

**RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE  
STATES PARTIES TO THE FOLLOW-UP MECHANISM FOR THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERAMERICAN CONVENTION  
ON THE PREVENTION, PUNISHMENT AND ERADICATION OF  
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN "BELEM DO PARA  
CONVENTION" (MESECVI)**

**(Amended at the IX Conference of States Parties, June 11, 2024, in  
Santiago, Chile.)**

## PREAMBLE

BEARING IN MIND that on July 9th, 2008, at the first plenary session of the Second Conference of States Parties, held in Venezuela, the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of States Parties to the Follow-up Mechanism for the Implementation of the InterAmerican Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women "Convention of Belem do Para" (MESECVI) were approved;

CONSIDERING that Article 12, number 12.1 of the Statute of the MESECVI establishes that "The Conference shall periodically review the functioning of the Mechanism, taking into account the observations of the Committee, and may introduce such modifications as it deems appropriate";

CONSIDERING that Article 1 of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the States Parties establishes that "(the Rules of Procedure) shall govern the organization and functioning of the Conference of the States Parties to the MESECVI (the Conference) and the Mechanism, respectively. The Conference shall perform its functions within the framework of the purposes, fundamental principles, characteristics and other provisions set forth in the Statute of the Mechanism, hereinafter the Statute, and the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS). Cases not provided for in these Rules of Procedure and not provided for in the Statute or the Charter of the OAS may be resolved by the Conference, or when the Conference is not in session, by the President in consultation with the Vice Presidents and the States Parties;

CONSIDERING the experiences and lessons learned from the global pandemic caused by the COVID - SARS II Virus, regarding the work and development of sessions through virtual platforms, among other technological means;

AGREEING on the need to adapt the rules of procedures contained in the Rules of Procedure of the Conference, in the context indicated in the previous paragraph, and considering that the improvement in the organic functioning of the Conference of the States Parties (CEP) has an impact on the improvement and the strengthening of the MESECVI;

CONSIDERING the standards established by the Organization of American States (OAS) regarding the organizational structures and forms of operation of its organs and dependent bodies, which provide legal certainty to the decisions and resolutions adopted by them;

TAKING NOTE of the Permanent Council document CP/doc. 5602/20 of 13 April 2020 setting out considerations on the conduct of virtual meetings of the Permanent Council and its subsidiary bodies: Draft Permanent Council Resolution CP/doc. 5646/20 of 15 October 2020 on updating the rules of procedure of the Permanent Council and its subsidiary bodies; Permanent Council Resolution CP/RES. 115/2280/20 of 16 April 2020 on virtual meetings of the Permanent Council due to the COVID-19 pandemic; Resolution CP/doc. 5746/21 rev. 1 of November 22 2021 on the adequacy of the work of the organs, agencies and entities of the OAS; and of Resolution CP/INF. 9344/22 of April 18, 2022

regarding recommendations on procedures for in-person meetings with virtual participation of the Permanent Council;

REPRESENTING that in all matters not modified or supplemented by these revised rules, the former rules remain in full force and effect;

The IX Regular Conference of the States Parties of the MESECVI agrees to the following modification of the aforementioned Rules of Procedure in the following terms:

## **I. SCOPE OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE**

### **Article 1. Scope of the Rules of Procedure.**

These Rules of Procedure shall govern the organization and operations of the Conference of States Party to the Follow-up Mechanism on Implementation of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, the "Convention of Belém do Pará" (MESECVI), hereinafter the Conference, and the Mechanism, respectively.

The Conference shall carry out its functions within the framework of the purposes, basic principles, characteristics and other provisions established in the Statute of the Mechanism, hereinafter the Statute, as well as in the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS).

Situations not provided for in these Rules of Procedure, in the Statute or the OAS Charter may be resolved by the Conference, or when the Conference is not in session, by the President in consultation with the Vice-Presidents and the States Parties.

## **II. NATURE, ORGANIZATION, AND OPERATION OF THE CONFERENCE**

### **Article 2. Nature.**

The Conference, as the political body of the Mechanism, has the authority and the general responsibility for implementing the Mechanism and adopting decisions or procedures it deems necessary to the attainment of its objectives.

### **Article 3. Composition.**

The Conference is made up of representatives from all the States Parties of the Mechanism. The States Parties shall appoint a head of delegation and any delegates they deem necessary.

### **Article 4. Functions.**

The functions of the Conference are:

- a. To establish overall guidelines for the work of the Committee of Experts (CEVI) of the Mechanism and to serve as its advisory body;
- b. To receive, analyze, and evaluate the reports of the CEVI;
- c. To publish and disseminate the final report of the Mechanism, in coordination with the OAS General Secretariat;
- d. To settle any matter relating to the operations of the Mechanism;
- e. To report every two years to the OAS General Assembly on the work carried out during that period, on the progress, challenges and best practices arising from the final reports and, if appropriate, to formulate general recommendations;
- f. To periodically review the operations of the Mechanism, taking into account the observations of the CEVI, and introducing any changes it deems appropriate; and,
- g. To establish criteria for determining regular contributions.

### **III. PRESIDENCY AND VICE PRESIDENCIES**

#### **Article 5. Presidency and Vice Presidencies.**

The Conference shall have a President and two Vice-Presidents, which shall be elected at the beginning of each regular meeting. Said officials shall carry out their functions in any special meetings that may occur between regular meetings.

In the absence of the President, the first Vice President shall take his/her place, and in his/her absence, the second Vice President will do so.

Nominations for the President and Vice President shall be made through the corresponding channels of the Executive Secretariat of the CIM/OAS, in its capacity as Technical Secretariat of the MESECVI, five calendar non-extendable days prior to the date of the meeting of the Conference of States Party, except in the event of an absence of nominations, in which case it will be the responsibility of the Presidency and the Vice Presidencies to define the steps to follow. The Technical Secretariat will send out a call for nominations 40 (forty) days before the date of the Conference, carrying out the pertinent procedures as required.

When election processes are necessary, they shall be carried out following Chapter 11 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly.

## **Article 6. Functions.**

The functions of the Presidency are:

- a. Propose, in collaboration with the host State, if any, the agenda and tentative schedule for the Conference Meeting;
- b. To open and close the sessions as well as to direct and moderate the debates;
- c. Submit for the consideration and approval of the Conference the draft agenda and draft schedule for the Conference Meeting, as well as the items under discussion requiring decision and announce the results;
- d. To follow up on the decisions of the Conference and report to the States Parties as appropriate;
- e. Coordinate the work of the organs of the Mechanism and present the proposals it deems appropriate for its better functioning;
- f. To rule on points of order arising during the deliberations in accordance with article 22 quater of this Rules of procedure;
- g. To represent the Conference before the CEVI;
- h. Represent the Mechanism before the OAS bodies and in the acts, conferences or activities to which it is invited;
- i. To set up the necessary committees for the Conference meetings;
- j. The Presidency, with the agreement of the Vice-Presidencies, may propose to the Conference to adopt measures which are understood to be exceptional, not covered by these Rules of Procedure, in order to allow for the normal and transparent development of ordinary and extraordinary meetings. Such measures shall require the approval of a majority of the States Party.
- k. Such other duties as are conferred by these Rules of Procedure and the Conference.

## **IV. SECRETARIAT OF THE CONFERENCE**

### **Article 7. Secretariat.**

The Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) is the Technical Secretariat of the Conference, and will have the following functions:

[according to the reform of the Statute of the InterAmerican Commission of Women, approved by the 36th Assembly of Delegates of the CIM (2012)].

- a. To prepare the documents for each Meeting of the Conference and present them to the Presidency for approval;
- b. To ensure the safe-keeping of all Conference documents and files;
- c. To disseminate by any adequate means of communication, including the CIM website, information and public documents relating to the Mechanism, as well as the final report of the CEVI issued at the end of each multilateral evaluation round, once they have been made public in accordance with the provisions of the Statute, and the Final Report of the Conference;
- d. To act as the nexus for coordination and contacts for sending and exchanging documents and communication for the Conference, the CEVI, the OAS organs, and other organizations or institutions;
- e. To present the Final Report of the Meeting of the Conference and the Hemispheric Report to the Assembly of CIM Delegates and the OAS General Assembly;
- f. To prepare summary minutes of the Meetings of the Conference;
- g. To submit financial reports to donors as required;
- h. To perform functions for the effective fulfillment of its functions; and
- i. To perform other functions as may be entrusted to it by the Conference.

## **V. MEETINGS OF THE CONFERENCE**

### **Article 8. Venue.**

The Conference may hold meetings in the State Party that offers to host them, or otherwise, at the headquarters of the OAS General Secretariat.

This offer, if not made at the previous meeting of the Conference, shall be communicated in writing at least 8 months in advance, to the Executive Secretariat of the CIM in its capacity as Technical Secretariat of the MESECVI, which shall inform all the States Parties through their Permanent Missions to the OAS. In the event that two or more offers are found, the Presidency will consult to find a solution.

### **Article 9. Convocation**

As set forth in Article 5 of the Statute, the Conference will hold a regular meeting every two years and special meetings as often as it deems necessary.

The State holding the Presidency of the Conference, in accordance with article 6, subsection C of these Rules of Procedure, shall convene the regular and special meetings of the Conference through the Secretary General of the OAS who will send the invitations to the regular and special meetings of the Conference by means of a written communication addressed to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the States Parties, through their Permanent Missions to the OAS, with copy to the duly designated Competent National Authorities (CNAs) in charge of gender equality and gender-based violence policies; and any others that each State may designate.

Any State Party may request the Presidency, with a copy to the States Parties, to convene a duly justified special session, by sending the communication to the OAS General Secretariat which, through the Executive Secretariat of the CIM, in its capacity as Technical Secretariat of the MESECVI, will forward this request to the National Competent Authorities (NCA), with a copy to their Permanent Missions to the OAS. Invitations to regular and special meetings will be issued at least 90 calendar days in advance.

To determine the realization of special meetings of the Conference, the Presidency, in consensus with the Vice-Presidencies, and after carrying out the consultations deemed appropriate, will communicate its decision to the States Parties.

#### **Article 10. Preparatory Meetings.**

The State which presides over the Conference will convene the preparatory meetings of States Parties of the Mechanism to for the Meeting of the Conference. The purposes for the preparatory meetings will be, among others:

- a. To determine the venue and date of the next Meeting in case these were not established in the preceding meeting of the Conference;
- b. To consider the draft agenda and calendar of the Meeting of the Conference;
- c. To agree on the documents which will be presented for the consideration of the Conference;
- d. To establish the work methodology and the working commissions;
- e. To establish the order of precedence, in accordance with Article 17 of this Rules of Procedure; and
- f. To decide upon the approximate duration of the meeting of the Conference.

#### **Article 10 bis (11). Advance notice of convocation.**

Preparatory Meetings may be held as deemed necessary for the preparation and negotiation of the documents to be submitted to the Conference. Such preparatory meetings shall be convened by the Chair of the Conference at least 20 calendar days prior

to the meeting, which shall be communicated by the Executive Secretariat of the CIM, in its capacity as Technical Secretariat of the MESECVI, to the States Party through their Competent National Authorities (CNAs), with a copy to their Permanent Missions to the OAS.

**Article 10 ter (12). Duration of Interventions.**

At the Preparatory Meetings, which shall be directed by the Chair of the Conference, each intervention or contribution by the Competent National Authorities or delegates designated for this purpose by the State Party may not exceed 5 minutes per intervention, taking into consideration the total duration of the meeting.

The Chair of the Conference shall be responsible for deciding questions of order arising during the Preparatory Meetings.

**Article 10 quáter (13). Adoption of agreements with respect to proposals made to the Conference.**

For the purpose of submitting documents or proposals for the consideration of the Conference for approval, in accordance with art. 10 octies (17), each State Party shall have the right to one vote, which may be expressed orally by its delegation, either in person or remotely or through the use of virtual communication platforms.

**Article 10 quinquies (14). Voting remotely or through the use of virtual communication platforms.**

In the case of a roll call vote in virtual or hybrid meetings, this shall be carried out through the OAS virtual platform or another that, in its absence, duly safeguards the security of the data and the simultaneous interpretation of official OAS languages; designated for such purposes in advance by the Chair of the Conference, which shall be stated in the notice of the Meeting(s). The result of the vote shall be recorded in the respective minutes.

At the end of the vote, the Chair shall announce the result in accordance with the votes expressed by delegations. At the request of any delegation, the Chair shall conduct a formal count of the votes. Each delegation may challenge the result of the formal count by raising a point of order.

**Article 10 sexies (15). Order of Precedence.**

For the purposes of adopting agreements, discussing, and/or negotiating the proposals addressed in the Meetings, the order of precedence for voting shall be determined by the alphabetical order of the States' names in Spanish, or by following the order of precedence of the Permanent Council.



**Article 10 septies (16). Closing the debate.**

Once the contributions, comments or interventions by the corresponding State Party to the technical proposal subject of the Preparatory Meeting have been finalized, the corresponding debate shall be closed by the Chair of the Conference.

The total duration of each Preparatory Meeting shall be determined by the Chair of the Conference prior to its holding, which shall be communicated in the corresponding convocation.

Minutes shall be taken of the discussion by the Technical Secretariat, which shall include an excerpt of the dialogue promoted between the delegations. The extracts shall be submitted for consideration by the delegations concerned for an eventual reformulation, in accordance with the proceedings of the corresponding meeting.

**Article 10 octies (17). Remission of Documents and/or Agreements.**

The Executive Secretariat of the CIM, in its capacity as Technical Secretariat of the MESECVI, shall send the text to be submitted to the Conference 15 calendar days prior to the corresponding session.

In the following preparatory meetings, the Secretariat shall send the documents with the systematized modification proposals well in advance of the upcoming sessions.

**Article 11. Delegations.**

Accreditation of the delegations appointed by the States Parties shall be effected through written communication sent to the OAS Secretary General through the Technical Secretariat of the Conference.

**VI. GUESTS****Article 12. Non-Party States.**

Member States of the OAS which are not Party to the Convention, may be invited as Observers to the Meeting of the Conference, if they so request.

**Article 13. Permanent Observers.**

Permanent Observers of the OAS may be invited to attend the Meeting of the Conference, if they so request.

**Article 14. Organs and Organizations.**

Inter-American, sub-regional and hemispheric organs and entities as well as international organizations may be invited to the Meeting of the Conference. They may intervene in accordance with the manner that the President of the Conference deems appropriate.

**Article 15. Civil Society.**

If it is deemed convenient, the Presidency may, in joint consultation with States Party in the preparatory meetings, invite representatives of civil society organizations related to the matters of the Convention to attend the meetings of the Conference, in accordance with the principles contained in the Guidelines for the Participation of Civil Society Organizations in OAS Activities (CP/RES. 759 (1217/99)).

**Article 16. Special Guests.**

Special guests deemed appropriate by the President may be invited to attend the Meeting of the Conference.

**Article 17. Precedence.**

The order of precedence of the delegations shall be established by drawing lots in a preparatory meeting. To this end, the alphabetical order of the States in Spanish will be followed.

**Article 18. Languages.**

The official languages of the Meeting of the Conference are Spanish, French, English and Portuguese.

**VII. SESSIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE****Article 19. Sessions.**

The Meeting of the Conference shall comprise an opening session, plenary sessions, and a closing session. These sessions shall be public. However, they may be private if so ruled by the President or requested by any of the representatives.

**Article 20. Rapporteur.**

The Conference will elect Rapporteurs as needed. These Rapporteurs will provide written reports which will be presented verbally prior to the conclusion of the Meeting of the Conference and will be included in its Final Report.

**Article 21. Adoption of Decisions.**

In the deliberations of the Conference, each State Party will have the right to one vote. Decisions will require the affirmative vote of the majority of the States Parties that are participating in the meeting of the Conference, except as set forth in Article 26 of the Rules of Procedure.

**Article 22. Quorum.**

A simple majority of the States Parties to the Conference shall constitute a quorum for holding sessions.

**Article 22 bis. Duration of the Meeting.**

The Chair of the Conference, in consultation with the host country, shall determine the maximum duration of the Meeting, whether regular or special.

**Article 22 ter. Use of the floor.**

It shall be determined by the Chairperson of the Conference, in the order in which each delegate requests to speak or, alternatively, according to the alphabetical order in Spanish of the participating States, with a maximum of 5 minutes of speaking time.

**Article 22 quater. Point of Order.**

During the regular or special meetings, any duly designated delegate of the participating States may request the intervention of the Chairperson of the Conference, so that he/she may resolve the matter in accordance with the provisions of these rules of procedure. In this situation, the Chair of the Conference shall call a recess to resolve the matter. In case of disagreement, it shall be approved by a simple majority of the attendees. In case of a tie, the Chair of the Conference shall decide.

**Article 22 quinquies. Suspension of the Debate.**

This power is only granted to the Presidency of the Conference in view of its organic faculties, and maybe submitted to a vote of the participating States, which motion shall be understood to be approved by a simple majority of the participating States. In the event of a tie, the Chair of the Conference shall decide.

**Article 22 sexies. Closing of the Debate.**

When the Agenda submitted for the consideration of the regular or special session has been sufficiently discussed in the judgment of the Chairperson of the Conference, having certified that each of the matters included in the Agenda has been reviewed and decided upon, the corresponding session shall be terminated.

**Article 22 septies. Procedure of Motions.**

Each participating State may propose interventions on topics not included in the initial agenda. In such a case, the Chair of the Conference shall allow for their discussion after the end of the regular or special session, and may also allow their presentation in writing.

In case of written presentation, if the merit of the background requires it, it may be put in the agenda for the following meeting; all of the above at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Conference.

## **VIII. MINUTES AND FINAL REPORT**

### **Article 23. Minutes.**

Summary minutes shall be recorded of the plenary and working sessions and must contain a summary of the discussions and the full text of agreements reached.

The Secretariat shall distribute to the delegations as soon as possible, the provisional draft of the minutes from each session in all the official languages of the Conference. Delegations may submit to the Conference Secretariat any corrections they consider necessary within a period of 15 days following the distribution of that text.

### **Article 24. Final Report of the Meeting of the Conference.**

A final Report of the Meeting of the Conference will be produced which will include, in addition to the conclusions and agreements reached, background information on the organization of the Conference, the list of participants, and basic information on the development of the Conference as well as reports from the respective Rapporteurs.

## **IX. ON THE RULES OF PROCEDURE**

### **Article 25. Adoption and Validity of the Regulations.**

These Rules of Procedure shall be adopted by the Second Meeting of the Conference of States Parties and shall enter into force upon their adoption.

### **Article 26. Amendment of the Rules of Procedure.**

The Rules of Procedure can be amended only by a motion supported by an absolute majority of the States Parties.

### **Transitory Article:**

These rules of procedure shall not have retroactive effect. They shall govern in actum from the time of their approval at the session at which they shall be submitted to a vote of the attending states.

These regulations shall be made known to the States Parties through the Technical Secretariat, in a coordinated and systematized text, once they have been approved in accordance with the provisions of article 26; this text shall include all approved modifications and complements.