



AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

UNITED STATES A. I. D. MISSION TO COSTA RICA

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April 30, 1991

Dr. Allan Weinstein
The Center for Democracy
1101 15th Street, N.W., Suite 505
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Dr. Weinstein:

This letter acknowledges receipt of your document "Master Plan for the Development and Modernization of the Legislative Assembly, Republic of Costa Rica".

The Mission has reviewed the document and greatly appreciates the effort made by the Consortium for Legislative Development to meet the one month deadline established by the President of the Legislature. In general we find the document well written and satisfactory. However, for our purposes and in the interest of assisting USAID in making this plan more operational, there is additional information which we will require.

Overall these requirements include:

1. The need for a clearer, more detailed problem statement, i.e. what are the problems specific to the Costa Rican legislature which need to be addressed;
2. Additional, more detailed information on the budget. (We understand that this information is almost ready for submission to the Mission.);
3. A clearer more detailed and precise description of the why, how and when of the components, including person months and the types of TA, types of training and a time phased plan laid out in graphic form for each of the components. In particular we are interested in determining the proposed concrete results which the T.A. and training will accomplish. We are also concerned about language problems which might arise in U.S. training situations;
4. More detail in the Management Section; for example, do you plan on having a long-term advisory team in-country; will you have an administrative support team, how will accounting be maintained, how will the team function, where will they be located, what type of support will they require?

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5. Your best ideas as to the strategy for promoting the Multidonor financing mode and more detail as to how it would function;
6. A definition of what you see as the host country contribution under the project if it is done on a multidonor basis;
7. A definition of how AID funding plus appropriate counterpart from the GOCR could be used in a meaningful, stand alone way, should other donor assistance not materialize in the near term.

This information will not only serve to better define the proposed activities but will also allow us to incorporate the contemplated interventions for the Costa Rican Legislature into a planning document which will serve as the basis for the implementation of the proposed actions. In a separate action, we are advising AID/W of our desire to proceed with the financing of technical assistance and training for the modernization and development of the Costa Rican Legislature in fiscal year 1991, under what will be an amendment to one of our current USAID projects. Anticipating a positive response to this request, we will proceed with the required documentation for effecting a buy-in to the Consortium's current project.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ronald F. Venezia".

Ronald F. Venezia
Mission Director



CONSORTIUM FOR LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENT

CONSORCIO PARA EL DESARROLLO LEGISLATIVO ♦ CONSÓRCIO PARA O DESENVOLVIMENTO LEGISLATIVO
♦ CONSORTIUM POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT LÉGISLATIF

May 31, 1991

M E M O R A N D U M

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TO: Ronald F. Venezia, Mission Director,
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FROM: Dr. Allen Weinstein, Consortium Chairman *AW.*
SUBJECT: Response to letter of April 30

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Prof. Abdo Baaklini
Consortium Principal

Dr. Charles Dawson
Program Manager

The Consortium for Legislative Development is pleased to respond to the request for additional information contained in your letter dated April 30, 1991. The separate three million dollar project description you requested is presently being developed by Dr. Abdo Baaklini, who led the Master Plan team, and his staff at the Center for Legislative Development at the University at Albany, State University of New York. This element and the budgetary information you requested will be forwarded shortly under separate cover. However, there were several other areas mentioned in your letter that we are addressing in this memorandum.

1. Problem Statement

Analytical work conducted by the Consortium for Legislative Development prior to the preparation of the Master Plan has found that the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly is presently a vibrant democratic institution with excellent potential to perform its constitutionally mandated role. However, fundamental and important problems inherent in both its political and administrative organization prevent the Assembly from making more than a marginal contribution to the country's political system. The following are examples of the obstacles which prevent the Assembly from

effectively fulfilling important functions such as oversight of the executive branch and analysis of policy proposals (for a more complete and detailed analysis of the institutional problems please refer to Attachment A - Section VIII. Opportunities for Strengthening the Legislative Assembly excerpted from the document titled "Diagnostic Study & Institutional Development Plan" dated January 25, 1991 and February 13, 1991):

- The Assembly is not sufficiently developed as a political organization. Many legislators and staff of the Assembly lack a clear understanding of their role or the role of the institution in which they serve. The resources around both the political parties and the members to enable the performance of effective oversight and policy analysis are not in place;
- The Assembly is not sufficiently developed as an administrative organization. An effective organization requires that some functions be decentralized but that others, such as bill drafting, be centralized. Additionally, it lacks the basic management tools normally present and needed for efficiency and productivity. The Assembly does not even have the minimal physical facilities needed for development as an effective organization;
- There is a lack of professional level staff support. Such support is vital if a legislature is to fulfill its role in government. Complicating this problem, the quality of many of the existing staff, in terms of work experience and education, is below the level needed;
- The Assembly lacks the institutional linkages and ties which would give it access to the information, resources, talents and support mechanisms available in the community and in the region;
- The Assembly does not fulfill its function as a representative body. Constituency services and interaction with the communications media need enhancing. This is complicated, in part, due to a lack of understanding of the role and function of the Assembly by the general public;
- The Assembly is weak as a decision-making body. It is hampered in this role by specific institutional traditions and practices (such as annual rotation of the leadership) and a broader historical and cultural tradition of dependence on the Executive Branch; and
- The Assembly is not considered a strong symbol of

democracy. Both the Assembly as an institution and its members suffer from a poor public image.

Overcoming all of the specific problems associated with the weaknesses identified above is beyond the scope of any short-term plan. However, the plan addresses all of the identified weaknesses by contributing to and complementing the broader legislative strengthening efforts occurring within the Assembly, in Costa Rica and in the region. The Consortium will conduct its own activities; foster cooperation between the Assembly and local organizations; and collaborate with regional activities. Some of the proposed activities have political implications or require policy changes while others are more administrative.

The plan will support activities designed to: increase the legislators understanding of their and their institution's proper role and functions; improve the balance of power between the Assembly and the executive branch; enhance the Assembly's decision-making ability; improve the Assembly's organizational capacities and effectiveness; establish ties between the Assembly and other institutions; and educate the public and the media about the Assembly in order to elevate its image as a symbol of the majesty of the state and reputation as a representative body. The plan will organize its activities around: (i) development of the Commission on the Modernization of the Assembly (ii) strengthening the Assembly's human resources and organization-- its ability to perform its law making, oversight and related functions; (iii) improving external linkages; (iv) enhancing the organization structure and processes; and (v) providing additional informational and physical support. These activities also indicate in general terms what the plan hopes to achieve, that is, the end-of-project status.

Finally, in addressing the problems identified above, the plan is designed to complement and build upon the prior and current efforts of USAID, the Swedish government, ILANUD's bilateral Administration of Justice Project, the Center for Democracy, Florida International University, the University of New York at Albany, ATELCA, Peat Marwick and Associates and other institutions working with the Assembly.

2. Additional Component Information

The Consortium has reviewed and revised the programmatic sections of the Master Plan to insure that the information requested is included. It is the Consortium's belief that the "why" for the programmatic activities are described generally in the "Rationale for Legislative Development" section and specifically in the introductory descriptions for each activity. Additionally, each activity's "how" is given by designating if the activity requires resources of technical assistance,

training, commodity support or other types of inputs and specifying the number of person weeks, training time required, etc. The "Outputs" for each activity specifies the concrete results of the "Resources" inputs.

In making these revisions, we have endeavored to be as specific as possible. However, any program of this scope and time frame will of necessity require adjustments during implementation and we therefore consider the specificity given as tentative and primarily illustrative in nature. At the end of the revision, a chronogram of the activities is provided.

[BEGIN REVISION]

B. Institutionalizing the Legislative Development Process

For a legislative development effort to be sustained over the long term, the Legislative Assembly must have mechanisms in place to insure continuity and a shared development vision.

1. Development of the Commission on Modernization of the Legislative Assembly

The Directorio Legislativo of the Assembly as introduced legislation to create a permanent Commission on the Modernization of the Legislative Assembly. The Permanent Commission will succeed the currently functioning Interim Commission designated by the President to work with the Consortium since the beginning of the preparation of the Needs Assessment and Master Plan documents. As currently proposed, the Permanent Commission will be comprised of legislative leaders representing the key political groups in the Assembly and senior staff.

This project endeavors to promote a philosophy of legislative development shared by all parties involved. An important ancillary aim is the building of relationships between the Consortium and the Permanent Committee representatives in order to create a common vision for the Project. The basic activity in this project is a short term workshop to be conducted in the United States and, separately, in at least one Latin American legislature. The project will include a two-week visit to Albany, Miami/Tallahassee, Washington, D.C. and possibly other state legislatures. Participants will include members of the Permanent Commission. The participants will be exposed to the subject of legislative development in comparative perspective. Follow-up visits to selective legislatures in the U.S. to observe first-hand several of the functions and structures described in the academic environment.

Targeted Audience: The Permanent Committee itself and, by extension, the entire institution.

Resources/Inputs: 2 person weeks of T.A. for program design and organization; a two-week Training study tour in legislative development from a comparative perspective; Funds for Per Diem, Transportation, and Printed Materials.

Outputs: 6 Permanent Commission members sharing understanding and philosophy of legislative development.

Timing: 1st Quarter of the 1st year.

2. Planning and Modernization Unit

To adequately perform its functions, a legislature must engage in a constant process of adaptation of its structure, staff and services in relation to its evolving needs. Factors such as new legislative technologies and the increasing complexity of society are placing constantly greater demands on legislators. The creation of a unit on Planning and Modernization will facilitate the legislature's ability to gather and synthesize information on the future needs of the Assembly. This unit will, for example, prepare proposals for major acquisitions, human resource development programs, and present recommendations and studies to the Executive Director for review, amendment, approval or submission to the Directorio Legislativo.

This unit would coordinate the provision of technical assistance for the computer technology to be provided to those units included under the management information section of this Master Plan. It would also oversee the provision of technical support and training for human resources development so as to guarantee an administrative philosophy that values legislative modernization as defined by the unique needs of legislatures. The heads of the various administrative and technical departments should serve as an advisory panel to the this new unit.

This project will consist of technical assistance to design the mission and structure of this unit in order to develop its relationship with other units in the Assembly and provide training for its staff.

Targeted Audience: The legislature as a whole and especially the units that use computers; the deputies; and the units that provide services for the deputies.

Resources: 1 person week of T.A. in the design of the Planning and Modernization unit, drafting of necessary legislation, development of the working philosophy, and implementation of the first projects.

2 weeks of training of personnel in administrative planning/human resources.

Outputs: 1 new administrative unit and 15 trained staff.

Timing: TA: 2nd quarter - 1st year; Training: 1st quarter - 2nd year & 1st quarter of the 3rd year.

3. Graduate Study Program

An essential component of any legislative development program is the development of staff resources to such a level that the institution as a whole benefits from their advanced degree of knowledge and the techniques they possess. This can be done only through a program to develop human resources at an in-depth level. This project will enable people to master specific skills and develop comprehensive understanding of the nature and processes involved in legislative development and the relationship and rationale among the various components. Thus it is expected that a critical mass of 5 staff members be formed to insure the sustainability and continuity of legislative development.

This project will be carried out through graduate study at The University at Albany, SUNY and Florida International University for five Costa Ricans, who shall be agreed upon by the Permanent Committee on the Modernization of the Legislative Assembly. The candidates will acquire an in-depth knowledge of legislative development, of operational theory and working techniques, and of specific professional tools such as policy analysis. It is critical that the Legislative Assembly secure agreements with the candidates to insure that they will return to work in positions of professional responsibility.

Targeted Audience: The Assembly as a whole.

Resources: 1 person week of T.A. for development of student selection process; Funding for Graduate degree program for five

students, including such activities as attendance of professional meetings and visits to different legislatures.

Outputs: 5 Professionals with Masters degrees in Legislative Administration, Information and Public Policy.

Timing: 1st, 2nd and 3rd years.

C. Organizational and Human Resource Development

The institutionalization of the developmental process requires appropriate structures and qualified persons in those structures. The projects described below are organized according to the roles that the Costa Rican Assembly plays. They address the structural and human resource needs of the legislature.

1. Budgetary Role

The budget process lies at the heart of the nation's political process, and it is here that the legislature plays a critical role in helping to shape and determine the nation's priorities. This project entails the design and implementation of ways and means to strengthen the Legislative Assembly as an effective and responsible participant in the nation's budgetary process. This includes the development and training through workshops of professional fiscal staff, technical assistance in the development of organizational structures and relationships and use of budgetary information systems, and member orientation. This will be achieved through technical assistance in the organization of the budget function, and training in budgetary techniques, carried out mainly through workshops and internships conducted in Costa Rica and a study tour to the United States.

Targeted Audience: Selected professional staff and members.

Resources/Inputs: 4 person weeks of T.A. for development of curriculum and institutional budgetary capability;

4 weeks (total) of Training in: (i) overview of conducting the legislative budget function: (e.g. separate and joint taxation/revenue and budget/expenditure

committees, professional budgetary committee staff and its organization, fiscal and budgetary information systems, budgetary oversight mechanisms); (ii) the role of committee members in analyzing, revising and overseeing the budget, including the holding of public and agency hearings and working with the general membership; (iii) the role of the fiscal committee staff in providing information and analysis of the budget under review and the budget during its implementation by the executive as well as working with the member staffs; (iv) relations with the executive branch and the media; (v) methods for revenue analysis and budget analysis; (vi) utilization of information systems and hardware; (vii) use of reference materials; (viii) the oversight role and techniques of the legislative staff; and (ix) the legal aspects of the legislature's budgetary role.

Outputs: 20 trained members in budgetary activities; 10 trained staff in budgetary activities.

Timing: 1st, 2nd and 3rd years.

2. Oversight Role

In a democratic society governed by the rule of law, the legislature and its members are indispensable political counterweights to the bureaucracy . Legislator-politicians must establish effective control over the bureaucracy which invariably tends to both conceal its actions and attempts to usurp the power of other political institutions. It is not enough for a legislature to enact programs and policies into law; it must keep a constant vigil to ascertain that the bureaucracy is implementing the legislatively approved programs as intended and to take corrective actions as necessary. Since legislative oversight is not a discrete activity, but occurs in conjunction with other activities of the legislature, such as budgeting, policy making and others, it is often neglected as an important activity.

This project will provide technical assistance in the design and organization of the oversight function and its relationships to the other interrelated legislative functions. It will also provide training in oversight

techniques and opportunities. A workshop will be held in Costa Rica and internships provided in the U.S. or other Latin American countries.

Targeted Audience: Selected professional staff and members.

Resources/Inputs: 2 person weeks of T.A. for the design and organization of the oversight activity;

2 weeks (total) of Training in oversight techniques, e.g. (i) philosophy of legislative oversight, (ii) opportunities for conduct of the oversight function, (iii) the practical value of legislative oversight, and (iv) a survey of the variety of legislative organizational mechanisms and techniques available to strengthen the oversight capability.

Outputs: 15 members and 5 staff trained in oversight function.

Timing: 1st, 2nd and 3rd years.

3. Public Policy Role

A third area of importance is the role of legislatures in public policy. It is in this important function that the legislature determines public policy not directly related to public expenditures, such as human rights, environment, consumer relations, etc. This project aims at augmenting the capability of the legislature in its law-making function by providing policy analysis support for the legislators.

To do this it is necessary to equip the Assembly with analytical skills, demonstrate specific techniques for providing the information to legislators, and provide the leadership with models as to how research and analytical staff are typically organized in legislatures. The activities under this project are directed at developing the capability of providing policy analysis support for the members and to develop a rationale to organize this new function and to place it in the organizational structure. This will be achieved through technical assistance in the design of the unit and workshops for members and professional staff in policy/bill analysis. Finally an internship will be developed and executed for development of staff skills.

Targeted Audience: Selected Professional staff and members.

Resources: 2 person weeks of T.A. for the design and organization of the policy analysis activity;

2 weeks (total) of Training in policy/bill analysis techniques, e.g. (i) the role of legislators and legislative staff in the nation's policy role; (ii) typical services provided by policy analysis staff; (iii) support services from a functional approach (research, analysis, program evaluation) and organizational approach (models for organizing policy analysis staff).

Outputs: 15 members and 10 staff trained in policy/bill analysis techniques.

Timing: 1st, 2nd and 3rd years.

4. Constituent Services

Although constituency services are intricately associated with the representational function of a legislature, in many countries they are either misunderstood or implemented in a questionable manner. Constituency services are often associated with corruptive favors and access to state resources that are not legitimate. Therefore, when it is performed, it is usually considered a "second class" function. It is important to emphasize this function and explore the legitimate ways of conducting these services.

Constituency services, the resources needed, and the manner in which these services can be delivered will be the subject of series of workshops. These workshops will expose the members and staff to the ways legislatures perform this function, how it relates to a member's constitutional function, what are the types of legitimate services and how to effectively organize staff resources to perform these services. The general idea is to cover all the members of the Assembly and their personal staff. In addition, technical assistance will be provided to help in the design and implementation of the structures, processes and relationships needed to perform this function.

Targeted Audience: Selected members and personal staff.

Resources/Inputs: 2 person weeks of Technical assistance for the design, organization and implementation of activity.

2 weeks (total) Training in provision of constituency services, e.g. (i) the purpose of the constituency services; (ii) the variety of legitimate constituency services; and (iii) models for organization of constituency service staff.

Outputs: Constituency function in operation.

Timing: 1st, 2nd and 3rd years.

5. Other Legislative Techniques and Technologies

Besides these major areas of institutional interest, there are a number of activities that are relevant to the way legislatures perform their functions and duties that can be enhanced to improve the way the legislature performs as a whole. Among these are:

- i. bill drafting and indexing;
- ii. legislative/parliamentary procedures;
- iii. legislative office organization;
- iv. plenary and committee management; and
- v. legislative reference.

To enhance these activities, training programs consisting of workshops will be developed and implemented. Technical assistance will also be provided related to the organizational problems--especially the interface between such activities and the functions described above, as well as between them. Internships designed to acquaint staffers with new technologies can also be developed and implemented.

Targeted Audience: Selected professional staff.

Resources/Inputs: 4 person weeks of Technical assistance for the design, organization and implementation of activity.

4 weeks (total) of Training in legislative techniques and technologies (see i through v above).

Outputs: 30 members and 30 staff trained in legislative techniques and technologies.

Timing: 1st, 2nd and 3rd years.

D. Improving Institutional Linkages

The development of linkages between a legislature and other institutions in its environment is crucial. This project will build a mutual understanding and appreciation of the Assembly by other institutions through the participation of members of the target institutions in the process of modernization of the legislature. This will allow an understanding of the specificities of the legislative process as contrasted to the executive branch. To develop this relationship, it is important that organizations such as member's universities, research centers, and professional associations are selectively include among the targeted audience in the activities described above. For example, members of the Bar Association may participate in a bill drafting workshop, university professors may participate in public policy oriented seminars, and staff of selective units within the executive branch may participate in seminars in their area of specialization. This exposure will enhance the linkages between the assembly and those institutions.

The projects to be carried out under this category are:

1. Legislative Internship

One way to start building a stable and constructive relationship between a legislature and the academic and professional community is the implementation of an internship program drawing on students from the University of Costa Rica and other appropriate local academic institutions. In such programs, students typically work in a variety of legislative offices (members' offices and professional staff offices) for one or two academic semesters. Two direct benefits of the program are the provision of educated and motivated staff assist*ants for the legislature and the provision of a practical exposure to democratic processes for the students. Indirect benefits include the program serving as a recruitment device for the legislature and as a

mechanism for strengthening the institutional ties between the legislature and the participating universities.

Targeted Audience: Leadership offices, professional staff offices, and committee offices.

Resources/Inputs: 2 person weeks of Technical assistance to develop and implement the program.

2 weeks (total) in Training for participants (interns) in the program.

Outputs: Internship program in operation.

Timing: 2nd and 3rd years.

2. Joint Research

Another effective way that has been used to expand a mutual interest in the linkage between legislatures and the academic community is the development of joint research. Under this project, selective research of interest to both academia and the Assembly may be partially funded. Technical assistance will also be provided to help the academic community in developing the mechanisms to do research that may be relevant to the Assembly.

Targeted Audience: Selected committees, technical staff, academic community.

Resources: 2 person weeks of Technical assistance to develop and implement the program as described.

2 weeks (total) of training for participating legislators, legislative staff and members for the academic community.

Monetary resources (seed) for funding research projects.

Outputs: 10 members, 10 staff, and 10 academics trained in joint research programs. Joint research activities in operation with resulting publications.

Timing: 2nd and 3rd years

3. Participation in Professional Conferences and Associations

A third project aimed at improving the institutional ties is the systematic participation of members and staffers in the professional and academic meetings and associations, such as ATELCA, in which subjects of professional or political interest are discussed. These conferences and organizations may provide information and training to the Assembly and help to promote understanding and mutual appreciation.

Targeted Audience: Selected Committees, technical staff, academic and professional communities.

Resources/Inputs: Funding for travel, per diem and other costs associated with participation in the organizations and conferences.

Outputs: 30 members and 30 staff trained at appropriate organizations and attending relevant conferences.

Timing: 1st, 2nd and 3rd years.

E. Administration and Management

The projects designed to promote administrative and managerial development are of a different nature from the substantive programs. First, because they are aimed at a different clientele: basically the administrative echelon of the legislature. Second, because they deal with administrative and management technologies and processes that are more similar to those existing in the executive branch and the public sector in general. The projects in this category are, therefore, of a more traditional nature.

Under this component we propose projects related to the improvement of the capability of the administrative and management support structure and processes. Most of the work will be done to assist in the implementation of the recommendations of the Peat Marwick study commissioned by the Assembly. Projects will be developed in the following areas:

1. Organizational Structure

This project aims at implementing changes in the organizational structure proposed in the Peat Marwick study and approved by the Directorio. This includes assistance in the preparation of descriptions of the functions of each office, department, etc. It will also include determination of the numbers and types of personnel required as the new technologies provided under this Project are implemented.

Units Benefitted: All departments.

Resources/Inputs: 4 person weeks of Technical assistance for the development of activities described above.

2 weeks (total) of training for selected personnel in the implementation of organizational structure improvements.

Outputs: Departmental functional description; personnel needs proposal. 15 trained staff in reorganizational requirements.

Timing: 1st and 2nd years.

2. Management Information Process

The existing system for providing information regarding management and administrative decisions (i.e. information unrelated to the legislative information system) to the President, the Directorio, the Executive Director and other appropriate administrative leadership will be reviewed. A comprehensive and unified process which integrates the new information systems and technologies being provided under this Project will be developed. In essence, this project will assist in the design of the conceptual framework and processes needed to effectively utilize the Information Science assistance.

Units Benefitted: Office of the President, the Directorio, the Executive Director and other key administrative staff.

Resources/Inputs: 4 person weeks of Technical assistance.

2 weeks (total) of Training for selected staff in MI processes.

Outputs: Integrated management information process proposal. 15 staff trained in MI processes.

Timing: 1st and 2nd year.

3. Financial Information Process

The existing financial management and budgeting process will be examined. A new system taking full advantage of the new automation system will be developed.

Units Benefitted: All.

Resources/Inputs: 4 person weeks of Technical Assistance.

2 weeks (total) of Training in financial management and budgeting processes.

Outputs: Integrated financial and budgeting process based on new automation system proposal. 15 staff trained in financial information processes.

Timing: 2nd and 3rd years.

4. Comprehensive Personnel System

The existing personnel system will be reviewed and proposals for modifications deemed appropriate by the President, Directorio and Executive Director developed. The objective will be to design a comprehensive system which includes standardized recruitment procedures, career tracks, class and position descriptions, job specifications and a personnel evaluation system.

Units Benefitted: All.

Resources/Inputs: 8 person weeks of Technical assistance.n

2 weeks (total) of training for selected staff.

Outputs: Comprehensive human resource classification system proposal. 10 staff trained in implementation and utilization of comprehensive personnel systems.

Timing: 3rd year.

5. Assistance to Maintenance Department

This activity will promote the Maintenance Department's capability to deal with the new technological environment.

Units Benefitted: Maintenance Department

Resources: 1 person week of Technical Assistance for planning and specification of equipment, maintenance standards, procedures and safety training.

1 week (total) of training for selected maintenance personnel.

Funds for purchase of new and up-graded tools and equipment.

Outputs: Proposal on above topics to Executive Director. New equipment purchased and installed. 10 maintenance staff trained in new equipment usage and safety standards.

Timing: 2nd year.

F. Information Support

A major element in the development of a legislature's capacity to perform its functions, especially the ones related to budget, policy analysis, oversight and law making, is the availability of comprehensive legislative and management information systems with the adequate technology and human resources to operate and utilize them as a whole system. These systems are necessary to provide the Assembly and the Directorio with their information needs.

The projects under this component are directed at providing these systems.

1. Implementation of the Information Science Plan

The Information System, as developed in the Plan Maestro de Desarrollo created with the support of Swedeserv, A.B., is based on two principal components: (1) the Legislative Component, and (2) the Management/Administrative Component.

The Legislative component of this information system must include:

- a) a bill drafting capability;
- b) a bill status and reference capability;
- c) a public policy analysis capability;
- d) an oversight and program evaluation capability;
- e) a statutory retrieval capability;
- f) a library, documentation, legislative reference (including parliamentary debates) capability; and
- g) a recording, registering and transcription system of legislative activities.

The management component of the system includes functions not related to the legislative process that are, in essence, administrative support functions of the legislature. These usually include the following:

- a) The maintenance of a comprehensive human resource system;
- b) The maintenance of a financial system;
- c) The maintenance of a record keeping and documentation system; and
- e) The maintenance of an information dissemination and public relations system.

The ultimate purpose of this project, thus, is to provide the technological base and the technical assistance to design information processes and systems for the President, Directorio, and members to enable them to improve their decision making capacity.

This project includes all activities related to the process of implementation of the Plan Maestro de Desarrollo which includes the design, development and implementation plans of a comprehensive computer system to support all units and activities of the Legislative Assembly.

Units affected: All units of the Assembly.

Resources/Inputs: Technical assistance in the design, development and implementation of the appropriate legislative systems (i.e. bill tracking, bill status, bill indexing, etc.) and the management/administrative systems (personnel, accounting, management, etc.).

Training of human resources involved in the processes of development and operation of

systems and users.

Computers, software and auxiliary equipment as described in the SIS-SWEDESERV, A.B.-financed study.

Outputs: Fully developed, automated and supported Legislative and Management/Administrative Information systems.

Timing: 1st, 2nd and 3rd years.

2. Library Improvement

The Legislative Library is in the advantageous position of having a well qualified staff and a collection that is well organized and catalogued. The Information System activities of this Project will provide new technologies available to improve the library's ability to serve the legislature's members and staff with needed information. This project will provide two other essential elements to transform the library into a modern and complete source of legislative information:

- (1) technical assistance in developing the library's capability to provide service with a uniquely legislative focus; and
- (2) the acquisition of new publications to complement the existing collection;

Technical assistance will be provided to the legislature's current library science professionals to develop a strategy for providing services targeted to the Assembly's Members and staff. Particular emphasis will be given to developing new services that will be needed as other staff support services such as policy and fiscal analysis and program evaluation are introduced in the Assembly, to change the nature and direction (i.e. provides bibliographic research, clipping service, abstracts) of the work of the library so as to transform it into a legislative library and coordinate its responsibilities with those of Archives.

The Project will also provide funding to increase the library's existing collection of publications, reference materials, etc. and to establish communication links with appropriate databases.

Units Benefitted: The Legislative Assembly as a whole and the Legislative Library in particular.

Resources: 2 person weeks of Technical assistance to develop the project.

2 weeks (total) for training of library staff and users in new services provision and usage.

Funding for new collections and access to data bases.

Outputs: A strategy proposal for improving legislative library services; 30 trained staff; enhanced library collections.

Timing: 2nd Year.

3. Improvement of Archives

This project will provide support to the Archives Department to further integrate it into the documentation and information functions of the Assembly. The Archives is currently poorly equipped to maintain and utilize the legislature's historical documentary records. Conditions are such that original documents suffer from deterioration and in some cases are in danger of being lost. The Assembly has set the physical and technical improvement of the Archives as a top priority. This is especially important given the Archives' important role as the distribution center for all bills as they pass through the legislative process. The Archives also maintains the legislature's Bill Index.

As noted elsewhere in this document, the Legislative Assembly has already developed a detailed study with recommendations for securing appropriate microfilm equipment to preserve the Assembly's archival collection.

This project will be addressed through three related activities, including the provision of technical assistance, the integration of the Archives into the Information System, and the implementation of commodities assistance.

Units Benefitted: Archives Department

Resources/Inputs: 2 person weeks of Technical Assistance for development of integration and procurement plan;

2 weeks (total) Training for Archives staff.

Funds for procurement and installation of the equipment.

Outputs: 10 trained staff. Necessary equipment installed and being utilized. Archives unit integrated into information process.

Timing: 1st & 2nd years.

4. Publications & Printing

For a legislature to perform its responsibilities, its members and interested parties must be informed on the decision process that is occurring. This process depends on the availability of relevant printed materials produced in a timely fashion. At the same time a constant and selective production of legislative documents can also serve as educational tools for the society. In order to develop these functions the legislature needs a small independent capability for printing and publishing. The activities under this project are designed to provide the Assembly with this independent capability. It should be stressed that the utilization of this capability must be done under proper administrative rules designed to avoid misuse and abuse.

Units Benefitted: The entire legislature.

Resources: 2 person weeks of Technical assistance in the design of the unit, development of draft implementation legislation and project orientation;

2 weeks (total) Training of designated staff;

Funds for purchase of the following commodities: Desktop publishing (from Management Information System Component), small off-set printing device, and document duplication/photocopying equipment.

Outputs: 1 plan for activity implementation; 15 trained staff; 1 fully equipped publishing/printing administrative unit.

Timing: 2nd year.

G. Physical Plant Support

The physical space currently available to the members of the Assembly is crowded, inappropriate and will not allow for the growth of the legislative support services that this Plan envisions. The condition of the space currently in use seriously inhibits the Assembly and its members from carrying out some of their primary functions, including the constituent relations role of the legislature, the public policy making role of the Assembly, the budgetary and fiscal role of the Assembly, the oversight role of the legislature and the educational role of the legislature in the democratic process. Also, the current physical plant is inappropriate for the use of computer technology that is being introduced.

1. Construction of a New Legislative Office Building

The Assembly's physical plant is currently overcrowded. Members offices have been built in corridors and legislative staff are crowded into small spaces that severely limit their productivity. In response to this situation, the Assembly has developed plans to construct a new legislative office building. The structure will provide adequate space for member's individual offices and additional space for the Assembly's permanent committee. To date, the Assembly has held a design contest and has chosen an architect to design the building. A special commission has been appointed to oversee the development of the architectural plan, secure financing for the building and oversee its construction. The Assembly has included the building as a cornerstone of its modernization efforts.

This project is designed to support the refinement of the architectural plans, and the construction, equipping and utilization of the new building. The Assembly has created a considerable base fund to finance the construction of this building. The Assembly seeks to attract external donor support to compliment its own financial commitment to this project.

Units Benefitted: Directly: members offices and committee offices. Indirectly: all other units in the Assembly as result of alleviating chronic overcrowding.

Resources/Inputs: 8 person weeks of Technical

assistance in the refinement of architectural and engineering plans;

Funds for the construction and furnishings, including infrastructure such as computer systems, a telephone system, electrical wiring, ventilation equipment, furnishings, essential office equipment, a fire protection system, and an intercom/paging system.

Output: New legislative building.

Timing: Three years beginning in the 1st year.

2. Upgrade Existing Electrical Installations

Implementing a sophisticated, automated information system requires a reliable electrical system to ensure an adequate, stable flow of electricity to supply the delicate electronic technology. Presently, the wiring in the Assembly's building is sub-standard and in some cases poses a fire risk. Since the Assembly's automation plan includes the use of linked Local Area Networks (LANs), it will be important to properly upgrade the existing electrical infrastructure in the Assembly's buildings. This will require technical assistance to carry out a review of the Assembly's current electrical installations and the development of a plan for modernization.

Units Benefitted: Units located in the existing building; computer systems; electrical equipment.

Resources/Inputs: 1 person week of Technical assistance to review the current system and develop a corrective plan;

1 week (total) of Training for maintenance staff in.

Funds for contracting the implementation of the upgrading effort, including the procurement of electrical wiring and related materials.

Outputs: An updated rewiring of the Assembly's existing buildings; 10 trained staff.

Timing: 1st, 2nd and 3rd years.

3. Upgrading the Library's Physical Space

The library cannot currently efficiently expand its functions as proposed under this Plan due to the lack of properly prepared physical space. A basic lack of physical space also currently inhibits the utilization of the library's current resources as there is little room to read materials and conduct research. The Directorio Legislativo has authorized the acquisition of a residential building next to the Assembly known as the Casa Rosada. It is proposed that the library set up its collections in this building. It will be necessary to invest resources to modify this building's interior to accommodate and protect the library's collection. This will include such details as upgrading electrical wiring, replacing windows, installing ventilation/humidity control equipment, and modifying the interior structure and wall materials.

Units Benefitted: Library and the units that are library users.

Resources/Inputs: 1 person week of Technical assistance to develop a detailed study and plans for upgrading and modifying the Casa Rosada;

Funds for materials, commodities and labor needed to modify the Casa Rosada.

Outputs: A properly conditioned space for housing the library's collection and expanding its services.

Timing: 1st and 2nd years.

4. Upgrading the Assembly's Telephone System

Modern telecommunications are absolutely essential to the development of any major institution. This is especially true in a legislature, where constant and fluid communications are the lifeblood of the political and legislative process. This aspect of the infrastructure greatly affects the Assembly's ability to carry out its primary functions, most especially its constituent relations role.

This project will study options for replacing the

Assembly's existing ineffective and mixed telephone system with a unified modern telecommunications system. The installation of the automated information system will in and of itself require an upgraded telecommunications capability to handle high-volume transfer of data via modem. In designing a new system for implementation under this Plan, it will be necessary to interface with the planned new building.

Units Benefitted: All, including the new building; units using computer equipment.

Resources/Inputs: 1 person week of Technical assistance for evaluation and planning;

1 week (total) of Training in new system for selected staff.

Funds for the purchase and installation of new system.

Outputs: An integrated modern telecommunications system. 50 trained staff.

Timing: 3rd year (to coincide with completion of new building).

H. Operational Equipment

Among the many factors that can influence an institution's efficiency and productivity is the basic office equipment it has available to conduct its work. Although the Legislative Assembly possesses general office equipment, it is at once insufficient and in many cases obsolete. This project addresses the most critical operational equipment needs of the Assembly.

1. Upgrading the Departamento de Actas

The Departamento de Actas is responsible for recording and transcribing verbatim the proceedings of the Assembly's plenary sessions. Currently, Actas produces completed transcripts 48 hours after plenary sessions are held. This project will provide upgraded equipment to increase the timeliness and efficiency of this department. This should include new audio/video recording equipment, computer-based desktop publishing and high-speed, high-volume photocopying equipment. This combination of equipment will allow Actas to produce a very high quality publication in a short period of time and provide members of the Assembly and the press

with direct written and audio/video reports on the plenary's proceedings.

Units Benefitted: Departamento de Actas, the Plenary and, indirectly, the Public Relations Office.

Resources/Inputs: 1 person week of Technical assistance for evaluation and planning;

Funds for the purchase of equipment;

1 week (total) of Training in the use of the equipment.

Outputs: A properly equipped Departamento de Actas. 15 staff trained in use of new technologies installed.

Timing: 1st year

2. Administrative/Legislative Operating Equipment

The Assembly's Administrative and Legislative offices would benefit greatly from an infusion of basic office equipment. The departments involved should include the Committees Department, the Technical Services Department, the Secretarial & Drafting Department, the Financial Department, the Audit Department, the Human Resources Department, the Purchasing Department, and the Legal Department.

General office equipment needed to support these departments should include: typewriters, calculators, fax machines, small photocopiers, audio-visual equipment, file cabinets, small furnishings.

Units Benefitted: Committees Department, the Technical Services Department, The Secretarial & Drafting Department, the Financial Department, the Audit Department, the Human Resources Department, the Purchasing Department, and the Legal Department

Resources/Inputs: 1 person week of Technical Assistance in the planning and specification of needs;

Funds for the procurement of office equipment;

1 week (total) of training in the use of the

new equipment.

Outputs: 100 staff trained in use of new office equipment. Equipment purchased and installed.

Timing: 1st year.

3. Operating Equipment for Legislator's Offices

The Legislative Assembly, using internal funds, is currently procuring personal computers and printers for each member of the Assembly as the first step in implementing the automated information system described elsewhere in this document. As with the Assembly's Administrative and Legislative offices, the members offices would benefit greatly from an infusion of basic office equipment. General office equipment needed includes: typewriters, calculators, fax machines, computer furniture, file cabinets, and other small furnishings.

Units Benefitted: Legislator's offices

Resources/Inputs: 1 person week of Technical Assistance in the planning and identification of equipment needs.

Funds for the procurement of office equipment.

Outputs: Office equipment installed and operational in legislators offices.

Timing: 1st year.

3. Potential Language Problems

The Consortium's policy is to conduct its activities in the native language of the targeted audience whenever possible. For example, the Consortium recently sponsored the IV Reunion of ATELCA (the Asociacion de Tecnicos Legislativos Centroamericanos) held May 23 through 26 in Tegucigalpa, M.D.C., Honduras. All of the activities, including training sessions with presenters from the United States, were conducted in Spanish.

When training events include presenters who do not speak Spanish, the Consortium provides simultaneous translation using experienced translators supported by modern electronic equipment. The Center for Democracy, a member institution of the Consortium, has simultaneous translation equipment for groups of ??? persons or less. The Consortium's procurement plans include expanding this existing capability to support larger groups.

4. Project Management

PERSONNEL CHART
Costa Rica Master Plan

PROJECT DIRECTION

US-Based

The Consortium Committee
Chairman (1)
Principals (2)

CR-Based

Legislative Assembly
Modernization Committee
Chairman (1)
Deputies (2)
Professional Staff (2)

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Consortium Coordinator (1)
Program Managers (3)
Program Assistants (3)
(2) _____
Administrative Assistant (1)
Student Assistants (2)
Secretaries (3)

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Consortium Controller (1)
Accountant (1)
FIU/UASUNY Accountants ↗

Tom Raffa & Assoc.
(compliance)
Price, Waterhouse
(audit)

CR-Based

USAID/Other Donor Liaisons (1+)

CLD

Non-CR Program Manager (1)
CR Program Assistants (2)
CR Administrative Assistant (2)
CR Student Assistants (2)
CR Secretaries (2)
CR Receptionist/Clerical (1)
CR Messenger (1)
CR Guard (1)
CR Custodial (1)

CR Accountant (1)

The management of the Costa Rica Master Plan project will be accomplished by a combination of U.S.-based and Costa Rica-based personnel. This personnel pool can be sub-divided into three subsections, including PROJECT DIRECTION, PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION, and FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION. The following general descriptions build on the Consortium's existing administrative and project implementation base, and are intended to be illustrative of the project's management scheme.

PROJECT DIRECTION will be accomplished through the Consortium Committee in cooperation and coordination with the Legislative Assembly Modernization Committee.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION will be accomplished through a two-tiered structure under the direction of the Consortium Committee in cooperation with the Legislative Modernization Committee. U.S.-based project directors, with the core support staff outlined above, will plan and supervise the on-the-ground execution of program activities. The U.S.-based program management staff will also coordinate the provision of consultants and other technical assistance resources for project implementation.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION will be executed in-country by a mixed team of non-Costa Rican and Costa Rican professionals and support staff as outlined above. Their primary responsibilities will include:

- 1) Maintaining daily contact with the Legislative Assembly;
- 2) Supporting the U.S.-base program managers in developing program curriculums;
- 3) Implementing Program Logistics;
- 4) Development of Activity Reports;
- 5) Gathering Data for Use in Program Evaluations.

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION will be accomplished through a combination of in-house, contracted and field professionals and technicians. Overall, the Consortium's financial administration is under the direction of the Consortium Controller, based at The Center for Democracy. In addition, the Consortium's academic partners are administered by their respective controllers' offices and offices of sponsored research. The coordination of financial administration and monitoring of compliance, under Center for Democracy direction, of the Consortium for Legislative Development project and any subsequent buy-ins has been contracted with Tom Raffa & Associates. Price, Waterhouse has been retained to perform audits on the project. A Costa Rican accountant has been contemplated to insure proper funds management in the field office.

The Consortium's implementation of the project components

under the Master Plan will be accomplished using a combination of in-house academic and topical experts, outside consultants, legislative practitioners from the Americas and Europe, and other resource institutions as discussed in the original Master Plan.

5. Multi-Donor Strategy

The implementation of the Master Plan contemplates the solicitation, and coordination of multidonor financial support. The Master Plan outlines three strategies for tapping multidonor support for the Master Plan. These include:

- 1) THE MULTI-DONOR APPROACH characterized by the establishment of a joint pool of "un-tied" assistance funds;
- 2) THE FUNDING OF SPECIFIC SECTIONS APPROACH characterized by each donor picking a specific portion of the Master Plan and developing a complimentary project to fund; and,
- 3) THE CORE COSTS AND ACTIVITY FUNDING APPROACH characterized by donors funding separate project activities but contributing top a common management and administrative fund.

The goal of the Master Plan's implementation Strategy is to secure a single pool of "un-tied" multilateral funding. Securing this pool of un-tied donor funds will require a carefully-developed implementation plan. The basic elements of this plan are:

- 1) Adoption of the Master Plan by the Legislative Assembly;
- 2) Agreement by the President and Legislative Assembly Modernization Committee to promote a multi-donor strategy;
- 3) Agreement by one or more major donor to participate in an "un-tied funding pool" strategy;
- 4) Agreement by the Executive Branch to support the development of the multi-lateral "un-tied funding pool" strategy through its Foreign Ministry;
- 5) The development of a donor coordination and financial administration plan for the multidonor effort;
- 6) The implementation of a promotional visit by the president of the Legislative Assembly and a delegation to several major donor countries to engage in high level discussions to present the Master Plan and secure interest in participating in the multidonor plan;
- 7) Distribution of the Master Plan with promotional

visits to other donors not reached by the President directly;

8) Scheduling and implementation of a donor conference in San José, Costa Rica to secure participation in the multidonor plan.

9) Establishment of the multidonor funding pool as outlined in the donor coordination and financial administration plan and modified at the donor's conference.

As of the date of the writing of this addendum to the Master Plan, Steps 1-4 have been accomplished. Step 5, the drafting of a donor coordination and financial administration plan, must be accomplished before Steps 6 and 7 can be effectively implemented. The Consortium proposes to develop the coordination and administration plan in cooperation with USAID/Costa Rica which is the major donor referred to in Step 3 above. USAID/Costa Rica is especially suited to provide this support to the Multi-donor effort since its Deputy Director participated in a highly successful multi-donor project in Chad in the mid-1970's.

The promotional trip indicated in Step 6 is currently being planned. The Costa Rican Legislative Assembly has secured the support of the Costa Rica Foreign Ministry and has made contact with several diplomatic missions in support of the Consortium's efforts to implement this Step. The promotional work indicated in Step 7 will be implemented subsequent to the accomplishment of Step 6.

The scheduling and implementation of the donor conference will be accomplished in collaboration with the Legislative Assembly's Modernization Committee. The Consortium hopes to draw on USAID/Costa Rica's considerable expertise in this area to design and execute this Step. The establishment and management of the funding pool is linked to the overall management of the project, which is outlined in a separate section of this addendum.

6. Host Contribution to the Implementation of the Master Plan

The Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica has established an approximately two-million dollar fund for constructing a new legislative building. The disposition of these funds within the multidonor approach advocated in the Master Plan has not been determined. It is assumed that the Assembly's funds will be invested in the proposed building. However, should priorities change within the Assembly, these funds might be utilized on other major project components involving acquisitions such as the management and administrative information systems. Either in the

case of a multilateral funding effort or in the case of a strictly bilateral project, the Consortium surmises that the Assembly would insist on its funds remaining under its sovereign control. In either case, the Assembly's funds should and probably naturally would be directed at those project elements least favored by the international donors.

In addition to the existing pool of funds, which are earmarked for infrastructure improvements, the Assembly has expressed a clear understanding that the implementation of these program activities will incur additional costs requiring in-kind, one-time and recurring expenses, for example the addition of trained, professional staff, for which they will have to increase their institutional budget. Further discussion will be required to ascertain the specific level of additional counterpart contributions will be made available.

ATTACHMENT A

[BEGIN EXCERPT]

Listed below are areas that members and staff of the Legislative Assembly indicated were opportunities for strengthening the legislature. This is divided into four major components: 1) Physical Areas, 2) Equipment, 3) Technical Areas, 4) Politically-sensitive Areas and, 5) Others.

Physical Areas are those which involve non-controversial infrastructure weaknesses. Equipment/Resources involve essential support equipment and resources that are currently deficient. Technical Areas are those in which there is ample consensus that these represent reasonable targets of opportunity for institutional strengthening. Politically-sensitive areas are those which were noted but on which consensus does not exist and/or are subject to continued political/partisan debate. And, Others represent the Consortium technicians' suggestions of opportunities for strengthening the institution. Each major area is subdivided for clarity.

1. Physical Areas

A A. Physical Space

The office space currently available for members and party caucus offices is inadequate and inappropriate. The current leadership has named a permanent multipartisan committee to oversee the development and architectural design of a new legislative office building that the Assembly plans to construct.

There is a lack of space in many administrative and technical support areas along with other physical plant limitations (enumerated separately below). Of note is that though well organized, the library's physical space is woefully inadequate.

2. Equipment

A. Automated Equipment

As a first priority, the legislative leadership underscores the need for members to have access to computer technology to automate their offices.

There is not an integrated management information system in existence to encompass such primary technical support functions as bill tracking, statutory retrieval, and, in general, a decision support system for the Directorio and the political leadership. There is a critical need to

establish a modern computer system to keep track of bill histories of bills passed and dropped, to integrate the Attorney General's SLV data base of prevailing laws and jurisprudence, maintain the legislative index within the data base, provide electronic mail, and general office automazation, including text processing, spreadsheets and modem links with outside data bases. (Please refer to Attachment #1 of this report for the full text of the Assembly's computerization study.)

B. Basic Equipment/Resources

The Assembly needs to upgrade and/or modernize essential equipment and resources to support the technical and administrative implementation of the legislative process. This includes the following priority areas:

The Archives Department works in grave peril of losing its unique collection of legislative history to fire or slow decay. The Assembly has underscored the urgent need for microfilm equipment or possibly computer-based technology to copy, store and safeguard the Archives' documents.

The equipment utilized to record and transcribe the Plenary's proceedings must be replaced and/or upgraded to facilitate production of the legislature's verbatim journal. This should include an effort to automate the production of the journal.

Various departments of the Assembly lack or have inadequate basic support equipment such as typewriters, photocopiers, calculators, and fax machines.

Greater resources need to be made available for acquisitions and inter-library connections (universities, bi-cultural center, international data bases). The library could use improved audio visual equipment and may be considered for automation of its already manually well-organized indexes and administrative procedures.

Document reproduction equipment is old, inefficient and inadequate. There is an urgent need to acquire high-speed photocopying or photo-offset equipment to reproduce the vast number of copies of key documents required by the legislature.

Time clocks currently used to record employee's hours should be replaced by a computer-based attendance system.

A sound system should be installed in all Legislative Assembly buildings, including loudspeakers and an intercom.

The current "patchwork" telephone system is inadequate and inefficient and should be replaced with a unified modern telecommunications system.

A

The electrical wiring of all Legislative Assembly buildings will need to be upgraded to supply a proper, clean source of electricity for the automated systems envisioned by the Assembly.

The Legislative Assembly's current motorpool is inadequate to tend to the members' transportation needs. Additional vehicles should be acquired to alleviate this problem.

The Assembly's in-house maintenance workshop, requires new equipment, tools and training. Jury-rigged equipment has caused at least one serious injury in the maintenance workshop.

C. Organizational/Training Tools

Basic, fundamental manuals for legislative procedure, bill drafting, etc. to provide operational consistency do not exist (N.B. the drafters of this report understand that an effort to develop these manuals is presently being implemented under the able direction of long-time staffer Lic. Carlos Arguedas with AID financial support channeled through ILANUD.)

A manual of Public Services should be developed to advise visitors and concerned citizens of the services available to them from the Legislative Assembly, as well as to the limitations of these services.

3. Technical Areas

A. Organizational Needs

A

A master plan, identifying needs and that integrates and coordinates external development efforts does not exist.

Communication and the flow of information in support of the decision making capacity of the legislature as an institution needs strengthening. For example, more information needs to be made available to members prior to Plenary sessions and the work capacity of the legislature's committees needs to be increased to augment the volume of bills considered and to speed the legislative process.

The public image and understanding of the legislature's (and legislators) role and function is weak. Resources are

needed to communicate with the media and design and engage in public Education efforts.

Codification/systemization of the nation's laws is an urgent need. Although a project under the Attorney General's office is well advanced, the legislature is noticeably absent from the effort.

Additional emphasis must be placed on the qualifications of the political and professional staff hired by the Assembly.

Institutional linkages are weak, i.e, universities, think-tanks, professional associations have limited contact with the Assembly and hence, the legislature does not benefit from these resources.

The organization Assembly's administrative departments can be improved by combining departments with similar or overlapping responsibilities and duties, and by the consolidation of some independent units into existing departments or the reorientation of other units.

A

A specific Department of Publications, charged with developing and printing publications required by the Assembly in enhancing its public relations, does not presently exist and should be created. This Department would work through the National Printing Office and private printers. Staff, technical assistance and equipment would be needed to implement such a Department of Publications.

B. Training

Training programs for Members and staff on legislative practices and procedures do not exist.

Short-term professional training of technical and administrative staff including courses and short internships is needed.

Long-term training (both in-house and university based) is needed to improve the expertise of the legislative staff.

A

C. Technical Requirements

There is no centralized non-partisan bill drafting service to assist the Members in the initiation of legislative proposals, nor is the Assembly participating in the ongoing efforts elsewhere in the government to systematize the nation's laws.

Bill analysis is only performed at a rudimentary level and

the fiscal impact of proposed legislation is not analyzed. The Assembly also needs to establish a standardized format for bills.

4. Politically Sensitive Areas

A. Institutional Issues

A

Tradition, based on political factors, dictates that the officers of the Directorio Legislativo and committee chairmen rotate on an annual basis. This limits the ability of members to develop expertise in these areas.

Legislators with additional responsibilities (the Directorio, committee chairs, etc.) do not receive additional compensation which may incline them toward not continuing in that capacity. Other Latin American legislatures recognize the additional time and financial burdens of serving in a leadership capacity and provide additional compensation to members serving in the legislature's leadership and, in some cases, committee chairs.

Salary levels for staff (in relation to other governmental bodies) need to be updated.

The internal rules and other internal procedures need review and modification as necessary to allow the legislative process to advance in a responsible and timely fashion. (N.B. Although this continues to be a politically-sensitive issue, a multipartisan committee has been appointed and is making considerable progress on achieving consensus on modifications to streamline the legislative process.)

The Assembly needs to review and possibly expand the number of standing committees.

The Assembly needs to evaluate shifting part of its workload from the Plenary to the committees.

Votes need to be recorded by individual member.

B. Organizational Issues

The Assembly should consider creating a Department of Strategic Planning, Organization, Methodology and Control.

A

The Legislative Assembly should emancipate itself from the Executive's payroll system implemented by the Mechanized Technical Office.

Members need additional legislative assistants on their staff to effectively execute their legislative responsibilities, especially constituent relations (N.B., while this is, generally-speaking, a technical matter, the allocation of resources to improve this situation could well become highly politicized).

Security at the Legislative Assembly Should be improved. Possibilities include installation of a closed-circuit t.v. surveillance system, acquisition of alarm systems, walkie talkies and modern arms. (N.B. While these are regarded as technical matters by the Assembly they are politically-sensitive for potential external donors).

5. Others

A. Technical

Technical staff currently do not draft bills on a regular basis nor do they analyze legislation programmatically.

No comprehensive orientation program for new members currently exists. This is especially important given the complete turnover in membership every four years and the limited number of deputies with prior legislative experience.

The Assembly does not enjoy an internship program.

B. Politically Sensitive

Legislative oversight of the Executive is not systematically performed.

Although the Assembly's centralized administrative and technical staff departments are non-partisan, appointments to the central staff are decided by the Directorio Legislativo which, by tradition, is controlled entirely by the majority party. This has led at least to the perception among some members that the centralized staff is some degree or another politicized.

[END EXCERPT]