

AMAZON COOPERATION TREATY
REPORT OF ACTIVITIES OF THE *PRO TEMPORE* SECRETARIAT
March 10, 1997 – September 10, 1998

PRESENTATION

Since March 10th, 1997, and at the honorable request of the Contracting Parties, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela has been in charge of the direction of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty. This delicate responsibility -which will last approximately three years- was assumed as a challenge, in the most positive meaning of the term, to maintain the excellence level demonstrated by other Governments preceding Venezuela's tenure of the Secretariat, in keeping with the determination to make true the common expectation expressed –over the last 20 years- by the eight countries sharing the Amazon Basin, by means of the signature of the Treaty.

The results of the Venezuelan administration are briefly reflected hereinafter. We believe we have greatly achieved our goal, but that much more can still be achieved, by means of the coordination of efforts undertaken within the determined support and the political will of the Governments towards the consolidation of the Treaty as a forum for the regional cooperation and integration, as well as for the institutional strengthening of its Secretariat. The international financial and technical cooperation during this period - coming from the Netherlands, Finland, the EU and the IDB- has constituted the decisive support as far as projects, studies, meetings and publications are concerned.

Actions have been undertaken in strict accordance with the judicial frame of the Treaty, especially, with the Regulations of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, thus continuing, as far as practicable, with the transparent holding of dialogues and consultations with the accredited Embassies of the Member Countries in Caracas, which have consistently supported the Secretariat for the better exercise of its powers. The Ad Hoc Consultation Committee has been frequently consulted so as to achieve a better coordination of the affairs requiring personal exchanges.

Meetings of the Amazonian Cooperation Council, the Special Commissions on Education, CEEDA; Tourism, CETURA; Science and Technology, CECTA and Environment, CEMAA, were held. Likewise, several workshops and seminars were carried out under the auspices of the Secretariat. Furthermore, the *Pro Tempore* Secretary and other representatives of the Secretariat had to attend several international meetings. We are proud to highlight that a meeting of the ACT was held, for the first time, in Guyana and that the first CEEDA meeting has been carried out in Quito. Important progress was made within the Work Group on the Permanent Secretariat. The intense activities carried out within the field of publications and aimed at preserving the institutional record of the Treaty, are highlighted. Among them, it is worth to mention the CD-ROM published on account of the 20th anniversary of the Treaty, whose content has been published in the Internet.

Within this transition stage towards the establishment of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, with headquarters in Brasilia, we hope to be provided with new opportunities to efficiently collaborate with our countries, in keeping with their best interests, and in particular, to collaborate with the inhabitants of the Region.

Caracas, September 1998

Victor R. Carazo
Ambassador
Pro Tempore Secretary

I. INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Appointment of Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo to the ACT's *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo was appointed to the ACT's *Pro Tempore* Secretariat through Resolution DGSP-041, of February 13th 1997. Such Resolution was subscribed by Dr. Miguel Angel Bureli Rivas, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Venezuela, N° 36,147, of February 17th 1997. Carazo's Appointment was timely announced by means of notes to the accredited Embassies of the countries integrating the Amazon Cooperation Treaty in Caracas.

Visit of a Venezuelan Delegation to the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat in Lima

In order to carry out a suitable transfer and smooth the way for the future works of the ACT's *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, an official Venezuelan Delegation visited Lima on February 17-18,1997. Such delegation was integrated by Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, Minister Counselor Angela Delgado de Salazar and Dr. María Elena Medina. A meeting called by Ambassador Jorge Voto-Bernales -*Pro Tempore* Secretary at that time- and held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Headquarters in Lima, opened a series of work meetings carried out during this visit. Likewise, other meetings were carried out with the Special Commissions Coordinators and the FAO's Chief Advisor, Dr. Roberto Samanez, the person in charge of the cooperation project between that Organization and the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

At the end of the visit, a Memorandum of Understanding, regarding the issues and goods which had to be transferred to the new headquarters in Caracas, was signed.

Pro Tempore Secretariat's Transfer

On March 10th 1997, the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat located in the Republic of Peru was transferred to the Republic of Venezuela. The Act of Transfer was signed by the outgoing Secretary, Ambassador Jorge Voto-Bernales and the incoming Secretary, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, in the presence of the Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela, Ambassador Carlos Bivero, in a special event held in the *Casa Amarilla*, headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Caracas. The addresses given by the three representatives were attached as an annex to the Final Report of the VII Ordinary Meeting of the Amazonian Cooperation Council, mentioned hereinafter.

Given the Secretariat's transfer, the outgoing and incoming Secretaries signed a Memorandum of Understanding, where the issues and goods transferred are specified. The following issue was included in the Memorandum: "With regard to Subprogram II of the ACT/IDB Agreement and the national consultations for the Andean-Amazon countries on the criteria and indicators of the Amazonian forest preservation, financed by the Government of Finland, it was agreed that, given the high levels achieved in the execution and as few remains to be accomplished in the short-run, such subprogram and consultations shall be concluded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru".

The GCP/RLA/128/NET Project, in its second stage initiated in June 1996, financed by the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, managed by the FAO and aimed at supporting the strengthening of the ACT instances, was transferred to Caracas, at the request of the Government of Venezuela. Such request was carried out by means of Communiqué 00144, of February 3rd 1997, issued by Dr. Miguel Angel Burelli Rivas -Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela. It was addressed to Mr. Jacques Diouf, Director General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

Subprogram I on the Agreement between the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat and the Inter-American Development Bank (ATN/SF-4644/RG) on the strengthening of the ACT National Commissions was also transferred. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs appointed Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo as Authorized Representative to the IDB for all actions related to the enforcement of the Subprogram, by means of note 335, of March 21st 1997, addressed to the IDB Representative in Caracas.

As for operating expenses, the Venezuelan Government allocated the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat the amount of Bs. 248,600,000 (US\$ 518,000 approximately) for the period starting on March 10th 1997 and finishing on December 31st 1998. Likewise, it put at the Secretariat's disposal diplomatic and technical staff chargeable to the National Government, in order to ensure the accurate functioning of the institution.

During its establishment in Caracas, the Secretariat relied on the technical assistance of the FAO Project, aforementioned, as well as economic support for the purchase of computer equipment and other provisions.

Diplomatic and Technical Staff Attached to the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat

The following staff has been appointed to the Secretariat; all Governments of the Member Countries having been informed.

Diplomatic Support Staff:

Mrs. Angela Delgado de Salazar, Ministry Counselor, Diplomatic Coordinator.

Mrs. Emma Toledo Padilla, First Secretary, Regional Coordinator of Subprogram I on the PTS-ACT/IDB Agreement.

Mrs. Beatriz Ochoa Parra (Biologist), Third Secretary.

Technical Support Staff:

Dr. María Elena Medina Puig, Technical Coordinator

Professor Aída Santana Nazoa, Coordinator of the Special Commission on Science and Technology in the Amazon (CECTA).

Miguel Torrealba, esq., Coordinator of the Special Commission on the Amazonian Environment (CEMAA)

Mrs. Eduvigis Sánchez-Bueno, Coordinator of the Special Commission of the Amazon Region on Tourism (CETURA)

Mr. Carlos Ruíz, Coordinator of the Special Commission of the Amazon Region on Education (CEEDA) and the Special Commission on Amazon Indigenous Affairs (CEAIA).

GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO Project:

Víctor Palma, esq., Chief Technical Advisor

Mrs. Sophie Grouwels, Associate Professional

Subprogram I, PTS/ACT-IDB Agreement:

Mrs. Emma Toledo Padilla, Regional Coordinator

Pro Tempore Secretariat's Work Plan

One of the prioritarian commitments of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, given its transfer to Caracas, consisted in the establishment of its 1997-1999's Work Plan. With this aim in view, the PTS started working on the implementation of a coordination strategy and methodology as well as some initiatives, with the acceptance of all the Contracting parties. Likewise, it directed its efforts towards the enlargement of the institutional participation of all the sectors involved in the works carried out within the Treaty. While being submitted to the respective Governments, it was mentioned that such program was flexible and that it could be progressively changed, according to the countries' best interests. The Work Plan tries to follow up and

strengthen works already undertaken in the recent years, as well as to introduce new cooperation areas characterized by their feasibility, so as to prioritize projects offering greater opportunities of implementation.

Within the framework of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, Venezuela places more emphasis on the opening of new cooperation opportunities regarding, for instance, strengthening the protected areas, carrying out further studies on biodiversity, upgrading the implementation of the genetic resources in order to favor the peoples of the region, developing health programs, strengthening mechanisms of prevention and treatment of the hydric resources pollution, developing transportation and communications, fostering ecotourism, strengthening –at the regional level- the mechanisms aimed at fighting against the trafficking of narcotics, guaranteeing a greater participation of women in the management of the Amazon matters, fostering regional solidarity in case of disasters, among other cases, according to the needs. All these actions need to be undertaken, of course, without neglecting all the cooperation initiatives which have already been substantially developed.

During the preparation of its Work Plan, the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat received technical advice from the GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO Project.

The Work Plan was submitted and distributed among the accredited Chiefs of Missions in Caracas or their Representatives participating at the X Meeting of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat's *Ad Hoc* Committee of Consultations, held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela, on June 12th 1997.

First Meeting at the Inter-American Development Bank Representation in Caracas, held within the framework of the preparation of the transfer of Subprogram I to Caracas.

On March 17th 1997, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, *Pro Tempore* Secretary and Mrs. Angela Delgado de Salazar, Diplomatic Coordinator, met Dr. Ramón Rodríguez Hernández, Multisectoral Specialist, in the IDB Representation Headquarters in Caracas, in order to dwell upon all the aspects related to Subprogram I on the Agreement between the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat and the IDB (ATN/SF-4644/RG) transfer to Venezuela. Such Subprogram includes advice on the strengthening of the ACT National Commissions of the countries involved.

Work Meeting between the National Council for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICIT) and the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat

The meeting was held at the CONICIT's Headquarters, in Caracas, on April 17th 1997, after its President's, Dr. Ignacio Avalos, kind invitation. The meeting set the stage for a fruitful exchange on the ACT's subject areas, the guidelines and orientation of its decision-making agencies, the future expectations of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat in Venezuela, the presentation of its Work Plan and the appointment of the Special Coordinator of the Commission on Science and Technology (CECTA). The ongoing exchange of information between the CONICIT and the Secretariat was agreed.

Signature of the Agreement on the Second Stage of the PTS/FAO Project Supporting the ACT's *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

The Signature of the Agreement on the Second Stage of the GCP/RLA/128/NET *Pro Tempore* Secretariat Support Project was held on October 21st 1997, at the Headquarters of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome. This project is mainly aimed at improving the countries' participation mechanisms within the Structure of the Treaty by means of the strengthening of horizontal cooperation common actions among them. This Second Stage of the Project extends from June 1996 to July 1999 and it was transferred from Peru to Venezuela, given the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat's transfer to Caracas on March 10th 1997.

Over the last six years, when the Secretariat was still located in Ecuador, the Netherlands have been supporting the Amazon Cooperation Treaty through a non-refundable financing aimed at the formulation and execution of programs, projects and studies, especially in fields such as environment, science and technology and more recently, education.

The execution of the GCP/RLA/128/NET Project over the last years, under Ecuador, Peru and now Venezuela's direction of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, has constituted the driving force behind the enlargement of the cooperation within the ACT and the strengthening of the Secretariat itself as an Institution.

The Agreement applying to the Second Stage of the Project was subscribed between Mr. André Reigner, the FAO's Associate Director General of Technical Cooperation and Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, *Pro Tempore* Secretary of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty.

Mission of Intermediate Technical Examination of the GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO Project supporting the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat

The mission was carried out from March 16th to April 8th 1998. It was aimed at assessing the execution of the Second Stage of the Project, initiated in June 1996, in keeping with the programmed activities and the achieved results, by means of talks with the authorities of the countries visited. Such mission was integrated by its President, Dr. Castilla-Simarro, representative of the FAO; Dr. Johan H. Edens, representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands as donor country, and Dr. Luis Román, National of Peru, specially engaged for performing this activity, in representation of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat. Dr. Víctor Palma, the FAO's Chief Technical Advisor and head of the Project also participated in this mission.

The countries visited, in chronological order, were: Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil and Venezuela again. The presentation of the preliminary report took place in Caracas, on March 16th, in the presence of representatives of the ACT's accredited embassies in Venezuela and national authorities participating within the framework of the Treaty. The session was inaugurated through the intervention of the *Pro Tempore* Secretary, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, who dwelled upon issues such as the Venezuelan counterpart to the Project; the support granted by the Netherlands and the FAO to the Secretariat; the need for an ongoing external cooperation to the works of the Treaty; the Secretariat's management of the collection of funds; and the probable changes which must be expected regarding the future management of the Amazon, within the framework of new scenarios.

Subsequently, Dr. José Castilla-Simarro submitted the summary of the conclusions of the mission, with recommendations as for the priorities in the execution of the project within the period of time left for its conclusion.

The *Pro Tempore* Secretariat officially submitted the written report of the Review Mission to the Governments of the Member Countries, as well as to all the people involved in the meetings carried out.

Pro Tempore Secretary's visit to the Regional Headquarters of the FAO for Latin America and the Caribbean, Santiago de Chile

Thanks to the invitation extended by Dr. Gustavo Gordillo de Anda, FAO's Assistant Director General and Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo visited the aforementioned headquarters in the city of Santiago de Chile, on July 23-24, 1998. The invitation was also extended to Dr. Víctor Palma, Chief Technical Consultant of the FAO Project supporting the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

On July 23rd, Ambassador Carazo was welcomed by Dr. Gordillo de Anda, Dr. Roberto Samanez, Head of the Operations Regional Unit for Latin America and the Caribbean, Víctor Palma and Tomás López, Associate Regional Representative. Dr. Gordillo de Anda, who demonstrated a very particular interest in the works carried out within the framework of the Treaty, received concise information on the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat's management since its establishment in Caracas, as well as on the progress achieved regarding the administration of the Second Stage of the GCP/RLA/128/NET Project. Special emphasis was placed on the consideration of new forms of collaboration for the future, aimed at ensuring a better development of the Secretariat's activities during the time left in Venezuela, and during the transition period towards the establishment of the Permanent Secretariat in Brasilia.

Likewise, the *Pro Tempore* Secretary held working meetings with the FAO's Regional Representation staff in charge of the Project. Furthermore, Dr. Víctor Palma held some meetings related to such project.

Ambassador Carazo expressed his great satisfaction as for the results of the visit and expressed his gratitude to Dr. Gordillo for the warm welcome and the arrangements carried out to prepare the visit.

II. MEETINGS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE TREATY

VIII Ordinary Meeting of the Amazonian Cooperation Council

The meeting was held at the Headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Caracas, on March 10 –11, 1997. The Final Report summarizes the most important issues unanimously approved and contains the adopted resolutions as attachments to the document, regarding the following topics:

- 1) Acknowledgement of the active and efficient work carried out by Peru and Ambassador Jorge Voto-Bernales through the Secretariat in Lima;
- 2) A three year-period established for the exercise of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat in Caracas;
- 3) Commemoration of the XX Anniversary of the ACT;
- 4) Arrangements to identify financing sources for the San Miguel-Putumayo Project;
- 5) Gathering of Information on the navigability of the Amazon fluvial systems;
- 6) Strengthening of governmental coordination within the ACT.

The meeting was presided over by Ambassador Edmundo González Urrutia, Sectoral Director General of International Policy within the Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Oswaldo Ramírez L., Chief of the Delegation of Ecuador, was elected as Vice-Chairman and Ambassador Clodoaldo Huguency, Chief of the Delegation of Brazil was elected as Secretary General (Rapporteur).

Special Commissions Meetings

I Ordinary Meeting of the Special Commission of the Amazon Region on Education (CEEDA)

It is well-known that the CEEDA was established through resolution RES/V MRE-TCA/4, adopted by the V Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers, in Lima, on December 5th 1995, at the request of the Ministers of Education of the Member Countries in a meeting held in Santafé de Bogotá, on November 3-6, 1992.

The First Meeting was held in Quito, on October 30-31, 1997. It was preceded by the Regional Seminar aimed at elaborating Handbooks on a Common Program fostering Education and raising Awareness at the School level, organized by the Government of Peru.

This first CEEDA Meeting was inaugurated by Dr. Mauro Ordoñez, Minister of Education and Culture from Ecuador. During this opening session, the *Pro Tempore* Secretary of the ACT, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, also took the floor. The General Committee of the Meeting was integrated by Dr. Gladys Maldonado Coello – from Ecuador- as Chairwoman, Dr. Johny Márquez –from Venezuela- as Vice-Chairman, and Kayta Morales Rainaff –from Bolivia- as Rapporteur.

In the Meeting, the decision was made to undertake actions in aspects such as the “Considerations on Proposals for Programs and/or Projects of Interest for the Amazon Region”, given the fact that a common ground was set for the CEEDA and two great programs: Environmental Education and Bilingual Intercultural Education. Each country selected the topics, in keeping with its short-term objectives and its strengths, and committed itself to carry out internal consultations for the consensual approval of the preselected program by institutions, the governments and the civil society. The Final Report of the Meeting specifies the programs selected by each country.

Such Meeting was technically and financially supported by the GCP/RLA/128/NET Program directed by the FAO, pursuant to an Agreement letter signed between the Secretariat and such organization.

IV Ordinary Meeting of the Special Commission of the Amazon Region on Tourism (CETURA)

Such meeting was held in Rio de Janeiro, on December 17-18, 1997, parallel to the 1997's World Ecotur Summit. This opportunity set the stage for the inauguration of the new Conventions Center of this city.

Among the different topics discussed, emphasis was placed on the importance of the elaboration of a common plan on ecotourism in the Amazon region. With this aim in view, the decision was made to carry out a seminar during 1998, either in Venezuela or in Peru, having as a core topic the "potential of Ecotourism in the Amazon". This will precede the V CETURA Meeting. Likewise, emphasis was placed on the need for the VI Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to be held in Caracas, in 1998 –which will coincide with the celebration of the XX Anniversary of the signature of the Treaty- to focus on the regional ecotourism.

The IV CETURA Meeting was presided over by Counselor Carlos Alfredo Lazary Teixeira, Chief of the Business Operations Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil. Ambassador Milos Alcalay, from Venezuela, was elected as the Rapporteur of the Meeting.

This meeting was technically supported by the GCP/RLA/128 NET FAO Project supporting the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

VI Ordinary Meeting of the Special Commission on Science and Technology in The Amazon (CECTA)

Such meeting was held in Caracas, Venezuela, on March 5-6, 1997. It was inaugurated by Dr. Benjamín Scharifker, member of the Board of Directors of the National Council for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICIT) from Venezuela, and by Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, *Pro Tempore* Secretary of the ACT. The Directive Board was integrated by Dr. Ana María Alcázar as Chairwoman, Minister Carlos Zapata López, from Peru, as Vice-Chairman and Mrs. Carmen Miranda, from Bolivia, as the Rapporteur of the meeting.

Among the consensus achieved, it is worth to mention the need for assessing and analyzing the group of programs and projects directed by the CECTA, through the application of suitable assessment elements aimed at establishing a prioritarian list of such programs and projects, pursuant to particular interests and needs. They reiterated the importance of the CECTA as an appropriate forum for discussion and reflection of the policies and strategies regarding science and technology in the Amazon Region; a commission aimed at fostering the execution of the projects considered prioritarian by the Member Countries of the ACT.

This meeting was technically and financially supported by the GCP/RLA/128/NET Project, directed by the FAO, pursuant to an Agreement Letter previously signed between the Secretariat and such Organization.

VI Ordinary Meeting of the Special Commission on the Amazonian Environment (CEMAA)

This meeting was held in the city of Georgetown, Cooperative Republic of Guyana, on May 7-8, 1998. Dr. Gail Teixeira, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of the host country, Dr. Navin Chandarpal, Advisor of the Office of the President of the Republic regarding Science, Technology and Environment, and Ambassador Carazo, *Pro Tempore* Secretary, participated in the opening session, presided over by Mr. Forbes July, the ACT's National Coordinator in Guyana.

Mr. Chandarpal, Chief of the Delegation of Guyana, was elected as Chairman of the Meeting. Mr. Alfredo Antonio Recalde Cevallos, from Ecuador, participated as Vice-Chairman, and Mrs. Aleidi Sangronis Delgado, from Venezuela, as Rapporteur.

During the meeting, the delegations of the Member Countries came to a series of agreements, being the most important the assessment of the programs and projects of the CEMAA and therefore, their restructuring. This

initiative is aimed at achieving a more efficient and effective development of the functioning of the Commission. With this aim in view, several criteria to be used as technical basis for the prioritizing process were determined.

Likewise, such meeting set the stage for the delegations to exchange experiences, studies and information on the policies, programs and activities which have been carried out in the environmental field in each of the Amazon Countries, as well as for the definition of the schedule for technical events to be held within the framework of the CEMAA. All this will favor the preservation of the environment and the natural resources of the Amazon, and consequently, the sustainable development of the region.

Such meeting was technically and financially supported by the GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO Project, pursuant to an Agreement Letter previously signed between the Secretariat and such Organization.

It should be highlighted that this is the first meeting of the ACT held in Guyana, therefore, it had a wide impact in all the media of that country.

Workshops and Seminars

International Workshop on the Current and Potential State of the Management and Development of the Minor Tropical Forest in Latin America.

At the request of the Permanent National Commission of Peru, the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty sponsored, coupled with the Central American Council for Forests and Protected Areas (CCAB-AP), the “International Workshop on the Current and Potential State of the Management and Development of the Minor Tropical Forest in Latin America”. The workshop was held in Pucallpa, Peru, on June 2-6, 1997 and it was attended by specialists from 18 Latin American countries. This workshop was financed by the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and the Kingdom of the Netherland’s Cooperation Program (DGIS). The German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), and the IKC NATUURBEHEER (Management of Nature and Fishery) from Holand granted the technical assistance. This workshop was also attended by outstanding specialists from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), representatives from national and international institutions, such as the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the International Center for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF), the Tropical Agricultural Center for Research and Education (CATIE), among other agencies directly working with the problem of the minor forests in Latin America.

The FAO Project supporting the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was in charge of the technical organization of the event and the preparation and publication of the Annual Report and the Pucallpa Proposal on Sustainable Development of the Minor Forests in Tropical America. Both documents were submitted, distributed and discussed within the XI World Congress on Forests, held in Antalya, Turkey, in October 1997. In the International Workshop, the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was represented by Dr. María Elena Medina, Technical Coordinator of the PTS.

Bolivian National Consultation on the Criteria and Indicators of the Amazonian Forest Sustainability

This event was organized by the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Religious Affairs of Bolivia, with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru, in charge of the national consultations within the “Tarapoto Proposal” as the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was transferred to Venezuela, given the high levels achieved in the execution and as few remains to be accomplished in the short-run. The National Consultation was carried out in the city of Cochabamba, Bolivia, on June 17-19, 1997.

This activity relied on the financment of the Government of Finland and the technical advice of the GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO Project.

The Bolivian Consultation on Validation was published by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat in a volume dated June 1997.

Venezuelan National Consultation on the Criteria and Indicators of the Amazon Forest Sustainability

This event was organized by the Ministry of the Environment and the Renewable Natural Resources of Venezuela, and the Forestry Autonomous Service of Venezuela (SEFORVEN), with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru, in charge of the national consultations within the “Tarapoto Proposal”, as the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was transferred to Venezuela, given the high levels in the execution and as few remains to be accomplished in the short-run. The National Consultation was carried out in Caracas, Venezuela, on July 28-30, 1997, preceeded by regional workshops in Mérida, Barquisimeto and Ciudad Bolívar. The *Pro Tempore* Secretary, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, inaugurated the workshop in Mérida and participated in the opening session of the National Consultation in Caracas, on July 28th.

This activity was financed by the Government of Finland, while the GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO Project granted technical advice. Its results are gathered in a publication by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat , August 1997.

Evaluation Meeting of the “Regional Project on the Planning and Management of Amazon Protected Areas”

On November 5-10, 1997, in an evaluation meeting held in the Gorgona Natural National Park, in Colombia, the “Regional Project on the Planning and Management of the Amazon Protected Areas” was concluded.

Representatives from the eight Member Countries of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty attended the meeting and showed deep satisfaction, for the objectives and activities of the project had been all accomplished. This became an unique pilot experience within the framework of the Treaty.

The project, developed in several years, was coordinated by the Government of Colombia. It set the stage for the combination of regional cooperation regarding the development of the transboundary protected areas, ecosystems, protection of the fragile areas, assessment of the genetic resources, training on methods of planning and management of national parks, correspondence of policies and legislations and preservation of the natural endowment.

This project has been considered as an exemple of fruitful cooperation within the framework of the Treaty, favoring the eight countries. This successful experience motivated the respective Governments to request the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat the management of financing for a second stage of the Project, in order to ensure the continuity of the goals achieved. In compliance with that request, last December the *Pro Tempore* Secretary of the Treaty, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, submitted a project -previously approved by the eight Governments- aimed at requesting resources to the Representative of the European Union to Caracas at that time, Mr. Georges Rouvalis.

The *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was represented in the Gorgona meeting by the Diplomatic Coordinator, Mrs. Angela Delgado de Salazar and by the Technical Coordinator, Dr. Maria Elena Medina.

II Meeting on Private Investment on the Sustainable Development of the Forestry Sector in Latin America

This meeting was held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia on December 9-11, 1997. It was sponsored and called by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat and the Central American Council on Forests and Protected Areas (CCAB-AP). Other sponsoring institutions were: the International Development Agency, the United States of America (USAID), the Forestry Service of the United States of America, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Resources Institute (WRI). The following local institutions also supported the meeting: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Environment, the Ministry of Economic Development, the National Forestry Chamber, the BOLINVEST Foundation and the Forestry Superintendence.

The technical organization of the conference was in the hands of the FAO Project supporting the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, the Project on Sustainable Forestry Management (BOLFOR) and the GCP/BOL/028/NET FAO Project "Assistance to the Coordination and Implementation of Bolivia's Forestry Platform of Action".

Specialists from 16 Latin American countries attended the Meeting. By means of the signature of an Agreement Letter with the FAO, the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat sponsored the participation of the specialists of the Member Countries of the Treaty. The Secretariat was represented by Mrs. Angela Delgado de Salazar, PTS's Diplomatic coordinator. Dr. Victor Plama represented the GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO Project supporting the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

International Congress for a Cooperative Sustainable Development in the Amazon Basin Countries

The Congress was held in the city of Manaus, on December 10-12, 1997. The *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was represented by Mrs. Aída Santana Nazoa, Technical Coordinator of the Special Commission on Science and Technology (CETCA), who was invited to join the Congress Board.

Evaluation Meeting of Subprogram II of the ACT/IDB Convention on "Support to the Listing of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) used in the ecological-economic zoning of the Amazon", Iquitos, February 16-18, 1998

The meeting was organized by the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Given the high levels achieved in the execution and as few remains to be accomplished in the short-run, Peru has been coordinating the subprogram since the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was transferred to Venezuela. The meeting was also financially supported by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) through its non-refundable technical cooperation convention of "Support Program for the zoning of the Amazon".

Delegates from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela attended the meeting, as well as representatives of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, the ACT/IDB Agreement, and other observers.

Among the main decisions made by the participants to the meeting, the governments' decision was ratified to have the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat administrating the second stage of the project. Peru offered to host the project and was supported in the motion by the delegates from Bolivia and Ecuador.

The *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was represented by Mrs. Angela Delgado de Salazar, Diplomatic Coordinator, and by Mrs. Emma Toledo Padilla, Regional Coordinator for Subprogram I in the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

Meeting of the work group for a wider examination of the mahogany issue

The meeting was held in the city of Brasilia, on June 3-5, 1998. It was aimed at studying the preservation, exploitation practices, policies, handling and importance of the international cooperation and trade. The

antecedent to the meeting is the commitment Brazil made during the 10th Conference of the CITES Parties, held in Harare, Zimbabwe, on June 9-20, 1997.

The meeting was officially opened by the Brazilian Minister of the Environment, Hydric Resources and the Legal Amazon, Dr. Gustavo Krause, who pointed out that sustainability mainly depends on the political will and on the making a point in the environmental conservation, without neglecting the economic and social aspects. Dr. Krause also suggested to extend the international cooperation as a way to valorize the forestry heritage. As a matter of fact, he explained, the desired sustainability objectives can be achieved only through a system of fair, undistorted prices of forestry products.

The agenda of the meeting included the following issues: species status, policies and handling of the mahogany, and international cooperation and trade of the species.

The meeting was attended by representatives from the ACT countries, Panama, the major importing countries (Argentina, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States), several observer countries, members of a variety of international agencies and the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

In its conclusions, the Work Group points out the ACT countries' availability to raise a preliminary cooperation agenda aimed for concerted actions on the issues discussed, to the Amazon Cooperation Council. Such agenda would include the evaluation system of the status of commercial species, the technical and scientific cooperation for a sustainable handling of the species and its replanting, the commercial and industrial cooperation, the valorization and the follow-up, control and monitoring of the species.

Mrs. Beatriz Ochoa Parra attended the meeting as representative of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, while Dr. Víctor Palma was representing the GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO project supporting the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

Regional Workshop on Amazon Palm Trees

The workshop was held pursuant to the mandate granted by the VI CEFTA Commission (Caracas, March 5-6, 1998). It took place in Quito, in response to a generous proposal by the government of Ecuador, on June 24-26, 1998. The official opening of the workshop was attended by the Honorable Ecuadorian Minister of the Environment, Mrs. Flor de María Valverde.

The workshop produced a Final Report, as well as a Preliminary Technical Record of the Regional Workshop". The latter will be the logical framework for drafting a Regional Project on the Amazon Palm Trees, aimed for a sustainable development of such species, and as the reflection of a long-standing aspiration of the ACT Member Countries. While the present Report was being drafted, the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was also preparing a draft Project, with the support of an expert especially hired for this job.

The *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was represented by Mrs. Angela Delgado de Salazar, Diplomatic Coordinator.

The workshop was financially supported by the GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO project supporting the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, through an Agreement Letter. Dr. Víctor Palma, Chief Technical Consultant, also provided the workshop with technical expertise.

Drafting and validation of a Methodological Guide for designing gender-minded development policies in the Amazon Region

This activity is included in the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat's 1997-1999 Action Plan and is pursuant to the objectives of the GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO project supporting the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat

The FAO and the REPEM (Women Education Network of Latin America) signed an Agreement Letter last May with a view to launch a study aimed at preparing a methodology for designing gender-minded development policies in the Amazon region. The study specifically aimed to:

1. Widen the knowledge on the economic, social and cultural realities of the Amazon rural populations, starting from the understanding of the gender relations predominant among them.
2. Design methodological proposals so that the gender issue is addressed during the meetings of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (ACT), at the national and regional levels, with a view to have the gender dimension included into the draft policies of the ACT.

With a view to have common criteria among the research professional team of the eight ACT Member Countries, the decision was made to hold a regional meeting on the issue. The latter took place in Pozo de Rosas, (Miranda State, Venezuela), on July 8-11, 1998. The aim was to launch, along with the professionals involved in the investigation, a process of conceptualization, reflection and consensus-reaching on the gender perspective and on the application of participatory methodologies in the Amazon region. The meeting was specifically aimed to:

1. Know of experiences existing in other regions, of preparation of guides and manuals on the gender perspective and the application of participatory methodologies, with a view to study the possibilities of adapting them to the Amazon region.
2. Identify, among the participants (female and male), the level of theoretical/practical knowledge and expertise in gender perspective and participatory methodologies, in order to organize and settle instances of meeting, training and socialization of the focuses.
3. To determine common criteria by promoting consensus on conceptual frameworks such as: gender, sustainable development, strategies and methodologies of case studies, training in methodologies of participatory investigation and of activities calendars; all this is bound to be very useful in the future development of the research.

Researchers from the eight ACT Member Countries attended the meeting. A consensus was reached with regard to the methodology. The participants also elaborated the working tools for carrying out case studies in their respective countries. They agreed upon a schedule and on the products the Regional Coordination should expect, namely: the State of the Art on a per country basis, the Case Study, a consolidated report, and, in October, national meetings in each country with a view to validate the draft methodological training guide on gender analysis.

The regional coordination shall be responsible to consolidate the results from all the countries, as well as to define criteria for the drafting of political guidelines for addressing gender issues and on the sustainable development in the Amazon region.

The study shall be completed in December 1998, with a final report and the respective recommendations.

The meeting was attended by Ambassador Victor R. Carazo and Mrs. María Elena Medina Puig, in representation of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, and by Dr. Victor Palma (technical advisor) and Ms. Sophie Grouwels (associated professional), in representation of the FAO.

Regional Coordination Meeting on Forests

The meeting was held in Caracas, on August 13-14, 1998, pursuant to a proposal made by Peru, and was aimed at harmonizing positions and reaching a consensus in preparation of the 2nd Session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF), held in Geneva, on August 24 to September 4, 1998.

The debate focused on the issues included in the IFF agenda, according to the following categories:

Category I: to promote and ease the application of the action proposals made by the intergovernmental group on forests, and to examine and supervise the progress in the arrangement, conservation and sustainable development of forests of all types, and to present reports on the issue.

Category II: to address the pending issues regarding the elements included in the program of the intergovernmental group on forests, particularly trade and the environment, their relation with forestry products and services, and the need for financial resources.

Category III: international agreements and mechanisms for the preservation and sustainable development of forests of all kinds.

The meeting agreed on that the consensus reached, as included in the Final Report, should be presented to the 2nd Session of the IFF by the Venezuelan Delegation attending such session.

The meeting was presided over by Mr. Samuel Mendoza, from the Venezuelan Delegation. Minister Luis Espinosa Oyola, from the Peruvian Delegation, was appointed as Vice-chairman, and Mrs. Bibiana Vargas Morales, from the Colombian delegation, was appointed as rapporteur.

The meeting was technically and financially backed by the FAO project supporting the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, pursuant to an Agreement Letter previously signed.

Ad Hoc Consultation Committee of the Pro Tempore Secretariat

10th Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Consultation Committee (AHCC)

The meeting was held in the headquarters of the Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on June 12, 1997 and was attended by the ACT Accredited Representatives in Caracas, the Venezuelan Foreign Affairs authorities in charge of the ACT and the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat members. The core issue of the meeting was the 1997-1999 working plan of the Secretariat. The minutes of the meeting were sent to the governments of the eight Member Countries for the follow-up of the issues discussed.

11th Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Consultation Committee

The meeting was held in the headquarters of the Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on October 2nd, 1997 and focused on the following issues:

Observations and comments by the countries participating in the Secretariat's working plan for the 1997-1999 period. Ambassador Carazo pointed out the flexible and adaptable nature of the plan, according to the countries' decisions pursuant to their best interests.

Meetings calendar of the ACT:

The projects formulation forms were distributed. The meeting continued to address the issue of the non-refundable technical cooperation of the *Corporación Andina de Fomento* (Andean Corporation for Economic Development), the use of which depends on the resolution on the ACT financial mechanism adopted by the 5th Ministerial Meeting. Another issue briefly examined was the evolution of the Tarapoto Process on the Criteria and Indicators of the Amazon Forest Sustainability.

Some ideas were advanced with regard to the preparatory steps for the 20th anniversary celebration of the ACT. Ambassador Carazo mentioned the need to find external financial resources for the meetings of the Special Commissions, workshops and seminars.

Dr. Víctor Palma, FAO technical advisor, introduced the Secretariat CD-ROM.

Mr. Mauro Mendoza presented Subprogram II of the ACT-*IDB* Convention on the to the listing of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) used in the ecological-economic zoning of the Amazon. Mr. J. Aníbal Invernón carried out a presentation on the Regional Program for the planning and handling of protected areas of the Amazon. Other important issues were dealt with, too. In particular, the Brazilian Ambassador proposed to include the SIAMAZ issue in the agenda of the 4th Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* group on the Permanent Secretariat, to resume the cards recording on breakthroughs made in the regional projects, and to grant the governments more time to study the texts to be published by the Secretariat. The representatives from Colombia and Ecuador expressed their interests in the continuing of efforts by the secretariat in the execution of the San Miguel-Putumayo Plan. The Delegate from Colombia also reiterated his government's offer to have the Colombian Leticia Institute of Amazon Investigations as the host of the Institutional Network of Investigation on and Protection of Genetic Resources.

Pursuant to normal procedures, the Secretariat was in charge of the minute regarding the meeting, which was approved *a posteriori* by the governments.

12th Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Consultation Committee

The meeting was held in the headquarters of the Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on February 6th, 1998. It focused on the following issues:

Information by the *Pro Tempore* Secretary on his attendance to various international meetings, among which: the 11th World Congress on forests, in Antalya (Turkey) in October; the Amazonia 21 Conference on an Agenda for a sustainable World, in Brasilia in November. The Secretary also reported on his visit to the FAO headquarters in Rome, where the 2nd Stage of the PTS-FAO Project (initiated on July 2nd, 1996) of support to the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was signed on October 20.

Follow-up of the mandates for the previous meetings of CEEDA and CETURA Special Commissions.

Ambassador Carazo informed the attendants on the steps to be followed for obtaining funds from the European Union for the 2nd Stage of the Project on Planning and Handling of Protected Areas of the Amazon.

The attendants to the meeting commented on the results of the 4th meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Work Group on the Permanent Secretariat, held in Brasilia, on January 21-23, 1998.

The 1998 meetings calendar was also addressed, in which are worth to mention the 9th Ordinary Meeting of the Amazon Cooperation Council and the 6th Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs. An analysis was continued on the possibilities of activities for commemorating the 20th anniversary of the ACT, both by the countries and by the PTS.

The *Pro Tempore* Secretary mentioned the successful interviews program achieved in Brasilia in November 1997 with the governmental authorities in charge of the ACT and also suggested the convenience of such visits to the capitals of the other Member Countries, with similar objectives.

13th Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Consultation Committee (AHCC)

The meeting was held in the headquarters of the Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on May 12th, 1998. It focused on issues such as the follow-up of the mandates decided on by the ACT meetings but yet unfulfilled; the pending meetings in the calendar, with the respective agendas, as well as other miscellaneous issues. The *Pro Tempore* Secretary announced that the current works by the Secretariat regarding the listing of the mandates decided on in previous meetings are yet unfulfilled.

Participants to the meeting were informed on the Secretariat's plans to distribute among Member Countries a draft project of "Support to the institutional strengthening of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat", to be approved by the governments in order to apply for its financing by the European Union.

14th Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Consultation Committee (AHCC)

The meeting was held at the *Casa Amarilla*, headquarters of the Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on February 6th, 1998 and specifically focused on the deferment of the 6th Ordinary Meeting of ACT Foreign Affairs Ministers, since several countries have difficulties to attend the meeting at the dates previously set (July 2 and 3, 1998). The *Pro Tempore* Secretary announced that the Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs would propose new dates, so that the eight Member Countries can attend the meeting.

The *Pro Tempore* Secretary also stressed on the need to hasten the signature of the Amendment Protocol to the Treaty, if necessary before the ministerial meeting, for reasons of schedule. Ambassador Alfonso Barrera Valverde, from Ecuador, pointed out the convenience of a special meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Group on the Permanent Secretariat, to deal exclusively with the budget. The attendants agreed to submit the proposal to the governments.

***Ad Hoc* Group on the Permanent Secretariat**

4th Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Group on the Permanent Secretariat

The meeting was held in Brasilia, on January 21-23, 1998. A significant progress was achieved with regard to the mandate of the Group on issues such as the legal, administrative and financial studies previous and necessary for establishing the permanent secretariat in Brasilia.

As for the modification of Article XXII of the Treaty, the Group reached a consensus on a text. The meeting also agreed on draft rules for the Permanent Secretariat and for the Coordinating Commission of the Amazonian Cooperation Council. Issues regarding the installation and budget were also deepened, but still need to be examined during the 5th meeting, to be held in Caracas.

The official opening session was attended by Ambassador Ivan Cannabrava, Subsecretary General for political affairs in the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and by Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, ACT *Pro Tempore* Secretary. The Venezuelan Ambassador to Brazil and Chief of the Venezuelan Delegation, Mr. Milos Alcalay, was appointed as chairman of the meeting, while Ambassador Jorge Valdez Carrillo, Chief of the Peruvian Delegation, was appointed as vice-chairman. Minister Fernando Jacques de Magalhães Pimenta, from Brazil, was appointed as rapporteur.

The *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was represented by its Diplomatic Coordinator, Mrs. Angela Delgado de Salazar.

5th Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Group on the Permanent Secretariat

The meeting was held in the headquarters of the Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on June 9-10, 1998. It was officially opened by Ambassador Carlos Bivero, Director General in the Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who highlighted the significance of the achievements so far and encouraged the participants to carry on in reaching concrete proposals, for the Ministers of Foreign Affairs to make the corresponding decisions during their 6th meeting, particularly as far as Article XXII of the Treaty is concerned, as a way to activate the opening of a new Permanent Secretariat in Brasilia.

Another point worth to mention is the consensus reached by the *Ad Hoc* Group in drafting the amendment project of Article XXII, based on a text proposed by Brazil and aimed to the creation of the Organization of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty. The treaty would thus enjoy an international status and its Secretary General would be empowered to sign agreements on behalf of the Permanent Secretariat.

The budget —an issue difficult by nature— was adjourned to the next meeting of the *Ad Hoc* group. Other issues, however, were also addressed, among which the Headquarters Agreement, a preliminary version of which has been adopted and will be dealt further during the 6th meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Group.

The Brazilian Delegation reported on the ongoing procedures for the establishment of the Permanent Secretariat in Brasilia.

The Board of the Meeting was integrated by Ambassador Adriana Pulido Santana, Director for Multilateral Affairs at the Venezuelan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who was appointed as chairwoman; Minister Fernando Jacques de Magalhaes Pimenta, from Brazil, who acted as vice-chairman, and Minister Fernando Rojas Samanez, from Peru, who was the rapporteur.

III. *PRO TEMPORE* SECRETARIAT'S ATTENDANCE TO INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

Discussion on the development of Agenda 21 for the Greater Amazon

The meeting was held at the headquarters of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), in New York, on June 23, 1997, after the invitations by the governments of Bolivia and Brazil, through Capacity 21. The debate moderator was Mr. Philip Dobie, Capacity 21 Coordinator. The participants to the meeting were:

Pr. José Seixas Lourenço, Secretary for the Amazon, Brazilian Ministry of the Environment
Mr. Ramiro Ortega, National Secretary of Planning, Bolivian Ministry of Sustainable Development
Mr. Sergio Trindade, International Consultant
Mr. Luis Gómez Echeverri, Director, Public-Private Association, UNDP
Mr. Walter W. Arensberg, Environment department, *IDB*
Mr. Alejandro Mercado, Capacity 21, Bolivia
Mr. Ralph C. Schmidt, senior programs advisor, UNPD
Mr. Philip Dobie, Coordinator, Capacity 21
Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, *ACT Pro Tempore* Secretary

The main issue addressed during the meeting was the identification of international funds aimed to the execution of the Agenda 21 for the Amazon, resulting from a concerted action by the eight ACT Member Countries, thanks to international financial support.

Consultant Trindade exposed the structure needed for establishing in Brasilia an *ad hoc* sort of executive secretariat. According to him, the project would include the following elements: the financial contributions from the ACT countries and from agencies such as the *IDB*, the UNPD, the EU and bilateral agencies; the political issue: the participation of ACT governments and the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat of the Treaty; the consultation: a stakeholders group of 10 or 12 eminent personalities of the Amazon region; operational aspects: the Secretariat or Work Group, with 5 or 6 members, would handle the processes, with the help of an existing technical secretariat.

The plan would last four to five years and the overall budget would amount to US\$ 5 to 7 million.

As *Pro Tempore* Secretary, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo expressed his support to the joint idea of the ACT countries on the Agenda 21 for the Greater Amazon, although he pointed out that it was still early to define the role of the Secretariat. As a preliminary condition, he mentioned the political support in order to mobilize the wills. However, he also expressed his concern as the creation of a new structure would compete with the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat and weaken its functions. Consultant Trindade answered that on the contrary, the development of Agenda 21 would result in the strengthening of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, since the supporting structures would already exist.

Parallel meeting on the Agenda 21 for the Amazon region, United Nations

The meeting was organized under the auspices of the Brazilian government and was held at the UN headquarters, in New York, on June 23, 1997, as a parallel to the works of the 19th extraordinary period of sessions of the General Assembly on the results of the UNCED.

The panel was presided over by the Brazilian Minister of the Environment, Hydric Resources and the Legal Amazon, Dr. Gustavo Krause, and attended by the Venezuelan Minister of the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources, Dr. Rafael Martínez Monró; the Brazilian Coordination Secretary for the Amazon, Pr. José

Seixas Lourenço; the National Secretary of Planning of the Bolivian Ministry of Sustainable Development, Mr. Ramiro Ortega, and the *Pro Tempore* Secretary of the ACT, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo.

All the delegations of the United Nations Member Countries were invited to participate to the meeting, as well as many non governmental organizations.

The ACT *Pro Tempore* Secretary, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, delivered a brief speech in which he pointed out, among other questions, that the Agenda 21 for the Greater Amazon is an innovating vehicle for reaching a strategic plan of sustainable development for the Amazon, with the participation of eight Amazon countries and the support from international cooperation sources. He also ensured the Secretariat's availability to support any action aimed to the further progress of the Agenda 21 for the Greater Amazon until its adoption and execution.

Pro Tempore Secretary's attendance of the 11th World Congress on Forests

The World Congress on Forests took place on October 13-22, 1997, in the Mediterranean city of Antalya, Turkey. Ambassador Carazo, *Pro Tempore* Secretary, was invited as a panelist by the Congress organizing committee. The *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was also represented by Dr. Víctor Palma, chief technical consultant of the FAO project of support to the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

On October 14, during the plenary session, Ambassador Carazo emphasized the criteria and indicators of sustainability of the Amazon Forest, known as the "Tarapoto Process", with a view to publicize such proposal of sustainable forestry. The Tarapoto process is based on the regional application of criteria and indicators specific to the peculiar ecosystems of the Amazon.

On October 19th, at the request of a significant number of governmental delegations and representatives of both international agencies and NGO's, Ambassador Carazo presided over a parallel meeting on Minor Tropical Forest. Among the issues addressed on that occasion, it is worth to mention the need to define the current state and potential of minor forests, as well as the actions aimed to a sustainable management and development of such forests. The meeting adopted a series of recommendations, among which, the need to include minor forest as an issue in the agendas of international, regional and national forums, and to encourage the cooperation among international agencies in providing technical, consultative and financial assistance to these ends.

Ambassador Carazo's participation to the Congress was made possible thanks to a FAO's financial contribution managed by the Congress Organizing Committee.

International Conference Amazon 21: an agenda for a sustainable world

This conference was held under the auspices of the Brazilian government and the Amazon Universities Association (UNAMAZ), in Brasilia, on November 23-26, 1997. This major event was officially closed by Mr. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, President of Brazil. It was defined within the guidelines adopted by the UNCED (Rio de Janeiro, 1992), and was aimed as a threshold towards a new conception as to the future of the Amazon. The Conference's final document states that the Agenda 21 for the Greater Amazon shall be a significant tool for drafting and harmonizing national strategies of sustainable development in the region's countries. Moreover, a consensus was made clear on the need to promote a really sustainable development in the Amazon, as a way to use better its biodiversity and protect it at the same time. Another highlight of the conference is the significant participation role it assigned to the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat in achieving these ends, stating that "the forthcoming creation of the Treaty's Permanent Secretariat in Brazil will greatly contribute to such historic step forward".

The *Pro Tempore* Secretary, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, was especially invited to participate in the Conference Round Table on the issue of “Preparing the Region to new Scenarios; the role of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, the national and regional policies and agendas, and the need for and configuration of cooperation among Amazon countries”.

On that occasion, Dr. Víctor Palma, chief technical advisor of the GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO project, introduced the CR-ROM of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat. The attendants enthusiastically applauded the CD-ROM and praised such initiative.

Ambassador Cardozo’s participation to these meetings was made possible thanks to an invitation kindly extended by the Association of Amazon Universities (UNAMAZ), which contributed to the Ambassador’s travel expenses.

General Assembly of the Association of Amazon Universities (UNAMAZ)

The meeting was held in Brasilia, on November 22-26, 1997. The *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was represented by Pr. Aída Santana Nazoa, as special observer for the ACT.

Ambassador Carazo’s, *Pro Tempore* Secretary, participation to the Special Session of the 8th Ordinary Assembly of the Amazon Parliament

Invited by the Executive Secretary of the Amazon Parliament, Ambassador Carazo, *Pro Tempore* Secretary, attended the special session, on April 20, 1998, at the Honorable National Congress Headquarters of Bolivia, in the city of La Paz. Among other dignitaries attending the said session were Her Excellency Janet Jagan, President of Guyana; MP Emigdio Flores Calpiñeiro, Chairman of the Amazon Parliament, Bolivian MP’s, Dr. Alejandro Martínez, Executive Secretary of the Amazon Parliament, and Dr. Víctor Rico, Director General of the Andean Community.

Ambassador Carazo delivered a speech on the Amazon Cooperation Treaty and its implications for a fertile relationship with the Amazon Parliament.

International meeting on the exchange of experience and strategies on the sustainable management of the Amazon, Iquitos, Peru, June 11-19, 1998

With a view to share information and gather a wide range of opinions on the sustainable preservation and management of the Amazon, the Peruvian Amazon National University (UNAP) promoted the holding of an international meeting on the exchange of experience on the sustainable management of the Amazon. The meeting was held in the Peruvian city of Iquitos, on June 17-19, 1998, with the support of the European Commission. The main objective was to implement, in the Amazon region, the Proposal for Action of the Intergovernmental Group on Forests.

Eminent panelists participated to the meeting, as well as representatives from the ACT Member Countries, indigenous organizations, senior officials of the European Commission, FAO representatives, private sector agents, NGO’s and other groups of the Amazon civil society. The international meeting divided its works into 12 issues, on which attendants had the opportunity to debate with the panelists. As a result of this meeting, a report shall be published on the main issue, including policy and action proposals, as well as a proposal for an Amazon Information Network on the Sustainable Management and Development of the Amazon Forests (REDAMAZ).

The *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was represented by its technical coordinator, Dr. María Elena Medina, who attended as a panelist. The GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO Project supporting the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was represented by Dr. Víctor Palma, who also attended as a panelist, and by Mrs. Sophie Grouwels.

IV. VISITS OF EMINENT PERSONALITIES TO THE *PRO TEMPORE* SECRETARIAT

Visit of Mrs. Ruby de Valencia, President of the NGO Venezuelan Foundation for the Preservation of the Habitat, and the Promotion and Defense of Cultures (FUNDABITAT)

On April 24th 1997, Mrs. Valencia carried out a presentation on the ONG she presides over: she provided information on its objectives, its nature, the projects carried out by the organization and those to be undertaken in the future and which require to be financed. She stated that FUNDABITAT is specially committed to the work with women and indigenous peoples, even though the projects have been devised to be implemented in any rural collective. In this sense, she declared that financial support is required for FUNDABITAT projects to be carried out.

Visit of Professor Luis Eduardo Aragón, UNAMAZ Executive Secretary

On April 11th, 1997, in Caracas, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo gathered with Professor Luis Eduardo Aragón, Executive Secretary of the Association of Amazon Universities (UNAMAZ). Cooperation between the Amazonian System of Information (SIAMAZ) and the PTS, as well as the preparatory works for the Amazonia 21 Conference held in Brasilia, in November 1997, were among the topics discussed.

Visit of Mr. Fabián Valdivieso, Director General of Boundary Development and Amazonian Affairs of Ecuador's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The visit took place on April 25th 1997. The distinguished visitor was welcomed by the *Pro Tempore* Secretary, and Diplomatic Coordinator Mrs. Angela Delgado de Salazar. Mr. Valdivieso expressed his satisfaction at the transfer of the Secretariat to Venezuela and offered support to this new Secretariat, for the successful performance of its functions, for the benefit of all the Contracting Parties of the Treaty. He also formulated the following statements: 1) His country's interest in continuing the regular meetings of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Consultations; 2) He asked for updated information on the evolution of the works of the *Ad Hoc* Group on the establishment of the Permanent Secretariat; 3) He reiterated his country's offer to be the headquarters of the first meeting of the Special Commission of the Amazon Region on Education (CEEDA); 4) He expressed Ecuador's interest in the expansion of the PTS-ACT/IDB Agreement on Zoning financed by the IDB.

Visit of Mr. Juan Bermejo, Representative of the European Union, and Mr. Willem L. Peters, European Co-Director of the Project on the Preservation of the High Orinoco-Casiquiare Biosphere.

The meeting was held in the headquarters of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, on May 29th 1997. It was aimed at presenting the "Preservation of the High Orinoco- Casiquiare Biosphere" Project, financed by the European Union. Furthermore, Mr. Willem L. Peters proposed that the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat direct a process of exchange of experiences and information on projects concerning the biosphere among the ACT member countries. This topic was included in the Secretariat's Working Plan.

Visit of Dr. Waldo Espinoza, Executive Secretary of the Cooperative Program on Research and Technology Transfer for the South American Tropics (PROCITROPICOS)

The first meeting, which took place on May 28th 1997, was aimed at studying the possibility for PROCITROPICOS to join the ACT as an associate member. Visitors presented the work and the functioning of this institution, with headquarters in Brasilia. Furthermore, the ACT's structure and mechanism of financing were described. The programs developed were briefly mentioned, and three areas of common interest were identified. The possibility to coordinate actions with the CEMAA and CECTA was also considered. Besides,

the importance of the ACT's political support to the PROCITROPICOS projects was highlighted. This Secretariat expressed its satisfaction at the proposals, and offered its support to this Program. Subsequently, on August 28th 1998, Dr. Waldo Espinoza visited the Secretariat with a view to present the current activities of PROCITROPICOS and to propose possibilities of reciprocal technical cooperation.

Visit of a Delegation of Brazil

On May 18th, a Delegation of the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil visited the headquarters of the PTS. This delegation was integrated by the Ambassador of Brazil, His Excellency Clodoaldo Huguency; Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fernando Jacques de Magalhães Pimenta; and Mr. Aldenir C. Paraguassú, from Brazil's Ministry of the Environment, Hydric Resources and the Legal Amazon. In the work meeting carried out with the participation of the *Pro Tempore* Secretary and a group of colleagues, several topics of common interest for Brazil and the PTS were discussed, including aspects concerning the works the PTS is carrying out in Venezuela.

Visit of a mission from the Netherlands

On June 9th 1997, a mission of the Government of the Netherlands visited the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat. The delegation was integrated by Mr. Ir. Hendrik R. Oosterveld, Associate Director of the Environment Department (Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Fishery); Mr. Gerard Terberg, Agricultural Advisor of the Embassy of the Netherlands to Mexico; and Mr. Rudolf Mulder, Director of Projects (DHV Consultants BV). They were welcomed by Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, *Pro Tempore* Secretary, Diplomatic Coordinator Mrs. Angela Delgado de Salazar and Technical Coordinator Mrs. María Elena Medina.

Visitors attended a presentation on the ACT, its objectives and mechanisms, as well as on the Secretariat's Work plan. Ambassador Carazo highlighted and expressed his gratitude towards the significant contribution of the Netherlands to the institutional strengthening of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat and to the design of important programs, projects and studies in various fields of work of the ACT. Furthermore, he expressed his wish for the Secretariat to continue receiving financial support from the Netherlands for future activities.

Visit of Professor José Seixas Lourenço, Secretary for the Amazon, Ministry of the Environment, Hydric Resources and the Legal Amazon of Brazil.

The visit was held on June 19th 1997. Professor Seixas was accompanied by Brazil's Ambassador to Venezuela, His Excellency Clodoaldo Huguency, and Dr. Sergio Trindade, International Consultant. The different aspects concerning the Agenda 21 for the Amazon and its presentation in meetings within the framework of the XIX Extraordinary Period of Sessions of the UN General Assembly were considered. Besides, some aspects concerning the future role of the Amazonian System of Information (SIAMAZ) within the activities of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat were discussed.

Visit of Dr. Mariano Ospina, Coordinator of the Center of Fluvial Integration of South America (CIFSA)

The visit took place on November, 25th 1997. The distinguished guest was welcomed by Mrs. Angela Delgado de Salazar, Diplomatic Coordinator of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, in representation of the Secretary. Dr. Ospina stated that the meeting was aimed at presenting the Secretariat two basic aspects: 1) the proposals of coordination of the studies of the basins, and 2) the analysis of the Secretariat's possibility to cooperate in the creation of the Orinoco Coordinator Group (CIFSA-MRE from Colombia and Venezuela), which will join the Project of River Integration of South America (IFSA). Regarding the first aspect, Dr. Ospina declared that the progress of the *Hidrovia* Project – interconnection of Paraguay and Paraná rivers – could be considered as a frame of reference for the Orinoco-Meta-Negro interconnection. With respect to the

second aspect, Dr. Ospina focused on determining the most expeditious method to establish links between the Secretariat and the CIFSA, in order to support the creation of the Orinoco Coordinator Group.

The Diplomatic Coordinator informed him that the objectives of the IFSA Project and the goals, functions and programs of the CETICAM converge in several aspects and that the links of the CETICAM would depend on the official submission of the IFSA Project to the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat and the ACT governments. Dr. Ospina stated that he would continue sending information on this matter to the Secretariat.

Visit of Mr. Jacques Diouf, Director General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

During the visit of Mr. Jacques Diouf - Director General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)- to Venezuela , a meeting was held on March 3rd 1998. In that meeting this distinguished visitor gathered with the members of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, Ambassadors and other representatives of the ACT member countries to Venezuela, the Ambassador of the Netherlands and the FAO representative to Caracas. Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, *Pro Tempore* Secretary, welcomed the guests, thanking the consistent support given by the Netherlands and the FAO to the works of the Treaty. Peru's Ambassador Juan Castilla Meza took the floor on behalf of the ACT's Ambassadors. Subsequently, Mr. Diouf was given the floor and he discoursed on some aspects concerning the evolution of the FAO/Netherlands project on institutional support to the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat. He also dwelled upon aspects related to the world food assurance and the Amazonia and considered these two aspects as priorities.

At this meeting, he was presented and offered one of the first copies of the Secretariat's CD-ROM, published within the framework of the 20th Anniversary of the Signature of the Treaty. Furthermore, he was given the first copy of the book on Food Assurance in The Amazon Region, published by the Secretariat.

Visit of Dr. Athenia Montejo, Assistant Representative of the UNICEF to Venezuela

This meeting, held on May 15th 1998, was aimed at presenting a proposal of the project on information system for the local decision making in the Amazon region. She mainly focused on three aspects: gathering information on the ACT activities in this field, knowing the reactions to the proposal of the program and, if considered appropriate, establishing mechanisms of coordination. The *Pro Tempore* Secretary requested that a written proposal be sent to him.

Visit of Dr. Thomás Muñoz Martín, Sectoral Specialist of the Inter-American Development Bank Representation to Venezuela.

Dr. Thomás Muñoz Martín - Sectoral Specialist of the Inter-American Development Bank Representation to Venezuela- invited by the *Pro Tempore* Secretary, visited the headquarters of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, where the progress made regarding the execution of Subprogram I of the ACT/IDB Agreement "Strengthening of the ACT Permanent National Commissions" was evaluated and the activities established within its framework, in its conclusive stage, were analyzed. This meeting was attended by Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo; Mrs. Angela Delgado de Salazar, Diplomatic Coordinator; Mrs. Emma Toledo Padilla, Regional Coordinator of the Subprogram I in the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

Visit of His Excellency Juan Castilla Meza, Ambassador of Peru

On July 9th 1998 His Excellency the Ambassador of Peru Mr. Juan Castilla Meza visited the Secretariat. He was welcomed by *Pro Tempore* Secretary and members of the Diplomatic Coordination of the Secretariat. During the meeting, which was held in an environment of great cordiality, different aspects of the ongoing activities within the framework of the Treaty were discussed.

Visit of Dr. Alicia Bárcena, UNEP Chief of Technical Cooperation for Latin America.

The visit took place on July 16th 1998 and it was aimed at preliminarily identifying those areas of potential cooperation between the ACT and the UNEP.

Visit of Dr. Rafael Posada, Director of International Cooperation of the International Center of Tropical Agriculture (ICTA)

This visit took place on September 8th and 9th 1998. Dr. Posada was accompanied by Dr. Myles Fisher, Ecophysiologicalist and ICTA's Consultant; and Dr. Freddy Leal, Professor of the Faculty of Agronomy of the Central University of Venezuela (Maracay). The working meetings held with the different guests were focused on the establishment of a closer relation between the ACT and the ICTA, in order to develop cooperation activities and to have a better mutual knowledge about both institutions. The valuation of the Amazon forests, based on the studies on carbon retention, and the regional cooperation to solve the problems concerning the diseases affecting several perennial crops in the region constitute two of the topics discussed in this meeting.

V. *PRO TEMPORE* SECRETARY'S TALKS WITH AUTHORITIES FROM THE ACT'S MEMBER COUNTRIES

Pro Tempore Secretary's Talks with the Senior Authorities from the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil.

Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, *Pro Tempore* Secretary, was cordially invited by the Government of Brazil to discuss on significant topics within the ACT. Ambassador Carazo availed himself of his attendance to the Agenda 21 for the Amazon Conference to accept such invitation. At this occasion, a wide program of talks and working meetings was prepared for him.

First of all, the *Pro Tempore* Secretary had an audience with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Excellency Luis Felipe Lampreia and then, with Ambassador Ronald Sardemberg, Secretary of Strategic Affairs of the Office of the President of the Republic. He also held working sessions with Dr. Gustavo Krause, Brazil's Minister of the Environment, as well as with members of his Ministerial team, Ambassador Luis Augusto Castro Neves, Director of America, and the officials working with him in the works of the ACT. Furthermore, Mr. Aldenir C. Paraguassú, Director of the Ministry of the Environment, widely presented to Ambassador Carazo the ecological tourism plans being developed by Brazil's Government.

The talks were highly productive and significant for the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat. Ambassador Carazo thanked the support given by the authorities of Itamaraty to the Venezuelan administration of the Secretariat. Some of the most important topics discussed are the preparation of the transfer of the Secretariat to Brazil, expected for 1999; organizational aspects of the IV CETURA Meeting to be held in Rio de Janeiro; and the development and importance of the Amazon 21 Conference, which was being held at that moment in Brazil's capital.

Courtesy Visits of the *Pro Tempore* Secretary, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, to the Accredited Ambassadors and Chargés d' Affairs of the ACT in Caracas.

From January 29th to February 7th 1998, the *Pro Tempore* Secretary, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, carried out courtesy visits to Ambassadors Clodoaldo Huguency, from Brazil; Mario Suárez Melo, from Colombia; Alfonso Barrera Valverde, from Ecuador; Bayney Ran Karran, from Guyana; Juan Castilla Meza, from Peru; and the Chargés d' Affairs, Mr. Oscar Lazcano Henry, from Bolivia and Mr. Lawrence Neede, from Suriname. These visits were aimed at discussing aspects related to the works developed within the framework of the Treaty.

Visit to the Directorate of the Plata Basin and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bolivia

During his visit to La Paz in order to participate in the VIII Ordinary Assembly of the Amazonian Parliament, the *Pro Tempore* Secretary visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Religious Affairs of Bolivia on April 21st 1998. At that occasion, he was welcomed by the officials Guillermo Romero Jemio, Director in charge of the affairs concerning the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, and Pol Villegas Porcel, Coordinator of the National Commissions of the ACT in Bolivia.

During the meeting, diverse ongoing topics within the framework of the Treaty were discussed and Ambassador Carazo formally submitted some publications and the CD-ROM of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, published in parallel to the 20th anniversary of the signature of the Treaty.

Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo's talks with authorities from the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana

During his stay in Georgetown, and while attending the VI Meeting of the CEMAA, Ambassador Carazo had the opportunity to make several visits to discuss matters concerning the ACT. First of all, he had an audience with the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Gail Teixeira, who declared that the Treaty should place more emphasis on the support to health matters, in order to prevent and take care of the transboundary diseases. Besides, he expressed the interest of his government in providing help in case of natural disasters, such as the drought which has affected Guyana.

In another occasion, Ambassador Carazo visited the General Secretary of Guyana's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Cheryl Miles, with whom he discussed some affairs, including the preparatory works for the VI Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the ACT. The *Pro Tempore* Secretary officially submitted 50 copies of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat's CD-ROM.

During these visits, Ambassador Carazo was accompanied by Venezuela's Ambassador to Guyana, Dr. Héctor Azócar.

This series of talks resulted from Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo's interest in directly meeting the senior national authorities of each country and their concerns about the activities being developed within the framework of the Treaty.

VI. GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO PROJECT SUPPORTING THE *PRO TEMPORE* SECRETARIAT OF THE AMAZON COOPERATION TREATY.

Summary of the activities carried out, in pursuant of its objectives in the period comprised from March 10th 1997 to September 10th 1998.

Objective N° 1. Improving the mechanisms of the PTS-ACT by means of increasing and strengthening the capacity of the Special Commissions on the Amazonian Environment (CEMAA), on Science and Technology (CECTA), and on Education (CEEDA), as well as the capacity of the Permanent National Commissions.

- 1.- The project contributed to conclude the transfer of the PTS-ACT from Peru to Venezuela.
- 2.- It cooperated with the preparation and execution of the Work plan of the PTS-ACT for 1997-1999.
- 3.- It offered permanent technical support to the Technical Coordination and to the Coordinators of the Special Commissions of the PTS/ACT - including a permanent training process for both – particularly to the CEMAA and the CECTA.
- 4.- It published the Special Newsletter of the PTS/ACT (June, 1997) in Spanish, Portuguese and English.
- 5.- It cooperated with the creation and publication process of the Quarterly Newsletter N° 11 of the PTS/ACT (September, 1997) in Spanish, Portuguese and English.
- 6.- It fostered the participation of the *Pro Tempore* Secretary in the XI World Congress of Forests (Antalya, Turkey, October 1997).
- 7.- It set the stage for a *Pro Tempore* Secretary's visit to the FAO headquarters. During this visit, the document of the GCP/RLA/128/NET Project was signed (Rome, October 1997).
- 8.- It supported, financially and technically, the I Ordinary Meeting of the Special Commission of the Amazon Region on Education (CEEDA), held in Quito, Ecuador, in October 1997.
- 9.- It technically supported the IV Ordinary Meeting of the Special Commission of the Amazon Region on Tourism (CETURA), held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in December 1997.
- 10.- It supported, financially and technically, the VI Ordinary Meeting of the Special Commission on Science and Technology in the Amazon (CECTA), held in Caracas, Venezuela, in March 1998.
- 11.- The project was evaluated by the Mission of Intermediate Technical Examination from March 16th to April 8th 1998 and the results were positive.
- 12.- It supported, technically and financially, the VI Ordinary Meeting of the Special Commission on the Amazonian Environment (CEMAA), held in Georgetown, Guyana, in May 1998.
- 13.- It offered technical information to the Permanent National Commissions of the ACT and supported the holding of the II Meeting of Coordination and Assessment of SubProgram I of the IDB (Caracas, May, 1998).
- 14.- It cooperated with the creation and publication process of the Quarterly Newsletter N° 12 of the PTS-ACT (June, 1998) in Spanish, Portuguese and English.
- 15.- It fostered the participation of the Coordinator of the CEEDA in the Meeting of Projects Assessment of the FIDA, held in Bolivia, as well as a mission to Bolivia and Peru in order to hold talks with the main centers of the CEEDA in both countries.
- 16.- It supported the preparation of a project of agreement on the adoption of measures preventing and controlling the pollution of hydric resources in the Amazon and its harmful effects.
- 17.- It financially supported the PTS in the acquisition of its computer equipment and in its expenses concerning communication and the maintenance of its facilities.

Objective N° 2. Strengthening the horizontal technical cooperation among the Member Countries of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, through the formulation of strategies and the development of specific activities.

- 1.- It supported Peru, Bolivia and Venezuela's initiatives to carry out their national consultations for the validation of the Tarapoto Proposal on the Criteria and Indicators of the Amazonian Forest Sustainability.

- 2.- It technically contributed to the creation and publication process of the Colombian Consultation on the Validation of the Tarapoto Proposal on the Criteria and Indicators of the Amazonian Forest Sustainability, Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia, March 1997 (PTS/ACT/w.n).
- 3.- It technically contributed to the creation and publication process of the Ecuadorian Consultation on the Validation of the Tarapoto Proposal on the Criteria and Indicators of the Amazonian Forest Sustainability, Quito, Ecuador, May 1997 (PTS/ACT/w.n).
- 4.- It supported, technically and financially, the holding of the International Seminar-Workshop on the Current and Potential Situation of Management and Development of the Minor Tropical Forest in Latin America (Pucallpa, Peru, June 1997).
- 5.- It supported, technically and financially, the publication and distribution of the Annual Records of the International Workshop on the Current and Potential State of Management and Development of the Minor Tropical Forest in Latin America, PTS-ACT, et. al.
- 6.- It supported, technically and financially, the publication and distribution of Pucallpa Proposal on the Sustainable Development of the Minor Tropical Forest in Latin America, Pucallpa, Peru, June 1997 (PTS-ACT and other institutions).
- 7.- It contributed to the preparation and publication of the Legal Frame of the 5th Edition of Amazon Cooperation Treaty.
- 8.- It technically contributed to the creation and publication process of the Peruvian Consultation on the Validation of the Tarapoto Proposal on the Criteria and Indicators of the Amazonian Forest Sustainability , Lima, Peru, July 1997 (PTS-ACT/w.n).
- 9.- It technically contributed to the creation and publication process of the Bolivian Consultation on the Validation of the Tarapoto Proposal on the Criteria and Indicators of the Amazonian Forest Sustainability, La Paz, Bolivia, August 1997 (PTS-ACT/w.n).
- 10.- It promoted the holding of a Side Meeting on Minor Forests during the XI World Congress on Forests (Antalya, Turkey, October 1997). In this Congress the Pucallpa Proposal on the Sustainable Development of the Minor Tropical Forest in Latin America was presented and discussed.
- 11.- It supported the holding of the International Seminar-Workshop on Private Investments in the Forest Sector of Latin America and the Caribbean (Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, December 1997).
- 12.- It technically contributed to the creation and publication process of the List of Programs, Projects and Institutions of Development and Preservation of the Peruvian Amazon Region.
- 13.- It technically contributed to the creation and publication process of the Venezuelan Consultation on the Validation of the Tarapoto Proposal on the Criteria and Indicators of the Amazonian Forest Sustainability, Caracas, Venezuela, April 1998 (PTS-ACT/w.n.).
- 14.- It participated in the Meeting of the Work Group on Mahogany held in Brasilia, on June 3-5, 1998. It was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Environment, Hydric Resources and Legal Amazon, and IBAMA, from Brazil.
- 15.- It actively participated in the International Meeting “Exchange of Experiences and Strategies for a Sustainable Management of the Amazon Region”, Iquitos, Peru, on June 17-19, 1998.
- 16.- It supported, technically and financially, the holding of the Regional Workshop on Amazonian Palm Trees, which took place in Quito, Ecuador, on June 24-26, 1998.
- 17.- Within the framework of the CECTA’s activities, it carried out the Regional Workshop on Gender, in Pozo de Rosas, Miranda State, Venezuela, on July 8-11, 1998, in order to unify criteria for the Study on the Elaboration and Validation of a Methodological Guide for the Design of Gender-minded Development Policies, in the Amazon Region, in which participated researchers from the eight member countries.
- 18.- It contributed to the organization and holding of the Regional Coordination Meeting on Forests, in which participated the member countries of the ACT, and which constituted the preparatory meeting of the Inter-Governmental Forum on Forests (Caracas, August 13-14, 1998).
- 19.- It supported, technically and financially, the publication and distribution of the following books:
 - a) List of Programs, Projects and Institutions of Development and Preservation of the Peruvian Amazon Region, Lima, Peru, (PTS-ACT/N° 58).

- b) Legal Frame of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, 5th Edition, Caracas, Venezuela (PTS-ACT/N° 61).
- c) The Vilcanota Basin within the Amazonian System: Situation and Perspectives (FAO).
- d) *Switenia* and *Cedrela* Genetical Resources in the Neotropics: Proposals for joined actions (FAO).
- e) Proposal of institutional strengthening and technology transfer for the Amazon Region (PTS-ACT/N° 62).
- f) Venezuelan Consultation on the Validation of the Tarapoto Proposal on the Criteria and Indicators of the Amazonian Forest Sustainability, Caracas, Venezuela, April 1998 (PTS/ACT/w.n).
- g) Biology and Management of the *Podocnemis expansa* Turtle (PTS-ACT/N° 63).
- h) Situation and Perspectives of Food Assurance in the Amazon Region, within a framework of Agriculture and Livestock Production and Intra-Regional Cooperation, Caracas, Venezuela (PTS-ACT/N° 64).
- i) Ecological and Economic Zoning: A Methodological Proposal for the Amazon Region, Caracas, Venezuela (PTS-ACT/ N° 65).

Objective N° 3. Supporting the PTS and the Member Countries of the ACT in the consolidation of a system of information on the Amazon Region and enlarging the technical training of the people and the institutions involved.

1.- This project prepared and disseminated the CD-ROM of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat of the Treaty

The project supported the design, reproduction and distribution of 5,000 copies of the PTS-ACT's CD-ROM, which contains a selection of 37 books (approximately 11,000 pages) on Amazonian topics published by the ACT and whose editions are sold out. Most of these books were published thanks to the support of the Project. This CD-ROM is a significant contribution to the preservation of the institutional record of the Treaty. The CD-ROM allows links with more than 500 Web pages of the member countries, thus contributing to the dissemination of information on the Amazon Region. The PTS- ACT is distributing it to universities, libraries, educational and research centers of the member countries, as well as to people interested in the preservation and development of the Amazon region, living in or out of the region. In order to have a greater distribution of its content, the Project has published all the information of the CD-ROM in the Internet (<http://www.spt-tca.org>), which enables the opening of a virtual and interactive space where not only the institutions involved in the development and preservation of the Amazon region, but also all the people interested in it can access all the information contained in this instrument.

The project contributed to the wide diffusion of the CD-ROM in different events organized by the PTS-ACT, or by other national and international institutions, such as the following:

- a) Ordinary Meeting of the CEEDA (Quito).
- b) Opening Meeting of the CENTURA (Caracas).
- c) Special Meeting of the Ministry of Tourism and CORPOTURISMO (Venezuelan Corporation of Tourism) (Caracas).
- d) Special Presentation to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela.
- e) International Seminar on the Greater Amazon 21 (Brasilia).
- f) Special Meeting of the Ministry of Education of Venezuela.
- g) Internal Seminar held in the FAO Headquarters (Rome).
- h) Special Meeting of the Ministry of the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources of Venezuela (MARNR).
- i) Special Meeting of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela.
- j) IV Ordinary Meeting of the CETURA (Rio de Janeiro).
- k) Two meetings of the PTS-ACT's *Ad Hoc* Committee of Consultation. The Director General of the FAO participated in one of them.
- l) VI Ordinary Meeting of the CECTA (Caracas).
- m) Special Meeting of the United Nations System Agencies in Venezuela.
- n) Graduate studies of the CENDES in Amazonian Affairs (Caracas).

- o) VI Ordinary Meeting of the CEMAA (Georgetown).
- p) II Meeting of Coordination and Evaluation of Subprogram I of the IDB (Caracas).
- q) International Meeting: Exchange of experiences and strategies on the sustainable management of the Amazon Region, Iquitos, Peru, June 17-19, 1998. This meeting was organized by the European Commission and the National University of the Peruvian Amazon Region.
- r) Academic Meeting Commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the ACT. This meeting took place in the Diplomatic Academy of Peru (July 21st, 1998).

2.- The project prepared and disseminated a video on production of promissory Amazonian fruits. The project prepared, for the PTS-ACT, 1,000 copies of a video on production, agro-industrial transformation on a short scale and commercialization of four varieties of promissory Amazonian fruits: Camu-Camu (*Myrciaria dubia*); Pijuayo (*Bactris gasipaes*); Copoasú (*Theobroma grandiflorum*); and Arazá (*Eugenia stipitata*). The video is being distributed to the Member Countries.

3.- The project devised and presented two proposals for the financing of the Second Edition of the CD-ROM.

VII. SUBPROGRAM I OF THE PTS/ACT-IDB AGREEMENT

On the one hand, the coordination and management of Subprogram I of the Agreement on Non-Reimbursable Technical Cooperation, signed by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty and the Inter-American Development Bank, was transferred to Venezuela, after this country took office of the Secretariat. On the other hand, Subprogram II remained under the direction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru, as provided for by the third paragraph of the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the incoming and outgoing *Pro Tempore* Secretaries, which is included in the Act of Transfer.

The fundamental objective of Subprogram I has been the consolidation and strengthening of the Permanent National Commissions and a harmonious functioning of these Commissions with the ACT as a regional body. The following activities have been carried out under the Secretariat's administration in Caracas.

Mrs. Emma Cecilia Toledo Padilla was appointed as Regional Coordinator of SubProgram I, and Mrs. Ana Cáceres, as Administrative Assistant of this SubProgram.

The Technical Advisors of the Member Countries were requested to submit the Work Plan and its respective schedule, according to specific guidelines based on the objectives of the Agreement.

New Advisors were appointed in Guyana and Suriname to substitute the outgoing ones, who could not continue performing their functions for the second period.

The service agreements of the technical advisors of Peru, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Bolivia were prorogued.

Furthermore, new National Coordinators for the Permanent National Commissions were appointed in some countries, thus substituting the outgoing ones. This is the case of the Commissions of the following countries, whose current National Coordinators are mentioned below: Bolivia, Mrs. Ana María Solares; Colombia, Ambassador Sergio Camargo; Ecuador, Minister Francisco Riofrio; Guyana, Second Secretary Forbes July; Peru, Ambassador Jorge Valdez Carrillo; and Suriname, Mr. Glenn Alvares. In Venezuela, Ambassador Gustavo Dubuc still holds this position.

The activities carried out by the Technical Advisors in the different countries have been followed up, in order to be informed about their development and to supervise that the activities are carried out in accordance with the objectives established.

The Second Meeting of Coordination and Evaluation of Subprogram I of the PTS-ACT/IDB Agreement was held in Caracas, on May 19-20, 1998, in order to exchange experiences and present the progress achieved regarding the strengthening of the Permanent National Commissions. One of the important aspects of this meeting is the fact that the Member Countries requested the Secretariat to carry out the pertinent works before the IDB to devise and implement a new project aimed at strengthening and consolidating the activities developed in this Subprogram.

In general, Subprogram I has satisfactorily been developed, according to the goals established in the Agreement, and its achievements in each member country have been possible thanks to the particularities of the national institutional performance.

VIII. FUNDS COLLECTION NEGOTIATIONS

Considering the importance of a diversified external financing for the implementation of significant projects within the framework of the Treaty, the following negotiations have been carried out while the Secretariat has been in Venezuela:

1.- The *Pro Tempore* Secretary proposed methods to rescue the project “Action for a Sustainable Amazon Region” which was stopped in December 1996. The *Pro Tempore* Secretary proposed this action twice to the Executive Coordinator of the Global Environment Facility, Mr. Rafael Asenjo, firstly, personally on June 23rd, 1997 in New York; and secondly, through mail on July 17th, 1997.

2.- In order to fulfill the reiterative and reasonable demands of the President of the Association of Amazonian Universities (UNAMAZ), Dr. José Seixas Lourenço, an allocation of remainder resources for the new project “Network of Information and Communication Services of the Panamazonia” was requested before IDB President, Dr. Enrique Iglesias (This new project was prepared by the Executive Secretary of the Information System of the Amazon Region (SIAMAZ), with headquarters in Belém do Pará, Brazil). This request was made by means of a communiqué signed by the *Pro Tempore* Secretary on May 23rd, 1997.

3.- In December 1997, according to a resolution of the eight Member Countries of the ACT, *Pro Tempore* Secretary, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, visited the Representative of the European Union to Caracas, Mr. Georges Rouvalis, in order to submit the request for the Second Stage of the “Regional Project of Planning and Management of Protected Areas” and the new project. During the visit of the President of the Republic of Venezuela, Dr. Rafael Caldera, to the headquarters of the European Union in Brussels, he was requested to emphasize the importance of the follow-up of this project for the ACT’s countries. A preliminary answer in writing was received, which stated that the Annual Committee of Experts for the study of projects to be financed in the “Tropical Forest” line would examine the proposal. Moreover, an ex post evaluating mission was planned to be sent to determine if a second stage of the project could be carried out.

4.- In connection with the aforementioned project, the Secretariat requested moderate funds to the CAF, in order to be provided with coordination services ensuring the contacts in the Sub-Network of Protected Areas of the Amazon Region (SURAPA), until the allocation of funds for the Second Stage is decided.

5.- According to a resolution of the VIII Council of Amazonian Cooperation, funds were requested before the OAS to be invested in the San Miguel/Putumayo Binational Project concerning the Governments of Colombia and Ecuador. This request was submitted on September 23rd, 1997 through a communiqué attached to the respective project sent to Dr. Jorge Rucks, Head of the Unity of Sustainable Development and Environment of the OAS Secretariat, Washington.

By the time this report was enacted, the negotiations in this sense had not produced the expected results, and in some cases, the terms to fulfill the requests were very long.

IX. DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION. PUBLICATIONS

The *Pro Tempore* Secretariat in Caracas has tried to guarantee and expand the activities of dissemination of information by means of special or periodical newsletters, as well as through publications aimed at providing proper information to users who participate in initiatives of sustainable development of the Amazon Region within the framework of the Treaty. The collaboration granted by the GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO Project supporting the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat in the field of technical and financial assistance has been fundamental for the development of this action.

One of the most successful aspects of the performance of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat, under the direction of the former and current headquarters, relies upon publications, given the fact they have progressively formed what could be called the Record of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, because of their variety of topics and their evident utility for experts on the Amazonian matter. Some of the most important orientations of the Secretariat during its period in Caracas are the dissemination of topics concerning the development indexes of the Amazon region; biological diversity and abundance of natural resources; list of projects within the framework of the Treaty, legislation in force; research centers for the Amazon region; and publications on environment, health, science and technology, transportation, communications, indigenous affairs, tourism and education in the region.

The publication of the CD-ROM on the Treaty, mentioned in several sections of this report, constitutes the most significant effort undertaken by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat while functioning in Caracas to modernize its means of communication with people and institutions interested and committed to the sustainable development of the Amazon region. Because of its importance and impact, the CD-ROM was presented and distributed during the events carried out within the commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the Signature of the Treaty.

More technical details about the CD-ROM are available in the VII section of this report, where the activities carried out within the framework of the GCP/RLA/128/NET FAO Project supporting the PTS are described.

Hereinafter, the publications published by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat during the period described in this report are detailed:

Publications of the Series of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

PTS-ACT/N° 57. Special Commission of the Amazon Region on Health (CESAM):
Constituent Background, Minutes and Annexes of the Meetings, March, 1997.

PTS-ACT/N° 58. List of Institutions and Projects of Development and Preservation of the Peruvian Amazon Region, May 1997.

PTS-ACT/N° 59. The Environmental Dimension in the Basic Primary Education in the Member Countries of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (presented in a newspaper).

PTS-ACT/N° 61. Legal Frame of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, 5th Edition, June, 1997.

PTS-ACT/N° 62. Proposal for Institutional Strengthening and Technology Transfer in the Amazon Region, January, 1998.

PTS-ACT/N° 63. Biology and Management of the *Podocnemis expansa* Turtle, September, 1997.

PTS-ACT/N° 64. Situation and Perspectives of the Food Assurance in the Amazon Region, within a framework of Agricultural and Livestock Production and Intra-Regional Cooperation, November, 1997.

PTS-ACT/N° 65. Ecological and Economic Zoning: A Methodological Proposal for the Amazon Region, March, 1998.

Newsletters of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat

Special Newsletter of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, June, 1997.

Quarterly Newsletter N° 11 of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, September, 1997.

Quarterly Newsletter N° 12 of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, June, 1998.

Other publications supported by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat

Records of the International Workshop on the Current and Potential Development and Management of the Minor Tropical Forest in Latin America, June 1997.

Pucallpa Proposal for the Sustainable Development of the Minor Forest in Tropical America (available in Spanish and English), June, 1997.

The Vilcanota Basin within the Amazonian System: Situation and Perspectives (FAO), July, 1997.

Genetic Resources of *Swietenia* and *Cedrela* in the Neotropics: Proposals for joined actions (FAO), 1997

Bolivian Consultation on the Validitation of the Tarapoto Process on the Criteria and Indicators of the Amazonian Forest Sustainability, 1997.

Venezuelan Consultation on the Validitation of the Tarapoto Process on the Criteria and Indicators of the Amazonian Forest Sustainability, 1997.

Other means of dissemination of the activities carried out by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat

March, 1998. Five thousand copies of the CD-ROM of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (it contains 37 books and allows access to 550 Web pages of the Member Countries of the Treaty). For a greater dissemination of its content, all the information of the CD-ROM is available in the Internet: <http://www.spt-tca.org>

May, 1998. A thousand copies of a video on production, agro-industrial transformation in a short scale and commercialization of: 1) Production of Amazonian fruits and vegetables. 2) Production of Pijuayo (*Bactris gasipaes*) 3) Production of Copoasú (*Theobroma grandiflorum*) 4) Production of Arazá (*Eugenia stipitata*) 5) Production of Cocona (*Solanum sessiliflorum*).

In their final stage of reproduction: Two educational videos on the processing in a short scale of native and introduced Amazonian fruits and vegetables: 1) Production and processing of Amazonian fruits and vegetables. 2) Candied fruits processing. 3) Marmalades and jams processing. 4) Nectars processing. 5) Pickles processing. 6) Dehydrated fruits and vegetables processing.

August, 1998. A video commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (available in Spanish, English and Portuguese).

X. SPECIAL AFFAIRS

The *Pro Tempore* Secretary's Participation in the Seminar "The Amazon Region and the Sustainable Development within the Agenda of the Venezuelan Foreign Policy".

This event took place on March 20th, 1997 in the Eurobuilding Hotel, Caracas, and it was sponsored by the Parliamentary Faction of the Christian Social Party of Venezuela (COPEI), the Office of the Vice-President of the Committee on Sustainable Development of the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Executive Secretariat of the Amazonian Parliament. This event was aimed at fostering a closer relation between the Venezuelan political world and the development of the environmental policies. It also constituted a favorable opportunity to present the Bill of Venezuela's Biological Diversity, aimed for the harmonization of Venezuelan internal normative order with the international legal instruments.

The *Pro Tempore* Secretary, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, dwelled upon the topic "Venezuela and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty". First of all, he presented a general introduction on the ACT, emphasizing the functions of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat. Then, he briefly mentioned the Amazonian characteristics of Venezuela and dwelled upon the core issue concerning Venezuela's participation in the works of the ACT. He finally concluded with some future perspectives of the negotiations Venezuela can establish through the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat.

The *Pro Tempore* Secretary's Business Breakfast with the Association of Foreign Journalists in Caracas integrating the "Aves del Paraíso".

This event took place in the Caracas Hilton Hotel, on March 25th, 1997. During the breakfast, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, *Pro Tempore* Secretary and special guest at that occasion, carried out a presentation on the ACT, the functions of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat and the work plan to be developed during the Venezuelan administration of the Secretariat. This meeting was aimed at establishing exchanges to diffuse the relevant aspects to the main centers of the respective journalists abroad.

The *Pro Tempore* Secretary's Talks with Mr. Rafael Asenjo, Executive Coordinator of Global Environment Facility

Such talks, held in the facilities of the UNDP in New York, on June 23rd, 1997, were aimed at restating the proposal on the regional project "Action for a Sustainable Amazon Region", which was preliminarily approved by the Executive Council of the GEF in October 1995, and subsequently, reformulated, without such Council having undertaken any actions towards its final approval and later implementation at that time. The *Pro Tempore* Secretary, Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, suggested the possibility to engage a consultant from a country of the Amazon region for the reformulation of the project. This project would be later on submitted for approval to the authorities of the GEF once approved by the ACT's member countries. Mr. Asenjo considered this work plan to be feasible. He added that the consolidation of this work plan depended on the disposition of the countries allocating funds to the GEF and on a regional project of sustainable development supporting the biodiversity dimension. Subsequently, the *Pro Tempore* Secretary stated he would resume the procedures for the project to be reactivated. Likewise, he formulated the statement in writing through Communiqué PTS/ACT N° 00186 addressed to Mr. Asenjo, July 17th, 1997.

Official Presentation of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat's CD-ROM

The CD-ROM published by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat was presented during the commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the signature of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty. This event was presided over by Dr. Miguel

Angel Burelli Rivas, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Venezuela, and took place in the *Casa Amarilla*, Caracas, on February 5th, 1998.

The CD-ROM constitutes an evidence of the great importance granted by the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat to the creation of the ACT's Annual Record and the improvement of its communications. The publication of this CD-ROM was also an excellent way to successfully commemorate that important date.

Numerous personalities related to the works of the Treaty and interested in the Amazonian topic attended this event. The staff of the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat and representatives from accredited embassies and international organizations in Caracas also participated in this event.

Dr. Victor Palma, Chief Technical Advisor of the FAO Project, carried out a presentation on the characteristics of the CD-ROM and announced the emission of 5,000 copies of it.

Commemoration of the Twentieth Anniversary of the ACT

The 20th anniversary of the signature of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty took place on July 3rd, 1998. In order to commemorate such important date, the VIII Ordinary Meeting of the Council of Amazonian Cooperation - through Resolution RES/VIII CCA/3, March 11th, 1997- resolved "to promote the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the signature of the Treaty by means of national and international activities aimed at emphasizing the importance of this cooperation instrument".

Subsequently, the meetings carried out by the Special Commissions (CEEDA, CETURA, CECTA and CEMAA) proposed the organization of activities for the member countries and the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat to commemorate the anniversary of the Treaty.

It is worth to mention that the Secretariat put into circulation 5,000 copies of the CD-ROM on the ACT. This initiative was technically and financially supported by the FAO Project supporting the Secretariat. A significant quantity of this CD-ROM was distributed among the eight governments, having as final addressees institutions and people concerned about the Amazonian affairs.

Besides, the Secretariat, in collaboration with the International Soka Gakkai NGO, participated in the organization of the Exposition on Environment and Development "Amazon Region: Cohabitation and Hope", held in Caracas from May 15th to June 14th, 1998. This Exposition was extremely successful: it had to be extended, so that a greater number of people, particularly school-aged children, could attend.

The *Pro Tempore* Secretary wants to express, in this report, his deep satisfaction at the event organized by the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, where the delegations attending the VI Meeting of the Special Commission on the Amazonian Environment (CEMAA) were invited - on July 8th 1998 - to plant exotic and Guyana's native trees, in order to create a space called *Plaza Amazonas* in the Botanical Garden of Guyana. This event, full of symbolism, was presided over by the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports of Guyana (Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs), Dr. Gail Teixeira. Nine species were planted and the *Pro Tempore* Secretariat has its own tree, a mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Peru extended an invitation to the *Pro Tempore* Secretary to participate in an Academic Event organized by the Peruvian Diplomatic Academy on July 21st, 1998. This magnificent event took place in the headquarters of the Academy and a numerous and distinguished public from the scientific, academic, political and diplomatic sectors attended. Some of the participants of this event were: Ambassador Jorge Valdez, Director General of Bilateral Policy of the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Dr. Estuardo Marrou, Director of the Diplomatic Academy; Dr. Yolanda Guzmán, Director of Peru's Institute

of the Amazonian Research (IIAP); Dr. Víctor Palma, Chief Technical Advisor of the FAO; and Ambassador Víctor R. Carazo, *Pro Tempore* Secretary. The event was closed by Ambassador Hugo Palma, Peru's Vice-Minister of Foreign Relations.

Emission of Stamps in Venezuela

As part of the activities organized by the Government of Venezuela to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, stamps picturing the Venezuelan Amazon Region were put into circulation during an event held on August 20th, 1998, in the *Casa Amarilla*, Caracas. This event was presided over by Dr. Miguel Angel Burelli Rivas, and authorities of the Venezuelan Post Office Institute (IPOSTEL), the *Pro Tempore* Secretary of the ACT, representatives from the FAO diplomatic body and other personalities were among the participants of the event.

The emission comprised ten different stamps with landscapes and species of flora and fauna of the Venezuelan Amazon region. 500,000 stamps were emitted.