that the Chinese Government has decided to extend the term of the China-OAS Cooperation Fund for five years, with a total fund of one million US dollars.

China will, as always, continue to strengthen cooperation and exchanges with the OAS and contribute our share to peace, stability and prosperity in the Western Hemisphere and the rest of the world.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

New challenges give birth to new opportunities, and the new era calls for new cooperation. Countries of the world need to be of one mind and pool their efforts in order to tide over the hardship and meet the challenges ahead on. China and the countries of the Americas are fully capable of engaging in cooperation at higher levels, in broader areas and with better quality for the purpose of common development.

In conclusion, I wish the 39th General Assembly success.

Thank you.