

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)]

(Forum of MERCOSUR Women, Paraguay Chapter)

ANALYSIS OF THE ELEMENTS RELATED TO THE APPLICATION BY  
THE FORUM OF MERCOSUR WOMEN, PARAGUAY CHAPTER,  
TO PARTICIPATE IN OAS ACTIVITIES

This document was prepared by the Summits Secretariat to provide member states of the Organization of American States (OAS) with information on the civil society organization (CSO) Forum of MERCOSUR Women.

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 Forum of MERCOSUR Women in accordance with the aforementioned Guidelines.

1. Background

The Forum of MERCOSUR Women, Paraguay Chapter, was established in 1996. It is the national chapter of this Forum, a civil society organization that brings together women entrepreneurs, educators, union leaders, politicians, and professionals from Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Paraguay, to incorporate a gender perspective into the entire MERCOSUR integration process.

The Forum of MERCOSUR Women, Paraguay Chapter, is a nonprofit civil society organization made up of women residing in Paraguay, who meet to promote the gender perspective in MERCOSUR, together with the other member chapters of the Forum. It works toward full participation by women in all areas; equal opportunity for women and men; and strengthening relations among women in the MERCOSUR states parties to eradicate discrimination against women.

It also promotes equality in all areas in the MERCOSUR states parties; promotes anti-corruption practices by working with the *Consejo Impulsor del Sistema Nacional de Integridad* (Council to Promote the National Integrity System) and other civil society organizations in drafting laws and establishing anti-corruption projects; promotes government policies to fight trafficking in persons, especially in women and children for sexual exploitation; and organizes and attends meetings with Paraguayan and international organizations and social actors.

The Forum of MERCOSUR Women, Paraguay Chapter, is supported mainly by contributions from its members. For its participation in various initiatives, it has received financial support from commercial firms, civil society organization, the OAS, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The Forum of MERCOSUR Women, Paraguay Chapter, submitted its application to the OAS on February 9, 2006.

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

Name: Forum of MERCOSUR Women, Paraguay Chapter

Address: Av. España 625 – Edif. San Quirico, sala 11  
Asunción, Paraguay

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President, Regional Board of Directors: Ivonne Lugo

Date established: December 9, 1996

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

The Forum of MERCOSUR Women, Paraguay Chapter, works to promote women's equality and to incorporate the gender perspective into the MERCOSUR integration process in the following ways:

- Promoting women's human rights through activities aimed at society in general and supporting women's participation in public affairs.
- Promoting economic, social, and cultural human rights, in collaboration with various social actors, including civil society and the national Government of Paraguay.
- Promoting best anti-corruption practices in conjunction with other civil society organizations.
- Promoting appropriate government policies to fight trafficking in persons, especially trafficking in women and children for sexual exploitation.
- Strengthening civil society participation through joint initiatives with other organizations and meetings with various civil society organizations of the region for information-sharing and the discussion of experiences.
- Publicizing and promoting national, regional, and international agreements related to the promotion of women's rights.

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

The Forum of MERCOSUR Women, Paraguay Chapter, can contribute to OAS efforts in the areas of gender equality, human rights, fighting corruption, and trafficking in persons, and strengthening civil society, as follows:

- Strengthening women's status in society through measures to promote their educational, social, political, and economic development. Conducting events, campaigns, and presentations to influence public opinion in favor of improving the status of women and promoting women's entry into the Economic and Social Consultative Forum of MERCOSUR and incorporation of the gender perspective in the MERCOSUR working groups.
- Guiding the women of the region in addressing the matter of compliance with laws in MERCOSUR states parties that strengthen women's equitable participation, especially legislation to implement ratified international conventions with similar aims, and promoting conventions not yet ratified.
- Promoting best transparency practices through participation in the *Consejo Impulsor del Sistema Nacional de Integridad* and in the installation of the Citizen Anti-Corruption Observatory with Transparency Paraguay and other organizations.
- Promoting dialogue between the authority entrusted with implementation of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption and government employees of Paraguay.
- Fighting trafficking in persons through participation in the Specialized Meeting of Women of MERCOSUR and the installation of an interagency council with the Coordinating Office of the foreign ministry of Paraguay.
- Promoting dialogue with the private sector on fighting trafficking in women and children, especially with travel agencies, airlines, employment agencies, police, and the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of Paraguay.
- Promoting meetings for constructive dialogue among authorities and civil society organizations.
- Offering mediation and arbitration to assist in conflict resolution.

5. Identification of the OAS work areas in which the CSO proposes to support ongoing activities or to make recommendations on the best way to achieve OAS objectives

The Forum of MERCOSUR Women, Paraguay Chapter, believes it could contribute to OAS efforts to promote women's human rights and equal participation as follows:

- Publicizing the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women, "Convention of Belém do Pará," and

supporting its proper implementation, especially through joint action with states parties to MERCOSUR.

- Supporting the work of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) in ensuring recognition of the civil and political rights of women and promoting gender equality.
- Strengthening the inter-American human rights system by supporting its organs, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, so as to promote the observance and defense of women's rights.
- Supporting the Follow-up Mechanism for the Implementation of the Inter-American Convention against Corruption (MESICIC) in the MERCOSUR states parties.
- Working with the Trafficking in Persons Section of the Department for the Prevention of Threats against Public Security of the Secretariat for Multidimensional Security in carrying out measures against trafficking in persons from the perspective of regional cooperation.
- Publicizing the mandates of the Fourth Summit of the Americas in Paraguay, supporting their proper fulfillment, and working with the foreign ministry of Paraguay to establish a joint working group for their fulfillment in the areas of labor rights and employment.
- Supporting and participating in the Summits of the Americas process through activities of the Summits Secretariat.

6. Documents submitted by the CSO to the OAS

- Letter addressed to the Secretary General of the OAS, dated February 9, 2006
- Statute
- Technical description of the Forum of MERCOSUR Women
- Brief account for the annual report of the Forum of MERCOSUR Women
- Articles of association
- Record of public registry of the statute
- Record of amendment to the statute in the public registry
- Institutional mission statement
- Activities in support of the mission
- List of legal representatives
- Summary of activities, 2004-2005
- Summary financial statement, 2004-2006
- Brief account for the annual report