



## **Engineering for the Americas: Progress on the Action Plans of the Ministers of Science and Technology of the Organization of American States**

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The Organization of American States' First Meeting of Ministers and High Authorities of Science and Technology, held in Lima, Peru in November of 2004, resulted in the Declaration of Lima [1], which pronounced that science, engineering, technology, innovation, and education are fundamental to the development of the countries of the Americas, and needed their sustained attention and commitment for resources. An emphasis was made on “integral” development and hemispheric cooperation to impact job creation, to combat poverty and gender inequity, and to protect the quality of the environment. The Lima Action Plan was defined and a commitment to invest and convene annual meetings of the commissions of science, engineering, technology and innovation (COMCYT) to follow up and disseminate national and hemispheric results. OAS established Engineering for the Americas (EftA)[2] which permitted broad partnerships involving activities both at the grass roots and in political policy. A hemispheric collaboration agreement was signed with the multinational engineering education organizations key to the region. In addition to these organizations, EftA participation included the World Federation of Engineering Societies (WFEO – groups the organizations of engineering professionals), government entities, such as the National Councils of Science and Technology and the US Trade and Development Agency, and was supported by a number of private sector companies, such as Hewlett Packard, Microsoft, and National Instruments. One of the first outcomes from EftA was successfully seeking funds from the Inter-American Development Bank to create the Greater Caribbean Region Engineering Accreditation System (GCREAS) [3]. In the last Ministerial gathering, held in Panamá, the Ministers developed the Panamá Action Plan, which structured efforts into 4 Working Groups: WG1 Innovation (lead by Mexico), WG2 Human Resources Training and Education (led by Argentina), WG3 National Quality Infrastructure (led by Canada) and WG4 Technological Development (led by Colombia). This paper summarizes accomplishments up to date of the groups, and discusses in more detail the outcomes of the efforts of WG2 that impact engineering education.

[1] “REMCYT-I/DEC. 1/04, Declaration of Lima, 12 November 20014”. Accessed 30 January 2015 at <http://www.efta.oas.org/documentos/REMCYT-I-DECLARACION-ING.pdf>

[2] Engineering for the Americas (EftA): Fostering Growth through Quality Engineering. Accessed 30 Jan. 2015 at <http://www.efta.oas.org/english/default.asp>

[3] GCREAS - Greater Caribbean Region Engineering Accreditation System. accessed 30 January 2015 at <http://www.caribengine.org>