

Ensure that national legislation relating to freedom of expression is applied equitably to all, respecting freedom of expression and access to information of all citizens, and that journalists and opinion leaders are free to investigate and publish without fear of reprisals, harassment or retaliatory actions, including the misuse of anti-defamation laws;

3. JUSTICE, RULE OF LAW AND SECURITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Recognizing that equal access to independent, impartial and timely justice is a cornerstone of democracy and economic and social development, welcoming more frequent meetings, consultations and collaboration among our justice ministers, supreme court justices, attorneys general, ombudsman officials, law enforcement officials and others, and noting with satisfaction the increased interest in collaborating and sharing experiences to develop and implement judicial and law enforcement reforms:

Access to Justice

Support public and private initiatives and programs to educate people about their rights relating to access to justice, and promote measures that ensure prompt, equal and universal access to justice;

Promote cooperation to exchange experiences in alternative dispute resolution mechanisms to expedite the administration of justice, including among indigenous peoples, for which they may request the support as appropriate of the OAS, the IDB and other entities;

Independence of the Judiciary

Encourage measures to strengthen the independence of the judiciary, including transparent judicial selection, secure tenure on the bench, appropriate standards of conduct and systems of accountability;

Hemispheric Meetings of Ministers of Justice

Continue to support the work done in the context of the Meetings of Ministers of Justice and Attorneys General of the Americas, whose Fourth Meeting will take place in Trinidad and Tobago, as well as subsequent meetings, and the implementation of their conclusions and recommendations;

Develop a funding plan for the Justice Studies Center for the Americas that takes into account the interests and resources of both governments and other likely donors, and that will enable the Center to contribute not only to the modernization and formulation of public policy in this area, but also to the institutional development of judicial systems in the region;

Develop an exchange of best practices and recommendations, through the Meetings of Ministers of Justice and other appropriate mechanisms, seeking the technical and financial