



Organization of  
American States



## STATUTE OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION OF WOMEN<sup>1</sup>

### Chapter I. NATURE

Article 1. The Inter-American Commission of Women (the “CIM”) was established by way of resolution of the Sixth International Conference of American States in 1928 as an inter-American specialized organization, of a permanent and inter-governmental nature.

In accordance with the agreement signed between the CIM and the Organization of American States (the “Organization”) in 1978, the CIM shall operate in accordance with the provisions of Chapter XVIII of the Charter of the Organization of American States (the “Charter”). Pursuant to Article 126 of the Charter, the CIM shall enjoy technical autonomy in the performance of its functions, within the limits of its Statute and of the Charter. It shall have its headquarters in the country where the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (“General Secretariat”) operates.

### Chapter II. MISSION AND FUNCTIONS

Article 2. The mission of the CIM, as a hemispheric policy forum for women’s rights and gender equality, is to support the Member States of the Organization (the “Member States”) in their efforts to comply with their respective international and inter-American commitments on women’s human rights and gender equity and equality, so that they are converted into effective public policy, contributing to the full and equal participation of women in the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural spheres.

Article 3. The functions of the CIM shall be:

- a) To support Member States, upon their request, in their compliance with their respective international and inter-American commitments on women’s human rights and gender equity and equality, including the implementation of international and inter-American instruments, the provisions adopted by specialized international or inter-American conferences, the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (“the General Assembly”), the Summits of the Americas and the Assembly of Delegates of the CIM (the “Assembly”);
- b) To support the efforts of Member States to promote full and equal access, participation, representation, leadership and influence of women in the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural spheres;
- c) To promote the participation and leadership of women in the planning and implementation of public policies and programs;
- d) To advise the Organization in all matters related to women's rights and gender equality;

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

- e) To collaborate with Member States, other international organizations, civil society groups, academia and the private sector in support of women's rights and gender equality in the hemisphere;
- f) To report, on an annual basis, to the General Assembly on the work of the CIM, including relevant aspects of the status of women in the hemisphere, on progress made in terms of women's human rights and gender equity and equality and on specific issues of concern in these areas, and to elevate concrete recommendations to the Member States in relation to the above;
- g) To contribute to the development of international and inter-American jurisprudence on women's human rights and gender equity and equality;
- h) To foster the formulation and adoption of inter-American instruments for the recognition of women as rights holders and agents of democracy;
- i) To promote the adoption or adaptation of the necessary legal measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women.

### **Chapter III. STRUCTURE**

Article 4. In order to fulfill its mission and carry out its functions, the CIM shall have the following structure:

- a) The Assembly of Delegates;
- b) The Executive Committee;
- c) The Presidency and Vice-Presidencies;
- d) The Delegates;
- e) The Executive Secretariat;

### **Chapter IV. DELEGATES**

Article 5. The CIM shall be composed of one Principal Delegate from each Member State, accredited by the government thereof and communicated to the Secretary General of the Organization, who will circulate such notice to the members of the CIM.

Each government may appoint such Alternate Delegates as it considers advisable and may if necessary appoint an Interim Principal Delegate.

The Principal Delegate shall be a national of, and reside in, the country she represents. She shall be the head of the national mechanism or other governmental authority of the highest level responsible for the advancement of women and gender equality in the national and/or international sphere, in accordance with the domestic structure and legal system. In the absence of such a national mechanism or governmental authority, the Principal Delegate shall be a government official whose duties include responsibility for gender equality, at a level corresponding to that of other Principal Delegates.

The Principal Delegate or her designate shall act as liaison between the Executive Committee, authorities of her government, and other organizations that relate to matters that concern the CIM. All communications shall be sent through the corresponding Permanent Mission to the OAS.

Article 6. At the request of the CIM, the Secretary General of the Organization shall request the Member States to accredit a Delegate to the CIM whenever such Member State's representation in the CIM becomes vacant.

Article 7. The honoraria and travel and other expenses required for the delegates to participate in the Assemblies and in other activities of the CIM shall be provided by the respective governments.

Article 8. When special assignments are entrusted to the CIM by the Organization, the General Secretariat shall defray the expenses in accordance with the General Standards to Govern the Operations of the General Secretariat and the budget allocations approved by the General Assembly.

## **Chapter V. ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES**

Article 9. The CIM shall hold regular Assemblies every three years and special Assemblies on the dates and under the conditions determined by the Executive Committee in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations of the Inter-American Commission of Women (the "Regulations").

These Assemblies shall adopt policy and action programs reflecting the strategic direction and policy goals of the CIM, as prepared by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Member States.

Article 10. The participation of CIM Delegates in regular or special assemblies requires their timely accreditation before the Organization.

Article 11. Each Member State will have the right to one vote.

Only Principal or Alternate Delegates to the CIM who have been duly accredited to the Assembly shall be entitled to vote in such Assembly.

Article 12. The site for the Assemblies shall be set by the Assemblies themselves, in accordance with offers received by the Member States or, failing that, by the Executive Committee.

Should such an invitation not be issued, the Assembly shall be held at the headquarters of the CIM.

Article 13. The government of a State that has accredited a Permanent Observer to the Organization may also accredit an Observer to the CIM.

For this purpose, the government may accredit the person or persons it designates to carry out these duties by addressing a note to the President of the CIM

## **Chapter VI. PRESIDENCY AND VICE-PRESIDENCIES**

Article 14. The CIM shall elect its President from among the Principal Delegates of the Member States, taking into account the principles of rotation and equitable geographic representation.

Article 15. The President shall be elected by an absolute majority of the Delegates of the Member States that are accredited to the Assembly at which the voting takes place. The election shall be held at the regular Assembly held in the year in which the President's term of office expires or at a special Assembly convoked for that purpose.

Article 16. The Executive Committee shall include a maximum of three Vice-Presidents, determined by the number of candidacies, who shall be elected at the same Assembly at which the President of the CIM is elected, in the same manner, and for the same term of office, and taking into

consideration the principles of rotation and equitable geographic representation, and shall have the same status within the Executive Committee.

Article 17. The President and Vice-Presidents shall hold office for a three-year term.

Article 18. The President and Vice Presidents are elected to serve as representatives of their respective Member States and not in a personal capacity.

Article 19. If the President should for any reason be unable to serve in her post, the Executive Committee shall elect, by an absolute majority, one of the Vice-Presidents as Interim President, to serve until a new President is appointed or elected.

The Member State that occupies the Presidency will have a period of not more than ninety (90) business days to accredit a new President to the CIM or to notify the CIM of its intention to continue with the Presidency or to resign the position.

If, during that period, neither of the first two situations has occurred, or the third has occurred, the Interim President shall assume the Presidency until the conclusion of the mandate.

In the event that one of the Vice-Presidents assumes the office of President, she shall assume all the rights and duties of that office and shall serve until the end of the term.

Article 20. In the event that the Interim President assumes the Presidency, the Executive Committee will elect, by an absolute majority, a new Vice-President from among its members, taking into consideration the principles of rotation and equitable geographic representation.

Article 21. A Vice-President holding the office of President may be elected to the post of President for the following term, provided the vacancy occurs during the second half of the previous term.

Article 22. If a Vice-President should for any reason be unable to serve in her post, the Member State that occupies that Vice-Presidency will have a period of not more than ninety business (90) days to accredit a new Vice-President to the CIM or to notify the CIM of its intention to continue with the Vice-Presidency or to resign the position.

If, during that period, neither of the first two situations has occurred, or the third has occurred, the Executive Committee shall elect a new Vice-President from among its members, who will serve until the conclusion of the mandate.

Article 23. In the event that the offices of the President and the Vice-Presidents fall vacant simultaneously, the Executive Committee shall appoint, by an absolute majority, one of its members as Interim President, to serve until a new election is held.

Within ninety days after the appointment of an Interim President, the Executive Committee shall convene a special Assembly to elect officers for all positions.

If, however, the next regular meeting of the Assembly is scheduled to be held within one hundred and eighty days after the vacancies occur, the special meeting of the Assembly referred to in the preceding paragraph shall not be convoked. In this case, the Interim President shall continue to perform the duties of President of the CIM until the vote at the next regular meeting of the Assembly.

Article 24. In compliance with the mandate given to her by the Assembly, the President shall have the fullest political authority to direct the activities of the CIM and shall have the following duties and functions:

- a) To legally represent the CIM;
- b) To comply with and enforce the provisions of the legal instruments that govern the CIM and the decisions of its Assemblies, the Executive Committee, and the General Assembly;
- c) To present the program of work of the CIM and to prepare the preliminary draft agenda for meetings of the Assembly, to be approved by the Executive Committee;
- d) To monitor the fulfillment of the duties of the CIM and to this end, to establish guidelines for the Executive Secretariat to carry out the overall policy of the CIM and its program of work;
- e) To preside over the regular and special Assemblies held at the headquarters of the CIM;
- f) To temporarily preside over Assemblies held outside the headquarters of the CIM, until the presiding officer of such Assembly has been elected;
- g) To convene and preside over the meetings of the Executive Committee, and to sign its minutes;
- h) To report to the Delegates on all activities of the CIM, especially when those activities take place in their respective countries;
- i) To address, on matters relating to the activities of the CIM, the governments of the Member States; the Permanent Council and other pertinent entities of the Organization; the General Secretariat; Permanent Observers to the Organization accredited to the CIM; international organizations; institutions interested in the goals of the CIM, and governments that have cooperative relations with the Organization. The communications addressed to the governments shall be sent simultaneously to their respective Delegates and to their Permanent Missions;
- j) To represent the CIM at meetings of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, at meetings of other international, regional, and sub-regional organizations, and at any other public or official event that is relevant to the work of the CIM; and to submit a corresponding written report to the Executive Committee and to the CIM.
- k) To submit to the Secretary General of the Organization for consideration, in accordance with Article 112 (c) of the Charter, the preliminary proposed program-budget of the CIM, as approved by the Executive Committee, and to transmit it in a timely manner to the Delegates;
- l) To receive and submit to the Executive Committee reports prepared by the Executive Secretariat on the financial statements of its regular funds and other resources of the CIM;
- m) To present annual reports to the General Assembly on the activities of the CIM and on its annual budget and accounts, in accordance with Article 127 of the Charter;
- n) To negotiate donations and bequests to the CIM in accordance with applicable rules and regulations of the General Secretariat;
- o) To urge the governments of the Member States, when forming their delegations, to seek parity between women and men;
- p) To contribute to any project documents, programs and initiatives in which the CIM could play a role, from their inception, and submit them to the Executive Committee for their approval and to monitor their implementation;
- q) To perform all other duties entrusted to her by the Assembly and by the Executive Committee;
- r) The President may temporarily delegate these duties and functions to any Vice-President.

## **CHAPTER VII. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Article 25. The Executive Committee shall serve as the political representative of the CIM, and shall be composed of the President, a maximum of three Vice-Presidents and the Delegates of the five Member States elected to the Committee.

The Member States making up the Executive Committee shall be elected for a three-year term, at the same time and under the same conditions as the election of the President and Vice-Presidents and may not be reelected to the same office for the immediately following term.

The Executive Committee shall meet, at least twice a year, virtually or in person, at the Headquarters of the CIM or in any Member State.

The Regulations will stipulate the budgetary provisions related to the Executive Committee

Article 26. No Member State may run for more than one elective office in any one term.

Article 27. During the interval between Assemblies, the Executive Committee shall perform the following functions:

- a) Adopt the measures necessary to carry out pertinent recommendations of the General Assembly and of the Permanent Council of the Organization, as well as decisions of the Assembly;
- b) Make preparations for holding the regular and special Assemblies;
- c) Draw up the draft agenda for the Assembly and transmit it to the governments of the member states and to the Delegates in accordance with the procedure set forth in the Regulations;
- d) Study and approve the annual work program of the CIM, including all technical training programs, seminars, projects, operation plans and other activities, together with those of the Executive Secretariat, which shall be transmitted to the General Secretariat for the preparation of the section part of the preliminary proposed program-budget of the Organization that refers to the CIM;
- e) Approve the preliminary proposed program-budget of the CIM;
- f) In the interval between Assemblies, take any necessary decisions that are too urgent to allow for consultation with all the Delegates;
- g) Approve the reports of the CIM presented to the General Assembly, pursuant to Article 127 of the OAS Charter, and to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women at its regular meetings.
- h) Authorize the President to negotiate donations and bequests to the CIM in accordance with applicable rules and regulations of the General Secretariat;
- i) Delegate to the President those powers and functions it may deem appropriate.

## **Chapter VIII. EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT**

Article 28. The office of the Executive Secretariat shall be under the responsibility of an Executive Secretary, who shall be a person of independence and recognized trajectory and competence in the field of human rights and gender equality.

Article 29. The Executive Secretary shall be appointed by the Secretary General of the Organization from the list of three finalists identified by the Executive Committee in accordance with Article 30. The term in office of the Executive Secretary shall be four years and her/his appointment may be renewed by the Secretary General, in consultation with the Executive Committee, for a subsequent four year term. The Executive Secretary may be removed from office by the Secretary General, in consultation with the Executive Committee and upon informing the Member States of the reasons for such removal.

Article 30. The Executive Committee shall undertake the following internal procedure to identify the best qualified candidates for the position of Executive Secretary to make up the shortlist of three candidates that it will transmit to the Secretary General:

- a) At least six months before the conclusion of the mandate of the Executive Secretary, the Executive Committee shall open a public competition to fill the vacancy, publicizing the criteria and qualifications for the office and description of the functions and duties to be fulfilled. The notice of convocation of the competition shall be published for a period of thirty days on the Website of the OAS, under the section of Employment Opportunities and on the Webpage of the CIM.
- b) The Executive Committee shall review the applications received and interview those candidates that it considers best qualified for the position. The curriculum vitae of each person interviewed shall be published on the Webpage of the CIM for a period of thirty days, with a view to receiving observations on the candidates from the Member States and civil society.
- c) The Executive Committee shall select, by majority, three finalists, whose applications shall make up the shortlist to be sent to the Secretary General, including all documentation presented by the candidates, cover letter, curriculum vitae, and any other relevant information, and with the observations that it considers pertinent.
- d) Prior to and during their period of appointment, the Executive Secretary shall disclose to the Executive Committee any interest which may be considered to be in conflict with the exercise of her or his functions.

Article 31. The Executive Secretariat shall employ technical staff specializing in gender, planning and programming, research, team work, and other fields as required by the needs of the CIM and of the triennial program of work.

Article 32. The Executive Secretariat shall perform the administrative, technical, and executive functions of the CIM, in coordination with the President of the CIM:

- a) It shall prepare the draft strategic plans and triennial programs of work, to be adopted by the Executive Committee and Assembly, keeping in mind the commitments adopted by the Member States of the OAS in other regional mechanisms that address the issue of women's human rights and gender equity and equality;
- b) It shall prepare draft project proposals, to be approved by the Executive Committee;
- c) It shall provide the General Secretariat with the necessary inputs to prepare its budget, which shall be approved by the General Assembly.

The Executive Secretariat shall operate out of the offices of the General Secretariat of and in accordance with applicable rules and regulations, pursuant to the *Agreement between the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Commission of Women* (1978), contemplated in Article 128 of the Charter, and other applicable agreements.

## **Chapter IX. AMENDMENTS TO THE STATUTE**

Article 33. Amendments to this Statute must be approved by the Assembly. Amendments must be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the Delegates accredited to the Assembly at which such vote takes place.

Article 34. Draft Amendments to the Statute proposed by one or more governments of the Member States must be duly transmitted to the other governments by the President of the CIM.

Article 35. The Executive Committee shall present a preliminary draft Statute to the Assembly of Delegates, taking into account any amendments proposed by the Member States.

Article 36. Any amendments adopted shall be transmitted by the President to the governments of the Member States and to the Permanent Council of the Organization.

Article 37. Amendments to the Statute shall enter into force on the date on which they are adopted by the Assembly, unless said amendment stipulates otherwise.

### **Chapter X. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Article 38. The CIM shall revise its own Regulations and the Rules of Procedure of its Assembly in accordance with the provisions of this Statute.

Article 39. Cases not provided for in this Statute, as well as any point regarding interpretation thereof, shall be resolved by the Assembly of Delegates by the vote of an absolute majority of the Delegates accredited to the Assembly at which such vote takes place.