

Proposal for the alignment of the  
**Rules of Procedure for the General Secretariat**  
with the Organic Statute



General Secretariat of the PAIGH, June 2023

**PROPOSAL FOR THE ALIGNMENT OF THE  
RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE  
PAN-AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

**CHAPTER I  
CONCERNING THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT**

**Article 1.**

In accordance with Article 30 of the Organic Statute, the General Secretariat of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH) is the body that has, as its purposes, to:

1. “perform the administrative tasks of the PAIGH;”
2. “coordinate the activities of the other PAIGH bodies;”
3. “provide the necessary assistance for the correct performance of the bodies of the PAIGH and the National Sections;”
4. “put into effect those activities entrusted by the General Assembly” and,
5. “oversee that the decisions adopted by the bodies of the PAIGH are fulfilled”.

**Article 2.**

The headquarters of the General Secretariat is located in Mexico City, in a palace of historic and architectural relevance, which was built specifically by the Government of the United Mexican States for the performance of the activities of the PAIGH.

**Article 3.**

Under the supervision of the General Assembly, the General Secretariat will be directed by a Secretary General, who will reside in Mexico City.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **CONCERNING THE SECRETARY GENERAL**

#### **Article 4.**

The Secretary General is chosen by the General Assembly for a period of four years.

In exceptional circumstances, the General Assembly may re-elect the Secretary General for another period; for this there must be the vote of two thirds of those Member States which have the right to vote.

The Secretary General may not be succeeded by a person of the same nationality, except to complete the period stipulated in the case of incapacity, resignation or death.

#### **Article 5.**

Candidates for leading the General Secretariat will be submitted to the General Assembly with their background by a Member State and considering that stipulated in Article 28 of the Organic Statute.

The candidates will provide proof of technical capabilities recognized internationally in one or more of the areas of interest of the PAIGH and be competent in the matters related to the functions of the post in question.

The curriculums of the candidates and their proposed work plans are sent to the General Secretariat, six months in advance of the General Assembly at which the elections are to be held.

The General Secretariat will send these documents to the Member States four months before that General Assembly.

**Article 6.**

The Secretary General is responsible, before the General Assembly and the meetings of PAIGH Authorities, for guaranteeing the adequate fulfilment of the obligations and functions assigned, in accordance with Article 12 of the current Rules of Procedure.

**Article 7.**

The Secretary General participates in all the statutory meetings of the organization with speaking rights, but no vote, except at the meeting of Authorities, at which he has the right to vote and is considered a full member.

**Article 8.**

In accordance with the basic structure established in these rules of procedure and with the authorized budgetary assignments, the Secretary General has faculties to:

1. Create or eliminate units or individual posts dependent on the General Secretariat, in the interest of ensuring that it operates adequately;
2. Designate or dismiss personnel, following the established procedures and requirements, for the purpose of guaranteeing the efficiency and competence of the team working as the General Secretariat;
3. Hire external services, when this is necessary and appropriate, ensuring the quality and suitability of those services;
4. Reassign functions within the General Secretariat, in accordance with the needs and priorities of this institution;
5. Issue and implement internal administrative rules in the General Secretariat, which contribute to its operating well and ensures an adequate management of the internal resources and processes;
6. Administer the PAIGH within the view of the government of the host nation, representing the interests of the institution and checking to ensure its compliance with rules and standards;
7. Certify official documents of the PAIGH, giving them authenticity and legal validity, in accordance with institutional rules;

8. Delegate faculties or powers in writing to Authorities or staff of the General Secretariat, for tasks and missions; and
9. Sign appointments to be Authorities of the PAIGH, informing them of their designation.

**Article 9.**

The employment conditions of the Secretary General, including salary, benefits, incentives, retirement fund and other awards, will be determined for the coming four-year period during the meeting of Authorities prior to the General Assembly at which he should be elected or, if the case arises, be allowed to continue for a further period in office. In the case of an extension for a further period, the Secretary General will abstain from participating in that meeting.

**Article 10.**

The former Secretaries General of the PAIGH shall not perform paid functions in the PAIGH during the four years following the end of their period in office, unless they have been given the explicit approval of the General Assembly.

**Article 11.**

In the case of the temporary absence of the Secretary General, the Department Head designated by the Secretary General on each occasion, will take over only the administrative responsibilities.

If the absence of the Secretary General is due to sickness or temporary inability to work that lasts for more than three months, the meeting of Authorities will designate an acting Secretary General, while the Department Heads of the General Secretariat should sustain close cooperation in order to ensure a smooth and efficient transition.

In the case of resignation, permanent sickness, permanent inability to work or the decease of the Secretary General, the General Assembly will designate a Secretary General to complete that period of office. In the interim, the meeting of PAIGH

Authorities will appoint an acting Secretary General. Only in case of the latter situation (resignation, permanent sickness, or death), the person designated by the General Assembly as a replacement in the post of Secretary General may be elected for a further, full period immediately.

In any situation of absence during the transition process of the election, the Department Heads will be responsible for ensuring an efficient and effective transition, whether the substitution of one person for another as Secretary General is temporary or permanent.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **CONCERNING THE FUNCTIONS AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT**

#### **Article 12.**

Under the supervision of the General Assembly, the functions of the Secretary General are:

In the scientific area:

1. To coordinate the activities for creating, encouraging and publicly disseminating scientific – technical knowledge in the areas that are of interest for the PAIGH;
2. Push forwards the actions of the scientific schedule of the PAIGH, in particular the Technical Assistance Program and the Publications Program;
3. Encourage links between governments, academic institutions, multilateral organizations and private initiatives, with the aim of fulfilling the mission of the PAIGH;
4. Put into effect actions for strengthening the National Sections, with the aim of coordinating them alongside academic, governmental, and private institutions related to the areas of interest to the PAIGH.

In the administrative area:

5. Act as liaison between the component bodies of the PAIGH and the Member States, keeping the Authorities informed;
6. Hire competent staff for the performance of tasks that are specific and for the working of the General Secretariat, within the budgetary assignments that the General Assembly sets for these purposes;
7. Coordinate the modification of the rules of procedure of the PAIGH;
8. Prepare the draft agenda and the rules of procedure for the meetings of the General Assembly, in accordance with Article 21 of the Organic Statute;
9. Submit to the General Assembly and to the Authorities a report about their activities, which will include the financial status of the PAIGH for the corresponding year, also providing those reports that may be requested by the General Assembly or those which are stipulated in the rules of procedure;
10. Put into effect the decisions of the General Assembly and the requests that the Commissions may make, and, on behalf of the PAIGH, urge the Member States to fulfil the recommendations of these bodies of the PAIGH;
11. Publish the works sent in by the General Assembly, the Commissions and other technical bodies, in accordance with the applicable rules and with the respective budgetary authorization;
12. Compile and transmit to those governments and National Sections which require it the minutes and records of the General Assembly and of the meetings of the Commissions;
13. Cooperate in the preparation of the meetings of the General Assembly and of the meetings of the Commissions, in accordance with that established in the Organic Statute and in the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly;

14. Cooperate with the secretaries of the General Assembly and of the Commissions;
15. Cooperate with the Commission Presidents and the National Sections in order to supervise the activities of the Committees, Working Groups and persons responsible for projects, with the aim of preventing duplication of efforts between the technical and administrative areas and of improving the use of the available resources.
16. Invite the Permanent Observer States to designate delegates to the meetings of the General Assembly.
17. Transmit, to the appropriate body of the Organization of American States (OAS) an annual report about the performance of the activities of the PAIGH, including a report about the financial situation;
18. Sign agreements, memorandums of understanding and their equivalents with governments, international organizations and private institutions, which will be ratified by the General Assembly;
19. Issue the certificates and credential documents that give the accreditation of the designations by the General Assembly of the several PAIGH Authorities;
20. Issue the credential documents that give the accreditation of the representatives of the PAIGH at international meetings;
21. Conserve and maintain custody of the tangible and intangible assets of the PAIGH, including the documents and archives of the organization, ensuring their selective preservation in accordance with established standards;
22. Carry out all the other functions that may be entrusted to it by the General Assembly; and
23. Exercise, by judicial and extrajudicial means, the legal representation of the PAIGH.

In the financial area:



24. Draft the relevant studies and proposals, in accordance with that requested by the General Assembly, for the calculation of the quotas that the Member States provide;
25. Submit to the General Assembly the proposed annual budget, in accordance with Article 56 of the Organic Statute;
26. Annually review and check the financial status of the PAIGH by means of an external audit, in accordance with that established in the Financial Rules of Procedure.

The Secretary General will be able to perform other functions established in the Organic Statute, the resolutions of the General Assembly, the inter-American agreements, the Meeting of Authorities and the tasks set here, under these rules of procedure.

**Article 13.**

When the General Assembly determines it, the General Secretariat will provide the personnel and the services necessary for the statutory meetings of the PAIGH. In all these cases, the supporting personnel will be administratively dependent upon the Secretary General.

**Article 14.**

The General Secretariat will be constituted by the Departments and units that are necessary for it to operate well; these will be determined on the basis of the objectives and responsibilities of the General Secretariat, also of the available resources.

These Departments will undertake the tasks of supporting and strengthening the work of the General Secretariat in its scientific, administrative and financial areas, and may be adapted to the following structure:

1. Personal Secretariat of the Secretary General;
2. Statutory Meetings Department;

3. Technical Assistance Department;
4. Financial Administration and Human Resources Department;
5. Social Communication Department; and
6. General Services Department.

**Article 15.**

The personal Secretariat specific to the Secretary General is the dependent unit responsible for:

1. Supporting the management of information, decision-making and the fulfilment of the functions of the Secretary General;
2. Serving as liaison between the Department Heads and the Secretary General;
3. Performing research, make reports and gather data, requested for decision-making and the fulfilment of the functions of the Secretary General;
4. Managing the schedules of the Secretary General;
5. Supporting the organization of meetings and events;
6. Preparing documents and presentations requested by the Secretary General;
7. Managing correspondence and communications;
8. Coordinating travel and logistic aspects requested by the Secretary General;
9. Providing support for the creation and updating of the manuals necessary for putting into effect the procedures of the Departments; and
10. Fulfilling those additional, necessary functions that are assigned by the Secretary General, in accordance with the responsibilities of the Department and the needs of the PAIGH.

**Article 16.**

The Statutory Meetings Department, attached to and dependent on the General Secretariat, is responsible for:

1. Coordinating and ensuring the correct performance of the meetings of the General Assembly, of the Authorities, and of the Commissions, in fulfilment of that established in the Organic Statute, the Rules of Procedure and the procedural manual currently in force;
2. Cooperating with the Secretary General in order to facilitate effective communication between it and the representatives of the Member States and Permanent Observers, Authorities, National Sections, and scientific and technical organizations;
3. Establishing communication channels that work in a timely and efficient manner, both internal and external, in order to ensure the flow of relevant information and related to the statutory meetings;
4. Coordinating the drafting and distribution of the documentation necessary for the statutory meetings, including agendas, reports, proposals and resolutions, guaranteeing their delivery on time to the participants;
5. Checking and confirming compliance with the deadlines established for the presentation of documents and for making queries prior to the statutory meetings, in order to ensure there is active participation;
6. Recording and filing the documents and minutes of the statutory meetings, also keeping the corresponding databases updated, in order to facilitate access to information and guarantee their preservation in fulfilment of the established rules.
7. Cooperating with other Departments or internal units in the preparation of reports, studies or presentations related to the statutory meetings, providing technical and administrative support whenever required;
8. Setting up and keeping updated the manuals necessary for putting into effect the procedures corresponding to its functions; and
9. Fulfilling the additional functions that may be assigned by the Secretary General, in accordance with the responsibilities of the Department and the needs of the PAIGH.

**Article 17.**

The Technical Assistance Department is the unit attached to the General Secretariat that is responsible for:

1. Coordinating and ensuring the correct running of the Technical Assistance Program of the PAIGH, which has as its purpose providing annual finance for projects oriented towards the disciplines of the four Commissions and that contribute to the creation of knowledge for the Member States;
2. Planning, implementation and follow-up on the Technical Assistance Program, in accordance with the rules established by the Organic Statute, the Rules of Procedure for the Technical Assistance Program, the Financial Rules of Procedure and the procedural manuals currently in force;
3. Encouraging and supporting an efficient management of the resources assigned to the Technical Assistance Program, ensuring an equitable and transparent distribution of the available funds;
4. Supervising the fulfilment of the deadlines and requirements established for the execution of the projects, also the presentation, periodically, of reports concerning progress and results by those who are responsible for the projects;
5. Managing the grants offered by the PAIGH, in cooperation with the corresponding Departments;
6. Encouraging and supporting the establishment of agreements and conventions that facilitate the generation of synergies in the performance of joint projects;
7. Submitting reports at regular intervals to the General Secretariat and to the Commissions about the execution and the results of the Technical Assistance Program, also recommendations for improving their efficiency and effectiveness;
8. Drafting, setting up and keeping up to date the manuals necessary for putting into effect the procedures corresponding to their functions; and

10. Fulfilling the additional functions that may be assigned by the Secretary General, in accordance with the responsibilities of the Department and the needs of the PAIGH.

**Article 18.**

The Financial Administration and Human Resources Department is the unit attached to the General Secretariat that is responsible for:

1. Drafting the proposed budget of the PAIGH, in accordance with the Organic Statute, the Financial Rules of Procedure and the procedural manuals currently in force;
2. Preparing the draft budget for those Commissions that have not submitted their proposal by the time of the stipulated deadline, in accordance with that established in Article 7 of the Financial Rules of Procedure;
3. Putting into effect the accounting processes of the PAIGH, ensuring that all the financial operations, income and expenses are correctly recorded, in accordance with the principles of accounting and the standards and regulations established by the Government of the country hosting the headquarters;
4. Coordinating and ensuring the fulfilment of the tax-related, financial, legal and employment obligations of the General Secretariat, guaranteeing compliance with the rules, standards and regulations currently in force for matters involving taxes, finances and human resources, and established by the Government of the country hosting the headquarters;
5. Drafting the reports about the financial status, also statements and analyses of the financial situation of the PAIGH, that are requested by the Secretary General;
6. Managing the human resources of the PAIGH, carrying out tasks related to the development and the welfare of the personnel. This involves the implementation and follow-up of policies and procedures for the management of human resources, also the administration of benefits and training;

7. Coordinating the financial execution of the projects and activities of the PAIGH, ensuring the fulfilment of the commitments acquired and the efficient and transparent use of the resources assigned;
8. Performing the follow-up checks and control upon the expenses and income of the PAIGH, ensuring compliance with the approved budget;
9. Keeping up to date the records of the inventory and of checks on the assets of the institution, checking and ensuring the suitable preservation and use of the assets and property of the PAIGH;
10. Providing advice and technical support on financial and human resources issues to the General Secretariat, encouraging best practices and the optimized use of resources;
11. Developing and keeping up to date the internal procedures and policies related to the financial administration and to the human resources, ensuring compliance with them by all of the staff of the PAIGH;
12. Drafting, setting up and keeping up to date the manuals necessary for putting into effect the procedures corresponding to their functions;
13. Preparing all the documentation necessary and cooperating with the coordination for the external audit and for that involving the Advisory Financial Planning and Assessment Committee (AFPA); and
11. Fulfilling the additional functions that may be assigned to them by the General Secretariat, in accordance with the responsibilities of the Department and the needs of the PAIGH.

**Article 19.**

The Social Communications Department is the unit attached to and dependent on the General Secretariat that is responsible for:

1. Coordinating and ensuring the correct working of the PAIGH Publications Program, which has as its main objective, the production and distribution of scientific and technical publications related to the areas of interest of

- the PAIGH, in accordance with that established in the Rules of Procedure for Publications and the procedural manuals currently in force;
2. Guaranteeing the correct preservation of the publications and files of the PAIGH, with the aim of ensuring its historic, cultural and scientific value, and its availability for future generations;
  3. Encouraging and managing the image of the PAIGH in public spheres, developing strategies for communication and public relations that strengthen the visibility and reputation of the organization;
  4. Developing channels of communication, both internal and external, and keep them up to date. This involves the management of the web site, social networks and other digital platforms, with the aim of disseminating information that is relevant, up to date and of interest to the various sectors of the public of the PAIGH;
  5. Providing support and advice on matters of communication to the Commissions, National Sections and other component bodies of the PAIGH, with the aim of encouraging an effective and coherent communication in all the activities and projects;
  6. Coordinating the drafting and distribution of informative newsletters, graphic reports and other materials for releasing information, ensuring their quality and relevance;
  7. Monitoring and assessing the perception of the PAIGH by the public, carrying out studies of opinion and analyses of the media to identify opportunities for improvement in communications and the image of this institution;
  8. Drafting reports at regular intervals on the activities and results of the Social Communications Department, submitting these to the General Secretariat and other component bodies of the PAIGH. These reports will include recommendations for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the communication tasks;
  9. Setting up and keeping up to date the manuals necessary for putting into effect the procedures corresponding to its functions; and,

10. Fulfilling the additional functions that may be assigned to them by the General Secretariat, in accordance with the responsibilities of the Department and the needs of the PAIGH.

**Article 20.**

The General Services Department is the unit attached to and dependent on the General Secretariat that is responsible for:

1. Maintaining in good conditions the shared areas of the PAIGH, such as the meeting rooms, passageways, bathrooms and areas of shared, common use. This means cleaning them regularly, providing and restocking the necessary materials and utensils, and responses to requests for maintenance by the staff;
2. Implementing and maintaining security and surveillance measures at the premises of the Palace-building offices of the PAIGH;
3. Providing technical support for the information equipment and systems used in the PAIGH, also the solutions for technical problems and help for users in the use of the technological resources available;
4. Providing the transport service necessary for the activities of the General Secretary to be carried out, ensuring the availability and efficiency of the service;
5. Guaranteeing the conservation and care of the material assets of the PAIGH, including furniture, vehicles, equipment and supplies;
6. Carrying out checks on inventory at regular intervals of the supplies for the General Secretariat, ensuring their availability, in coordination with the Financial Administration and Human Resources Department;
7. Providing logistics support at events, protocol functions and activities of the General Secretariat;
8. Setting up and keeping up to date the manuals necessary for putting into effect the procedures corresponding to its functions; and



9. Fulfilling the additional functions that may be assigned to them by the General Secretariat, in accordance with the responsibilities of the Department and the needs of the PAIGH.

#### **CHAPTER IV**

#### **CONCERNING THE STAFF OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT**

##### **Article 21.**

The members of the staff of the General Secretariat hold the status of employees of an international organization, and, in the performance of their duties, will be accountable only to the Secretary General, being subject to his authority, as they act under his instructions and as his representatives.

Upon accepting appointment to a position and post at the General Secretariat, the members of the staff are committed to performing their functions with a maximum effort and to adapting their behaviour in accordance with the nature, mission, vision, principles and interests of the PAIGH, established in the Organic Statute and the procedures currently in force.

**Article 22.**

The members of the staff, in the performance of their functions, should not request nor accept instructions from any government nor authority outside the PAIGH.

**Article 23.**

The members of the staff of the General Secretariat should act, at all times, in a way compatible with their status as employees of an international organization, and abstain from carrying out activities that may be considered inconvenient for the effective fulfillment of their duties or for the prestige of the PAIGH.

**Article 24.**

Upon accepting a position and post in the General Secretariat, the members of the staff are actively committed to:

1. Preventing any activity that could cause a conflict of interest, whether in the professional or in the personal sphere;
2. Making use, in a suitable and responsible way, of the resources and information of the PAIGH and its constituent bodies, with the objective of guaranteeing the integrity and availability of these resources and data for the benefit of the organization and its members;
3. Continuing to apply the principles of impartiality and objectivity, in order to ensure a fair and equitable way of fulfilling and performing the functions assigned; and,
4. Following and aligning with all the rules and standards of the PAIGH, also with the laws of the country hosting the headquarters, without forgetting that neglecting this obligation may mean a liability of a legal and judicial nature.

The Secretary General is responsible for determining which activities are considered inconvenient for the effective fulfilment of the duties of the personnel and for the prestige of the PAIGH.

**Article 25.**

The members of the staff of the General Secretariat have the responsibility of not taking any actions or making declarations that may damage or harm the Member States or the Permanent Observer States.

**Article 26.**

The members of the staff of the General Secretariat have the responsibility of keeping a maximum level of discretion concerning all official matters, and abstaining from communicating to any people all kinds of information of a confidential nature or which they have come to know during the performance of their functions and work. At the same time, it is prohibited for them to make any use, for the benefit of their own or others, of this kind of information.

These obligations of confidentiality and privacy do not end when the period of service in the PAIGH finishes; it is expected that the members of staff maintain as confidential and private the information that they have known during their time at the organization, even after having left their position and job.

**Article 27.**

The members of the General Secretariat staff will not be able to request the influence or the support of the Authorities, National Section Presidents, constituent bodies of the PAIGH, nor of any government, on matters that affect the administration by or the discipline of the General Secretariat. All issues involving these matters should be in line with and adapted to the appropriate administrative rules.

**Article 28.**

The privileges or immunities that should be granted to the members of the General Secretariat staff will be determined in multilateral agreements between the Member States or bilateral agreements between the General Secretariat and a Member State.

These agreements should clearly establish the necessary privileges and immunities for the performance of the functions of the staff of the General Secretariat, and they will be followed and fulfilled by the parties involved.

**Article 29.**

The Secretary General will be responsible for determining the administrative rules for the classification of the posts and positions in the General Secretariat of the PAIGH.

These rules should establish the criteria and the classification categories for the posts and positions and should be checked at regular intervals in order to ensure that they are updated and appropriate.

**Article 30.**

The Secretary General will be responsible for putting into effect an assessment at regular intervals of the work that the members of the General Secretariat staff perform.

This assessment will be based on clear and suitable criteria and will be carried out at regular intervals in order to ensure the continual improvement of the staff.

**Article 31.**

The Secretary General will be responsible for setting the salary scales, adjustments, allowances, and other benefits of the staff of the General Secretariat, in accordance with the budgetary assignments approved by the General Assembly. Moreover, the Secretary General will be able to grant special bonus payments for performance, attendance, special services, among others.

**Article 32.**

The letter of appointment will contain the conditions and terms of the appointment, which should be in accordance with these rules of procedure here and with the current regulations.

The letter of appointment is an official document that establishes the details that are specific to the post and job, including:

1. The position or post;
2. The duration of the appointment;
3. The salary;
4. The benefits; and
5. Any other information that is relevant for the post.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCERNING THE CONDUCT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND OF THE STAFF OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT**

#### **Article 33.**

Being in the service of the PAIGH is a duty that requires all the staff to demonstrate their loyalty. For this reason, it is prohibited to use a position as employee to obtain personal benefits.

#### **Article 34.**

The staff of the PAIGH will fulfil their functions without discrimination of any kind at all, whether due to causes such as race, color, religion, gender, ethnic origin, age, disability, or any other factor.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **CONCERNING GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### **Article 35.**

This Rules of Procedure may be modified by means of the affirmative vote of two thirds of the Member States present, with the right to vote and fully accredited, at the General Assembly.

**Article 36.**

This Rules of Procedure will enter into force immediately on the date of its approval by the General Assembly.