

AMBASSADOR PAUL DURAND, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CANADA
TO THE OAS
BELIZE-GUATEMALA CEREMONY

September 30, 2002 - Washington, DC

- The Government of Canada is very pleased with this successful conclusion of the Facilitation Process for the peaceful resolution of the Belize-Guatemala territorial differendum.
- Together with our partners in the international community, Canada has strongly supported the OAS facilitation process.
- The establishment of a permanent, stable border between Belize and Guatemala is key to encouraging stability and development in the region.
- Canada firmly believes that the proposals on the table will lead to a just and equitable settlement of the dispute, and will ensure a brighter, more secure future for the citizens of both countries.
- Mr. Secretary General I have here a letter from my Minister, the Honourable Bill Graham, who is attending the Speech from the Throne today in Ottawa and could not join us, in which he reaffirms Canada's strong support for the facilitation process coordinated by yourself and the Assistant Secretary General Luigi Einaudi, and the facilitators with the help of the staff of the OAS, including Mr. Hernandez-Roy.
- We congratulate the parties and the OAS for this precedent-setting process and call on the governments of Belize and Guatemala to grasp this opportunity – this unique opportunity – to bring long-lasting benefits to their people. Specifically, we hope that both governments will make every effort to ensure support for the proposals, in early referendums in both countries.
- My delegation and my government are proud of this signal of achievement by our regional organization – this is what the OAS is supposed to do – this is what it has done, with distinction.
- Thank you.