

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-291/06
4 October 2006
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)]

(Freedom House)

ANALYSIS OF THE ELEMENTS RELATED TO THE APPLICATION BY
FREEDOM HOUSE
TO PARTICIPATE IN OAS ACTIVITIES

This document was prepared by the Summits of the Americas Secretariat to provide Member States of the Organization of American States (OAS) with information on the civil society organization (CSO) *Freedom House*.

The information contained in this report responds 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 *Freedom House* in accordance with the aforementioned Guidelines.

1. Background

Freedom House is a non-profit association founded on October 31, 1941 in New York, New York, USA with the objective of promoting democracy, the rule of law, free market economics, independent media, and US engagement in international affairs and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms at a global level.

Freedom House conducts advocacy, education, nonviolent civic initiatives and training initiatives to achieve its goals. *Freedom House* also develops and disseminates annual publications, including country-specific reports, to draw attention to issues related to democracy and human rights violations.

Freedom House is headquartered in New York and has 15 offices globally, including three in the Western Hemisphere (New York, Washington DC, and Mexico City). Mexico City houses the Latin America regional office, from which *Freedom House* coordinates all Latin American programs. Its Board of Trustees consists of a group of business and labor leaders, former government officials, scholars, and journalists.

The majority of *Freedom House* funding is received from U.S. government sources US State Department, US Agency for International Development (USAID), the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). *Freedom House* receives the remainder of its financing from private foundations and individual donors.

Freedom House submitted its application on April 16, 2006.

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

Organization Name: *Freedom House*

Address: 1301 Connecticut Ave NW, Floor 6
Washington, DC 20036
USA

Tel: 202.296.5101

Fax: 202.296.5078

E-mail address: fhdc@freedomhouse.org

Website: www.freedomhouse.org

Executive Director: Jennifer Windsor

Date established: October 31, 1941

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

The main objective of *Freedom House* is to promote respect for human rights and civil liberties and to strengthen democracy worldwide. Its activities are related to those of the OAS in the following areas:

- Promote and monitor democratic processes;
- Monitor, promote and prevent violations of human rights in all OAS Member States;
- Advocate respect for human rights at international organizations;
- Raise awareness on human rights and democracy issues among the public;
- Promote democratic institutions and respect for the rule of law;
- Collaborate with similar civil society organizations in the region.

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

In promoting human rights and democratic values, the goals of *Freedom House* and OAS are intertwined. In this regard, the following activities that this organization carries out may be of interest to the OAS:

- Monitor individual human rights throughout the Americas through the annual *Freedom in the World* report;
- Publish annual, country-specific human rights and democratization reports;
- Network among human rights and political development CSOs;

- Participate in forums and develop partnerships among groups to design and implement human rights programs;
- Help victims of human rights violations understand and access the inter-American human rights system;
- Train human rights defenders to promote and protect human rights;
- Link regional human rights activists through programmatic activities.

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

Through its offices, *Freedom House* can cooperate with the OAS in initiatives that strengthen and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms and that strengthen democracy. In particular, *Freedom House* can assist the organs, agencies, and entities of the Organization in the following ways:

- Guide victims of human rights violations through the inter-American human rights system, particularly the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Inter-American Human Rights Court;
- Collaborate with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to produce updated reports on human rights situations, cases, and trends;
- Support and disseminate the efforts of the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the IACHR;
- Disseminate the Inter-American Democratic Charter and monitor its compliance in the OAS Member States;
- Collaborate with the Department for the Promotion of Democracy (DPD) of the Secretariat for Political Affairs in efforts to promote fair and free elections, including election monitoring and strengthening election institutions;
- Support the initiatives of the Department for the Promotion of Good Governance of the Secretariat for Political Affairs;
- Assist governments to comply with Plan of Action of Mar del Plata Paragraph 62, which encourages concrete actions that improve victims' access the mechanisms of the inter-American human rights system.

6. Documents submitted by the CSO to the OAS

- 2005 Financial Report (audited by McGladrey & Pullen)
- Annual Report (year 2004)
- Charter/Constitution
- Letter addressed to OAS Secretary General (dated April 3 2006)
- Statutes (Amended October 19, 2005)
- Mission Statement
- Certificate of Incorporation (State of New York, dated October 31, 1941)