

The Organization of American States (OAS) — the main forum for hemispheric policy discussions and followup — is a principal participant in implementing many Summit of the Americas' commitments. It is also a leading regional force for strengthening democracy, human rights, and security. Canada has backed reforms intended to expand overall OAS capacity to support common hemispheric endeavours.

Canada hosted the OAS General Assembly from June 4 to 6, 2000, in Windsor, Ontario. The event brought together OAS foreign ministers for talks on major hemispheric issues, including democracy, the fight against drug trafficking, anti-corruption measures, and measures to assist war-affected children. They also discussed themes for the next Summit of the Americas.

Summit of the Americas, 2001

The first two summits of the Americas, in Miami in 1994 and Santiago, Chile, in 1998, fostered hemisphere-wide, practical co-operation on a range of priorities that mesh well with Canadian economic and human security priorities. The action plan adopted in Santiago covers, for example, economic integration and trade liberalization, improvements in education, consolidation of democratization, strengthening of human rights protection, and reduction of poverty and discrimination.

From April 20 to 22, 2001, presidents and prime ministers will convene at the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City to chart a common course for the new millennium. As chair, Canada will lead in developing the agenda and guiding preparations. This is a major undertaking requiring co-operation among federal, provincial, and municipal governments, as well as co-operation with businesses, indigenous organizations, and civil society.

In close consultation with its domestic partners and the OAS, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Pan American Health Organization, the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the World Bank, Canada will set a results-oriented program that will help the hemisphere and its governments combat inequality and help spread the wealth that is being created through expanded economic liberalization and increased integration.