



**INTER-AMERICAN NETWORK OF ACADEMIES OF SCIENCES (IANAS)  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
MARGARITA ISLAND, VENEZUELA, JUNE 9, 2007**

The Inter-American Network of Academies of Sciences (IANAS) held its Second General Assembly (GA) on June 9, 2007 in Margarita Island, Venezuela. The GA took place right after the Ist IANAS Conference, on "Strengthening S&T in the Americas: A Tool for Development, Social Inclusion and Democracy" held on June 7-8. The General Assembly brought together IANAS member Academies, and representatives from four countries with no Science Academy, to appraise the networks' actions in the last three years and discuss IANAS' role towards the promotion of scientific capacity and excellence for sustainable development in the Americas.

The following Science Academies were present at the General Assembly: Latin American Academy of Sciences (ACAL); National Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences (Argentina); National Academy of Sciences of Bolivia; Brazilian Academy of Sciences; Caribbean Academy of Sciences; The Academies of Arts, Humanities and Sciences of Canada; Caribbean Scientific Union; Chilean Academy of Sciences; Colombian Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences; National Academy of Sciences (Costa Rica); Cuban Academy of Sciences; Academy of Sciences of the Dominican Republic; Academy of Medical, Physical and Natural Sciences of Guatemala; Mexican Academy of Sciences; National Academy of Sciences of Peru; National Academy of Sciences (USA); and Academy of Physical, Mathematical and Natural Sciences of Venezuela.

Representatives from the national scientific communities of the following countries were also present: Oris Sanjur, President of the Panamanian Association for the Advancement of Science; Jorge A. Huete-Pérez, Vice-President of the Nicaraguan Society for Science; Maximo E. Drets, Emeritus Professor of the Clemente Estable Institute of Biological Investigation, Uruguay; and Fritz

Deshommes, Research Provost of the State University of Haiti.

The Second IANAS GA was opened with a welcome address delivered by Claudio Bifano, President of the Academy of Physical, Mathematical and Natural Sciences of Venezuela. Hernan Chaimovich and Howard Alper, IANAS Co-chairs, addressed the audience congratulating and thanking the host Academy for the organization of the General Assembly, welcoming all to Margarita Island and wishing participants a fruitful discussion.

In the first session "Benchmarking the last three years: Achievements and Challenges", IANAS member Academies delivered brief presentations summarizing the major actions undertaken by each one of them over the past three years. The engagement of the Academies in the IANAS programs were detailed. The actions of each Academy to implement their core mission - i.e., support of national scientific and technological development and assist national policy and decision making processes in issues where Science has a role to play – were highlighted.

The second session on "Organizing National Scientific Communities" had as objective the discussion of how can IANAS develop capacity building initiatives to help countries with no Science Academy. Representatives from the scientific communities of Panama, Nicaragua, Uruguay and Haiti delivered presentations focusing on the state of the art of Science and Technology on these countries, the level of organization of the national scientific communities, and how can IANAS be of assistance in the strengthening of local S&T. After a very productive discussion, it was decided that IANAS should develop further contacts with these countries to develop a plan of action for this area.



In the session “Three Years of IANAS: The Road Since 2004 and the Way Ahead”, the Co-chairs presented a report on the mission, membership, structure and achievements since the inaugural meeting held in Chile. Alper and Chaimovich highlighted the active role played by the network in policy making in the region, through intense collaboration with OAS, IADB, UNESCO and CARICOM. In recognition of the network’s contributions, in December 2006 the Permanent Council of OAS recognized IANAS as a civil society organization credentialed within its structure to officially participate and collaborate in activities of the organization. The Co-chairs also praised the development of the Science Education and Water Programs, which have successfully held several meetings. As for the Capacity Building Program, it was recognized that significant steps had been given, such as a visit to Nicaragua and the IANAS-Ford Foundation Study. The network has also been effective in disclosing information via its trilingual website and bulletins. The co-chairs congratulated all for the successful structuring of IANAS, thanking the member Academies and the IANAS Steering Committee for the work achieved.

After the unanimous approval of the report, a productive discussion on future actions was held. The following initiatives were listed as possible actions for the network in the near future: (1) promotion of existing and new IAP Programs in the region; (2) implementation of an Inter-American Science and Technology Information System; (3) enlargement of the exchange of expertise to strengthen the existing Academies and promote the establishment of new Academies and Science Organizations in the Americas; (4) formulation of an innovative hemispheric scientific mobility program for the less developed countries of the region; (5) coordination of the actions of IAP, IANAS, TWAS and ICSU in the Americas; and (6) drafting of a first IANAS Strategic Plan. These actions will be included in the IANAS Plan of Action that will be submitted to IAP. Its implementation will depend not only on IAP’s

support, but also on the support of other partners willing to financially contribute to specific actions.

The member Academies then discussed the new IANAS statute, which was drafted by a committee established by the Steering Committee and had previously circulated among membership. After redefining the composition of the Executive Board of the network - which will now be integrated by the co-chairs, the Academy hosting the present General Assembly, the Academy hosting the next General Assembly, and five Academies not represented in the citizenship of the co-chairs – the Statute was unanimously approved.

The election of the new IANAS Executive Board was the next item in the agenda. The Academies of Arts, Humanities and Sciences of Canada were unanimously elected as host to the 2010 IANAS General Assembly. Hernan Chaimovich, from the Brazilian Academy of Sciences, and Juan Pedro Laclette, from the Mexican Academy of Sciences were unanimously elected IANAS co-chairs for the period 2007-2010. The following Academies were elected to the Executive Board of IANAS: National Academy of Exact, Physical and Natural Sciences (Argentina); Chilean Academy of Sciences; National Academy of Sciences (Costa Rica); Academy of Medical, Physical and Natural Sciences of Guatemala; and National Academy of Sciences (USA).

Having no more further business to discuss and having covered the meeting’s agenda, the General Assembly was closed with concluding remarks from the host Academy and the elected co-chairs.