

Last year, the Justice Studies Center of the Americas (JSCA) held an International Seminar to exchange experiences in judicial management and general reform, with specific reference to the Member States of the OAS. It was particularly gratifying to note the participation by several of the distinguished jurists of Member States. The Lord Chancellor's Department of the United Kingdom and the Basque Statistical Institute also attended in the persons of Mr. Peter Handcock and Dr. Louis Goltaker respectively. The attendance of other computer technology consultants in support of judicial management was also appreciated. The seminar would not have been possible without the support of the Government of the Republic of Chile which is the host country for the Center.

In 2002, the Parliament and the Government of Chile approved the Headquarters' Agreement for JSCA. The Center would like to record its thanks to the Government of Chile for the special effort made through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice in making the agreement a reality in such a short space of time.

The Center is an institution established by the General Assembly of the OAS in compliance with the Plan of Action of the 2nd Summit of the Americas and the further recommendations of the meetings of Attorneys General and Ministers of Justice of the OAS. The Center is charged with the responsibility of conducting research and facilitating the exchange of views in the area of judicial systems management. It depends for its budget on the



voluntary contributions of Member States and other governmental and non-governmental organizations as well as public sector parties and individuals. In the short period of its existence, the Center and its first Executive Director, Dr. Juan Enrique Vargas, have made a considerable impact on the region.

The JSCA provides a clearing house for information on the various judicial systems of the OAS. More particularly, the Center is the coordinator and facilitator in fundamental research and the measurement of levels of achievement in the various areas of justice delivery systems. The Center welcomes its increasing role of providing expert assistance in all areas of the judicial sector at the request of any of our member countries. It also assists in identifying sources of funding for the executions of projects. Though a fledging organization, we are proud of our impressive record. A visit to our website (<http://www.cejamericas.org>) will attest to the range of our activities. As a service center, it welcomes requests for assistance in any of the areas of its operations from any of the Member States and their institutions.

The seminar and its discussions provided another opportunity for serious comparative work in all areas of management of the delivery of Justice. There are several different jurisdictions within the OAS with different historical pasts and developments. Much was gained by the cross-pollination of ideas on the functioning of the different judicial systems in the region. This was done in a most friendly and charming environment.

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* Karl Hudson-Phillips, a Trinidad & Tobago jurist, is a Member of the JSCA Board of Directors. In June 2002, he was re-elected to this position by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States. Last February, he was elected one of the eighteen (18) judges of the International Criminal Court, by the representatives of the 85 States Parties that ratified the Rome Statute. He was sworn in as a Judge on the 11th March 2003 in The Hague.