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**PROGRAM OF ASSISTANCE FOR A
REPRESENTATIVE CONGRESS (PARC)**

BOLIVIA

QUARTERLY TECHNICAL REPORT

April 1 – June 30, 2005

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OVERVIEW

Implementation of the Emergency Plan (Section A) continued this quarter jointly with the application of representation mechanisms developed under the Project (Section B).¹

Project activities were slowed down in May and June due to unstable conditions in country that included roadblocks, strikes and travel restrictions. Most applications planned for April were carried out, totaling twenty-four (24). This total dropped to eighteen (18) in May and to six (6) in June.

The political crisis came to a head with the resignation of President Carlos Mesa on June 6 and his replacement by Supreme Court President Eduardo Rodriguez on June 9. On June 27 Congress resolved the crisis by amending Article 93 of the Constitution to authorize the holding of general elections a year and a half in advance of the due date.²

Legislators were reluctant to participate in Project activities at their districts until the crisis was resolved on June 27, when Congress approved a package of four electoral events.³ The shifting priorities of the outgoing Congress and the anticipated requirements of the incoming Congress pose new scenarios for legislative assistance.

A. PROGRESS UNDER EMERGENCY PLAN

The Emergency Plan includes three kinds of objectives:

1. Emergency objectives
2. Institutional strengthening objectives
3. Other objectives

1. Emergency Plan objectives include:

- a. Drafting and approval of the Law Convoking the National Assembly
Indicator: Law drafted and approved by January 31, 2005

Products

On May 31, 2005 the Special Committee to Convoke the Constitutional Assembly presented to the Plenary a draft of the Law Convoking the Constitutional Assembly. This draft includes two options on the composition and mode of election of the Constitutional Assembly.

A team of Project consultants organized Committee sessions at different Departments, provided technical advice, wrote reports and helped the

¹ See Annex 1 for List of Representation Mechanisms and their definitions.

² The current Congress and Administration were due to end their mandates on August 6, 2007.

³ See Annex 2 for Calendar of Electoral Events, 2005-2006.

Committee conduct nation-wide Citizen Interest Forums before and after the presentation of this draft law.

Prospects

Congress set July 2, 2006 as the new date for the election of the members of the constitutional assembly, but did not approve a law on the composition, mode of election, operation or duration of this deliberative body.

None of these issues is likely to be resolved under the current Congress by the required 2/3 votes of those present at a joint session of both Houses. This task is most likely to fall upon the next Congress (2006-2011).

Objectives 2 and 3: Constitutional Assembly Preparation and Support

b. Preparation of the Constitutional Assembly

Indicators for 2005:

- a. *National Consensus document terminated by May 6*
- b. *Draft Organizational Plan and Procedures presented by May 6*
- c. *Constituent Relations Mechanisms adapted and completed by August 6*

c. Assist the members and committees of the Constitutional Assembly in Constituent relations

Indicator:

Technical Secretaries trained and applying constituent relation mechanisms

Products

At the start of last reporting period USAID placed on hold all activities in support of objectives 2 and 3, possibly because of opposing views on the objectives of the constitutional assembly. Most Bolivians have been led to believe that the main objective of the constitutional assembly is a social revolution involving wholesale redistribution of power and wealth.

This restriction was maintained during this quarter. USAID Democracy Team officials requested that this decision be reconsidered, particularly in view of the fact that the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the Embassy is conducting a well-publicized series of events on the constitutional assembly. The Democratic Initiatives Project under Casals & Associates also provides support in this area.

Prospects

With a July 5, 2006 date set by law for the election of the representatives of the constitutional assembly, there is little doubt that helping Bolivia prepare a technically viable constitutional assembly is critical.

Congress has mandated the Rodriguez government to organize a new body in support of the constitutional assembly. The current body (UCAC), set up by the Mesa government, reports to the Ministry of the Presidency.

By contrast the new body will be directed by representatives of the heads of each of the three branches of government. There is much discussion as to whether and to what extent civil society will be represented.

All funds provided by international cooperation agencies to UCAC will be transferred to the new body, which will be charged with informing the population about the purpose and nature of a constitutional assembly, and with receiving, organizing and preparing proposals for different constitutional changes.

The role of this body will be crucial. Project assistance in this area should be resumed as soon as possible.

2. INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING OBJECTIVES

- d. Improve the capacity of representatives to understand and evaluate national and departmental budgets

Indicator (Departmental Brigades):

30% of Brigade members trained in budget analysis and provided with instruments to understand national and departmental budgets and to exercise oversight over budget implementation

Products

Over its life to date, the Project has provided budget training to 121 parliamentarians. This figure represents 77% of Upper and Lower House seat holders and 39% of seat holders plus their alternates.

Some budget training was included under the workshop for Technical Secretaries. The two Minimal Regional Agenda (AMRs) events included a measure of budget analysis. These events are described below (Section B, Applications of Representation Mechanisms).

Prospects

Next quarter the project will continue to improve the capacity of current representatives to understand and evaluate national and departmental budgets. The immediate effects and status of two new laws (hydrocarbons and budget) justify continued budget training for outgoing legislators.

The achievement of this objective has contributed to an improved budget analysis capability on the part of a number of individual legislators, but it has not left in place a permanent budget analysis capability of the Congress.

Other donors are considering a revival of the Budget Technical Office implemented by SUNY in the 1990's. To promote sustainability, qualified civil servants who enter through a competitive process and are both held accountable for their actions as well as enjoy job security should staff this office. Such an office could take up budget training of legislators after the Project ends.

- e. Consolidate the use of constituent relation mechanisms and obtain funds from the congressional budget sufficient to finance constituent relation activities

Indicator (Uninominal Deputies):

Consolidated operational budget presented to the congressional authorities by a majority block of uninominal deputies

Products

Instead of a special fund for uninominal deputy representational activities, which could be questioned as a kind of slush fund, the project counterpart in Congress known as the *Unidad de Apoyo a la Gestión Parlamentaria* (UAGP) obtained funds from the regular congressional budget.

During this reporting quarter these funds were used as the congressional counterpart to SUNY/PARC activities involving the implementation of representation mechanisms.

Prospects

Accountability for the use of congressional funds is a sensitive issue in Bolivia. There are allegations of misappropriation of funds provided by other donors under previous UAGP management. For this reason SUNY PARC proposes that this indicator be revised, until the end of the current legislature, as follows:

“Support Brigade efforts to secure duly audited permanent funds for UAGP from the regular congressional budget to serve as counterpart for the implementation of representation mechanisms.”

The consolidation of the use of representation mechanisms after the Project ends requires the establishment of a permanent representation service. Whether this service is the UAGP or some other existing or new unit must be carefully evaluated under the coming legislature.

Such a unit should be staffed by permanent civil service staff chosen by merit under the terms of current Bolivian legislation, which protects career

government staff from the kind of political changes which are most frequent in Congress.

- f. Revise public hearing regulations and improve compliance with respect to important legislation

Indicator (Committees):

Revised rules incorporated into the regulations and hearings that comply with the hearings' main objectives conducted on important legislation

Products

The Public Hearing Regulations were revised this quarter by SUNY/PARC and the German cooperation agency GTZ. This partial revision showed a need for a wider revision of Rules of Order and other regulations affecting Public Hearings as well as other representation mechanisms.

Prospects

A consultant will be hired next reporting quarter to revise Public Hearing Regulations in the context of the Rules of Order and other regulations of the Upper and Lower Houses.

- g. Consolidate the Agenda Minima Regional (AMR) and the Departmental Development Plan (PDD) as accepted planning and monitoring instruments

Indicator (Departmental Brigades):

Not stated

Products

The Project assisted the Oruro and Cochabamba Brigades hold Minimal Regional Agenda (AMRs) events on the basis of the Departmental Development Plan (PDD).

AMRs have proven to be effective tools to bring Brigades close to constituents. At these events investment and expenditure expectations acquire a realistic character, with Members of Congress held accountable for specific targets.

At this time 80% of Brigades use AMRs as a planning and oversight tool.

Prospects

No indicator was set for this objective under the Emergency Plan. This quarter SUNY/PARC proposed to USAID Democracy Team officials the following draft indicator for this objective:

“Starting with the year 2000, at least 60% of Brigades keep AMRs as a planning and oversight tool.”

3. OTHER OBJECTIVES

The Emergency Plan was meant to be flexible and illustrative. It did not explicitly contemplate the following objectives, which were added at a later stage:

1. Assistance for the drafting of the new oil and gas (hydrocarbons) law
2. Assistance to delineate the proposed new autonomic regime
3. Assistance to promote the participation of women in legislative affairs
4. Assistance for public debate of the law on sexual and reproductive rights

Following is a review of the products and prospects under these objectives.

1. ASSISTANCE FOR THE DRAFTING OF THE HYDROCARBONS LAW

On May 17 President of Congress Hormando Vaca Diez promulgated the oil and gas law approved by Congress. President Carlos Mesa declined to sign it, leaving it up to Congress to promulgate it.

Eco Pol requested that the SUNY/PARC consultants who helped with the development of this law be hired in order to explain it to a variety of groups. This action was suspended due to the political crisis.

It is likely the coming Congress will require Project assistance to revise this law. The constitutional framework for foreign investment currently mandates a “state command” economy, a feature that can hardly be carried further along this direction.

During the last two decades this aspect of the constitution has been ignored while government was downsized and its regulatory role was perfected. As a result Bolivia attracted massive foreign investment for exploration and exploitation of its oil and gas resources.

Today Bolivia holds about 59 trillion cubic feet in proven and probable natural gas reserves, second only to Venezuela among South American nations. Viable legislation in this area is critical for Bolivia’s development.

There are fears in the investment community regarding what the constitutional assembly might do to property rights and current contracts in the oil and gas industry and to other industries that exploit natural resources.

2. ASSISTANCE TO DELINEATE THE PROPOSED NEW AUTONOMIC REGIME

This quarter the Project helped Congress carry out seven (7) forums on the proposed new autonomic regime, with the intent of turning the discussion towards technical rather than political issues.

Technical issues include transfer of competencies, collection and destination of national and departmental revenues, compensation funds for less developed departments and so forth.

Political issues come close to calls for federalism and separatism. The slogan of a vocal lowlands group is: "Unless there is autonomy for Santa Cruz there will be no Santa Cruz for Bolivia." Clearly this issue is far from closed.

Congress has set July 5, 2006 as the date for a national referendum on the autonomic regime. It is essential to inform the population about the technical issues involved in autonomy in order to prevent political issues and slogans from having a determining role in voter perceptions.

3. ASSISTANCE TO PROMOTE THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

The Project helped women parliamentarians hold two events during this reporting quarter, one on the selection of representatives to the constitutional assembly and another on the development of an agenda for the *Unión de Mujeres Parlamentarias de Bolivia* (UMPABOL).

The most prominent women parliamentarians attended the events and they represented all political parties. In addition, work was started on a Handbook of Women Parliamentarians. Questionnaires were designed and presented to members of UMPABOL. On the basis of these questionnaires, the group will develop an outline of the Handbook next quarter for approval.

Under the current Congress, four (4) women were elected as Senators (15%) and twenty-four (24) women were elected as Deputies in the Lower House (18%). In addition there are women who serve as alternates to different Senators and Deputies, for a total of over sixty (60) members of UMPABOL.

4. LAW ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

UMPABOL remained an active participant at the three (3) public hearings held on this law (Santa Cruz, Trinidad, Cobija). Public hearings proved to be an appropriate mechanism to air this debate.

B. APPLICATIONS OF REPRESENTATIVE MECHANISMS

1. Summary of Applications

The following events were aimed at assisting Congress to improve its relations with civil society:

- ❖ Four (4) public hearings on contested legislative issues
- ❖ Two (2) training events, one for technical secretaries of committees and brigades and another for local level technical personnel on the implementation of the new EDC model
- ❖ Two (2) workshops held by women parliamentarians, one on the constitutional assembly and one to define a work plan and a legislative agenda
- ❖ Twenty-seven (27) Citizens' Forums for congressional committees, brigades and uninominal deputies
- ❖ Eleven (11) Interactive Radio Programs
- ❖ Two (2) Regional Minimal Agendas (RMAs) for the departmental brigades
- ❖ Four (4) bulletins, one (1) brochure and one (1) poster published in connection with the application of different mechanisms

SUNY/PARC responded to eleven (11) requests from nine (9) Uninominal Deputies, comprised of one (1) Deputy from the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR) party, four (4) from the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) party, two (2) from the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) party, one (1) from the Socialist Party (PS) and one (1) from the Pachakuti Indigenous Movement (MIP) party.

In addition, SUNY/PARC responded to nineteen (19) requests from Brigades (6 from Oruro, 3 from Pando, 2 each from La Paz, Cochabamba, Beni, and Tarija, and 1 each from Santa Cruz and Potosi); fourteen (14) requests from Committees (11 from the Special Joint Committee on Convoing the Constitutional Assembly, 2 from the Social Policy Committee and 1 from the Human Development Committee); one (1) request from the Upper and Lower Houses for training Technical Secretaries; two (2) requests from the Union of Women Parliamentarians; and one (1) from the Chuquisaca Municipal Association.

These events were carried out at all nine Departments of Bolivia: eleven (11) in La Paz; seven (7) in Oruro; six (6) in Chuquisaca; five (5) each in Tarija and Beni; four (4) each in Santa Cruz and Pando; and three (3) each in Cochabamba and Potosi. Nine (9) of these events were carried out at smaller provincial cities in rural areas and thirty-eight (39) at Department capital cities.

2. Focus, impact and attendance

Two (2) **Minimal Regional Agenda Events** were held, one by the Cochabamba and one by the Oruro Brigade, in order to **set Departmental development priorities**

and the congressional means to bring them about with the participation of civil society representatives (civic committees, universities, labor unions, business associations, etc).

With these two events the planned cycle of 9 AMRs has come up to 7, with only 2 AMRs left for early next quarter (Chuquisaca and Potosi). This particular mechanism is not only institutionalized in a handbook, but also widely used in practice.

Forty-six (46) persons, thirty-nine (39) men and seven (7) women attended the Cochabamba event, while seventy-one (71) persons, sixty-four (64) men and seven (7) women attended the Oruro event.

Three (3) **Public Hearings** were held on the controversial **law on sexual and reproductive rights** in Santa Cruz, Beni and Pando. Previous Public Hearings on the same subject were held in La Paz, Cochabamba, Chuquisaca, Tarija and Oruro. The Public Hearing scheduled to take place in Oruro was cancelled due to on-going conflicts.

The Departmental Brigade jointly with the Social Policy Committee of the Lower House held all other Public Hearings on this subject. These events were extremely well attended by both adversaries and proponents of the new law.

Six hundred and fifteen (615) persons attended the Santa Cruz Public Hearing, two hundred and eleven (211) men and four hundred and four (404) women. Seven hundred and twenty seven (727) persons, two hundred and fifty eight (258) men and four hundred sixty nine (469) women attended the Beni event. Four hundred and thirty two (432) persons, one hundred and seventy men (170) and two hundred sixty two (262) women attended the Pando event.

These events were attended by more women than men, reflecting the importance of the subject for religious organizations composed primarily of women opposing the new law. Nevertheless there was a vocal minority of women favoring the new law, which was developed with support from a United Nations agency promoting current policy on the subject. Conservative sectors of the Catholic Church denounced foreign intervention in the development of the law.

There were highly organized lobbies on each side. The unusual response shows that Public Hearings can contribute to better inform decisions on the part of Congress. SUNY/PARC did not take sides on this debate, but made an intense debate possible in a peaceful, democratic context.

According to regulations, Public Hearings should conclude with amendments to the legislation under consideration. In this case, President Mesa observed the law sent by Congress to the Executive Branch with the argument that it had not been sufficiently consulted with civil society. As result of this observation, the Social

Policy Committee of the Lower House decided to carry out Public Hearings, even though they were extemporaneous.

The La Paz Brigade on access to plural justice held one (1) Public Hearing. This event was held at the request of indigenous communities, which want indigenous justice to be recognized and regulated under the new criminal procedures code. One hundred and one (101) persons attended, including eighty-nine (89) men and twelve (12) women, for the most part from highlands indigenous communities.

The Public Hearing Mechanism has proven to be extremely useful to air highly controversial matters. Records of the Public Hearing proceedings show a very positive reaction by constituents to the opportunity to express their opinions.

A workshop was held at the Project office with ILDIS and FUNDAPPAC on amendments to the Public Hearing Regulations. While the proposed amendments improved the regulations at various points, the need to revise the Rules of Order as a whole became evident and is planned for next quarter.

One (1) major **Training Event on legislative techniques, planning and the application of representation mechanisms** was held for Technical Secretaries of the Upper and Lower House Committees and Brigades. Thirty-four (34) persons, twenty-eight (28) men and six (6) women attended this event, from La Paz and the interior.

Trainees learned how to develop a Strategic Institutional Plan and an Annual Operating Plan for their respective Brigades and Committees. Those who were already familiar with the implementation of Public Hearings met separately on ways to improve this mechanism, while those who had never participated in a Public Hearing were given training from scratch.

Technical Secretaries expressed a concern about the stability and continuity of their positions, which are subject to political changes because they have not yet been institutionalized in accordance with the Public Official Statute.

The positions of Technical Secretaries were established with IDB assistance under the PRONAGOB program, which financed merit-based recruitment of part-time consultants to fill these positions. At the time there was no civil service career in Bolivia. The Public Official Statute came into effect on June 19, 2001, after the first group of Technical Secretaries was hired.

Even though the pro-tem President of the Lower House, Mr. Mario Cossio, agreed with IDB representatives at the end of 2004 that he would prevent political changes in these positions, there were a number of attempts by new Committee and Brigade Presidents to replace Technical Secretaries with their own people.

The stability of Technical Secretaries is essential, because they are the main source of technical support currently available to parliament. In addition, they are the only

institutional memory available to Members and Committees. There are ways under the new Public Official Statute in which the posts of Technical Secretaries can be given stability as civil service career positions.

Twenty-seven (27) **Forums** were held on the following subjects: seven (7) on **autonomy**; seven (7) on the **constitutional assembly**; ten (10) on the **law convoking the constitutional assembly**; two (2) on **current challenges** and one (1) on the **current legislative agenda**.

Departmental Brigades held the seven (7) forums on autonomy. They centered on the definition and scope of the new proposed autonomic regime. It was expected that each Department would organize a special committee to analyze autonomy issues and take a stand on behalf of the Department. These committees were organized in La Paz, Cochabamba, Cobija, Oruro and Potosi. Santa Cruz, Beni and Pando had previously organized committees and positions on this subject.

A total of nine hundred and eight (908) persons attended the forums on autonomy, six hundred and seventy (670) men and two hundred and thirty eight (238) women. Left for next quarter were forums on autonomy at Santa Cruz, main proponent of this new regime, and Chuquisaca.

The forums on autonomy allowed an opportunity for constituents to understand relatively complex technical issues such as the transfer of competencies from the central to departmental governments, as well as options for a new departmental regime on revenues, expenditures and investment.

As during the previous quarter, the six (6) **forums on the constitutional assembly** provided information to civil society representatives on what such an assembly can and cannot do, and what its results are expected to be. The dominant tone of these forums was informative, with relatively less debate on the part of the public.

This is a critical activity because most of the Bolivian population has been led to believe by contestatory groups that the objective of the constitutional assembly is not to amend the constitution as a whole, but to carry out a massive redistribution of wealth and power.

Clearly the latter objective involves a social revolution rather than a constitutional amendment process. The widespread generation of false expectations about the constitutional assembly is likely to lead to deadlock or violence. There is a need for a massive campaign to set these expectations on the right track.

A total of eight hundred and eighty two (882) persons attended the forums on the constitutional assembly, six hundred and nineteen (619) men and two hundred and sixty three (263) women.

The ten (10) **forums on the law convoking the constitutional assembly** placed before the public the two options on the composition and mode of selection of the

constitutional assembly which were adopted by the Special Joint Committee, who were unable to agree on a single option.

A total of one thousand seven hundred and fifty six (1756) persons attended the forums on the law convoking the constitutional assembly, one thousand one hundred and eighty eight (1188) men and five hundred and sixty eight (568) women.

Results of these forums were systematized through a matrix originally elaborated by project consultant Patricia Quezada, which provided inputs for a database designed in cooperation with the German government cooperation agency GTZ.

Option 1 consists of 2 representatives for each of the 68 current uninominal districts, 2 representatives from each of Bolivia's 9 Departments, and 1 representative from each of 26 new indigenous districts. Under this option the total number of representatives would be 180.

Option 2 consists of 10 representatives from each of Bolivia's 9 Departments plus 26 representatives from new indigenous districts for a total of 116 representatives.

Most participants at the forums favored Option 1, reflecting the fact that contestatory groups sent special delegations to accompany forums wherever they were held.

By contrast, the less populated Departments of Bolivia (Oruro, Potosi, Beni, Pando, Tarija and even Chuquisaca) were tempted by Option 2, which offered them 10 representatives, placing them on the same numerical footing as the more populated Departments (La Paz, Santa Cruz, Cochabamba).

Under both options representatives from the 26 indigenous districts would not be elected by secret ballot, but by "traditional usage and customs." Under current practice this means intimidation and coercion of indigenous voters by local leaders. The proposed new indigenous districts overlap current rural uninominal districts, in which indigenous voters are over-represented due to urban migration.

While most participants did not express any opinion on these issues, indigenous lobbies traveling to each forum strongly favored such representation. Starting with the Potosí forum, there was opposition by indigenous organization representatives to the opening of separate voter registration books for the proposed new districts.

The argument wielded by these organizations was that voter registration goes against traditional practices and customs. This is an indication of the extent to which a very small minority of activists speaks in the name of the indigenous majority, claiming to have a right to override democratic practices and institutions.

At bottom, this initiative is an attempt to secure double representation through the proposed new indigenous districts, where citizens would vote both for the single-district member candidate and for the overlapping indigenous district candidate.

Women organizations lobbied at each forum for "parity and switching" between male and female candidacies and for elected positions. There was a show of support by women representatives for these ideas under both Option 1 and Option 2, with the additional requirement of a single ballot for a male-female pair of candidates under each ticket.

Other subjects that came up at the forums included a demand that "politicians" be excluded from participating at these elections. While current officeholders would be normally required to resign by a set date before a given election in order to qualify, the demand was for a blanket restriction against all well known members of political parties and all current elected officeholders.

Indigenous participants rejected the military service ("draft") requirement for males, in spite of the fact that most recruits in Bolivia come from indigenous families. Most participants favored the city of Sucre, seat of the Judicial Branch, as the best seat for the constitutional assembly. There was a demand for setting lower pay for Members of the Constitutional Assembly than for Deputies under the current Congress.

Some participants demanded that any kind of organization be empowered to present candidates to run for any and all offices. At present only political parties, citizen associations or certified indigenous groups can present candidates for elections.

The two forums on **current challenges** dealt with whether and how Congress could or should call for advance general elections, including not only the offices of President and Vice-President, but also the whole of Congress. A majority of the Bolivian population was led to believe that the current Congress has been unproductive, pernicious and corrupt.

This widely held view ignores the remarkable achievements of the current legislature. For this reason most legislators during this critical transition time feared having to face constituents at forums or other events. The Santa Cruz and Pando forums on this issue were highly critical of the legislators who dared to organize them, as was the El Alto forum on the **current legislative agenda**.

Six (6) out of eleven (11) interactive radio programs (PIRs) were dedicated to **progress reports** offered by Members of Congress to their constituents. It is likely that this modality will become very popular under the coming election campaign.

The other five (5) PIRs were dedicated to various issues such as local mining industry problems at Vinto and Huanuni; oversight of the Oruro Prefecture; the demand for a tax-free zone in Oruro; the legislative agenda implemented by the

Oruro Brigade and the law convoking the constitutional assembly; broadcast in Trinidad, Beni.

UMPABOL, the association of parliamentary women organized with support from SUNY/PARC, held two (2) workshops. One was on the constitutional assembly, emphasizing greater participation by women as candidates and as elected officials, and the other on a work plan and a legislative agenda promoting gender issues.

The total number of participants at all of the above events was 6272, an increase of 96 % over last reporting quarter. A total of 3772 participants were men and 2500 were women, increases of 122% and 66% respectively.

Audience ratings for the Interactive Radio Programs (PIRs) are not included in this count. Radio is the most widely used of all media in Bolivia. Urban and rural audiences hear daily broadcasts in Spanish and native languages.

C. PROBLEMS, DELAYS AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

The single most important factor causing delays in Project implementation this reporting quarter was national unrest. Activities in preparation of the constitutional assembly remained on hold. This action is delaying implementation of one of the most important Emergency Plan objectives.

The achievement of objectives under the Emergency Plan complies with most of the original targets under the October 2003 contract, before the Emergency Plan was requested by USAID.

D. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

USAID decided not to require the signature of Congress on a Project Implementation Letter (PIL) which has been pending for two quarters. Congress took the position that in order to sign this letter they had to have a detailed budget. A disbursement of \$300,000 was processed by USAID and notification sent to Albany.

María Eugenia Verástegui was hired in order to help prepare bulletins and media-related activities connected with the implementation of representation mechanisms. She will work with Arturo Cárdenas, who cannot cover activities that often are carried out simultaneously in different parts of the country.

The planned study tour of indigenous parliamentarians was postponed to September given the political and social unrest in the country. It is not certain whether some of these parliamentarians will return to Congress next January. Nevertheless, they are leaders in their communities. Eco Pol suggested the study tour be carried out with the original guest list. This tour will be financed through a Transition Initiatives project managed by Casals.

E. NEXT QUARTER PLANS

Members of Congress will intensify requests for project activities from now through December in order to bolster contacts with constituents for electoral purposes. Current assistance to improve the capacity of Congress to relate to constituents will continue through the Project termination date of September 30.

Members of Congress are not required to resign in order to run for re-election. The Project will exercise caution in order to prevent the appearance of supporting particular candidates, political parties or campaign offers.

In response to the new scenario, USAID is considering the application of additional funds for civil society activities, some of them related to Congress. SUNY PARC might be asked to carry out a part of this "emergency within the emergency" program.

Under the new Congress there will be a continuing need to improve the *quality* of representation mechanisms and to address the *stability* of support personnel. These and other aspects of a possible follow-on phase of the Project will be developed next quarter with the assistance of former COP Arthur Sist.

F. CONCLUSIONS

There is increasing awareness within USAID and the U.S. Embassy about the importance of legislative assistance. The prospect of a new Congress, which will be elected for the period 2006-2011, poses questions about extending current assistance to the new incumbents, many of whom may be entirely new to their functions.

Clearly an exciting time lies immediately ahead. It will involve the design and implementation of assistance to the new legislature and the constitutional convention. The fate of Bolivian democracy turns on the successful functioning of these two institutions.

ANNEX I

LIST OF REPRESENTATION MECHANISMS

The following list of acronyms and definitions of representation mechanism is provided with all reports for ease of reference.

AMR (AGENDA MÍNIMA REGIONAL) – MINIMUM REGIONAL AGENDA

An AMR is a local planning event at which actors (municipal, prefectural and civil society) engage in a town meeting context in order to plan annual actions.

AP (AUDIENCIA PÚBLICA) – PUBLIC HEARING

This is a formal consultation process carried out under approved regulations. It can be held at the initiative of parliament or civil society. It involves formalities such as taking down minutes and rules on speaking.

FIC (FORO DE INTERESES CIUDADANOS) – CITIZEN INTEREST FORUM

Informal event at which committees, departmental caucuses (known as Brigadas), and single-district members (known as Diputados Uninominales) inform the public and listen to citizens without having to make commitments.

PIR (PROGRAMA INTERACTIVO RADIAL) – INTERACTIVE RADIO PROGRAM

Radio program allowing committees, departmental caucuses (known as Brigadas), and single-district members (known as Diputados Uninominales) to inform the public and listen to citizens without having to make commitments.

TALLER – WORKSHOP

Training event, carried out under a given methodology, about administrative, technical and political subjects, for members of parliament or support staff.

REDIC (REPRESENTACIÓN DIRECTA DE INTERESES CIUDADANOS) – DIRECT REPRESENTATION OF CITIZEN INTEREST

This event aims at collecting the needs and demands of different sectors of society concerning a given subject in order to orient parliamentary action on the basis of an agenda agreed upon by all.

EDC (ENCUENTRO DE DECISIONES CONCURRENTES) – CONCURRENT DECISIONS MEETING

This event centers on the identification and resolution of development problems at the local level on the part of national, departmental and municipal actors, with an emphasis on collective decision-making and follow-up.

ANNEX 2
ELECTORAL EVENTS 2005-2006

December 4, 2005:

1. Elections for President, Vice-President, and all 157 parliamentary seats (130 Lower House Deputies and 27 Upper House Senators).
2. Elections for nine (9) Department Prefects in anticipation of a proposed new autonomic regime.

July 2, 2006:

3. Elections for members of the proposed constitutional assembly.
4. Referendum on the proposed new autonomic regime.