



Organization of
American States



RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION OF WOMEN¹

Article 1. The Assembly of Delegates (the “Assembly”) is the supreme organ of the Inter-American Commission of Women (“CIM”) and as such approves its Plans and Programmes of Work, which are prepared by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Member States of the Organization of American States (“Member States”) (“Organization”).

All Member States of the CIM have the right to be represented in the Assembly through the delegations they appoint for that purpose, taking into account the provisions of Articles 9 through 13 of the Statutes of the CIM (the “Statute”).

CHAPTER I. PARTICIPANTS

Article 2. In accordance with Article 10 of the Statute, members of the delegations shall be accredited by their respective governments by written communication to the Secretary General of the Organization.

Article 3. A delegation shall be composed of the Principal Delegate to the CIM, who shall head it, and/or Alternate Delegates or Advisers, and other authorities assigned by the government, duly accredited to the Assembly by their government as stipulated in Article 10 of the Statute.

As stipulated in Article 11 of the Statute, each Member State will have the right to one vote. Only the Principal Delegate, or the Alternate Delegate, in case of her absence, and representatives of the Member States who have been duly accredited as Delegates to the CIM and to the Assembly shall be entitled to vote in such Assembly.

Article 4. The OAS Permanent Observers; the United Nations; the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women; and governmental or international institutions that are interested in the agenda of the Assembly and that maintain cooperative relations with the Organization of American States, especially with the CIM, may participate in the Assembly of Delegates as observers.

Observers may speak when the President of the Assembly so decides.

Article 5. Observers may present their statements and reports to the Secretariat of the Assembly in writing, with the number of copies that they consider necessary for distribution.

¹ The Member States of the OAS retain their sovereignty with regard to the designation of the Principle and Alternate Delegates to the CIM. Accordingly, the use of the feminine in articles that refer to the authorities of the CIM does not imply the exclusion of other sexes.

Article 6. The Secretary General of the Organization, upon request of the Executive Committee, when proposed by the President and with the consent of the host country, may grant facilities and courtesies to governments of non-Member States, private or public entities, and other persons to attend meetings of the Assembly as guests, provided they have shown interest in attending, so that they may follow the proceedings.

Such interest should be conveyed in writing to the General Secretariat of the Organization at least thirty days prior to the opening of the meeting of the Assembly.

Article 7 The order of precedence of the delegations shall be established by lottery at an informal meeting of the Delegates, which shall be held prior to the opening of the meeting of the Assembly. This order of precedence shall be in effect until the end of the meeting of the Assembly.

Article 8 The Secretary General of the Organization, or his/her representative, participates with voice but without vote in the plenary sessions and in the committees and subcommittees.

CHAPTER II. OFFICERS

Article 9. At Regular and Special Assemblies held at the CIM headquarters, the President of the CIM shall preside.

Away from headquarters, and until the President of the Assembly is elected, the President of the CIM or, if she is unable to do so, one of the Vice-Presidents of the CIM, shall preside provisionally over the Assembly.

Article 10. The President, Vice-President and Rapporteur of the Assembly shall be elected at the first plenary session, and shall hold office until the close of the Assembly. Only Principal Delegates of the CIM may be elected to these posts.

These elections shall be by the vote of an absolute majority of the Member States accredited to the Assembly.

Article 11. The President of the Assembly shall have the following duties, in addition to those assigned to her by other provisions of these Rules of Procedure:

- a. To convene the plenary sessions;
- b. To establish the order of business for the sessions;
- c. To open and close the plenary sessions and to direct the discussions;
- d. To recognize speakers in the order in which they request the floor;
- e. To put points under discussion to the vote, and announce the decisions taken;
- f. To rule on points of order, without prejudice to the submission of such a ruling to the consideration of the Assembly, at the request of a delegation;
- g. To install the working committees, and
- h. In general, to observe and enforce these Rules of Procedure.

The President shall call any participant to order when her remarks depart from the matter under discussion. During the discussion of a subject, she shall also propose a limitation on the length of a speaker's remarks, a limitation on the number of times each participant may take the floor, closing the list of speakers, or closing the discussion. She may propose suspension or adjournment of the session, or postponement of discussion on a matter under consideration.

Article 12. In the performance of her duties, the President is subject to the authority of the Assembly.

Article 13. The President of the Assembly, or the Vice-President acting as President, shall not participate in the voting at plenary sessions, but shall designate another member of her/his delegation to vote as the representative of her/his country.

Nor shall she, as President, participate in the discussion of the substance of a matter.

Article 14. The Vice-President of the Assembly shall replace the President when the latter considers it necessary to be absent for all or part of the session, or when she requests such replacement for any other reason. The Vice-President of the Assembly shall have the same functions and duties as the President.

Article 15. If the officers of the Assembly should be absent or unable to serve, the Assembly shall be presided over by the Presidents of the Committees, following the numerical order of the Committees.

CHAPTER III. SECRETARIAT OF THE ASSEMBLY

Article 16. The Executive Secretary of the CIM shall serve as Technical Secretary of the Assembly and as supervisor of the secretariat services for the Assembly.

Article 17. It shall be the responsibility of the government of the host country of the Assembly to appoint a Coordinator of the services that it will provide under the agreement between that government and the General Secretariat of the Organization.

Article 18. The Secretary General of the Organization shall appoint a staff member of the General Secretariat to serve as coordinator of the Secretariat services of the Assembly. The appointment shall be made with the consent of the government of the host country in the case of Assemblies held away from headquarters.

Article 19 The Technical Secretary shall advise the President of the Assembly on all technical matters dealt with at the meeting, including the following duties:

- a) To supervise the work of the officials and staff assigned to the Assembly;
- b) To submit the credentials of the delegations to the Committee on Credentials;
- c) To publish and distribute the official list of participants, both of the delegations and of the observers and special guests;
- d) To receive the official correspondence addressed to the Assembly, immediately to consult the President, and to answer it according to her instructions;
- e) To direct the preparation of the minutes and distribution of them to the participants;
- f) To prepare, in accordance with instructions of the President of the Assembly, the draft order of business, and upon its approval, to distribute it to the participants;
- g) To distribute the documents of the Assembly twenty-four hours prior to their consideration;
- h) To manage the documents, maintain them in proper form, and at the close of the meeting of the Assembly, send them to the General Secretariat;
- i) To serve as liaison between the various delegations, and between the host country and the delegations, in matters relating to the Assembly; and

- j) To perform any other functions assigned by these Rules of Procedure, the Assembly, or its President, with reference to the work of the Assembly.

Article 20. The Secretary General of the Organization shall furnish to the Assembly such specialized, technical and administrative personnel as may be necessary, in accordance with the funds approved for that purpose.

CHAPTER IV. AGENDA

Article 21. Taking into account the topics proposed by the Member States and the preliminary draft prepared by the Executive Secretariat of the CIM, the Executive Committee shall prepare a draft agenda for each meeting of the Assembly and submit it to the Delegates for consideration at least three months before the opening of the meeting of the Assembly, setting a deadline of thirty days for them to present their observations.

On the basis of these observations, the Executive Committee shall prepare the definitive draft agenda, present it to the Member States forty-five days before the opening of the meeting of the Assembly, and send it to the President of the Permanent Council of the Organization for her/his information.

Article 22. The draft agenda shall be considered by the Assembly at its first plenary session. After the agenda has been adopted, it may be changed only by the vote of two thirds of the Delegates accredited to the Assembly.

Article 23. The agenda of the regular meeting of the Assembly must include the following topics:

- a) Consideration of the report of the President and the Executive Secretariat of the CIM, and of the national reports prepared by the CIM Delegates;
- b) Election of the President and a maximum of three Vice-Presidents of the CIM;
- c) Election of the five member states that will form the Executive Committee;
- d) Adoption of a triennial program of work;
- e) Determination of the place and date of the next regular meeting of the Assembly.

CHAPTER V. SESSIONS

Article 24. The Assembly shall hold an inaugural session, such plenary sessions as may be necessary, and a closing session.

Article 25. Prior to the inaugural session the President of the CIM shall meet informally with the Principal Delegates or their Alternates to coordinate the aspects of organization of the work of the Assembly.

Article 26. Plenary sessions and sessions of the Committees shall be open. However, at the proposal of the President of the Assembly or any Delegate, these sessions may begin as closed and, when the reasons of the proponent have been heard if it is so agreed, they may continue in that form.

Sessions of the Committee on Credentials and any Sub-Committees and Working Groups shall be closed, unless they determine otherwise.

Article 27. Other than the delegations accredited to the Assembly, only the Secretariat personnel expressly authorized in each case by the President of the respective group may be present at closed sessions.

The Permanent Observers to the OAS or their Alternates may attend closed sessions when invited by the respective President.

Article 28. Every decision taken by the Assembly at a closed session shall be announced at a future open session.

Article 29. No session may be held unless the place and time have been publicly announced sufficiently in advance, except by the unanimous agreement of the delegations of the Member States.

Article 30 The President of the CIM shall preside over the inaugural session. The Head of State of the host country, if she/he so desires, or their representative, may address the inaugural session. The President of the CIM and the Delegate of the host country shall speak at this session.

Article 31. The first plenary session shall be held as soon as possible after the inauguration of the Assembly. This session, as the first order of business, shall elect the officers of the Assembly and establish the Coordinating Committee, the Committee on Credentials and any other Committees, Sub-Committees or Working Groups deemed necessary. Immediately afterwards, the President of the Assembly shall install each of the Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups, which shall elect their respective officers.

CHAPTER VI. COMMITTEES

Article 32. The Coordinating Committee shall be composed of the President of the CIM, the President and Vice-President of the Assembly and the Presidents of any other Committees established.

Its purpose shall be to settle any difficulties that may arise with regard to the work of the Assembly, and to suggest pertinent solutions to the Committees or to the plenary session.

To ensure smooth running of the Assembly, the Coordinating Committee shall coordinate the work of the Committees and shall be responsible for revising the documents of the Assembly. When deemed advisable, the Coordinating Committee shall invite the Technical Secretary of the Assembly to its meetings. The President of the Assembly shall convoke the Coordinating Committee whenever she considers it advisable.

Article 33. The Assembly shall establish the Committees that it deems advisable to consider the various topics of the agenda.

Article 34. The Committees may be composed of all the delegations of the Member States.

Article 35. Each Committee shall elect a President, a Vice-President, and a Rapporteur from among the Delegates in attendance

Article 36. The purpose of a Committee shall be to study the topics assigned to it by the Assembly and to present to the plenary session a report on the discussions held, drafts considered, and recommendations made to the plenary session. The report must be presented to the plenary session by the

Rapporteur and, whenever possible, shall be published and distributed to the delegations prior to the plenary session in which it is to be presented. The plenary session shall take cognizance of the document containing the report and shall consider the drafts recommended therein.

Article 37. Each Committee may delegate to its President the power to form Sub-Committees and Working Groups, established to ensure that the various opinions expressed on the different topics are represented. Each Sub-Committee and Working Group shall elect a person to serve as President, who will present the report to the respective Committee.

Article 38. Each Committee, Sub-Committee and Working Group may establish such Drafting Committees as it considers necessary. The President of the Drafting Committee shall present its conclusions and recommendations to the body that established it.

Article 39. Delegations that do not form part of a subcommittee working or drafting group shall have the right to participate in their sessions with voice, but without vote. The groups should set limits for interventions by same.

Article 40. There shall be a Committee on Credentials composed of three delegations elected at the first plenary session. It shall examine the credentials of the delegations, and shall submit the corresponding report to the Assembly at the second plenary session.

CHAPTER VII. DISCUSSIONS AND PROCEDURE

Article 41. The official languages of the Assembly shall be English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.

Article 42. Simultaneous interpretation will be made available during the plenary sessions in the four official languages and during the Committee, Sub-Committee and Working Group sessions, interpretation will be in English and Spanish.

Article 43. Draft resolutions, recommendations and declarations and the pertinent amendments thereto, as well as the decisions of the Assembly, shall be published in the official languages.

The Final Act of the Assembly shall be published in the official languages.

Article 44. An absolute majority of the Member States duly accredited to the Assembly shall constitute a quorum for plenary sessions. In the Committees, Sub-Committees, and Working Groups, a quorum shall consist of one third of the delegations comprising those bodies.

Nevertheless, in order for a vote to be taken, at least two thirds of those delegations must be present at the session or meeting concerned.

Article 45. The President of the Assembly or Committee, Sub-Committee or Working Group session shall grant the floor in the order in which it is requested. No one may speak until recognized.

The President of the Assembly or Committee, Sub-Committee or Working Group session may call any delegation to order when its remarks depart from the subject under discussion.

Article 46. Proposals shall be presented in writing to the Secretariat, and may not be discussed until twenty-four hours after they have been distributed to the delegations.

Nevertheless, the Assembly may, by a vote of two thirds of the duly accredited delegations, authorize discussion in its plenary sessions of a proposal that has not been distributed on time. In each case, the proposing delegation shall indicate the Committee that, in its opinion, should study the proposal, unless such proposal concerns matters that should be discussed only in the plenary sessions.

Article 47. During the consideration of a proposal, a motion may be made to amend it.

A motion shall be considered to be an amendment to a proposal only when it adds to or eliminates something from that proposal or changes part of it. A motion that would totally replace the original proposal or that is not directly related to it shall not be considered to be an amendment.

Article 48. A proposal or an amendment may be withdrawn by its proponent before it has been put to a vote. Any delegation may present again a proposal that has been withdrawn.

Article 49. A motion to reconsider a decision taken by the Assembly, a Committee, Sub-Committee or Working Group shall require approval by a two-third vote of the delegations comprising these bodies.

Article 50. Reports of the Rapporteurs should be submitted to the Technical Secretariat of the Assembly duly in advance for their translation and presentation to the respective plenary session.

Article 51. During the discussion of a matter, any delegation may raise a point of order regarding the application of these Rules of Procedure, which shall be decided upon immediately by the President of the Assembly or Committee, Sub-Committee or Working Group. While raising a point of order, a delegation may not address the substance of the matter under discussion.

The decision of the President of the Assembly or Committee, Sub-Committee or Working Group may be appealed to the Assembly. The appeal shall be put to a vote immediately and shall be declared approved if favored by a two-thirds vote of the duly accredited delegations.

Article 52. The President of the Assembly or Committee, Sub-Committee or Working Group or any delegation may request that the debate be suspended. Only two representatives may speak in favor of, and two against, a motion to suspend the debate. It shall then be put to a vote immediately and shall be declared approved if favored by a two-thirds vote of the participating delegations.

Article 53. The President of the Assembly or Committee, Sub-Committee or Working Group or any delegation, when she or it considers that a topic has been sufficiently discussed, may propose that the debate be closed.

This motion may be opposed by two delegations, after which it shall be declared approved if favored by a two-thirds vote of the participating delegations.

Article 54. During the discussion of any topic, the President of the Assembly or Committee, Sub-Committee or Working Group or any delegation may propose that the meeting be suspended or adjourned.

Such a motion shall be put to a vote immediately without discussion, and it shall be declared approved if favored by a two-thirds vote of the participating delegations.

Article 55. Except as provided in Article 52, the following motions shall have precedence, in the order set forth below, over all other proposals or motions:

- a) Suspension of the Session;
- b) Adjournment of the Session;
- c) Suspension of debate on the topic under consideration;
- d) Close of debate on the topic under consideration.

Article 56. The provisions regarding discussions and procedure contained in this chapter shall govern the plenary sessions and the meetings of the Committees, Sub-Committees, and Working Groups.

CHAPTER VIII. VOTING

Article 57. As stipulated in Article 11 of the Statute, each delegation shall have the right to one vote. The right to vote does not imply an obligation to vote.

Only the Principal Delegates or their Alternates duly accredited to the Assembly shall have the right to vote.

Article 58. Decisions of the Assembly shall be adopted by the affirmative vote of an absolute majority of the delegations accredited to the Assembly.

Article 59. In the Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups, decisions shall be taken by a simple majority.

Article 60. There shall be a secret vote only in the cases and in the form stipulated in the Regulations of the CIM and in the present Rules of Procedure. For the purposes of these Rules of Procedure, the expression "absolute majority" means more than half the votes of all the members of each deliberative body, and the expression "simple majority" means more than half of those present.

Article 61. Proposals on which there is a tie vote shall be considered rejected.

Article 62. After the discussion is closed, the proposals presented, together with any amendments thereto, shall be put to the vote immediately. Proposals shall be voted upon in the order in which they were presented, unless the respective body decides otherwise.

Article 63. Voting shall be conducted by a show of hands, but any Delegate may request a roll-call vote, which shall be taken beginning with the delegation of the country whose name is drawn by lottery by the President and continuing in the order of precedence of the delegations. No Delegate may interrupt the voting except for a point of order regarding the manner in which the voting is being conducted. The voting shall conclude with an announcement of the results by the President.

Article 64. If there are any doubts regarding the result of the vote after it is announced, any delegation may immediately request that the balloting be repeated. The new vote shall be taken with the same delegations that took part in the vote in question. Delegations that did not take part in the previous balloting may not do so in the subsequent one.

Article 65. Amendments shall be discussed before voting on the proposal to be amended. When two or more amendments to a proposal are submitted, they shall be considered in the order in which they were presented.

Article 66. When adoption of one amendment necessarily implies exclusion of another, the latter shall not be put to the vote. If one or more of the amendments are adopted, the proposal shall be put to the vote in the form in which it has been amended.

Article 67. When any delegation so requests, proposals or amendments shall be voted on by parts. If a delegation opposes such a request, the respective body shall decide on the objection. It shall be put to the vote, the majority required for approval being that indicated in Articles 59 or 60 of these Rules of Procedure, as the case may be. If voting by parts is accepted, the various parts of the proposal or amendment that are accepted shall be put to the vote as a whole. When all the operative parts of a proposal or amendment have been rejected, the proposal shall be deemed to have been rejected in its entirety.

Article 68. The President may allow the delegations to explain their votes, either before or after the balloting, and may limit the duration of these explanations.

CHAPTER IX. ELECTIONS

Article 69. The President and Vice-Presidents of the CIM and the Member States that are to make up the Executive Committee shall be elected by secret ballot.

Article 70. When only one candidate is to be elected, and no such candidate receives an absolute majority on the first ballot, a second ballot shall be taken, or a third, if necessary. These ballots shall be restricted to the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes.

If after the third ballot, neither of the two Member States has received an absolute majority, the balloting shall be suspended for a period of not more than twenty-four hours. When the balloting is resumed, up to two more ballots shall be taken. If neither of the two Member States receives an absolute majority, the election process indicated in the present article shall begin again, within twenty-four hours, with the Member States presented.

Article 71. When it is necessary to fill two or more elective posts at the same time and under the same conditions, the Member States receiving an absolute majority on the first ballot shall be declared elected. If it has not been possible to fill all the vacancies on the first ballot, and it is necessary to take a second, the vote shall be between those Member States that received the highest number of votes on the first ballot, in such way that the number of Member States shall not exceed twice the number of posts that remain to be filled, however, after a third inconclusive ballot, any other Member State may be voted for until the vacancies are filled.

Article 72. In the event of a tie between two or more Member States, as the case may be, that have received at least an absolute majority, and when the number of posts to be filled is less than the number of Member States receiving the same number of votes, another ballot shall be taken. If the tie is not broken by the second ballot, the election shall be decided by lottery.

CHAPTER X. MINUTES AND DOCUMENTS

Article 73. Summary minutes shall be taken of the plenary sessions and of the committee meetings.

Article 74. The Technical Secretariat of the Assembly shall distribute the provisional summary minutes to the delegations as soon as possible.

Twenty-four hours after this distribution, the delegations shall present to the Secretariat any stylistic corrections they deem necessary.

The corrected minutes shall be published as part of the official proceedings of the Assembly.

Article 75. Before any proposed resolution is put to the vote, its text shall be translated into the four official languages of the Organization and distributed by the Technical Secretariat of the Assembly 12 hours before its consideration, whenever possible.

The resolutions of the Assembly shall likewise be distributed in the four official languages immediately after they are adopted.

These translations shall be done unless the delegations concerned express a wish to the contrary. Provision shall be made for translation of documents in the budget of the Assembly.

Article 76. Working documents produced during the Assembly and the reports of the Rapporteurs of the Committees shall be published in the official languages insofar as the Technical Secretariat is able to do so.

Article 77. The Technical Secretariat of the Assembly shall prepare the Final Act in the four official languages of the Organization, or at least in English and Spanish if the former is not possible.

The Final Act shall contain the resolutions, declarations, recommendations, agreements and votes adopted by the Assembly and shall be signed at the closing session by all duly accredited Member States.

Article 78. The Executive Secretariat of the CIM shall adopt a suitable system of numbering the resolutions of the Assemblies.

After the close of the meeting of the Assembly, the Executive Secretariat shall be responsible for publishing and distributing the Final Act in the four official languages, within the three-month period following the holding of the Assembly.

Article 79. Cases not provided for in these Rules of Procedure shall be resolved in accordance with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly of the Organization.