

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES  
TO THE MECHANISM TO FOLLOW UP ON THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE INTER-AMERICAN CONVENTION ON THE PREVENTION,  
PUNISHMENT AND ERADICATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST  
WOMEN “CONVENTION OF BELÉM DO PARÁ” (MESECVI)



(Adopted at the First Plenary Session of the Second Conference of  
States Parties held in Caracas, Venezuela, on July 9, 2008)

## 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

### 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 work done during that period concerning progress, challenges, and best practices emanating from the final reports and, if appropriate, shall issue any general recommendations it deems appropriate;
- 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.** Establecer criterios para determinar contribuciones regulares.

### **III. PRESIDENT AND VICEPRESIDENTS**

#### **Article 5. President and Vice-Presidents.**

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 until the next meeting of the Conference, including any special meetings that need to be held. 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.

## Article 6. Functions.

The functions of the President are:

- a. To propose, in collaboration with the host country, if any, the draft agenda and calendar for the Meeting of the *Conference*;
- b. To open and close the sessions as well as to direct and moderate the discussions;
- c. To submit for consideration and approval of the Conference, the draft agenda and calendar of the Meeting of the Conference, as well as any issues in the debate that require decision-making, and to announce the results;
- d. To follow up on decisions made by the Conference and inform the States Parties, as applicable;
- e. To coordinate the work of the bodies of the Mechanism and present any proposals he/she deems appropriate to ensure optimal operation thereof
- f. To decide on points of order that raised during the deliberations;
- g. To represent the Conference before the CEVI;
- h. To represent the Mechanism before the Organs of the OAS and participate in acts, conferences or activities to which he/she is invited;
- i. To install commissions at the Meetings of the Conference, as required; and
- j. To perform other responsibilities as may arise from the *Rules of Procedure* and as entrusted by the *Conference*.

## IV. SECRETARIAT OF THE CONFERENCE

### Article 7. Secretariat.

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

- 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 any State Party that offers to host them, or otherwise, at the headquarters of the OAS General Secretariat.

Said offer, if not made at the preceding meeting of the Conference, should be communicated in writing to the Secretary General of the OAS, who will then inform all States Parties on the matter through their Permanent Missions to the OAS.

## **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 OAS Secretary General will convene the regular and special meetings of the Conference by way of written communication directed to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the States Parties, through their Permanent Missions to the OAS, with copy to their respective Competent National Authorities (CNA).

## **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 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 and its preparatory meetings if they so request.

### **Article 13. Permanent Observers**

A la Reunión de la Conferencia podrán ser invitados a asistir los Observadores Permanentes de la OEA, si así lo solicitaren.

### **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.



## 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 Entering into Effect of the Rules of Procedure.**

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. Amendments to the Rules of Procedure.**

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