



## THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION OF WOMEN

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Virtual

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### MINUTES OF THE FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF THE CIM STEERING COMMITTEE 2022-2025

On September 27, 2022, Panama, as President of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), inaugurated the First Regular Session of the Executive Committee of the CIM 2022-2025, which was held virtually. The Principal Delegate and Minister for Social Development of Panama, María Inés Castillo, presided over the session. The session was attended by all the members of the CIM Steering Committee: Panama (President), Chile, El Salvador and Saint Lucia (Vice-Presidents), and Antigua and Barbuda, Brazil, Canada, Honduras and Uruguay (Members), thus constituting the quorum of five Member States necessary for the Committee to begin its deliberations.

As Item 1 of the Agenda of the meeting, the President proceeded to consider the Draft Agenda (CIM/CD/doc.1/22) and the Organization of Work (CIM/CD/doc.2/22) of the meeting, which were adopted without modifications.<sup>1</sup>

The President then proceeded to Agenda Item 2, the presentation of the Report of the President and the Executive Secretariat of the CIM (CIM/doc.7/22). The Executive Secretary of the CIM, Alejandra Mora Mora, took the floor for the presentation of the report, and noted that, compared to the 2017 to 2018 budget, today the non-personnel budget had dropped by 30%. This was due to the general reduction in the OAS budget, and means that the CIM is increasingly dependent on cooperation, including funds received from Canada, Spain, Italy, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Portugal, Trinidad and Tobago and the European Union, through the EuroSocial+ and Spotlight Programs.

An internal OAS discussion was held on the concepts previously agreed upon at the CIM Assembly of Delegates, particularly those of gender, sexual and reproductive health, and diversity/intersectionality. As a result of the conversations and discussions at the CIM Assembly and with a view to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly of the OAS, a document on agreed language and definitions was being prepared to support the States, through their Missions to the OAS and other bodies, in the reflection, debate and negotiation of these issues.

In her presentation, the Executive Secretary highlighted:

- The **Celebration of the 39<sup>th</sup> Assembly of Delegates of the CIM**, including
  - o The adoption of the Declaration of Panama “Building bridges for a new social and

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<sup>1</sup> All documents presented or considered at this meeting are available at <https://www.oas.org/en/CIM/committee.asp>

economic pact led by women”<sup>2</sup> which consolidated new concepts of leadership, parity and sisterhood.

- The election of a new CIM Executive Committee for the period 2022-2025.
- The adoption of the CIM Strategic Plan 2022-2026<sup>3</sup> which, in addition to carrying forward the CIM’s existing lines of work, included new lines of work on alliances and articulation, climate change, sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and mental health.
- The adoption of the “Engagement Strategy for the Caribbean Member States: 2022-2026,” as an annex to the Strategic Plan, which seeks to strengthen the relevance of the CIM in the sub-region and its participation in the work of the Commission.
- **Political Rights**
  - In Mexico, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Colombia and Peru, more than 400 women have been trained through the Course for women electoral candidates.
  - An evaluation was carried out within the framework of the Inter-American Program for Democratic Strengthening and Women’s Leadership in which women identified the benefits of the tools provided on political leadership and political violence, including digital political violence. The topic of electoral financing for women was also highlighted.
  - More than 500 people have been trained on the Inter-American Model Law on Political Violence<sup>4</sup> and the Protocol for Political Parties.<sup>5</sup>
  - The CIM Network for Women in Politics has more than 400 members.
- **The Inter-American Task Force on Women’s Leadership**
  - Launched the publication “A Call to Action to Advance Women’s Leadership and Parity Democracy in the Americas” during a high-level event with women foreign ministers during the Ninth Summit of the Americas.
  - Received more than 140 nominations for the Inter-American Award for Best Practices in Women’s Leadership, which was also awarded during the Summit.
- **Economic Rights**
  - Several publications were launched, including:
    - “COVID-19 in Women’s Lives: Care as an investment”<sup>6</sup>
    - “COVID-19 in Women’s Lives: Findings and recommendations on the care emergency”<sup>7</sup>
    - The “Inter-American Model Law on Care”<sup>8</sup> and its Implementation Guide<sup>9</sup>
- **Women, Peace and Security**
  - Finalization of the document “Pathways to Peace and Security, Forged by Women: An Agenda for the Americas” and preparations for its launch during the last quarter of 2022.
  - The first (pilot) edition of the virtual course on the Women, Peace and Security agenda for the Americas was organized in collaboration with the Educational Portal of the Americas.
  - A series of interviews and meetings were held with leaders and experts on topics relevant

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<sup>2</sup> Available at <https://www.oas.org/en/cim/docs/DeclaracionPANAMA-EN.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Available at [https://www.oas.org/en/cim/docs/plan\\_estrategico\\_ENG\\_22-26.pdf](https://www.oas.org/en/cim/docs/plan_estrategico_ENG_22-26.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Available at <https://www.oas.org/en/cim/docs/ViolenciaPolitica-LeyModelo-EN.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Available at <https://www.oas.org/en/cim/docs/ViolenciaPolitica-ProtocoloPartidos-EN.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Available at <https://www.oas.org/en/cim/docs/CuidadosCOVID19-EN-Corto.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Available at <https://www.oas.org/en/cim/docs/CuidadosCOVID19-Hallazgos-EN.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Available at <https://www.oas.org/en/cim/docs/LeyModeloCuidados-EN.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Available at

[https://www.oas.org/en/cim/docs/Gu%C3%ADa%20de%20implementaci%C3%B3n\\_LMIC\\_ENG\\_fn.pdf](https://www.oas.org/en/cim/docs/Gu%C3%ADa%20de%20implementaci%C3%B3n_LMIC_ENG_fn.pdf)

to the agenda.

- **Gender Mainstreaming, equality, diversity and rights based approach**
  - o Editions of each of the courses available online were offered: i) Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) with the support of Canada;<sup>10</sup> ii) Rights and Gender Equality Approach in Policies, Programs and Projects;<sup>11</sup> and iii) Strategic Planning with a Gender Approach.<sup>12</sup>
  - o The development and negotiation of the OAS Parity Plan, in coordination with the office of the Secretary General, which has the goal of 50/50 parity in all decision-making positions of the OAS General Secretariat by 2026.
  - o Adaptation to the virtual environment of the process of methodological transfer of the Participatory Gender Assessments (PGDs), and the delivery of the first virtual edition with the Human Rights Secretariat of Ecuador.
  - o The preparation of the Mainstreaming+ Strategy for Equality and Transformation, and its presentation during a first pilot workshop carried out with the National Mechanisms and some municipal/local governments of Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, and Uruguay.

The President invited delegations to ask questions or make comments on the report presented:

The Delegate from **Chile**:

- Requested more information on the OAS Parity Plan and the remaining steps.

Alejandra Mora Mora informed that the plan was presented a month ago and clarified that it is a plan for all positions, although with emphasis on decision-making positions. She identified the mechanisms on which the Plan will work, for example, on the side of the Human Resources Department and the announcements of competitions, to call on the States to present women in the calls for candidates, to work on gender bias, and to work with the organizations whose appointments do not depend on the Secretary General.

The Delegate from **Uruguay**:

- Commented that the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Defense had played an important role in the process within the United Nations and the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Uruguay has several peace missions and is making an effort to increase the participation of women in them. She pointed out that, in many cases, women in the military and other spheres are not aware of the calls for missions and therefore do not apply to participate. In addition, she highlighted the challenges that health and care represent for their participation. She offered her experience for the CIM archive so that it can be shared with other States.

Alejandra Mora Mora agreed that the topic of Women, Peace and Security is one of the topics that must be further explored in the Strategic Plan. She considered that the Uruguayan model and other good practices are useful to go further into this topic.

The Delegate from **Canada**:

- Shared that Canada is encouraged by the Strategic Plan, which is quite ambitious and addresses very relevant issues for women in the region such as climate change and reproductive health and

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<sup>10</sup> Available at <https://moocs.educoas.org/course/index.php?categoryid=7>

<sup>11</sup> Available at <https://portal.educoas.org/?lang=en>

<sup>12</sup> Available at <https://portal.educoas.org/?lang=en>

rights. She encouraged the CIM to continue creating spaces for political dialogue between the Member States and the OAS to share best practices. She also encouraged the participation of women's civil society organizations in the work of the CIM because they have very important perspectives.

The President then proceeded to Item 3 of the Agenda, the implementation of the CIM Strategic Plan 2022-2026 and its annex, the Engagement Strategy for the Caribbean Member States: 2022-2026.

The Executive Secretary took the floor to share the CIM's starting points in the implementation of the Strategic Plan. She highlighted that the Plan addresses new topics on the global agenda such as climate change and reproductive health, mental health, digitality, etc. She also highlighted the need for the Caribbean Engagement Strategy, which was developed in consultation with representatives of the National Mechanisms and Missions of the sub-region.

With respect to Political Rights, she highlighted that:

- The issue of funding is an obstacle to women's participation that needs to be addressed strategically.
- The CIM wants to generate research processes on lessons learned and good practices on parity.
- In the Caribbean, in particular, the topic of political violence will be addressed.
- Another goal is the implementation of the OAS Parity Plan.

With respect to Economic Rights, she highlighted that:

- A process of implementation of the Inter-American Model Law on Care will be carried out.

With respect to Gender Mainstreaming, she highlighted that:

- The Mainstreaming+ Strategy would be finalized with the results of the first workshops in Latin America (September/October) and the Caribbean (December).
- The OAS General Secretariat's Gender Policy Action Plan will be evaluated, revised and extended for the next five years.

With respect to Alliances and Articulation, she highlighted that:

- The work of the Task Force on Women's Leadership will continue.
- There is a goal to strengthen alliances with other OAS Secretariats and Departments such as the Summit of the Americas, the Department for Electoral Cooperation and Observation, etc.
- The CIM will continue to strengthen coordination with the feminist and broader women's movement in the region to continue to raise their voices in the political arena of the OAS and enrich the formal space for coordination between the Organization and civil society.

With respect to the new areas of work, she highlighted that:

- The Women, Peace and Security Agenda requires a feminist reconceptualization of the understanding of security. She highlighted the launch of the document on November 3 with the panel of inter-sectoral experts. There will also be a systematization of lessons learned on women's leadership in crisis contexts.
- The issue of reproductive health and reproductive rights is the most controversial within the Organization. The CIM wants to map actors and strategic alliances and create spaces for dialogue on successful advocacy strategies in partnership with women's and international organizations.
- The theme of climate change and women's leadership focuses on strengthening women's capacities on climate change mitigation and management and environmental stewardship. The

intention is to create three roundtables of indigenous women, rural women and Afro-descendant women and then systematize the differentiated impacts experienced by each group of women.

- The aim is to make mental health visible within the agenda for gender equality. The CIM will also work jointly with the High Level Commission on Mental Health and COVID-19 of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

With respect to the engagement of the Caribbean Member States, she highlighted that:

- The Strategy was developed based on dialogues with the sub-region and a mapping of strategic actors in the region and roundtables with authorities. It has a particular focus on the economic empowerment of women in the Caribbean and the strengthening of the work with the CARICOM Caucus, as well as strategic communication for the Caribbean.

The President underscored the request to declare the Inter-American Decade for Rural Women that was first expressed during the 39<sup>th</sup> Assembly of Delegates. She highlighted the importance of the topic at the regional level and the link that rural women have with food security and nutrition in the countries. She considered that now is the time to seek opportunities for collaboration with multinational companies and the private sector to strengthen the CIM's regional programs.

The President offered the floor to delegations for their comments:

The Delegate from **Santa Lucia**:

- Thanked the Executive Secretariat for its report and expressed her excitement for what lies ahead in the coming years. She highlighted her interest in the integration of the Caribbean into CIM programs. She shared that some of the issues that will have a great impact include an analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on women in the Caribbean. She considered that the CIM structures are important to ensure that the greatest possible impact is made.

The Representative **El Salvador**:

- Highlighted the great opportunity and hope presented by the Strategic Plan, especially the adoption and socialization of the Inter-American Model Law on Care. She shared that, in El Salvador, the first co-responsibility for care policy would be launched in October and technical assistance from the CIM and colleagues from the Committee and the Secretariat was expected.

The Delegate from **Chile**:

- Made an observation on the topic of security. She expressed that it is important to include organized crime and corruption within the dimension of security, on page 22 of the report, and in general when talking about security.

The Representative from **Antigua and Barbuda**:

- Applauded the strategy of involving the Caribbean and highlighted climate change and women's political participation and economic empowerment as relevant issues in the Caribbean and the region.

Following the comments, the President moved on to Item 4 of the Agenda, the Strategy to Support the National Women's Machineries in mainstreaming a gender, rights and diversity approach throughout the work of the State (CIM/CD/doc.4/22). The floor was given to the Executive Secretary to present the strategy.

The Executive Secretary highlighted that:

- Gender mainstreaming requires the articulation of a solid equality architecture; the deepening of strategic alliances; inter-sectoral, multi-actor, multi-level and territorial co-responsibility; and the necessary budget allocation to make mainstreaming effective.
- Strengthening women's mechanisms is key, but mainstreaming is not their sole responsibility.
- The document is being translated into English in order to gather the inputs and carry out a parallel process in the Caribbean.
- A three-day course will be held with experts on the subject, which will result in feedback to the document, to be formally presented in early 2023.

The President opened the floor for comments. In the absence of any comments, she proceeded to Agenda Item 5, the Commemoration of the 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the CIM (February 18). After giving a brief history of the CIM, the floor was given to the Executive Secretary of the CIM to share what is being contemplated for the commemoration.

Alejandra Mora Mora spoke about parity and the need for greater understanding of women's participation in politics. Work is being done to recover the history of the CIM because information about its important role in the region over the years has been lost. She emphasized that young feminists do not relate as much to the CIM and that is why an effort is being made to incorporate them into the work of the Commission.

After the presentation, the President commented on the possibility of having a woman guest presenter, and offered the floor to the Delegates to provide their comments and reflections on the commemoration:

The Delegate from **Uruguay**:

- Noted that the Vice President of Uruguay is a feminist and could be considered as a presenter because she is the founder of two important mechanisms for women, the Women's Caucus and the Women's Political Network. In addition, she mentioned a veteran politician who was very active in the CIM in the 1980s and 1990s and who could also contribute to the event.

The Delegate from **Canada**:

- Stressed the importance of reflecting on the progress that has been made and celebrating all that the CIM has done. She wanted to clarify the date of the event because they could think about what the CIM can do at the UN CSW in the weeks that follow. She felt that it is important for the CIM to have an event at the CSW to showcase its anniversary at the global level and expressed her willingness to be part of the planning conversations that follow.

The Delegate from **Chile**:

- Stressed the need to highlight the contribution of women of African descent to the CIM. She considered that an important framework for the commemoration is the inter-generationality of feminism and to show how progress has been made from one generation to the next - but at the same time she wanted to emphasize that it is not necessary to wait three more generations to achieve mainstreaming and transformation. Finally, she recommended using funds from the private sector to finance the event.

The Delegate from **Santa Lucia**:

- Raised the possibility of conceiving the CIM anniversary in decades and highlighting important findings in each decade. This could be at the regional and sub-regional level as well as at the level

of the CIM as a whole. Based on this information, States could recommend activities to highlight their participation and the impact they have had on the CIM.

The President clarified that the event would take place around February 18 and also considered Canada's suggestion to consider a side event at the CSW.

The Delegate from **Honduras**:

- Considered the commemoration to be a great opportunity to bring people closer to the work of the CIM, both locally, regionally and internationally. On the other hand, she proposed an emergency meeting to address the issue of the budget, which has dropped by almost 30%. She also considered that the commemoration requires another planning meeting so that each State can think of a proposal and have a space for more planning. Finally, she stressed the importance of a communication strategy so that the States can bring the initiatives of the CIM closer to their citizens in an appropriate and effective manner.

The President raised the possibility of using the OAS General Assembly in Peru (October 2022) to address the CIM budget issue. She also commented that a separate meeting could be scheduled for the planning of the commemoration. Alejandra Mora Mora agreed with the proposals.

The President then moved on to the next item on the agenda, New Elements of the CIM Communications Strategy, and gave the floor to the Executive Secretary.

The Executive Secretary emphasized the need to think about how the communication strategy can serve the National Mechanisms and how to add the work of the CIM to the political debate. She highlighted the "We are all CIM" campaign that had been carried out over the last two years. A blog related to the campaign is being considered as a space for interaction and reflection with the public. In addition, how to translate the campaign into English is under consideration. She also highlighted a possible Podcast of the CIM as a future space for intergenerational dialogue.

After the presentation by the Executive Secretary, the President opened the floor to the Delegates. In the absence of comments, the next item on the agenda was the CIM side event at the XV Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean in November 2022. The President shared that Panama was promoting an event to address the issue of care from the perspective of the private sector. The objective of the event is to position the relevance of strategic alliances between the government and the private sector as a mechanism to establish comprehensive care systems that enable the reconciliation of family and work life, in order to achieve sustainable and inclusive development for women.

Alejandra Mora Mora shared another proposal that came to the CIM from the Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network (RSMLAC), which revolves around the idea of care for women human rights defenders and women's rights defenders. This involves not only the health sector but also women defenders of the land, the environment, etc. After the words of the Executive Secretary, the President opened the floor for comments from the Delegates. Alejandra Mora Mora commented that it seemed that the two parallel events could be held because they come from civil society and the private sector, and proposals are still being accepted. There were no comments from the Delegates.

The President continued to Agenda Item 8, Other Matters: Draft Declaration of Concern for the Situation of Women and Girls in Afghanistan and Iran (CIM/CD/doc.3/22). The President opened the floor for questions on the statement.

The Representative from **El Salvador**:

- Commented that the decision has to be made in conjunction with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and asked for more time for El Salvador's response.

Alejandra Mora Mora clarified that this is the first declaration issued by the Executive Committee, which is an important action to highlight because it represents a great instrument for the voice of the Committee. The President acknowledged that the Uruguayan and Honduran Delegations did not receive the declaration and asked that it be resent so that everyone would have the draft.

The Delegate from **Chile**:

- Asked to establish a maximum review period because there is an event contingent on its approval.

The President proposed the following morning for the deadline to review the statement. In the absence of further comments, the President stated that the Committee could approve the statement by electronic signature the following day.

The President passed the floor to Hilary Anderson to share the draft agreements of the First Regular Session of the CIM Executive Committee 2022-2025. After the reading of the draft, the President opened the floor for comments from the delegations.

After some clarifications, the agreements were adopted by the delegations as follows:

#### **Agreement 1**

Taking note of the Report of the Secretariat to the 39th Assembly of Delegates of the CIM, to request that the Executive Secretariat:

- a. In future reports, move forward gradually with an emphasis on documenting concrete results and fulfilling mandates, rather than activities, using relevant statistics and indicators; and
- b. Highlight the issues that impact, and the work being done in, the Caribbean sub-region.

#### **Agreement 2**

In view of the reflections shared by the Delegates on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2022-2026:

- a. Approve the activities proposed by the Executive Secretariat for the next period;
- b. Requests that the Executive Secretariat prepare a draft of operational guidelines for the implementation of the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan; and
- c. Requests that the Executive Secretariat incorporate in these operational guidelines a focus on security and organized crime, as well rurality.

#### **Agreement 3**

In view of the draft "Mainstreaming+ for Equality and Transformation: CIM/OAS Strategy," contained in document CIM/CD/doc.4/22, requests that the Executive Secretariat:

- a. Continue enriching the document with the experiences and contributions of the Delegates;
- b. Proceed with the consultation of the National Mechanisms of the Caribbean, to incorporate their experiences and reflections with mainstreaming into the document; and
- c. Circulate a new version of the document.



#### **Agreement 4**

In the framework of the commemoration of the ninety-fifth anniversary of the CIM (February 18, 2023):

- a. Save the dates around February 18, 2023 for the celebration of an in-person event in Washington DC, to commemorate the 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary, as well as the Second Regular Session of the Executive Committee of the CIM 2022-2025;
- b. Organize simultaneous activities at the national level;
- c. Organize a side-event in the framework of the 66<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW);
- d. Include in the commemoration activities a specific focus on young women;
- e. Include a focus on the timeline to highlight the progress of women's rights in the region and in the countries; and
- f. Request that the Executive Secretariat circulate to the Delegates, in a timely manner, the Concept Note proposal for the commemoration event and the pertinent documents of the Second Regular Session.

#### **Agreement 5**

In view of the draft "Declaration of concern for the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan and Iran" transmitted by the Delegate of Chile, contained in document CIM/CD/doc.3/22:

- a. Request that the Executive Secretary re-circulate the Declaration to the members of the Committee, who will send their comments no later than September 28, 2022; and
- b. Approve the revised version of the Declaration and request that the Executive Secretariat disseminate it to all the Delegates and through the corresponding dissemination channels.

#### **Agreement 6**

In view of the concerns expressed by the Delegates over the reduction in the budget of the CIM:

- a. Request a bilateral meeting between the President of the CIM and the Secretary General of the OAS in order to discuss these concerns; and
- b. Formally communicate these concerns to the Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Affairs of the OAS (CAAP) with a request to maintain the CIM's budget as is, and not apply further reductions.

#### **Agreement 7**

Request that the Executive Secretariat move forward with the organization of the two side-events proposed in the framework of the 15<sup>th</sup> Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, and keep the Delegates informed of their organization.