



Youth enjoying their computer facilities at the *Museo de los Niños*, San Jose, Costa Rica

Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada's (DFAIT) Glyn Berry Program has allocated over \$1 million of its democracy support funding to the Americas. Part of this funding has supported the development of a strong and vibrant civil society, free and open media outlets, and research networks focusing on democracy issues in the region. For example, in March 2008, Canada supported the OAS convening a special meeting of the Permanent Council with representatives from civil society to examine the contribution of civil society organizations to strengthening democratic culture in the hemisphere.

Canada has also supported the creation of the first broad-based civil society network of democracy champions in Latin America. The network provides over 90 civil society organizations with the space to exchange best practices

and develop strategies for the defence of civil society in the region, and increase awareness in the international community about the challenges facing civil society. Similarly, Canada supported the development of the Andean Democracy Research Network which produces timely, impartial and high-quality assessments of democracy in the Andean region. The network also provides a forum to analyze and debate ways to strengthen the implementation of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

Another example is Canada's support to the Carter Center which has facilitated a series of workshops with journalists and media professionals to address the political polarization in the Venezuelan media. With Canada's support, the Carter Center has also engaged with governments to encourage the application of the Inter-American Democratic

Charter and to assist citizen groups and other domestic actors that work in concert with the Charter's principles to tackle the root causes of potential democratic crises.

Building transparent and accountable institutions in Haiti

Canada recognizes that institutions are the building blocks of democratic governance. To this end, Canada is working with Haiti to transform the police, the judiciary and the prison systems into professional and accountable institutions. In partnership with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Correctional Services Canada (CSC), DFAIT has facilitated the deployment of police and correctional officers to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) to provide practical advice that has led to security sector reforms.