XXXIX GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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

ITALY

JUNE 1, 2009
Intervention by the Delegation of Italy
San Pedro Sula

Thank you Mr. President,

The Italian delegation is pleased to once again be present for the dialogue with the Permanent Observers, which traditionally precedes the formal opening of the organization’s General Assembly. Please allow me to express the solidarity of the Italian people following the recent earthquake here, and sincere condolences to the families of the victims.

Mr. President,

Italy’s attention extends beyond the discussion that will take place throughout the Assembly, being equally focused on the overall efficiency and functionality of the Organization of American States as a multilateral forum for political debate, with an impeccable internal management and the consequent ability to take concrete action in order to face the challenges affecting this hemisphere.

Allow me to remind that Italy is one of the founders of the European Union, as well as among the major donors to the United Nations system. A system that we hope will become increasingly efficient, responsible, representative and democratic. A system able to act transparently and utilize the significant contribution provided by the Specialized Agencies as well as by the regional Organizations that often have more experience and greater familiarity of specific problems.

Italy follows with interest and involvement the various developments on the American continent to which it is tied by historical and vigorous bonds of a political, economic cultural and often personal nature. These bonds are reconfirmed by common initiatives and frequent reciprocal missions at the highest political levels.
Mr. President,

Italy’s increased interest in Latin America in the last 12 months is demonstrated by its participation as an observer to SICA (Central American Integration System); Italy’s request to be an observer at the Iberoamerican Summit; the country’s intent to organize events in celebration of the 200th anniversary of independence of Latin America. This strategy will culminate in the IV National Conference Italy-Latin America to take place in Milan on December 2nd and 3rd, centered on the topic “Latin American Integration and Dialogue with Europe in the Global Crisis”.

In this framework we reserve particular attention to the Organization of American States through our support for the projects presented by the Organization. Under Secretary Scotti conveyed Italy’s commitment in the course of Secretary General Insulza.

Because of the complex economic situation we cannot, at this time, quantify the total amount of the Italian contribution to the Organization’s programs for the current year 2009. which cannot be the same as 2008. However, we are committed to continuing our support of the Organization of American States, as we have in the past and notwithstanding difficult economic situation that our country now faces. We can as of now announce a first contribution of at least 130,000 dollars to be destined to the following programs:

- Mine Action in Ecuador and Peru
- Victim Assistance in Central America
- Initiatives on public policies regarding public security and human rights in the Americas.

Mr. President,

The agenda topics of the General Assembly that we received are impressive indeed in terms of scope and number. The topic of non-violence is one of great actuality and relevance, not only in our hemisphere, but everywhere in the world that sees wars
ripping through many countries. It will undoubtedly be an important session, rich in content and giving way to open debate and in-depth analyses.

For the constructive implementation of such a comprehensive Agenda, organizing the work is of prime importance. I wish to compliment and thank the Secretariat for its lengthy and extensive preparatory work, and I also wish to thank our hosts for their gracious hospitality in San Pedro Sula. I am convinced that this too will contribute to the success of the event. You have my compliments and best wishes.

Lastly, I would like to thank the OAS and all the members states for ths solidarity and very generous support demonstrated to my country and to the people affected by the recent disastrous earthquake in L’ Aquila.

Thankyou Mr. President.