

# *Luis Almagro Vows to Recover OAS Credibility*

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Panama City, April 10 (teleSUR-RHC) During a televised interview on Thursday with VTV, newly elected Secretary-General Luis Almagro vowed to recover trust and credibility of the Organization of American States.

“We will modernize it (OAS) ... it has to recover a connection with local agendas,” explained Almagro. The new secretary-general will take office in May, but is attending the Americas Summit in Panama.

Regarding the role that the OAS has played throughout its history — which critics point out has benefited the United States — Almagro explained that the institution can still recover its relevance and that recent episodes have shown this to be possible.

“The OAS countries that met during the 70s were all governed by dictatorships ... and the OAS failed in its response to the coup against President Chavez ... but the OAS can also be used to help solve regional issues,” he said, adding the examples of OAS sessions which supported Ecuador's stance regarding Julian Assange, the Argentine defense against the vulture funds, and others.

The new secretary-general also described his view of what the institution will work on, once he takes offices. “We have to focus on balance (between countries), impartiality and objectivity ... we have to be very strict in our commitment with democracy,” he said.

Almagro reasserted once again that Venezuela was not a threat to the U.S. and said he viewed as a positive sign the recent visit of U.S. officials to Caracas, which he believes could help resolve the ongoing tensions between both countries.

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