



NEWS RELEASE

901 N. Stuart St., 10th Floor, Arlington, VA 22203

Office of External Affairs

Telephone: 703-306-4301

Facsimile: 703-306-4365

www.iaf.gov

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Second Summit on Decentralization

Arlington, VA—Members of El Salvador’s Congress, President Elias Antonio Saca and the chief justice of the Salvadoran Supreme Court joined 400 participants from more than 20 countries representing civil society, government, international organizations and the private sector at the Second Summit on Decentralization and Local/Regional Governance held July 20–22 in San Salvador. Ramon Daubon, IAF’s vice-president for programs, accepted on behalf of the Inter-American Foundation (IAF), a commemorative plaque honoring the IAF’s work in the hemisphere from the Salvadoran congressional representatives.

The Summit discussed the participants’ efforts to involve local and regional units of government in development and issued a declaration on the importance of such involvement in development projects. It will be presented for presentation at the IV Summit of the Americas, to be held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, November 4-5 and at the XV Iberia-American Summit for Heads of State in Seville, Spain, October 14-15.

President Saca of El Salvador, Vice President Eduardo Stein of Guatemala, former president Carlos Mesa of Bolivia and Mayor Carlos Rivas Zamora of San Salvador were among the dignitaries. “Decentralization is fundamental our country’s progress and well-being,” Saca said. He also confirmed his government’s commitment to local economic development.

IAF grantee Fundacion Nacional para el Desarrollo (FUNDE) organized the Decentralization Summit that the IAF and the provincial government of Barcelona co-sponsored. Corporación de Municipalidades de la Republica de El Salvador (COMURES), a Salvadoran network of municipal governments, representatives from the Conferencia Centroamericana por la Descentralización del Estado y el Desarrollo Local (CONFEDELCA), a regional annual conference on decentralization, and an informal international committee of representatives drawn from civil society organizations assisted in the coordination of the event. The IAF funded the First Summit on Decentralization and Local Development held in Arequipa, Peru in June 2003. It laid the groundwork in Peru for the passage of legislation on decentralization during the same year.

Congress created the IAF in 1969 to fund the self-help efforts of grassroots organizations. Since 1971, the IAF has invested more than \$571 million in 4,500 such projects in 32 countries. Its mandate includes sharing lessons from its experience. For more information on the IAF, go to www.iaf.gov.

Para clarificación en español o para más detalles, llame al 703-306-4301. For more details, call 703-306-4301.