

PERMANENT COUNCIL OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
COMMITTEE ON INTER-AMERICAN SUMMITS MANAGEMENT
AND CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN
OAS ACTIVITIES

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APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN OAS ACTIVITIES PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 6
OF THE GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION BY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS
IN OAS ACTIVITIES [CP/RES. 759 (1217/99)]

[Organización de Desarrollo Étnico Comunitario (ODECO)]

**ANALYSIS OF THE ELEMENTS RELATED TO THE APPLICATION BY THE
ORGANIZACIÓN DE DESARROLLO ÉTNICO COMUNITARIO (ODECO)
TO PARTICIPATE IN OAS ACTIVITIES**

This document was prepared by the Department of International Affairs, Secretariat for External Relations, to provide member states of the Organization of American States (OAS) with information on the civil society organization *Organización de Desarrollo Étnico Comunitario* – ODECO (Organization for Community-based Ethnic Development).

The information contained in this report is in response to resolution CP/RES. 759 (1217/99), “Guidelines for the Participation of Civil Society Organizations in OAS Activities.” This document contains a summary and a list of supporting documentation presented by the *Organización de Desarrollo Étnico Comunitario* in accordance with the aforementioned Guidelines.

1. Background

The *Organización de Desarrollo Étnico Comunitario* of Honduras is a nonprofit civil society organization dedicated to the integration and integral development of Afro-Honduran communities and populations. Its principal objectives are the development of local skills, increased influence and empowerment of Afro-Honduran communities and people, and institutional development, strengthening, and efficiency.

ODECO achieves its objectives through its participation in various programs, conferences, and seminars related to the participation of persons of African descent in economic, social, cultural, and environmental policy and development. It also endeavors to follow up on the campaign pledges of elected leaders regarding the rights and equality of Afro-Honduran people.

ODECO has participated in international conferences on the rights of persons of African descent, such as the Conference of the Americas on Social Justice, in June 2007 (sponsored by the White House, Washington, D.C.); the Assembly of the National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities (NALACC), in October 2007; the Forum of Afro/Central American Women, in Panama in November 2007; and the General Assembly of the Central American Black Organization (ONECA). It is also affiliated with the SOUTH-SOUTH Link on the Environment and Development for Central America and Mexico, the Committee for the Bicentennial Celebration of the arrival of the Garifuna people in Honduras, the Central American Black Organization, and the National Coordinator of Black Organizations of Honduras.

ODECO submitted its application to the OAS on April 17, 2008.

2. Name, address, and date of establishment of the CSO

Name: *Organización de Desarrollo Étnico Comunitario (ODECO)*

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President: Celeo Álvarez Casildo

3. Primary areas of activity of the CSO and their relationship to OAS activities

ODECO's mission is to promote and protect the economic, social, political, and cultural rights and to work against the exclusion of Afro-Honduran communities and people, by means of political influence, consciousness raising, training, and the defense of human rights. Its objectives are the following:

- To promote the development of local skills by establishing cooperatives, schools, libraries, vocational training institutes, experimental fields, sports fields, and other entities geared toward professional, cultural, and solidarity- and welfare-related ends and dedicated to promoting the inclusion of the Afro-Honduran population.
- To influence legislation on equality of rights for Garifuna and non-Garifuna communities in Honduras and the region.
- To help shore up the democratic institutional system in Honduras and Central America and to work to restore and preserve ecological balance in communities.

4. CSO contributions that could be of interest to the OAS

ODECO can contribute to OAS work areas through the following activities:

- Foster activities that help salvage, preserve, and strengthen national cultural values expressed by the Garifuna people and other members of the Honduran black ethnic group.
- Plan, carry out, and assess tasks, activities, projects, programs, and development plans in order to raise the level of social, economic, and political well-being among the Honduran black community.
- Establish cooperative ties with similar peoples and organizations, both at home and abroad.
- Provide training and organize members of the black Honduran community, including women, in small self-managed businesses, with a view to combating unemployment, deterioration of the standard of living, migration, and relinquishment of community heritage.

- Implement preventive activities to protect child victims of malnutrition, abandonment, drug addiction, alcoholism, prostitution, and illiteracy.
- Fight to achieve respect for human rights and dignity in their broadest sense, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Constitution of the Republic of Honduras, and the American Convention.

5. Identification of OAS work areas

ODECO proposes to collaborate with the OAS in the following areas:

- Defense of democracy and institutional development, and strengthening of mechanisms for citizen participation, together with the Department for the Promotion of Good Governance of the Secretariat for Political Affairs.
- Protection of human rights and promotion of nondiscrimination and social and gender equity for particularly vulnerable social groups, in collaboration with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM).
- Promotion and defense of the principles of the OAS Inter-American Democratic Charter through support and dissemination of said Charter and programs to be carried out by the Department for the Promotion of Democracy of the Secretariat for Political Affairs.
- Support for OAS efforts to defend and promote human rights in the implementation of social and cultural development programs, in collaboration with the Department of Education and Culture of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI).
- Participation in the Summits of the Americas process by means of activities implemented by the Summits Secretariat in relation to the Fifth Summit of the Americas.

6. Documents submitted by the CSO to the OAS

- Letter to the OAS Secretary General, dated April 17, 2008
- Articles of incorporation of the organization
- Statutes
- Annual report for 2007
- Financial statements for 2007
- Institutional mission and vision statement