XXXII ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES
27 – 29 October, 2004
Washington, D.C.

OEA/Ser.L/II.2.32
CIM/doc.9/04 corr.1
6 October 2004
Original: English

WORKING PROGRAM FOR THE BIENNIUM PROGRAMMATIC ORIENTATIONS

(Item 7 of the Agenda)

CIM WORKING PROGRAM FOR THE 2004-2006 BIENNIUM
PROGRAMMATIC ORIENTATIONS

I. GENERAL CRITERIA

The Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality (IAP), approved by the 2000 Meeting of Ministers or of the Highest Ranking Authorities Responsible for the Advancement of Women in the Member States (REMIM I), adopted at the Thirtieth Regular Session of the General Assembly of the OAS in 2000, and subsequently endorsed by the Quebec Summit of the Americas (2001), is a clear manifestation of the Hemisphere's consensus on the need to undertake initiatives in both the member states and at the OAS in which the integration of a gender perspective should be included as a key element for promoting development.

This commitment was reaffirmed at the Special Summit of the Americas (Nuevo León, 2004) where the Heads of State and Government reiterated "that the empowerment of women, their full and equal participation in the development of our societies and their equal opportunities to exercise leadership are fundamental for the reduction of poverty, the promotion of economic and social prosperity, and for people-centered human development" and where they also reaffirmed their commitment to continue promoting gender equality and equity and the mandates of the Summits of the Americas in this area.

The IAP provides specific recommendations for the member states, and mandates for the OAS General Secretariat and for the CIM, on the integration of a gender perspective into hemispheric policy. Although the mandates are wide-ranging, they encompass and address a broad spectrum of issues. In compliance with the mandates received from the IAP, the OAS General Secretariat, has begun the process of integrating a gender perspective into the programs and policies of its organs, entities and agencies, recognizing that the work done by the OAS must equally benefit *both women and men*. Since its approval, the IAP has become a blueprint for action and, in the 2004-2006 Biennium, the CIM's work will focus, among other activities, on its implementation.

As referenced above, the Plan of Action adopted at the 2001 Quebec Summit of the Americas constituted an important mandate, reflecting priority areas common to those already identified by the CIM. In addition, it expressed the need to strengthen the role of the CIM as the technical advisory body of the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG), and made clear that the CIM must continue working as advisor on gender in the process of preparing the next Summits. This is important, because, despite that fact that a chapter on

gender was included at the Third Summit, gender has not been integrated into all areas as a cross-cutting issue. This requires special follow-up and work to continue progressing in the implementation of the objectives of the IAP and the mandates of the Summit.

Within the framework of previously identified priorities, the CIM will continue directing its efforts towards regional activities that institutionalize the progress achieved with the recommendations made to the ministries of labor, justice, education, and science and technology to develop policies that mainstream the gender perspective. CIM will focus attention not only on efforts that can exert a multiplier effect but also on activities that demonstrate sustainability over the longer-term, in order to prevent initiatives from appearing as isolated phenomena, with a limited impact both over time and in terms of the number of persons targeted by this activity or program.

As stated in the IAP responsibility for gender mainstreaming and implementation of the Program should not, and cannot be left entirely to the CIM, and will only be successful with the active engagement of other partners, Member States and commitment from the OAS as an institution. In this context, to ensure a more effective integration of gender as a cross-cutting issue, the CIM will continue strengthening its relationships with other bodies of the inter-American system, entities and organizations of the OAS, international institutions, and civil society organizations

II. FINANCIAL SITUATION

The financial situation of the OAS has led to a freezing in hiring, a modification of the regulations for hiring independent contractors, and new cuts in the CIM's budget. This has negatively affected the CIM's capacity to carry out its functions, fulfill its mandate, and negotiate with its counterparts in the international community on an equal basis. Since the outlook is very difficult for the OAS, it will have serious repercussions for the CIM.

The reduction in CIM's budget has been painful. Since 1997, the budget has declined from approximately $1.1 million to $893,000, a loss of approximately a quarter of a millions dollars. In 2003, the Seed Fund, which for many years constituted a much-needed source of funding for women's organizations in the member states, had to be eliminated. It is important to note that the very important work that was conducted in the area of violence against women and the trafficking of women and children has relied solely on external funding.

Unless additional financial, human and external resources are secured for the 2004-2006 biennium, CIM authorities will have to realistically assess its mandates so as not to create false expectations. Because of the CIM's financial constraints for the next biennium, efforts to identify external resources and establish strategic partnerships, as in the previous biennium, will be intensified.

The Permanent Secretariat will continue to provide, to the extent of its technical and financial possibilities, the support for the Principal Delegates to promote activities in the Member States.

III. PRIORITIES FOR THE BIENNIUM

1. *Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality – Measures for Action*

1.1 Within the Member States: Both the IAP and the Plan of Action of the Quebec Summit have recognized the CIM as the principal hemispheric policymaking forum for promoting women's human rights and gender equality. As such, the Permanent Secretariat shall promote greater involvement of CIM delegates in their respective countries in the implementation of the policies developed by the CIM Secretariat and adopted by the Commission.

The CIM has obtained highly positive results from the initiative known as SEPIA.[1] This process, developed in partnership with gender experts, was designed to implement the IAP's mandates by presenting, through the venue of the ministerials, recommendations on the integration of a gender perspective and suggested lines of action to the Member States.. To date, CIM has worked in the areas of: Labor (SEPIA I); Justice, (SEPIA II); Education (SEPIA III), and Science and Technology (SEPIA IV). But to capitalize on, and promote this initiative, there must be appropriate follow-up. This will be achieved if the CIM Delegates, in their countries, support the CIM's efforts, by conducting follow-up activities that endorse the implementation of the SEPIA recommendations in the work carried out by these Ministries and promote, not only the integration of a gender perspective at the ministerial level but the design of multi-sectoral strategies and approaches.

The CIM will continue implementing its strategy aimed at achieving full integration of the gender perspective into the above-mentioned areas, participating actively, to the extent possible, in all the follow-up activities of the ministerial meetings and the preparation of the ensuing meetings.

Finally, pursuant to Resolution AG/RES.2023, CIM will encourage the member states to continue their efforts to develop public policies, strengthen institutional mechanisms for promoting women and guarantee the enforcement of laws promoting women's human rights, and equal opportunities for women and men at all levels. All of this will be depend directly on the availability of resources needed for the 2004-2006 Biennium.

---

1 Spanish acronym for "Follow up of the Inter.-American Program" (**SE**guimiento del **P**rograma **I**nter**a**mericano)

1.2 Within the OAS: In compliance with the IAP's general objectives of "systematically integrating a gender perspective into all the bodies, organizations, and entities of the Inter-American system," the CIM, in its role as *the* organization specializing in gender affairs, will continue to encourage, along with the OAS General Secretariat, the development of OAS staff training activities, so as to continue promoting an awareness of the need to integrate a gender perspective in all OAS activities and programs. Dependant on its funding, the CIM proposes to provide capacity-building courses and activities to support the trainers who were already trained, so that they can continue to support the professional staff of OAS, responsible for programs and policies. In addition, CIM will identify training courses for the OAS field staff, for staff who did not participate in previous training and for new staff members.

Additionally, to comply with the mandates of REMIM II, the CIM will intensify its work with other organs and agencies of the OAS: such us the Trade Unit (TU), Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD), the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), the Office of Science and Technology (OST), the Unit for Social Development and Educations (UDSE).

1.3 Strengthening the CIM: The Thirty-fourth Regular Session of the General Assembly of the OAS adopted Resolution AG/RES. 2021, "Strengthening of the Inter-American Commission of Women," which urges the Secretary General to provide CIM with sufficient human and financial resources to strengthen its capacity to comply with its mandate. In addition, it requests that the Secretary General include CIM projects and programs among the priorities that are presented to external donors for funding. Finally, the member states were invites to provide voluntary contributions to support the development and implementation of the Commission's projects and programs. As a practical measure, this provision asks that the Permanent Council invite the CIM Executive Secretary to present reports on the financial resources needed to fulfill its mandates. This is a reiteration of what is set forth in the IAP, which recommends strengthening the technical, human, and financial resources of the Permanent Secretariat of the CIM as a necessary mechanism to enable it to promote relevant initiatives aimed at applying its objectives and conducting appropriate follow-ups.

1.4 With Civil Society: In fulfillment of the mandates received from the General Assembly of OAS, the Summits of the Americas, the Assembly of Delegates of the CIM and the IAP, the CIM will continue the process of integrating civil society organizations into its activities and will promote their accreditation by OAS as a way of furthering their participation in the inter-American system. The CIM will continue to work jointly with civil society gender experts to attain the goals of the IAP. The newly created fund for civil society participation will allow greater possibilities for a more sustained relationship with these organizations. In addition, the CIM will continue upgrading its web site on Internet so it can continue to be a repository of information on gender available to civil society organizations.

2. Fourth Summit of the Americas

As technical advisor to the Summit Implementation Review Group (SIRG) on gender issues and in conformity with the mandates of the Thirtieth Assembly of Delegates, the CIM submitted the recommendation of the Assembly of Delegates to the SIRG for incorporating a gender perspective into the Declaration and Plan of Action of the Third Summit of the Americas, held in Quebec City, Canada, in April 2001.

These recommendations were taken into account. The Plan of Action of the Summit contains a section on women's human rights and a chapter on gender equality, and uses an approach aimed at mainstreaming gender issues into labor and employment, civil society, health, justice, and indigenous peoples. It endorses the IAP, urging the integration of "a gender perspective into the programs, actions and agendas of national and international events, to ensure that women's experiences and gender equality are an integral dimension of the design, implementation and evaluation of government and inter-American policies and programs in all spheres."

The CIM is currently working in coordination with the Secretariat for the Summit Process, in accordance with the provisions of Resolution AG/RES. 2011/04, in order to achieve the integration of the gender perspective in the process of preparation of the next summit to be held in Argentina in November 2005. The central topic of the Summit will be "Creating Jobs to Confront Poverty and Strengthen Democratic Governance," an area that offers the CIM many opportunities to use its expertise in gender, as well as to incorporate the recommendations emanating from REMIM II on the economic integration of women.

3. *Strategic Plan of Action of CIM – Priority Areas of Action*

In the past, the Plan has oriented the development of strategies in four priority areas of action. The Plan was extended by the XXIX Assembly of Delegates of the CIM to the year 2005. Submitted to the Fourth World Conference of Beijing almost ten years ago, it has been a highly valuable instrument, and in the future it will be a document for consultation and orientation because the topics that are considered in it continue to be essential for CIM's work, especially those identified below.

3.1 Education

The Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality, in specific objective #5, urges the member states of OAS to promote gender equity and equality and women's human rights, among others, by securing their full and equal access to "education at all levels and to various fields of study." This is reaffirmed in objective #8), which calls for "the elimination of cultural patterns and stereotypes that denigrate the image of women, particularly in educational materials…" In addition, as one of the actions to be developed by the General Secretariat of the OAS, the IAP calls for the adoption of the necessary measures to promote the incorporation of this

perspective in the work of the organizations of the inter-American system

The CIM's proposal to incorporate the gender perspective in education is based on the premise that this perspective provides the basis for promoting the cultural changes that facilitate the achievement of gender equity and equality,, as well as being a mechanism for social and economic mobility, integration and poverty reduction. Although the equal access of women to all levels of education constitutes fundamental progress, there are other positive outcomes resulting from educating children in values of equity, tolerance, respect for diversity and citizen training.

Education with a gender perspective involves the formation of children at the earliest age in principles of equity and equality, paving the way to overcoming greater barriers based on gender inequity, among others, unequal access to the job market. It induces processes of cultural change in both men and women, such as responsible parenthood and the equal distribution of household chores. In addition, it creates conditions for the empowerment of women and, finally, builds a society that is more fair and equitable.

In this area, and in accordance with the results of SEPIA III: Gender and Education, the CIM proposes activities aimed at encouraging socio-cultural changes and eliminating stereotypes of domestic and job roles in order to raise awareness about the need for men and women to share public and private roles and responsibilities. It will continue working closely with the Unit for Social Development and Education to ensure follow up of the implementation of the gender perspective in the outcomes of the next Education Ministerial. The CIM will focus attention on the education of women in all life cycles and will give special attention to training programs for groups whose education is lagging, such as minorities, the rural population, the marginal urban population, indigenous groups and other ethnic groups. This will require the active participation of the Principal Delegates to achieve a closer relationship with the Ministries of Education, to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations developed by gender experts in SEPIA III: Gender and Education.

3.2 Eradication of Poverty and Discrimination –-Empowerment of Women

The CIM has been developing multidimensional and multi-sectoral strategies for dealing with this very important topic. Both the declarations and plans of action of the Summits of the Americas have increasingly expressed a special concern about this topic.

Specifically, the Special Summit held in Monterrey, Mexico, at the beginning of 2004, underscored that the participation of women in the development of our societies and their access to equal opportunities to exercise leadership are fundamental for reducing poverty, promoting economic and social prosperity, and people-centered sustainable development.

Education and training are an investment in human capital enabling improvement in the possibilities and quality of the insertion of persons in the job market and higher

remunerations in more productive sectors. A dynamic productive sector sustained by skilled workers and competitive companies contributes to a better insertion of the economies in an increasingly liberalized global market. On the basis of this analysis, it is necessary to examine the relationships between education, the job market and trade. Since policies are not gender neutral, efforts have to be made to prevent policy decisions, especially those on the topics mentioned above, from adversely affecting women.

The CIM will continue to promote the integrated treatment of these topics as a way to combat poverty. A strong relationship between education and labor is a strategic alliance, and a necessity in order to educate women so they can have greater access to the labor market and be competitive at all levels, as well as to increase their possibilities of gaining access to leadership positions.

The next Summit will focus on the topic "Creating employment to Confront Poverty and Strengthen Democratic Governance" and offers a broad range of initiatives to make progress in attaining the objectives that the Commission has in this area; as a result, the CIM will focus its efforts on this topic as a result of its role as gender advisor to the Summit process.

3.3 Human Rights and the Elimination of Violence Against Women

3.3.1 Violence Against Women. Since the adoption of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, *Convention of Belém do Pará*, the CIM has developed initiatives to promote the implementation of the Convention's objectives. To date, 31 member states have signed and ratified the Convention. Efforts continue to encourage all member states to do so.

Since the XXXI Assembly of Delegates of the CIM and in compliance with Resolution CIM/RES. 224/02, which was adopted at that meeting, the Commission drafted a document with a proposal for establishing a mechanism for follow-up on the implementation of the Convention, and conducted a consultation process for this proposal with governments and civil society. With the sponsorship of the Mexican Government, CIM convened a meeting of experts on July 20-21, 2004, to adopt the recommendations of these experts on the draft mechanism. In coordination with the CIM, the Secretary General will convene a meeting in 2004 of States Parties to the Convention, to adopt a decision on the mechanism as established in Resolutions AG/RES. 1942 (XXXIII-O/03) AG/RES. 2012 (XXXIV-O/04). For the next biennium, and dependent on funding, the CIM will carry out relevant activities as the Technical Secretariat of the Mechanism for Follow-up on the *Convention of Belém do Pará*, supporting its implementation.

The Commission will continue to promote activities aimed preventing, punishing, and eradicating violence against women, giving continuity to the initiatives carried out with the Pan American Health Organization, UNIFEM, and the World Bank.

3.3.2 International Trafficking in Women and Children for Sexual Exploitation in the Americas. In association with the International Organization for Migration, the CIM will continue in work on this very important issue and will continue the work begun in Mexico, Bolivia, and Belize. These projects have been possible because of funding from the U.S. government and from the government of Mexico and will last approximately one year. Their main objective is to conduct an assessment of the situation in the countries, both in terms of origin, transit or destination and to build up the institutional capacity to prevent the smuggling of women and children, protect victims, and punish traffickers.

Similar projects are being implemented in six countries of the English-speaking Caribbean in 2004 and part of 2005 under the direction of IOM and in collaboration with the CIM. The U.S. State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration granted specific funds for the projects in the Caribbean to IOM.

The CIM will seek additional funding to finance future anti-trafficking projects in the remaining countries of the region. In addition, and in compliance with General Assembly Resolutions AG/RES.1948 (XXXIII-O/03) and AG/RES. 2019 (XXXIV-O/04), the CIM will oversee, and work closely with the OAS Special Anti-Trafficking Coordinator, on related activities

The CIM, along with other OAS bodies that are competent in the matter, will seek additional external resources to coordinate a regional meeting in 2005 on the trafficking in persons, women and children, as recommended by the Meeting of Ministers of Justice and Attorneys General (REMJA V), held in April 2004.

In addition, as established by Resolution AG/RES. 2019 (XXXIV-0/04):

"To welcome the recommendation of the Fifth Meeting of Ministers of Justice or of Ministers or Attorneys General of the Americas to hold a meeting of national authorities on this matter, with the participation of the CIM, the IIN, the United Nations, the IOM, and other related international organizations, for the purpose of studying integral cooperation mechanisms among the States to ensure protection of and assistance to the victims, prevention of the crime, and the prosecution of its perpetrators, bearing in mind respect for the victims' human rights". The said meeting will also facilitate the exchange of information and experiences, policy dialogue, and cooperation among the countries of origin, transit, and destination of trafficking in persons, as well as the establishment or improvement of statistical records in this area."

CIM will provide technical assistance to the aforementioned Special Session of the Permanent Council. In addition, CIM will also partner with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and provide technical assistance in a regional meeting on trafficking, to be held in the 2005 and hosted by IOM.

CIM will also comply with the mandate received in AG/RES. 2051 (XXXIV-O/04), on the Sexual Exploitation of Children, reporting on the work done by CIM which also addresses this particular issue.

3.3.3. Women, Peace and Security in the Americas

Initiatives will continue to be developed in coordination with other OAS bodies, such as the Committee on Hemispheric Security and the Unit for the Promotion of Democracy, and with the nongovernmental organization *Women Waging Peace* and others, to strengthen the participation of women in all activities aimed at preventing conflicts, consolidating and promoting peace, and hemispheric security. In the context of the IAP, activities will be promoted to include a gender perspective in the programs and activities of the inter-American bodies related to hemispheric security. As a first step, resources are being sought to develop a pilot project to train women and men peacemakers to integrate a gender perspective in peace-building processes in Central America and the Andean Sub-region The aim is also to support in this way the fight against corruption and organized crime, especially as they contribute to violence against women and the trafficking in persons.