

OAS Permanent Council
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As delivered.

STATEMENT BY U.S. PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
AMBASSADOR LUIGI R. EINAUDI

Mr. Chairman:

I am both happy and proud to join my colleagues in congratulating our distinguished Secretary General for a job well done in Nicaragua and I might add a splendid report this morning.

I am happy that my government can join other governments, both in the hemisphere and from around the world, in celebrating the democratic process and civic responsibility with which the people and government of Nicaragua held elections on February 25.

And I am proud because the quality of those elections was due in no small measure to the leadership of our Secretary General, Ambassador Joao Baena Soares, and to the efforts since last August of this Organization and its courageous, far-sighted and competent personnel. The 433 OAS observers each deserve our gratitude. I wish to join the Secretary General in giving special recognition to the members of the OAS Secretariat. Our Governments, electoral institutions and legislatures were asked to contribute effectively as observers to assist the more than 100 members of the OAS Secretariat who established offices in all nine electoral districts. I salute their professionalism, their energy and their idealism. They enabled the OAS to create the structure on which all the other observers relied and that gave Nicaraguans the confidence their votes would count. With his customary foresight and wisdom the Secretary General agreed, even before the election, to maintain an OAS observer presence in Nicaragua through the inauguration of the new government. My government agrees that a continued international observer presence in Nicaragua will contribute to the national reconciliation that is so vital to the consolidation of democracy in Nicaragua and peace in Central America.

Mr. Chairman:

The electoral observation in Nicaragua has been a watershed experience for the Organization of American States. By vigorously affirming the principles of representative democracy and respect for human rights that are enshrined in its Charter, the observer delegation organized by the Secretary General is proving to the world that the OAS is very much relevant to the new democratic order that is emerging not just in our hemisphere but throughout the world.

In the months ahead, on other issues, in other situations, and in other countries, we will have numerous occasions to perfect our ability to cooperate on the positive agenda of institutional development, justice, education, and economic progress that can be built on the foundations of freedom we honor today. Today I wish merely to affirm that the United States looks forward to continuing to work with the OAS, and that we are confident that, under the Secretary General's able guidance, we will together make even greater contributions to region-wide peace and prosperity.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary General.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.