

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**APPROVED BY THE XVIII GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Caracas, Venezuela, 2005**

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PAN AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

CHAPTER I *NATURE OF THE MEETING*

Article 1. The General Assembly is the supreme organ of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History that determines the scientific, administrative and financial policies of the organization.

CHAPTER II *PARTICIPANTS*

Article 2. The official delegations of the General Assembly shall be composed of Delegates, one of whom shall be designated Chairman of the delegation, alternate delegates, advisors and those other members deemed necessary. All the members of the delegations shall be duly accredited by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of their respective governments.

Article 3. The Secretary General of the Organization of American States or his representatives, may participate in the deliberations of the General Assembly as observers, with voice, but without vote.

Article 4. The Secretary General of the Institute, in agreement with the Preparatory Commission, shall be authorized to invite Observers to attend the General Assembly to discuss technical and scientific matters, with voice, but without vote:

- a) American States which are not members of the PAIGH, with the agreement of the Directing Council;
- b) Non-American States which have expressed interest, with the agreement of the Directing Council;
- c) National scientific organizations of Member States and international scientific organizations of the Inter-American System which are proposed by an organ of PAIGH, with the agreement of the Directing Council;
- d) Scientific institutions of non-American States or international organizations outside the Inter-American System proposed by one of the organs of the Institute and approved by the Directing Council.

Article 5. The Officers of the General Assembly shall be:

- 1) The President of the General Assembly
- 2) The Vice President of the General Assembly
- 3) The Secretary of the General Assembly

Ex officio members of the General Assembly shall be:

- 1) The President of the Institute
- 2) The Vice President of the Institute
- 3) The Secretary General of the Institute
- 4) The Chairpersons of Commissions¹

¹ Thus amended by the XVIII General Assembly, Caracas, Venezuela, November 20-23, 2005.

CHAPTER III
OFFICERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The President of the General Assembly

Article 6. The President of the Preparatory Commission shall preside the General Assembly until the President elected by the latter has taken office.

Article 7. The President of the General Assembly shall be elected by one half plus one of the votes of the Member States. If an absolute majority is not received during the first vote, only those two candidates who have received the greater number of votes shall pass to the second voting.

Article 8. The President of the General Assembly shall have the following duties:

- a) Preside the sessions of the General Assembly and submit the various topics on the order of the day for consideration;
- b) Give the floor to the delegates in the order requested;
- c) Decide upon questions of order that may arise during the deliberations of the Assembly. However, in case one of the delegations so requests, the decision of the President shall be submitted to the General Assembly for final decision;
- d) Submit to vote the matters discussed by the General Assembly and announce the result of the votes;
- e) Transmit to the delegates, through the Secretary of the Assembly, the order of the day of the plenary sessions, as far in advance as possible;
- f) Install the Working Committees of the Assembly, and chair the Committee on Coordination of the Assembly, and
- g) Take measures deemed necessary to accelerate the work of the Assembly and to guarantee the implementation of these rules of procedure.

The Vice President of the General Assembly

Article 9. A Vice President of the General Assembly shall be elected, who shall replace the President of the Assembly in case of absence of the latter. His election shall require the favorable vote of one half plus one of the Member States.

The Secretary of the Assembly

Article 10. The Secretary of the General Assembly shall be elected by the favorable vote of one half plus one of the votes of the Member States.

Article 11. The Secretary of the General Assembly shall have the following duties:

- a) Receive, distribute and answer the official correspondence of the General Assembly;
- b) Prepare the order of the day in accordance with the instructions of the President of the General Assembly;
- c) Prepare the summary of the minutes of the plenary sessions;
- d) Serve as intermediary among the participants of the General Assembly and the Officers of the government of the country, and
- e) Collaborate with and coordinate all of the work of the Secretariat with the Secretary General of the Institute, and
- f) Carry out all other functions conferred by these rules of procedure, the General Assembly and the President of the General Assembly.

Article 12. The Secretary of the General Assembly shall have the advice of the Secretary General of the Institute for the conduct of his duties.

CHAPTER IV SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 13. The General Assembly shall hold a preparatory meeting, an inaugural session, two plenary sessions, the closing session and the meetings of the Working Committees that are established. In addition, with the prior decision of the Coordinating Committee, extraordinary sessions may be held.

Article 14. Before the holding of the inaugural session of the General Assembly, a preparatory meeting shall be held which shall be attended by the Chairmen of Delegations. The order of the day of the preparatory meeting shall be the following:

- a) Opening of the meeting by the President of the Institute;
- b) Presentation of the report of the Preparatory Commission and on credentials;
- c) Assignment, by drawing of lots, of order of precedence of the delegations;
- d) Consideration and adoption of the rules of procedure, agenda and work program;
- e) Election of the President, the Vice President and the Secretary of the Assembly;
- f) Establishment of the Working Committees.

CHAPTER V

QUORUM, QUESTIONS OF ORDER AND VOTING

Article 15. The quorum for the constitution of the General Assembly shall be two thirds of the Member States.

Once constituted, the quorum for holding sessions, shall be two thirds of the Member States, that constitute the Assembly.

Article 16. The decisions of the General Assembly shall be taken by a majority vote of the delegates present in the sessions, except in the following cases that shall require the affirmative vote of two thirds of the Member States:

- 1) Approval of the budget and establishment of annual quotas.
- 2) Extension of the terms of office of the Secretary General and of the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the Commissions.
- 3) Cases not specifically covered by these Statutes.
- 4) Amendment of the Organic Statutes.

Article 17. The General Assembly shall only consider items that appear on its agenda. To include new topics on the agenda or create or eliminate Commissions shall require the affirmative vote of two thirds of the delegations participating in the General Assembly.

Article 18. The delegation of each Member State shall have the right to one vote. In the plenary sessions and the meetings of Committees the vote shall be taken by a showing of hands, or by a roll call vote, if one of the delegations so requests. The list shall pass in turn in accordance with the order of precedence of the delegations.

Article 19. The delegations may abstain from voting and request that their abstention be reflected in the respective minutes.

Article 20. The plenary sessions of the General Assembly and the meetings of the Committees of the Assembly shall be public, but the General Assembly and the Committees of the Assembly shall be authorized to decide, when so requested by a delegation, that a session or meeting shall be held totally or partially behind closed doors. Any motion of this type by one of the delegations shall receive preferential attention and shall be submitted to vote without discussion.

Article 21. A motion must be seconded by another official delegation in order to be considered by the Assembly.

Article 22. The amendment shall be submitted for debate and shall be voted upon prior to the proposal which it is intended to modify.

Article 23. The proposals shall be submitted to vote in the order in which they are presented, unless the Assembly decides to the contrary.

CHAPTER VI

THE WORKING GROUPS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 24. The following Working Committees shall be created: Committee on Scientific Policy, Committee on Administrative Policy, Committee on Financial Policy and Committee on Coordination of the Assembly.

Article 25. The Committee on Scientific Policy shall be responsible for the study of those items which because of their nature are referred to it by the plenary. This Committee especially should review and, if necessary, propose changes in the standard and regulations for the preparation, evaluation, ap-

proval and supervision of the activities and projects of the Institute, according to the direction the Scientific Policy of PAIGH is to take.

Article 26. The Committee on Administrative Policy shall be responsible for those matters which because of their nature are referred to it by the plenary. The Committee should especially review the systems of action of the Institute and, if necessary, propose amendments to the Organic Statutes and the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Directing Council, and Regulations governing the General Secretariat, the Commissions, personnel, publications, etc. and seek to make the working procedures of the Institute more dynamic.

Article 27. The Committee on Financial Policy shall be responsible for those matters which because of their nature are referred to it by the plenary. The Committee should especially review the auditor's report, the financial report and the draft program-budget, and shall propose necessary amendments in the Financial Regulations.

Article 28. The Committee on Coordination shall be responsible for the review of the decisions of the three Working Committees to avoid duplications or contradictions. The Coordinating Committee shall be composed of the President and Secretary of the Assembly, the Chairmen of the Committees on Scientific Policy, Administrative Policy and Financial Policy, and the President and Secretary General of PAIGH.

Article 29. The Committee on Scientific Policy, Administrative Policy and Financial Policy shall elect its Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Rapporteur who shall prepare the report.

Article 30. The Committees shall be empowered to establish sub-committees or working groups when considered necessary and shall clearly define their duties.

Article 31. The Working Committees, with the support of the Secretariat of the Assembly, shall present their reports to the plenary. These reports should contain a brief account of the manner in which the items referred to them were treated, a list of the documents studied and of the persons who participated in their meetings and the draft resolutions necessary for the plenary to define the scientific, administrative and financial policy of PAIGH, pursuant to the stipulations of Articles 8 and 16 of the Organic Statutes.

Article 32. The reports of the Committees shall be delivered to the Secretary of the Assembly, sufficiently in advance for their translation, reproduction and distribution prior to the Plenary Session in which they are to be discussed.

CHAPTER VII **WORKING DOCUMENTS**

Article 33. The official delegations shall be empowered to present to the General Assembly:

- a) Information documents that shall consist of technical studies and reports concerning any topic on the agenda of the General Assembly, and
- b) Motions, declarations, resolutions, agreements, etc. which refer to the topics presented to the General Assembly.

The Observers from scientific organizations or institutions may only present documents of an informative nature concerning scientific or technical matters.

Article 34. The information documents, draft declarations, resolutions or recommendations shall be delivered to the Secretary of the Assembly.

Article 35. Each document shall refer to the item on the agenda with which it is concerned.

CHAPTER VIII **OFFICIAL LANGUAGES**

Article 36. The official languages of the General Assembly are those of the Institute. The summarized minutes of the plenary sessions, as well as the daily minutes of the meetings of the Working Committees shall be prepared in Spanish and English. In case of doubt, the language of the original document shall take preference.

CHAPTER IX
FINAL ACT

Article 37. The Final Act shall contain the declarations, resolutions, and recommendations approved by the General Assembly. The text shall be signed in Spanish during the closing session by a representative of each of the official delegations and Officers and Observers.

CHAPTER X
AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

Article 38. These rules of procedure may be amended by the affirmative vote of two thirds of the Member States accredited to the General Assembly.