

**STATUTES OF THE STAFF ASSOCIATION  
OF THE PAN AMERICAN UNION<sup>1</sup>**

(Approved by referendum held in May and June 1962,  
and amended by special sessions of the Staff Assembly held on  
June 21, 1982)

Staff Association  
Organization of American States  
1982

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<sup>1</sup> Now the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States.

# STATUTES OF THE STAFF ASSOCIATION

## CHAPTER I

### NAME AND OBJECTIVES

#### Article 1 - Name

The Association shall be known as the "Staff Association of the Pan American Union<sup>1</sup>, hereinafter referred to as the "Staff Association."

#### Article 2 - Purposes

The purposes of the Staff Association are:

- (a) To contribute to the attainment of the objectives of the Organization of American States, in particular, by the efficient discharge of the functions assigned to the OAS General Secretariat.
- (b) To protect the rights of all the members of the staff of the Pan American Union, particularly in relation to their conditions of employment, in order to attract and retain competent personnel.
- (c) To maintain relations and cooperate with staff organizations and similar bodies of other inter-American and international organizations in order to attain common objectives, and, in particular, to foster the spirit of an international civil service.
- (d) To maintain representation on the Pan American Union Retirement and Pension Committee.
- (e) To liaise between the Administration and the Staff.

#### Article 3 - Implementation

In order to accomplish the foregoing purposes, the Staff Association shall use the following means, among others:

- (a) Cooperation with, and recommendations to, the Secretary General of the Organization of American States and other responsible officers in charge of administrative and executive matters.
- (b) Establishment of the organs specified in Chapter IV, for the purpose of enabling the staff to form and voice its opinion.
- (c) Membership in the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA).

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<sup>1</sup> Now the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States.

(d) Election of a Representative and an Alternate Representative on the Pan American Union Retirement and Pension Committee.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

#### Article 4 - Membership

All members of the staff of the Pan American Union are de facto members of the Staff Association. For the purposes of these statutes any person occupying a position in the Pan American Union on a permanent appointment or temporary appointment for six months or more and who has signed the Statement of Loyalty shall be considered a member of the staff of the Pan American Union.

#### Article 5 - Right to vote

The members of the Staff Association shall have the right to vote in the Assembly, the Referendum, the Recall, and the election of the Staff Committee; those members who are participants in the Pan American Union Retirement and Pension Fund shall also have the right to vote for Representative and Alternate Representative of the Staff on the Retirement and Pension Committee.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **STAFF ASSOCIATION FUND**

#### Article 6 - Purposes

The Staff Association Fund shall establish a Fund to foster the general welfare of the staff. All staff members shall be requested to contribute annually to this fund a minimum amount set by the Staff Committee on the basis of estimated annual expenditures.

#### Article 7 - Sources

The Staff Association Fund shall consist of:

- (a) The annual contributions by members of the Association;
- (b) Revenue derived from other sources, subject to the approval of the Staff Committee.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **ORGANIZATION**

#### Article 8 - Organization

The Staff Association shall perform its functions through:

- (a) The Assembly:
  - (1) General;
  - (2) Special;
- (b) The Referendum;
- © The Staff Committee;
- (d) The Advisory Board;
- (e) The Recall.

## **CHAPTER V**

### THE ASSEMBLY (GENERAL OR SPECIAL)

#### Article 9 - Meetings

The Staff Association shall meet in an annual General Assembly to be convened within one month after the election of the Staff Committee. A Special Assembly shall meet whenever called by the Staff Committee, either upon its own initiative or upon written request of ten per cent of the members of the Staff Association. The call for the General or a Special Assembly shall be made at least four working days in advance by written notice to the staff, accompanied by the agenda.

#### Article 10 - Order of Business

The order of business for the General Assembly shall be accompanied by a copy of the annual report of the Staff Committee, and shall include the following items:

- (a) Approval of the minutes of the preceding General Assembly and special assemblies, if any;
- (b) Consideration of the reports of the Staff Committee;
- (c) The Treasurer's report;
- (d) Report by the Staff Representative on the Retirement and Pension Committee
- (e) Unfinished business;
- (f) Installation of incoming officers;

The order of business for a Special Assembly shall state specifically the matter(s) of urgent interest to be considered.

#### Article 11 - Quorum

The presence of 25 per cent of the members of the Staff Association shall constitute a quorum. Decisions shall be made by a majority of those present at the time of voting. Procedures shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **THE REFERENDUM**

#### Article 12 - Requests

Any matter requiring immediate action by the Staff Association, the consideration of which cannot be postponed until the General Assembly is held, may be submitted by the Staff Committee to a referendum. Ten per cent of the members of the Staff Association, except as specified in Article 28, may petition the Staff Committee to hold a referendum.

#### Article 13 - Subject

When a matter is submitted to a referendum, the issue shall be clearly stated and specific alternatives proposed for the voting with a brief statement of advantages and disadvantages. Four working days shall elapse between the time the matter is circulated to the staff and the time the voting takes place.

#### Article 14 - Decisions

Decisions taken by referendum shall be approved by a simple majority of the votes cast, except as specified in Article 28, provided that at least two thirds of the qualified voters participate in the referendum. Such decisions shall have the same effect as those adopted by a General or a Special Assembly.

#### Article 15 - Procedure

The Staff Committee shall adopt the rules of procedure and appoint the officials necessary for conducting the referendum.

## **CHAPTER VII**

### **THE STAFF COMMITTEE**

#### Article 16 - Functions

The Staff Committee shall be the executive organ of the Staff Association and as such shall carry out the decisions and recommendations of the General and Special Assemblies and of the Referendums, in the spirit of the purposes of the Staff Association as set forth in Article 2.

#### Article 17 - Membership

The Staff Committee shall be composed of thirteen members: The Chair, eleven other members, and the Representative of the Staff on the Retirement and Pension Committee. A Vice Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer shall be selected by the Staff Committee from among its members.

#### Article 18 - Rules of Procedure

The Staff Committee shall adopt its own rules of procedure and establish the frequency of its meetings.

Article 19 - Quorum and Decisions

The presence of seven members of the Staff Committee shall constitute a quorum. Decisions shall be taken by an absolute majority of the membership of the Committee.

Article 20 - Duties of the Chair

The Chair shall preside at meetings of the Staff Committee, the Advisory Board, and General and Special Assemblies; the Chair shall recommend to the Staff Committee any new activities that, in his or her judgment, may be undertaken by the Association. The Chair of the Association shall also serve as Chair of the Staff Committee.

Article 21 – Duties of the Vice Chair

The Vice Chair shall perform the functions of the Chair in the latter's absence or disability. In the absence of both the Chair and the Vice Chair, the Committee shall choose an Acting Chair.

Article 22 - Duties of the Secretary

The Secretary shall keep the minutes and records of the Staff Committee, the Advisory Board, and the General and Special Assemblies, and perform any other duties assigned by the Chair.

Article 23 - Duties of the Treasurer

The Treasurer shall collect contributions from the staff and all other monies payable to the Staff Association Fund; he shall make disbursements, however, only in accordance with rules established by the Staff Committee. The Treasurer shall keep the Fund's accounts, which may be examined by any member of the staff. The Treasurer shall submit a financial report at the General Assembly.

Article 24 - Duties of the Staff Committee

Among its duties, the Staff Committee shall:

- (a) Represent the views of the staff on matters of common interest;
- (b) Select the Vice Chair, the Secretary, and the Treasurer of the Staff Committee. In the event that there is no Chair elected by the staff, the Committee shall also select the Chair, from among its members;<sup>2</sup>
- (c) Designate members of the Advisory Board;
- (d) Prepare an annual program and estimate of expenses at the beginning of each term;

<sup>2</sup> Amendment adopted by the Special Assembly of June 21, 1982

- (e) Prepare an annual report at the end of each term;
- (f) Appoint such special sub-committees as it deems advisable, to study and report on matters of interest to the Association;
- (g) Call General and Special Assemblies;
- (h) Hold referendums, recalls, and elections, appointing officials to conduct them, and receive petitions from the staff;
- (I) Administer the Staff Association Fund;
- (j) Approve the sources of income for the Association Fund, other than that of the annual contributions of the staff members;
- (k) Keep the staff regularly informed of matters of general interest;
- (l) Appoint editors of the *Staff News*, the official publication of the Staff Association; and
- (m) Perform all other functions and duties assigned to it by these statutes, or by the General and Special Assemblies and the Referendum.

#### Article 25 - Attendance of Alternates

The alternate Representative on the Retirement and Pension Committee, as well as the first two Alternates of the Staff Committee, defined in Article 37, may attend meetings of the Staff Committee and of the Advisory Board, with voice but without vote.

## **CHAPTER VIII**

### THE ADVISORY BOARD

#### Article 26 - Membership

There shall be an Advisory Board, composed of five members as follows: the Chair of the Staff Committee; the most recent ex-Representative on the Retirement and Pension Committee; the most recent ex-Chair of the Staff Committee; and two members appointed by the Staff Committee. Whenever a vacancy occurs in the above group, the Staff Committee shall appoint additional staff members to bring the total membership of the Advisory Board to five.

#### Article 27 - Functions

The functions of the Advisory Board shall be to discuss and make recommendations on matters submitted to it by the Staff Committee.

The Advisory Board shall be appointed by each new Staff Committee within two weeks after taking office and it shall meet whenever convened by the Staff Committee. Recommendations to the Staff Committee shall be made by simple majority.

## CHAPTER IX

### RECALL

#### Article 28 - Procedure

Members of the Staff Committee may be removed by recall. Upon a written petition requesting the recall of a member of the Staff Committee and signed by twenty-five per cent of the members of the Staff Association, a referendum shall be held to pass upon the matter; in this case an absolute majority of the qualified voters of the Staff Association shall be required.

#### Article 29 - Replacement

An alternate shall replace the official removed, as provided in Articles 37 and 38 of these Statutes.

#### Article 30 - Time of Election

The election of the Staff Committee and that of the Representative and Alternate Representative on the Retirement Pension Committee shall be held once a year. The voting shall take place on the third Thursday in May and on the following Friday. Those elected shall take office during the General Assembly.

#### Article 31 - Eligibility

(a) The right to be a candidate for election to the Staff Committee shall be limited to members of the Staff Association who have served over one year on the Staff and are participants on the Retirement and Pension Fund of the Pan American Union. A person who has served two consecutive terms as one of the twelve elected members of the Staff Committee shall not be eligible for membership on the Staff Committee until after the lapse of one term.

(b) The right to be a candidate for election as Representative or Alternate on the Retirement and Pension Committee shall be limited to members of the Staff Association who are participants in the Retirement and Pension Fund of the Pan American Union. A person who has served five consecutive terms as Representative or Alternate on the Retirement and Pension Committee shall not be eligible for re-election to either office until after the lapse of two terms.

(c) Nobody may be a candidate for more than one office.

#### Article 32 - Nominating Committee



Not later than five weeks before elections, the Staff Committee shall appoint a Nominating Committee of seven members, none of whom may be a candidate for election or a member of the Staff Committee. Four members of the Nominating Committee shall constitute a quorum. Decisions shall be taken by an absolute majority of the membership of the Committee. The Nominating Committee shall function in accordance with the following procedure:

- (a) Upon appointment, the members shall meet to elect a Chair, whose name, together with those of the other members of the Nominating Committee, shall be immediately announced to the staff. At the same time, qualified voters shall be furnished a nominating form.
- (b) During the two weeks after the membership of the Nominating Committee has been announced, any qualified voter may propose in writing candidates for membership of the new Staff Committee.
- (c) The Nominating Committee shall ascertain whether any candidate so proposed is willing and eligible to serve either on the Staff Committee or as Representative or Alternate Representative on the Retirement and Pension Committee.
- (d) At the end of the said two-week period, the Nominating Committee shall select the following:
  - (1.a) A maximum of twenty (20) candidates for election as members of the Staff Committee and a maximum of three (3) candidates for Chair; or<sup>2</sup>
  - (1.b) In the event that there are no candidates for the office of Chair, a maximum of twenty (20) candidates for election as member of the Staff Committee.<sup>2</sup>
  - (2) Three (3) candidates for election as Staff Representative and three (3) candidates for election as Alternate Representative on the Retirement and Pension Committee.
- (e) Two weeks prior to election day, the Nominating Committee shall notify the qualified voters of the candidates selected, indicating those who have signified their willingness to serve as Chair.

#### Article 33 Voting Procedure

At least two weeks prior to election day, the Nominating Committee shall:

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<sup>2</sup> Amendment adopted by the Special Assembly of June 21, 1982

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- (a) Provide arrangements for voting, including the preparation of the list of voters qualified to participate in the elections;
- (b) Print two ballots, as specified in Article 35, and furnish ballot boxes;
- (c) Designate voting places; and
- (d) Appoint election officials, who shall not be candidates for office, whose duty it shall be to:
  - (1) Issue ballots to qualified voters at the places and on the days specified for voting;
  - (2) See that each ballot is signed for and deposited in the ballot box by the voter in person; and
  - (3) Seal the ballot boxes and deliver them to the Chair of the Teller Committee.

Article 34 - Absentee voting

Qualified voters who are unable to be present during elections may request, in writing, an absentee ballot from the Chair of the Nominating Committee. Absentee ballots printed in a different color from the regular ballot and authenticated by the Chair of the Nominating Committee shall be distributed on the first working day of the week of the election, or earlier, to those requesting them. Ballots shall be marked and returned by the absentee voter to the Chair of the Nominating Committee. If delivery cannot be made in person, the voter shall mail his ballot and sign his name on the back of the envelope. All ballots must be in the possession of the Chair of the Teller Committee before close of business on the last day of election. The Chair shall count the absentee ballots and integrate the count with that of the tellers.

Article 35 - Ballots

The ballots used in the elections of members of the Staff Committee shall be written in English and Spanish. There will be one section for the office of Chair and one section for the members of the Staff Committee.<sup>2</sup>

BALLOT FOR ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE STAFF COMMITTEE OF THE  
PAN AMERICAN UNION

Mark one X by the name of the person you choose for the office of Chair and mark one X beside the names of the additional seven (7) candidates you wish to elect to the Staff Committee.

In the event that there are no candidates for the office of Chair, mark an X beside the names of the eight (8) candidates; you wish to elect to the Staff Committee.

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Marque con una X el nombre del candidato de su preferencia para la presidencia y marque con una X los nombres de los otros siete (7) candidatos que desee elegir para el Comité del Personal.

En caso de que no haya candidato para la presidencia, marque con una X los nombres de los ocho (8) candidatos que desee elegir para el Comité del Personal.

Candidates for Chair

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Candidates for the Staff Committee

- |     |     |
|-----|-----|
| 1.  | 11. |
| 2.  | 12. |
| 3.  | 13. |
| 4.  | 14. |
| 5.  | 15. |
| 6.  | 16. |
| 7.  | 17. |
| 8.  | 18. |
| 9.  | 19. |
| 10. | 20. |

Date

(Authentication by the Chair of the Nominating Committee)

Article 36 - Teller Committee

A Teller Committee of six members, including the Chair thereof, shall be appointed by the Nominating Committee to count the ballots, and the Chair shall report the results to the Chair of the Nominating Committee. The latter shall announce the results to the staff before close of business on the first working day after the elections. The members of the Teller Committee shall not be members of the Staff Committee, candidates for election, or members of the Nominating Committee. The counting of ballots shall take place after office hours on the last day of elections.

Article 37 - Election of the Staff Committee

The candidate receiving the highest number of votes for Chair of the Staff Committee shall be elected to that office and the eleven (11) candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected to the Staff Committee.

In the event that there are no candidates for the office of Chair, the twelve (12) candidates receiving a majority of votes cast shall be elected members of the Staff Committee.<sup>2</sup>

In the event of a tie in the voting for Chair or for membership of the Committee, a run-off election will be held and the candidate with the majority of the votes cast shall be elected.

In the event of the death, resignation, prolonged absence, or recall of any of these twelve members, the resulting vacancy shall be filled in succession by Alternates. These are the candidates receiving the next highest number of votes.

#### Article 38 - Election of the Staff Representative on the Retirement and Pension Committee

- (a) The Nominating Committee shall select three candidates for Representative on the Retirement and Pension Committee and three other candidates for Alternate Representative. Each voter will indicate his choice by marking an (X) beside the name of one of the candidates for Representative and another (X) beside that of one of the candidates for Alternate. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes for Representative and Alternate Representative, respectively, shall be declared elected. In the event of a tie vote for either office, a run-off election between the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes for the respective office shall be held.
- (b) In the event of the death, resignation, prolonged absence, or recall of the Representative, the Alternate shall take his place. If both should be unable to serve the full term, the candidate receiving the next highest number of votes for Representative and Alternate Representative, respectively, shall serve in their place.

#### Article 39 - Official Announcement of the Results of the Elections

The Chair of the Nominating Committee shall report to the General Assembly at which the elected members shall take office.

#### Article 40 - Modifications of the Election Procedure

The Staff Committee is authorized to make the necessary adjustments in the timing of the election procedure described above, to accommodate such procedure to holidays or other unusual circumstances.

### **CHAPTER X: AMENDMENTS**

#### Article 41 - Proposals

An amendment to the Statutes of the Staff Association may be proposed in writing by ten per cent of the members, or by the Staff Committee. The text of the proposed amendment shall be made available to the members of the Staff Association for a period of at least four working days before it is submitted to a vote.

#### Article 42 - Voting

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<sup>2</sup> Amendment adopted by the Special Assembly of June 21, 1982

Voting on a proposed amendment may take place at a General or a Special Assembly, or by referendum. The procedure pertaining to the Assemblies (Chapter V) or to the Referendum (Chapter VI), as the case may be, shall apply.

Article 43 - Effective Date

An amendment shall enter into force immediately after its approval by a General or Special Assembly, or by referendum, and by the Secretary General of the OAS.

**CHAPTER XI: ENTRY INTO FORCE**

Article 44 - Effective Date

\_\_\_\_\_ These statutes shall enter into force immediately after approval by the Assembly and by the Secretary General of the Organization of American States.

STAFF ASSOCIATION OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES  
[logo]

**MEMORANDUM**

Sa 69-91/92

Date: May 27, 1992

TO: Ambassador Joao Baena Soares, Secretary General  
FROM: Jairo Torres Sánchez, Chair, Staff Association  
SUBJECT: Modification of the Statutes of the Staff Association

I would be grateful if you could kindly consider approving the attached amendment to the Statutes of the Staff Association regarding elections. The changes were adopted by the Special Assembly of this Association of May 4, 1992

[Handwritten: Approved/Mr. H Hurtado/06/01/1992)

[Margaret: Would you mind retyping the English "Proposed Modification"]