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BID No. 08/24

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FOR

**INTERNET AND SECURITY SERVICES FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE (ADM) AND MAIN (MNB)
BUILDINGS OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES**

**DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY SERVICES (DOITS)
SECRETARIAT FOR ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE (SAF)**

**GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
DEPARTMENT OF PROCUREMENT AND MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT (DPMO)**

September 19th, 2024

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1 BACKGROUND

The Organization of American States (OAS) is a public international organization, headquartered at 1889 F. St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. The OAS brings together the nations of the Western hemisphere to promote democracy, strengthen human rights, foster peace, security, and cooperation, and advance common interests. For more information about the OAS, please refer to the OAS's website at www.oas.org.

The General Secretariat of the OAS (GS/OAS) is the central and permanent organ of the OAS per Article 107 of the Charter.

The Department of Information and Technology Services of the GS/OAS (DOITS) evaluates, plans, and manages the General Secretariat's information and communications infrastructure, including the management of equipment installed or to be installed, local and wide-area networks (LAN/WAN), central computing and data communication services, operating systems, client software components and automation services, telecommunications, multimedia services, and communications.

2 OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to seek a response from an Internet service provider (ISP) to provide the following services for 36 months:

1. Two dedicated Internet Access in each site (one of the sites already has one DIA deployed)
2. SDWAN (software-defined wide area network) in HA (high Availability) configuration.
3. NextGen Firewall (NGFW)
4. Unified threat management (UTM)
5. Distributed denial of service (DDoS) protection

These services are described in Annex 1 - Terms of Reference (ToR) of this RFP.

3 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The ToRs of the INTERNET AND SECURITY SERVICES FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE (ADM) AND MAIN (MNB) BUILDINGS OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES for the GS/OAS are outlined in more detail in Annex 1 of this RFP, and, therefore, become part of it.

4 GOVERNING LAW

This selection process is regulated by:

- This RFP.

- The Procurement Contract Rules of the GS/OAS, approved by Executive Order No.00-1 (<https://www.oas.org/legal/english/gensec/Executive%20Order%2000-1.pdf>).
- The Performance Contract Rules, approved by Executive Order No. 05-04, Corr. No. 1 (<http://www.oas.org/legal/english/gensec/EXOR-05-04-CORR1.htm>).
- The Executive Orders, memoranda, and other dispositions and official documents of the GS/OAS applicable to this process.

5 PROPOSAL FORMAT

Proposals must be structured in four (4) separate documents:

1. Technical Proposal
2. Pricing
3. Legal Documentation
4. Financial Documentation

6 PROPOSAL CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Technical Proposal

The Technical Proposal shall include the following information/documents:

Documents related to Bidder's Experience

- a) A general description of the background and organization of the bidding firm.
- b) A detailed description of the Bidder's work experience similar or relevant to this Project. The description shall substantiate its qualifications and capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP.
- c) A minimum of five (5) references from Bidder's clients to which similar or relevant services were provided during the last three (3) years. These references should include: the name of the client, contact person, telephone number and e-mail address, and a description of the work performed and the duration of the Project. Please follow Format 3 of Annex 3.

Documents related to the Project

- a) A Statement of Work (SOW) which shall include a description of the basic infrastructure and associated professional services offered, implementation methodology, deliverables, and an estimated timeline for delivery of the requested services (milestones), following the ToR (Annex 1) of this RFP.
- b) If the Bidder plans to perform the work with subcontractors and/or in joint venture with other firms, an explanation of the relationship between the firms and how potential inefficiencies in the organization, communications, and Project processes can be avoided. If the form of a joint venture is considered, the Technical Proposal should additionally address joint and other liabilities for all partners.

Documents related to Bidder's Personnel

- a) The resume of the lead professional staff person who will be assigned to this project as

“Project Manager”, and two (2) concise but descriptive summaries of this person’s prior experience with similar projects. Professional skills and previous experience of the technical team to be assigned to the Project are required.

Bidder’s Point of Contact

- a) Information of Bidder’s point(s) of contact. Provide the name, position, telephone number, and email of the person or persons serving as coordinator or focal point of information of the Bidder concerning this bidding process.

6.2 Price Proposal

The Bidders shall submit a Price Proposal expressed in US Dollars (US\$) with a duration of ninety (90) days.

The price shall reflect any tax exemption to which the GS/OAS is entitled because of the Privilege and Immunities it enjoys. In any case, no Federal, State, or Local Taxes shall be included in the amount billed.

6.3 Legal Documentation:

- a) A copy of the Bidder’s certificate of incorporation issued by the competent authority of its country.
- b) A copy of the Bidder’s bylaws.
- c) A copy of the Bidder’s licenses and certifications in the corresponding jurisdiction (if required under the law of the duty station where the work is to be performed).
- d) A copy of the W-9 Form for US Companies and the Employer Identification Number for companies outside of the US.
- e) A list of the directors, officers, and the names of any stockholder with more than 50% of the stock.
- f) Acceptance of the Contractual Terms and Conditions Statement. The statement should follow Format 1 of Annex 3.
- g) A disclosure statement of conflict of interest. The statement should follow Format 2 of Annex 3. If the Bidder intends to subcontract or perform the Contract in the joint venture, such statement shall also be disclosed by the subcontractors and by each member of the joint venture.

6.4 Financial Documentation:

- a) A copy of Bidder’s latest general balance sheet of 2023; and a copy of Bidder’s latest three (3) audited financial statements for 2021, 2022, and 2023.
- b) The GS/OAS shall determine whether a Bidder is qualified to perform the contract satisfactorily. The determination may be based upon an examination of the documentary evidence of the Bidder’s qualifications either submitted by the Bidder or available as public information such as Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) report and through reference check.

7 PROPOSAL EVALUATION

7.1 Requests for Clarification

- 7.1.1.** To enhance the GS/OAS understanding of Proposals, allow reasonable interpretation of the Proposal, or facilitate the evaluation process, the GS/OAS may submit, in writing, any inquiry or request to the Bidders for explanation, substantiation, or clarification of certain aspects of its Proposals.
- 7.1.2.** Likewise, the GS/OAS may allow the Bidders to eliminate minor irregularities, informalities, or apparent clerical mistakes in its Proposals during the evaluation process.
- 7.1.3.** Requests for clarifications shall not be used to cure Proposal deficiencies or material omissions that materially alter the technical or cost elements of the Proposal, and/or otherwise revise the Proposal.
- 7.1.4.** Inquires or requests for clarification will be addressed to the point of contact indicated by the Bidders in its Proposal.

7.2 Evaluation Process

- 7.2.1.** The evaluation of the Proposals will be performed as a whole, in two (2) phases: Technical Evaluation and Price Evaluation. The purpose of the Technical Evaluation is to analyze and evaluate the Technical Proposal, and the purpose of the Price Evaluation is to analyze and evaluate the price offered.
- 7.2.2.** Proposals will be admitted for evaluation only if they comply with the mandatory minimums contained in the TORs. Once admitted, the GS/OAS shall analyze and rate those Proposals using the evaluation factors outlined in section 7.5.

7.3 Bidder's Warranties

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the Bidder represents and gives express warranty of:

- 7.3.1.** Its knowledge and acceptance of RFP and the rules and conditions that govern the bidding process.
- 7.3.2.** That it has studied and is thoroughly familiarized with the requirements and specifications of INTERNET AND SECURITY SERVICES FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE (ADM) AND MAIN (MNB) BUILDINGS OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES This includes familiarity with the technical and contractual information contained in this RFP and its Attachments, with all current equipment,

labor, material, market conditions, shipping, and with applicable laws, such that the Bidder accepts responsibility for and is prepared to execute and shall completely fulfill all obligations outlined in Annex 2, Contractual Terms and Conditions.

- 7.3.3.** The accuracy and reliability of all information it submits in this procurement process.
- 7.3.4.** Its knowledge that its proposal does not create any right in or expectation to a contract with the GS/OAS.
- 7.3.5.** That the Bidder shall bear any, and all costs or expenses associated with or incurred in formulating or developing a proposal in response to this RFP.
- 7.3.6.** The GS/OAS shall determine to its satisfaction whether a Bidder is qualified to perform the contract satisfactorily. The determination may be based upon an examination of the documentary evidence of the Bidder's qualifications either submitted by the Bidder or available as public information such as Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) report and through reference check.
- 7.3.7.** Bidder takes full responsibility for any errors or mistakes concerning its bid proposal. Bidder has used its best efforts to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and completeness of its proposal, and agrees that any cost of any modification of the proposal or contract terms based on Bidder's error in the information it has provided with its proposal shall be borne solely by Bidder.

7.4 Submitting a Proposal in a Joint Venture

Any firm may bid independently or in a joint venture confirming joint and several liabilities, either with domestic firms and/or with foreign firms. The GS/OAS does not accept conditions of bidding that require mandatory joint ventures or other forms of mandatory association between firms.

7.5 Award Criteria

Proposals will be admitted for evaluation only if they comply with the mandatory minimums contained in the RFP. Once admitted, the GS/OAS will review, evaluate, and compare those Proposals according to, but not necessarily limited to, the following criteria:

- 1. Responsiveness.** Whether the Bidder's Technical Proposal conforms in all material respects to the RFP.
- 2. Financial Capability.** Assesses the financial condition of the Bidder to perform the Contract through the review of the Bidder's financial statements.
- 3. References Check.** The GS/OAS will request performance information from Bidder's previous clients.

4. **Responsibility.** Whether the Bidder’s Technical Proposal meets the RFP’s technical specifications in order to determine its capability, tenacity, and perseverance to perform the Contract.

5. **Relevant Experience / Past Performance.** Assesses Bidder’s capability, comprising of three elements: i) observation of the historical facts of Bidder’s work experience (what work it did, when and where it did it, whom it did it for, and what methods it used); ii) qualitative judgments about breadth, depth, and relevance of that experience based on those observations; and iii) qualitative judgments about how well the Bidder performed, also based on those observations.

The Bidder’s relevant experience and past performance will be evaluated concerning past or current efforts similar or relevant to this Bid.

6. **Key Personnel.** Assesses the qualifications and relevant experience of the key personnel that the Bidder intends to use to perform the Contract, and its organization. Selection by the Bidder of the best-trained personnel available is crucial to the success of the Contract and will be a key element for the evaluation of the Proposal.

7. **Work Plan.** Assesses the completeness of the Proposal in order to determine technical compliance as per the Scope of Work detailed in Annex 1

8. **Innovation / Enhancements.** Favorable consideration will be given to those Bidders that offer greater performance through enhancements to the work called by the TORs, such as new technology that will enhance and improve the security work.

Criteria	Weight
Technical	70%
Price	30%

In the event of an award, the winning Bidder will be notified in writing. Such communication shall not be construed as a contract with the GS/OAS. The award is contingent upon the winning Bidder’s acceptance of the terms and conditions of the proposed Contract, which will be drafted by the GS/OAS based on this RFP and the winning Proposal. Consequently, the Contract shall come into effect when signed by both GS/OAS and the duly authorized representative of the winning Bidder.

7.6 Right to Cancel the RFP and/or Reject Proposals

- 7.6.1. This RFP does not in any manner whatsoever constitute a commitment or obligation on the part of GS/OAS to accept any proposal, in whole or in part, received in response

to this RFP, nor does it constitute any obligation by GS/OAS to acquire any goods or services.

- 7.6.2.** The GS/OAS has the right to reject any and/or all proposals and to disqualify any proposal not responsive to the minimum technical requirement and minimum proposal content specified in this RFP.

7.7 Discussions and Negotiations

- 7.7.1.** Before awarding the Contract, the GS/OAS may choose to negotiate the terms, conditions, and deliverables of the Contract with the Bidders that, in the opinion of GS/OAS, are within the competitive range.
- 7.7.2.** For that purpose, the GS/OAS, through DPMO, will submit, in writing, any request (including interview requests) to the Bidders. Such requests will be addressed to the point of contact indicated by the Bidders in their proposal.
- 7.7.3.** During the negotiations, the GS/OAS may issue a request for Best and Final Offer (BAFO) so those Bidders will have the opportunity to revise or modify their initial Proposal. The GS/OAS will analyze and rate those BAFOs using the evaluation factors outlined in Section 7.5.

7.8 Award

- 7.8.1.** A technical-economic analysis will be applied for the evaluation of the Proposals. Under this rule, the GS/OAS will evaluate both price and non-price factors and will award the Contract to the Bidder proposing the combination of factors that offers the best value to the GS/OAS. Therefore, the GS/OAS reserves the right to consider award to other than the lowest price bidder or the highest technically rated bidder.
- 7.8.2.** All technical evaluation factors, when combined, have a higher level of importance than cost or price.
- 7.8.3.** The GS/OAS reserves the right to award the contract to multiple contractors rather than a single contractor.
- 7.8.4.** The GS/OAS reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals, and to partially award the Contract.
- 7.8.5.** The award will be notified to the winning Bidder. Such communication shall not be construed as a Contract with the GS/OAS. The award is contingent upon the winning Bidder's acceptance of the terms and conditions of the proposed Contract, which will be drafted by the GS/OAS based on this RFP and the winning Proposal. Consequently,

the Contract shall come into effect when signed by both GS/OAS and the duly authorized representative of the winning Bidder.

7.8.6. The GS/OAS will promptly notify the unsuccessful Bidders in writing and the awarded company will be posted at the GS/OAS website <http://www.oas.org/OASpage/bid/default.asp>.

8 RFP SCHEDULE

The RFP Schedule represents the best estimate of the schedule that will be followed. The GS/OAS reserves the right to adjust this schedule at its sole discretion. Notification of any adjustment to the RFP Schedule will be provided to all Bidders registered through the Official GS/OAS Procurement Notices/Opportunities Portal directly to the email Bidders register with.

Activities	Dates
Issue Request for Proposals	September 19 th , 2024
Bidder’s inquiries due	October 3 rd , 2024
Response to Bidder’s Inquiries due	October 18 th , 2024
Proposal Closing Date	October 28th, 2024 (11:59 PM EST)
Presentations from Bidders (if required)	From October 31 st to November 8 th , 2024
Evaluation Process	From October 29 th - November 22 nd , 2024
Contract Award	November/December 2024

8.1 Registration at the Official GS/OAS Procurement Portal

8.1.1. The GS/OAS will post this RFP and its Annexes on the OAS website (<http://www.oas.org/OASpage/bid/default.asp>), United Nations Development Business website (www.devbusiness.com), dgMarket website (www.dgmarket.com) and at the Official GS/OAS Procurement Notices/Opportunities Portal (<https://oas.procurement.com/Bids>).

8.1.2. Companies interested in receiving updates of the RFP Schedule, requesting clarification and/or bidding will need to register before **October 28th, 2024**, at the Official GS/OAS Procurement Notices/Opportunities Portal (<https://oas.procurement.com/Bids>).

8.1.3. To start the registration process, Bidder must complete the following fields and then hit the “Next” button to submit its entry. Bidders will receive an email message with instructions on how to complete the registration.

- Company Name
- First Name (Contact Person)
- Last Name (Contact Person)
- Title (Contact Person)

- Email Address (Contact Person. This email address will receive all further notifications)
- Legal ID # (EIN or Federal Tax ID of the Company)
- Phone (Contact Person)

8.1.4. Please note that unfortunately, some servers or SPAM filters may block important messages or send them to your junk mail folder because they do not recognize the sender. To help ensure that you receive all emails and further notifications from OAS/ProcureWare, please ensure to add our e-mail address noreply@procureware.com to your address book, contacts, and/ or "Safe Senders" list.

Fig 1: Screenshot of the Official GS/OAS Procurement Notices/Opportunities Portal.

Source: <https://oas.procureware.com/Register?s=Setup>

8.2 Bidders' Inquires

8.2.1. Bidders may submit any inquiry or request for more information and clarification regarding terms of reference in this RFP until **October 3rd, 2024 at 5 pm EST** through the Official GS/OAS Procurement Notices/Opportunities Portal at <https://oas.procureware.com/Bids>. You must be registered to ask questions.

8.2.2. Bidder questions must identify the number of the section of the RFP related to the question being asked.

8.2.3. The responses to these requests will be submitted through the Official GS/OAS Procurement Notices/Opportunities Portal directly to the email that you register with, on or before **October 18th, 2024** where all submitted questions and answers (Q&A) will be available for registered Bidders.

8.3 Proposal Closing Date

8.3.1. Proposals shall be submitted through the GS/OAS Procurement Notices/Opportunities Portal at <https://oas.procureware.com/Bids> by **October 28th, 2024 (11:59 PM EST)**.

- 8.3.2.** Bidders should not consider their proposal received unless they receive a Bid submission received confirmation email from our address noreply@procureware.com. It is the responsibility of the Bidder to ensure their proposal was received. The GS/OAS is not responsible for proposals not received due to email delivery issues.

9 GENERAL PROVISIONS

9.1 Language

All correspondence and responses to this RFP shall be made in English.

9.2 Data Information Usage

- 9.2.1.** Bidder shall be liable for improper or incorrect use of the data collected or information disclosed to Contractor by GS/OAS in connection with its Proposal, and/or in connection with any subsequent contract negotiations between GS/OAS and the Contractor.
- 9.2.2.** The data and related information are legal documents and are intended to be used as such.
- 9.2.3.** Bidder takes full responsibility for any errors or mistakes concerning its bid proposal. The Contractor has used its best efforts to ensure the accuracy, reliability, and completeness of its proposal, and agrees that any cost of any modification of the proposal or contract terms based on the Contractor's error in the information it has provided with its proposal shall be borne solely by the Contractor.

9.3 Privileges and Immunities

- 9.3.1.** Nothing in this RFP shall constitute an express or implied agreement or waiver by the GS/OAS, the OAS, or their personnel of their privileges and immunities under the OAS Charter, the laws of the United States of America, or international law.
- 9.3.2.** The Bidders are not entitled to any of the exemptions, privileges, or immunities, which the GS/OAS may enjoy arising from GS/OAS status as a public international organization.

9.4 Limited Use of Data

If the Proposal includes data that the Bidder does not want to disclose to the public for any purpose or used by the GS/OAS except for evaluation purposes, the Bidder shall include in its Proposal a statement signed by its legal representative with the following legend:

USE AND DISCLOSURE OF DATA

This Proposal includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the GS/OAS and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed— in whole or in part—for any

purpose other than to evaluate this Proposal. If, however, a contract is awarded to this Bidder as a result of—or in connection with—the submission of this data, the GS/OAS shall have the right to duplicate, use, or disclose the data to the extent provided in the resulting contract. This restriction does not limit the GS/OAS' right to use information contained in this data if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets [insert numbers or other identification of sheets].

9.5 Confidentiality and Privacy

- 9.5.1.** Contractor shall keep all work and services carried out hereunder and proprietary information disclosed hereunder entirely confidential, and not use, publish, sell, or make known, without the GS/OAS' written approval, any information, developed by the Contractor or provided by the GS/OAS, to any persons other than personnel of the parties to this Contract. Any public representation regarding the GS/OAS shall be made by the GS/OAS and any requests for information made to the Contractor by the news media, or others, shall be referred to the GS/OAS. Additionally, the Contractor shall not reference the work performed for the GS/OAS under this Contract without prior written approval of the GS/OAS. For purposes of this Paragraph, proprietary information includes, but is not limited to any information that is understood as proprietary under common industry practices; and any matter designated as proprietary by the GS/OAS.
- 9.5.2.** In addition, information that a party considers as proprietary or confidential and which it has indicated/marked as proprietary or confidential will be treated by the receiving party in the same manner as the receiving party treats its own proprietary or confidential information.
- 9.5.3.** Period of confidentiality: The obligations under paragraph above, shall continue, notwithstanding the expiration or termination of this Contract.

9.6 Due Diligence and Information on the Contract

- 9.6.1.** By submitting a Proposal, the Bidder represents and warrants that it has studied and is thoroughly familiarized with the requirements and specifications of the Contract in their entirety. This includes familiarity with the Contract Documents attached to the RFP, with all current equipment, labor, material market conditions, and with applicable laws, such that the Bidder accepts responsibility for and is prepared to execute and shall completely fulfill all obligations under the Contract.
- 9.6.2.** By submitting a Proposal, the Bidder also accepts that it will not make any claim for or have any right to damages because of any misinterpretation or misunderstanding of

the Contract, or because of any information, which is known or should have been known to the Bidder.

10 CONTRACT TERMS

- 10.1** The Contract will be drafted by the GS/OAS based on this RFP, the Terms of Reference the winning Proposal, and the results of the negotiations with the selected Bidder. The Contract shall come into effect when signed by both GS/OAS and the duly authorized representative of the winning Bidder.
- 10.2** The GS/OAS shall not accept any changes to the Contract after the contract is awarded. Once the GS/OAS awards the Contract, the Vendor shall be bound by such Contract either as stated herein in the RFP or as mutually modified by the Parties.
- 10.3** Bidders wishing to negotiate a modification of the Contract Terms & Conditions stated in this RFP must attach a copy of the GS/OAS's RFP and show proposed changes (deleted sections with a strike over and added sections in boldface type). The Bidder's failure to identify any such changes in its Proposal will preclude the Bidder from making any such changes thereafter. If Proposals are subject to additional terms that the GS/OAS decides are not in its best interest, the GS/OAS reserves the right to deem that Proposal as unresponsive.
- 10.4** Any Bidder selected by the GS/OAS who proposes changes to the Contract shall not be deemed as acceptance of the Bidder's proposed changes. At all times, the GS/OAS reserves the right to use its Contract and to negotiate changes to it. The GS/OAS reserves the right to accept or reject any changes in language to the Contract and reserves the right to make final conforming changes to the Contract.

11 TAX EXEMPTION

The GS/OAS, as a public international organization, is exempt from all sales and use taxes imposed by the United States Federal Government, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland, and all other states in the U.S.A.

12 ATTACHMENTS

All attachments listed below form an integral part of this RFP and will be provided to Bidders as separate files in PDF format:

- Annex 1 - Terms of Reference
- Annex 2 - Contractual Terms and Conditions
- Annex 3 - Formats