



**JSCA AT A GLANCE:**  
SIX YEARS OF WORK FOR  
JUSTICE IN THE  
AMERICAS



**T A B L E   O F   C O N T E N T S**

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## What is JSCA?



The Justice Studies Center of the Americas (JSCA) is an agency of the inter-American system endowed with technical and functional autonomy. Its members are the active member states of the Organization of American States (OAS). The Center's main office is located in Santiago, Chile.



JSCA's statutes were approved by the OAS General Assembly in 1999 in fulfillment of the Plan of Action of the Second Summit of the Americas (1998) and the recommendations of the Meetings of Ministers of Justice and Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA).

Its Board of Directors is comprised of seven members who are individually selected by the OAS General Assembly.

The Board appoints the Center's Executive Director, who is responsible for all of its operations. This appointment is confirmed by REMJA.



**José Miguel Insulza**  
OAS Secretary General

"The Meetings of Ministers of Justice and Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA) held in the context of the OAS have become the main political and technical forum for issues related to justice and legal and judicial cooperation in the Americas. One of the key results of this process in the area of justice is the creation of the Justice Studies Center of the Americas (JSCA). In a few short years, the Center has generated a wide range of very solid studies on the problems facing our justice systems and the reforms that have been implemented in the region. It also generates analyses of the challenges in this field; facilitates the systemization, dissemination and exchange of information; and supports training in areas of justice."

### Mandates of the Second Summit of the Americas

Santiago, Chile, 1998

#### **"Governments will...**

*expedite the establishment of a justice studies center of the Americas, which will facilitate training of justice sector personnel, the exchange of information and other forms of technical cooperation in the Hemisphere, in response to particular requirements of each country. To this end, they request the Ministers of Justice or other competent authorities to analyze and define the most suitable actions for the organization and establishment for such a center."*



## JSCA Board of Directors



Meeting of the Board of Directors,  
September 2006

### President 2007- 2008:

Jaime Arellano, Chile

### Vice President:

Germán Garavano, Argentina

### Current Board Members:

George Thomson, Canada

Lloyd Ellis, Jamaica

Carlos Eduardo Caputo, Brazil

Hebe Martínez, Uruguay

Russel Wheeler, United States of America

### Former Board Members:

Douglass Cassel, United States of America

Federico Callizo, Paraguay

Monica Nágel, Costa Rica

María Soledad Alvear, Chile

Karl Terrence Hudson-Phillips, Trinidad & Tobago

Raphael Carl Rattray, Jamaica

José Ovalle, Mexico

### Executive Director

Juan Enrique Vargas



Visit to JSCA by OAS Secretary General  
José Miguel Insulza.



### Soledad Alvear

Former Minister of Justice  
and Foreign Affairs of  
Chile, Current Senator of  
the Republic

"I have been in a privileged position to monitor the formation of JSCA and its impact in the region. As a former Minister of Justice, Minister of Foreign Affairs and JSCA Board Member, I have observed that the Center has not only made a significant contribution to improving and evaluating criminal procedure reforms over the past six years, but also has added value to the design of judicial public policies that are quite uncommon for attorneys and judicial operators: those developed in the field of management."



### George Thomson

Executive Director of the  
National Judicial Institute  
and JSCA Board Member

"For much of my career, I have been part of or have observed efforts to reform the justice system. When those reforms fail, it is usually because the reformers do not sufficiently consider what the research tells us is most likely to succeed or because of a failure to monitor the reforms and then to respond quickly and well when problems arise. In my mind, what makes the Justice Studies Center such an important institution is the fact that it has concentrated on these two, essential requirements. They have coupled this with innovative educational programs that enable justice system professionals both to learn best practices and to assess their own reforms as they implement them. In this way they are increasing dramatically the chances of effective, successful change across the Americas."

## The Role of **JSCA**: Modernizing Justice Systems in the Americas



**Isidro Solís**  
Minister of Justice of  
Chile

“Over the past decade, the countries of the region have promoted an unprecedented justice reform process that, in the case of Chile and particularly in the area of criminal procedure, has had a foundational nature. It has been precisely in the middle of this wave of transformations that JSCA has met its goals, contributing to the exchange of experiences and academic discussion and with it to the consolidation of judicial reform. We still have an open field in which to move forward together: the improvement of the management of our judicial systems, better quality standards for service and the achievement of the necessary valorization of justice by the people.”



**Carlos Portales**  
Former Permanent  
Representative to the  
OAS and Current Director  
General of Foreign Policy  
of the Ministry of Foreign  
Affairs

“JSCA’s professional excellence and capacity for implementing international cooperation projects, especially with judicial branches, has led to significant progress in the implementation of reforms in the region. It has become an important space for dialogue among countries with diverse legal cultures, thereby facilitating cooperation in the Americas. JSCA has attracted financing from several countries in the region and has become involved with international, global and regional agencies.”

There is a consensus that the proper operation of judicial systems is indispensable to the strengthening of democracy and economic and social development. Over the past few decades, this has led the countries of the Americas to engage in intense judicial modernizations and reform processes.

In spite of the magnitude of the legal changes that have been initiated, the significant budgetary increases that have been made in the justice sector and the evident will for change, citizens continue to have a negative opinion of the quality of judicial services.

### Why does this perception persist?

1. This is a broad and complex area to orient towards new public policy objectives.
2. A significant number of the changes that have been made are more beneficial to system operators than to system users.
3. Many of the proposals for comprehensive changes led only to the approval of new legal codes and failed to alter the culture of the justice system and daily operation.

### JSCA’s Mission and Strategy

The Justice Studies Center of the Americas (JSCA) was created to revert this situation. Its main focus has been ensuring that the changes that are made directly benefit citizens. To this end, it has privileged very specific work with operators from every part of the system over academic or doctrinal discussions. JSCA’s approaches in this area range from generating data for technical evaluations of ongoing reforms to intense discussions of the results of those efforts to specific activities designed to solve problems about which a consensus has been reached.







**1** Since its inception, JSCA has positioned itself as the most important point of reference in the region for promoting judicial reforms. This has been achieved through efforts to:

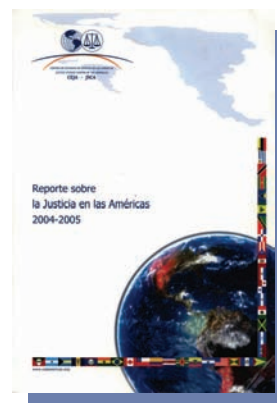
- (i) Detect operational problems
- (ii) Document successful experiences that have been implemented in response to them at the regional or global level.

These efforts are supported by empirical studies that identify innovative ideas and practices that follow a public policy perspective.



Most of these studies have focused on the operation of criminal justice, but we also have performed research on civil and commercial justice; judicial reform from the perspectives of gender, race and indigenous peoples; access to information; the role of civil society; young people; and other topics.

**2** JSCA has contributed to the improvement of judicial institutions' information systems in order to help countries around the region to design, implement and evaluate judicial policies on the basis of similar experiences. To this end, we have generated manuals for building information systems and judicial indicators, offered technical assistance to several countries and developed complete reports on the state of justice in the Americas for the past four years.



**Vicente Fox**  
former President of Mexico

"JSCA's contributions to Mexico's reform demonstrate that the countries of the region were right to create an institution with this mission and these characteristics within the inter-American system just as they have provided it with content for the cooperation agreement that was signed with the Attorney General's Office."



**Enrique Iglesias**  
Secretary General of Ibero-America, Former President of the IDB

"JSCA has done important work in a field that is vital to economic and social growth and development, the fight against corruption and impunity, and the strengthening of democratic culture and the rule of law. Its work deserves to be recognized, especially for its quality, use of institutional networks and utilization of the strengths of civil society in the region. This is especially true of JSCA's research on justice systems and judicial reform and its promotion of the development of best practices and instruments that improve information on justice in the Americas."



**Enrique Tapia**  
Chief Justice of the  
Supreme Court of Chile

"JSCA's work in re-  
searching, evaluating,  
disseminating, training and offering  
technical support for reform processes  
and the improvement of the criminal  
justice systems of the countries of the  
region is of extreme importance and  
utility. There is no doubt that JSCA allows  
us to move closer to our ideal of Justice,  
which is based not on achievements but  
on timely and efficient responses to  
people's needs."



**Dra. Vilma Cecilia  
Morales**  
Chief Justice of the  
Supreme Court of  
Honduras

"We find that organizations like JSCA  
are incredibly important for governance  
and contribute to generating quality  
information and strengthening all routes  
of access to information."



**Patricia Esquetini**  
Fundación Esquel

"JSCA has played an  
important role in the  
region. It has facilitated the exchange  
of experiences with and knowledge  
about the criminal procedure system  
as a whole. JSCA has been a facilitator  
of methodologies that have allowed  
for the application, monitoring and  
adjustment of the system in countries  
like Ecuador that are looking to improve  
the quality of justice. Its work has been  
professional, visionary and constructive,  
and demonstrates an understanding of  
the reality of Latin America. This has  
allowed JSCA to become a point of  
reference on judicial reform in the  
region."

**3** JSCA has developed an extensive network of contacts at the regional level, which it uses to disseminate and discuss the results of its studies and all of the information gathered on judicial reform in the region and around the world. JSCA's work in this area includes:

- (i) Technical support for the work of regional organizations that represent justice sector institutions. These include the Ibero-American Summit of Judicial Branches, the Inter-American Association of Public Prosecutor's Offices and the Inter-American Association of Public Defender's Offices;
- (ii) The development of close relationships with institutions that form part of judicial systems in the region and **65** cooperation agreements with judicial branches, public prosecutor's offices and public defender's offices from countries throughout the Americas;
- (iii) The formation of alliances with over **173** academic and civil society organizations that work on judicial issues in the Americas;
- (iv) The organization of **79** seminars and workshops and participation in over **234** events on justice in the region;
- (v) The development of several technological tools for facilitating the exchange of information in the region, including its Website, Virtual Community and bilingual Nexus Newsletter. JSCA's website was viewed **147,500** times in 2006. Its newsletter has **7,076** subscribers.



◀ Nexus Newsletter



◀ Report on  
Judicial Systems  
in the Americas

Index of Online Access  
to Judicial Information ▶





**4** The ideas that JSCA has generated regarding practical problems in judicial reform have created a significant demand for training. We have held 110 training courses and three editions of our most important annual course, the Inter-American Program for Training Trainers for Criminal Procedure Reform, which has graduated 168 students, including Supreme Court Chief Justices and National Prosecutors, from 17 countries. The local replicas of the program led to the training of an additional 2,043 people in 2006. JSCA also has a successful virtual training platform.



**5** JSCA's proposals for improving the operation of reformed criminal justice systems have developed into specific projects in implementation processes in Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Guatemala. These initiatives are designed to solve operational problems detected through JSCA's research, which were undertaken in partnership with local actors, at a low cost. One example is the successful project in Mar del Plata, Argentina, which led to:

- A reduction in the average amount of time it takes to reach a conditional suspension (from 237 to 18.74 days).



- A reduction in the average amount of time it takes to complete a summary procedure (from 240.73 to 21.57 days).



**Luis Paulino Mora**  
Chief Justice of the  
Supreme Court of Costa  
Rica

"Since its inception, JSCA has had a valuable relationship with the Costa Rican Judicial Branch and has accompanied us in our reform process. We have received various invitations for Costa Rican judicial servants to participate in training courses designed by the Center in order to analyze and present ideas about criminal procedure reform, judicial office organization, access to justice, statistical information gathering and strategies for processing that data so that it can become a useful instrument for decision-making processes."



**Esteban Righi**  
National Attorney  
General, Argentina

"JSCA has provided vital technical support for the criminal justice reform process in the provinces of Argentina by presenting innovative experiences that have met with success elsewhere in the region. This includes participating in the implementation of the pilot plan for expanding the adversarial system in Mar del Plata. JSCA has become a key actor in the realization of procedure reforms, contributing added value to those processes by placing priority on the incorporation of new perspectives, such as management and judicial administration. It also has encouraged the development of a new legal culture through the incorporation of instruments from the field of public policy in the rule of law."



## Sustainability Strategy

### How is JSCA financed?

*Member state contributions*

*Projects presented to international cooperation agencies*

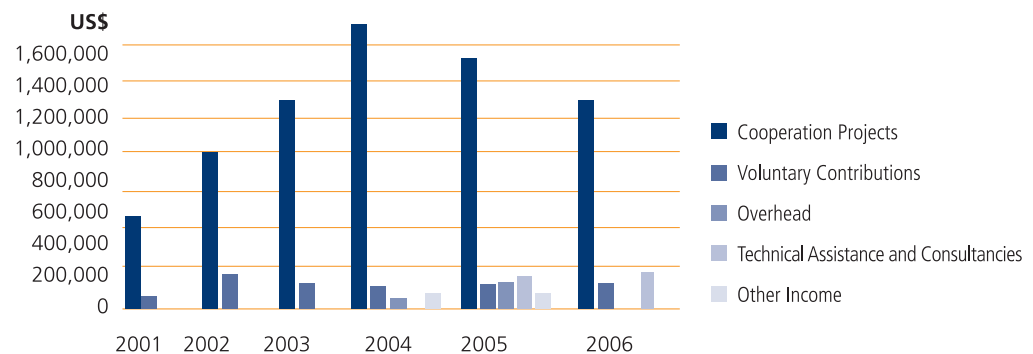
*Technical assistance projects*

*Courses and the sale of its services*

Over the past few years, JSCA has shown itself to be stable and profitable in terms of its institutional and financial organization by using a highly flexible and economical operational structure. The results obtained to date speak to the effectiveness of this strategy. An evaluation of the Institutional Strengthening in Criminal Justice Reform Project financed by Canada through CIDA in 2006 includes the following statement in its conclusions:

*“JSCA’s research and training programs are valued throughout the region. The training methodology is effective and benefits from an ongoing evaluation and review process. The projects that have been replicated go a long ways to increasing the impact of JSCA’s training programs. The administration of the ISCJR Project demonstrates high levels of efficiency, effectiveness and economy.”*

Most of JSCA’s funding has come from international cooperation agencies, mainly the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).



**Albert R. Ramdin**  
OAS Adjunct Secretary General

“The Justice Studies Center has developed a Strategy Plan that discusses the main approaches that have been set by its Board of Directors in order to guide its work during 2005-2009. This visionary document points to the organization’s commitment to serving member states and need for their full financial support.”





In order to strengthen this initiative, we have developed a long-term Funding Plan, which has been presented to REMJA and the OAS General Assembly. The document was developed in accordance with the main areas of JSCA's Strategy Plan for 2005-2009. It was presented first at VI REMJA (Dominican Republic, April 2006) and then at the XXXVI OAS General Assembly (Dominican Republic, June 2006). The Assembly resolved the following:

***“To encourage Member States to consider making voluntary contributions to the Justice Studies Center of the Americas (JSCA) in order to finance its basic expenditures.***

***That for the effects mentioned in the preceding resolution, Member States continue to consider the proposals that JSCA presents during each Meeting of Ministers of Justice and Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas (REMJA).”***

In the months following this meeting, JSCA contacted each country in the region through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, justice sector authorities and Permanent Mission to the OAS. The purpose of this effort was to follow up on the resolution and initiate direct conversations with each member state in order to secure the voluntary contributions mentioned therein.

JSCA is working intensely to expand and develop new projects with several international agencies, multilateral credit banks and private foundations that support actions in the field of justice. There also has been a proposal to substantially increase the amount of direct income generated through technical assistance projects and training programs.

#### Scale of Voluntary Contributions

|                                | US\$    |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| United States                  | 150,000 |
| Canada                         | 100,000 |
| Chile                          | 80,000  |
| Brazil                         | 45,000  |
| Mexico                         | 45,000  |
| Venezuela                      | 20,000  |
| Argentina                      | 20,000  |
| Colombia                       | 20,000  |
| Peru                           | 20,000  |
| Bahamas                        | 10,000  |
| Barbados                       | 10,000  |
| Costa Rica                     | 10,000  |
| Ecuador                        | 10,000  |
| El Salvador                    | 10,000  |
| Guatemala                      | 10,000  |
| Panama                         | 10,000  |
| Dominican Republic             | 10,000  |
| Trinidad & Tobago              | 10,000  |
| Uruguay                        | 10,000  |
| Antigua & Barbuda              | 5,000   |
| Belize                         | 5,000   |
| Bolivia                        | 5,000   |
| Dominica                       | 5,000   |
| Grenada                        | 5,000   |
| Guyana                         | 5,000   |
| Haiti                          | 5,000   |
| Honduras                       | 5,000   |
| Jamaica                        | 5,000   |
| Nicaragua                      | 5,000   |
| Paraguay                       | 5,000   |
| Saint Kitts and Nevis          | 5,000   |
| Saint Lucia                    | 5,000   |
| Saint Vincent & the Grenadines | 5,000   |
| Suriname                       | 5,000   |

## JSCA Research Projects

**Canada:** Court Fees, Judicial Statistics, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution

**United States:** Children's Rights, Court Fees, Comparative Study of Prosecutor's Offices, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access

**Mexico:** Children's Rights, Court Fees, Comparative Study of Prosecutor's Offices, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution, Support for Criminal Procedure Reform

**Guatemala:** Follow-up Study on Criminal Procedure Reform, Gender and Justice, Judicial Statistics, Judicial Indicators, Criminal Justice and Indigenous Communities, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution

**Belize:** Judicial Statistics, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access

**El Salvador:** Follow-up Study on Criminal Procedure Reform, Judicial Statistics, Judicial Indicators, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution

**Nicaragua:** Follow-up Study on Criminal Procedure Reform, Judicial Statistics, Judicial Indicators, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution

**Costa Rica:** Follow-up Study on Criminal Procedure Reform, Judicial Statistics, Judicial Indicators, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution

**Panama:** Judicial Statistics, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution

**Ecuador:** Follow-up Study on Criminal Procedure Reform, Gender and Justice, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution

**Peru:** Access to Judicial Information, Racial Discrimination and Justice Administration, Court Fees, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution, Support for Criminal Procedure Reform

**Chile:** Follow-up Study on Criminal Procedure Reform, Gender and Justice, Women's Rights Courts, Judicial Statistics, Children's Rights, Comparative Study of Prosecutor's Offices, Indigenous Justice, Empirical Evaluations, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution, Operational Models of First Instructions to the Police

**Honduras:** Gender and Justice, Follow-up Study on Criminal Procedure Reform, Judicial Statistics, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution

**Jamaica:** Follow-up Study on Criminal Procedure Reform, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access

**Haiti:** Report on Judicial Systems, Mission to evaluate the justice system

**Dominican Republic:** Racial Discrimination and Judicial Administration, Judicial Indicators, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution

**East Caribbean:** Follow-up Study on Criminal Procedure Reform, Judicial Statistics, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access

**Trinidad & Tobago:** Follow-up Study on Criminal Procedure Reform, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access

**Colombia:** Racial Discrimination and Justice Administration, Judicial Statistics, Criminal Justice and Indigenous Communities, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution, Support for Criminal Procedure Reform

**Venezuela:** Follow-up Study on Criminal Procedure Reform, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution

**Brazil:** Racial Discrimination and Justice Administration, Children's Rights, Court Fees, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution

**Paraguay:** Follow-up Study on Criminal Procedure Reform, Court Fees, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access

**Uruguay:** Children's Rights, Court Fees, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution

**Bolivia:** Follow-up Study on Criminal Procedure Reform, Court Fees, Gender and Justice, Justice and Indigenous Peoples, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution

**Argentina:** Follow-up Study on Criminal Procedure Reform, Judicial Statistics, Access to Judicial Information, Children's Rights, Civil Society, Comparative Study of Prosecutor's Offices, Court Fees, Strengthening Adversarial Systems, Gender and Justice, Report on Judicial Systems, Index of Online Access, Criminal Prosecution

