

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

OEA/Ser.G
CP/CISC-461/09
21 October 2009
Original: English

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)]

[Easter Seals, Inc.]

ANALYSIS OF ELEMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION BY EASTER SEALS DISABILITY
SERVICES IN THE FRAMEWORK OF REGISTRATION BY CIVIL SOCIETY
ORGANIZATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN OAS ACTIVITIES

This document was prepared by the Department of International Affairs / Secretariat for External Relations to provide information to the Member States of the Organization of American States (OAS) on the civil society organization (CSO) *Easter Seals, Inc.*

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 includes a summary and list of documentation presented by *Easter Seals, Inc.* in accordance with the aforementioned Guidelines.

1. Background

Easter Seals, Inc., is a non-profit civil society organization founded in the United States of America in 1919. Originally called the National Society for Crippled Children, the organization adopted the name of *Easter Seals, Inc.* in 1967, with the mission to provide services that will help people with disabilities or other special needs and their families to have equal opportunities and fully integrate into their communities and live independent lives.

Easter Seals, Inc. accomplishes its mission by offering services in five areas: medical rehabilitation, employment and training, children's services, adult and senior services, and camping and recreation. In each case, the services are aimed at helping individuals with all types of disabilities and from all age groups to diagnose their disabilities, find support services, and train them with skills to be able to effectively live, learn, work and play in their communities.

Easter Seals, Inc. offers its services primarily in the United States of America, including Puerto Rico. Similarly, *Easter Seals, Inc.* works with a broad network of affiliates throughout Canada and Australia, and is seeking to expand its network to Latin America and the Caribbean to increase opportunities for mutual learning and partnership.

Easter Seals, Inc. funds its activities through membership fees from its affiliates and through contributions from corporate sponsors, foundations, individual donations and government grants, including Amway Global, Bank of America, CVS Caremark, General Mills, Johnson & Johnson, Microsoft, Pfizer, Safeway, Inc., U.S. Rotary Clubs, Safeway Foundation, Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund, and the Alpha Chi Omega Foundation, among others.

Easter Seals, Inc. submitted its application to register in the OAS on July 25, 2009.

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

Name: Easter Seals, Inc.

Address: 233 S. Wacker Dr., Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60606

United States of America

Telephone: (202) 347-3066
Fax: (202) 737-7914
E-mail address: rrutta@easterseals.com
Website: <http://www.easterseals.com>
President and
Chief Executive Officer: James E. Williams, Jr.
Executive Vice President,
Public Affairs: Randall L. Rutta
Date of foundation: 1919

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

Easter Seals, Inc. works to promote the health and independence of people with disabilities and their families in the United States and abroad. The work of *Easter Seals, Inc.* relates to OAS activities in the following ways:

- Assist communities in developing, delivering and maintaining services to meet the needs of children and adults with disabilities or other special needs and their families and supporting them in obtaining their legal rights; and
- Empower children and adults with disabilities or other special needs and their families to find support resources for developing their abilities and integrating them into the mainstream of community life, especially for their education, training and employment.

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

Easter Seals, Inc. executes programs and projects that contribute to the improvement of living conditions and equal opportunity for persons with disabilities or other special needs and their families so they can live their lives with equality, dignity and independence. The activities of *Easter Seals, Inc.* that could be of interest to the OAS include:

- Providing medical rehabilitation services to focus on the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disabilities, such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech and language pathology, audiology, early intervention and other therapies to help individuals live with greater independence;
- Conducting workforce development programs that teach individuals with disabilities the skills to successfully enter the workforce, or return to work after an illness or injury;

- Managing Child Development Centers to foster children's mental and physical development offering adult and senior services, focusing on supported living and other residential options, adult day centers, in-home care, transportation, and caregiver support;
- Advocating the rights of persons with disabilities through public health education programs relating to specific disability issues and lobbying for national public policies and legislation that support programs that help people with disabilities gain independence; and
- Cooperating with affiliate organizations share information, best practices and to promote comprehensive development of activities that support their common goals.

5. Identification of OAS work areas

Easter Seals, Inc. offers to collaborate with the OAS in the following areas:

- Support the activities of the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs (CAJP) in the implementation of the policies set forth in the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities and in the development of the Program of Action for the Decade of the Americas for the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities;
- Provide assistance to the Department of Social Development and Employment of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI) in the promotion of policies and programs to support decent work and employment creation, especially for persons with disabilities;
- Contribute to the early childhood care and education programs of the Department of Human Development, Education and Culture of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI) by sharing best practices and helping in the development of new, related initiatives; and
- Cooperate with the Department of International Affairs (DIA) of the Secretariat for External Relations (SER) to promote civil society participation and formulate recommendations to the political bodies of the Organization in the area of health and disability.

6. Documents submitted by the CSO to the OAS

- Letter to the OAS Secretary General of July 25, 2009
- List of Board of Directors
- Mission Statement
- Certificates of Amendment to Articles of Incorporation signed March 24, 2000; April 22, 1988; January 21, 1980; December 15, 1967; April 26, 1958; December 6, 1938
- Bylaws (amended June 29, 2009)
- 2007 - 2008 Annual Report
- 2008 Financial Report (signed by McGladrey & Pullen, LLP)