

18 September 2006

Costa Rica Ratifies Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism

Becomes 21st nation to join efforts to fight terrorism in Western Hemisphere

By Eric Green
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Costa Rica has joined the United States and 19 other nations in the Western Hemisphere in ratifying a regional pact designed to eliminate the financing of terrorism and to deny safe haven to suspected terrorists.

In a September 15 statement, the Organization of American States (OAS) said Costa Rica deposited that day the instruments of ratification for the Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism. By doing so, said the OAS, Costa Rica is "thus honoring its commitment to collaborate in the international effort against the scourge" of terrorism.

Costa Rica's permanent representative to the OAS, Javier Sancho Bonilla, said that by ratifying the convention, his country now is "party to all hemispheric and international instruments in force to combat" terrorism.

In reference to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, OAS Secretary-General José Miguel Insulza urged continued cooperation among OAS member states to ensure that terrorism "never occurs" again in the Americas.

The hemispheric convention was adopted June 3, 2002, during the OAS General Assembly in Barbados. The U.S. Senate approved the pact in October 2005. (See [related article](#).)

The State Department said after the United States ratified the convention in November 2005 that the measure "was a powerful indication of this region's resolve to fight terrorism in all its forms." (See [fact sheet](#).)

John Maisto, U.S. permanent representative to the OAS, says that among the almost 3000 people killed during the terrorist attacks in 2001 were citizens of 30 of the OAS's 34 member states, who were "murdered by the enemies of freedom."

Maisto told the OAS September 12 that the fifth anniversary of the

terrorist attacks is a "powerful commemoration, not only for the 296 million citizens of the United States of America, but for the over 800 million people of this hemisphere. Five years and one day ago, 19 terrorists tried to send a message of hate and destruction in New York and Washington, D.C.," but "we saw our countries, our region, and our world come together as a community of nations to provide comfort, solidarity and hope." (See [related article](#).)

The U.S. State Department said in a report covering the year 2005 that terrorism in the Western Hemisphere primarily was perpetrated by narco-terrorist organizations based in Colombia and by the remnants of radical leftist groups in South America's Andean region.

The report, called *Country Reports on Terrorism*, said that, except in the United States and Canada, "there are no known operational cells of Islamic terrorists in the hemisphere, although scattered pockets of ideological supporters and facilitators in South America and the Caribbean lent financial, logistical, and moral support to terrorist groups in the Middle East."

The report, released April 28, said Cuba remained a state sponsor of terrorism, while Venezuela virtually ceased its cooperation in the global War on Terror, tolerating terrorists in its territory and seeking closer relations with Cuba and Iran, another state sponsor of terrorism.

The [Western Hemisphere section](#) is available on the State Department Web site, as is a White House report entitled [9/11 Five Years Later: Successes and Challenges](#).

The [full text](#) of Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism is available on the OAS Web site.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)

This page printed from: <http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2006&m=September&x=200609181335281xeneerg0.4429285>