

Strategic Plan

»»»» 2017-2021



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159 SESSION PANAMA / Credit: Daniel Cirina/JACHR

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This Strategic Plan was developed in a participatory manner through a process that involved over 530 people and 343 entities. The broad participatory process led the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to identify key topics and effective proposals that it must carry out to address the challenges of the human rights context in the Americas. As an ongoing learning process, the IACHR considered the achievements, lessons learned and challenges in the implementation of its first Strategic Plan, which covered 2011 through 2016.

The Plan sets out the global strategy through **5 Strategic Objectives** and **21 Programs** of work. A first objective seeks to contribute to the development of a more effective, timely and accessible inter-American justice to overcome practices of impunity in the region and achieve integral reparation for the victims. With its second objective the IACHR seeks to have an impact with prevention measures and in the factors that give rise to human rights violations. A third objective seeks to promote democracy, human dignity, equality, justice, and fundamental freedoms. The fourth objective seeks to promote the universalization of the Inter-American Human Rights System (IAHRS). The fifth objective seeks to guarantee the availability of the needed resources to strengthen the institutional role with the goal of achieving a positive impact in respect of human rights in the region. Special Program 21 seeks to substantially improve the monitoring of recommendations made by the IACHR to improve the levels of effectiveness of the Inter-American Human Rights System and to have a transformative impact on the situation of human rights for all persons in the Americas.

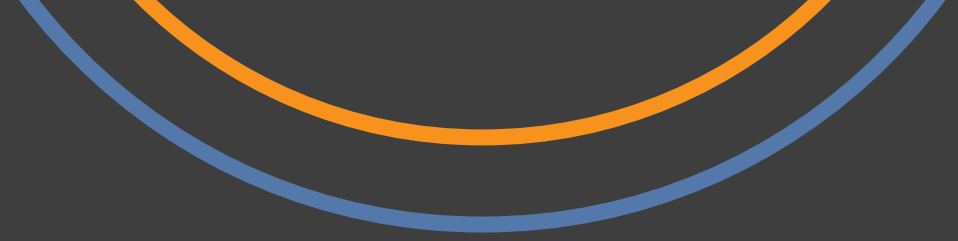
The strategic planning of the IACHR for 2017-2021 is framed in a context of growing levels of incorporation of human rights standards at the sub-regional, national and local levels, institutional improvements in the area of human rights and, with this, a greater level of awareness of rights in the region. Despite this, there are still contexts that present challenges at the global level and in the Americas; the reopening of discussions that had been overcome and recent setbacks; as well as a lack of solutions to historical problems in the region have led to a situation in which there are serious risks for the protection of human rights.

Given this situation, the IACHR strategically defined its work for these next years through the linkage of its mandates, functions and mechanisms. For 2017-2021, the IACHR prioritized a series of themes and populations, some of which it has worked on through its Rapporteurships, with a broad and cross-cutting focus, recognizing the interdependence between common causes and problems, manifested in multiple ways for vulnerable individuals and groups.

Aware of its role, the IACHR decided to strategically plan its actions through the elaboration of its Strategic Plan 2017-2021.



**“To stimulate the effectiveness of the
Inter-American Human Rights System as a
pillar and shared commitment of the
Americas”**





VISIT TO MÉXICO / Credit: Daniel Cima/IACHR

II. REGARDING THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights is a principal organ of the Organization of American States (OAS) and its main function is to promote the observance and defense of human rights in the Americas and serve as a consultative organ of the Organization in this area. It is composed of seven members who are elected in their personal capacity by the OAS General Assembly who must be individuals of high moral authority and recognized expertise in human rights. The Commission is headquartered in Washington, D.C. It was created by the OAS in 1959. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights became operational in 1979. Together they form the Inter-American Human Rights System.

The IAHR began with the adoption of the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man at the Ninth International Conference of American States celebrated in Bogotá in 1948. It was during that same conference that the OAS Charter (henceforth “the Charter”) was adopted, through which the “American States proclaim the fundamental rights of the individual” as one of the principles of the Organization. Per the Charter, “the true significance of American solidarity and good neighborliness can only mean the consolidation on this continent, within the framework of democratic institutions, of a system of individual liberty and social justice based on respect for the essential rights of man.”

The IACHR conducts its work on the basis of three pillars: the individual petition system, the monitoring of the human rights situation in the Member States, and advising and providing technical cooperation to States. With this framework, the Commission considers that in the context of the protection of the rights of all persons under the jurisdiction of the American States, it is fundamental to provide attention to persons, communities, and groups historically subjected to discrimination and exclusion.

The mandate of the IACHR is established in the American Convention on Human Rights (the Pact of San José), which was adopted on November 22, 1969 and entered into force on July 18, 1978. The IACHR mandate is related to the following inter-American instruments in the area of human rights:

- Charter of the Organization of American States, adopted April 30, 1948 and entered into force on December 13, 1951;
- American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, approved at the Ninth International Conference of American States in Bogotá, Colombia on May 2, 1948;
- Inter-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture, adopted December 9, 1985 and entered into force on February 28, 1987;
- Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights ("Protocol of San Salvador"), adopted November 17, 1988 and entered into force on November 16, 1999;
- Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights to Abolish the Death Penalty, adopted June 8, 1990 and entered into force for States that ratify or adhere to it based on the filing of the corresponding ratification or adhesion instrument with the OAS General Secretariat;
- Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women ("Convention of Belém do Pará"), adopted June 9, 1994 and entered into force on March 5, 1995;
- Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance of Persons, adopted June 9, 1994 and entered into force on March 28, 1996;
- Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, adopted on June 7, 1999 and entered into force on September 14, 2001;
- Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression adopted during the 108 Period of Sessions of the IACHR, October 2-20, 2000;
- Inter-American Democratic Charter, adopted September 11, 2001;
- Principles and Best Practices on the Protection of Persons Deprived of Liberty in the Americas adopted during the 131 Ordinary Period of Sessions of the IACHR, March 3-14, 2008;
- Inter-American Convention Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Related Forms of Intolerance, adopted June 5, 2013 and will enter into force the thirtieth day after the date the second instrument of ratification or adhesion of the Convention is filed;
- Inter-American Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance, adopted June 5, 2013 and will enter into force the thirtieth day after the date the second instrument of ratification or adhesion of the Convention in the Secretariat General is filed;
- Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons, adopted June 15, 2015 and entered into force on January 11, 2017; and
- American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, approved on June 14, 2016.

The functions and mandates of the IACHR are to:

- Promote the observance and defense of human rights in the Americas
- Stimulate awareness of human rights
- Formulate recommendations to States and promote due respect for rights
- Prepare studies and reports
- Request information from States
- Provide advice and technical assistance to States
- Publish an annual report
- Conduct visits and observations in loco
- Act on individual cases and petitions, friendly settlements, and precautionary measures
- Appear before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in cases and other matters
- Submit proposals to the OAS for additional protocols or amendments to the American Convention on Human Rights
- Hold ordinary and extraordinary Periods of Sessions
- Convoke public hearings on the situation of human rights in the region
- Create and maintain country and thematic rapporteurships
- Present the program-budget to the OAS
- Hold promotional activities
- Issue press releases and resolutions

The Inter-American Commission has advocated for justice and defended freedom throughout the region for over five decades. Presently, the predominance of freely elected governments establishes the bases for the effective exercise of human rights, with respect for those rights being a vital element of democracy. However, the region continues to face profound challenges. Impunity, violations of due process, limits on judicial independence, police abuse, discrimination, poverty and social exclusion are just some of the problems that threaten the effectiveness of human rights and weaken the rule of law.

The IACHR works in collaboration with States to improve their laws, practices, policies, and institutions for the protection of human rights. OAS member states have underscored their unequivocal commitment to democracy and human rights, and the Commission employs its efforts to ensure that this commitment produces tangible results.

In this sense, the work of the Commission has yielded important advances throughout the region. As a result of IACHR actions, States have publicly recognized their responsibility for past abuses, which constitutes a significant step in victims' efforts to find justice.

The Commission's decisions have encouraged States to provide reparations to victims and family members of victims of serious human rights violations such as massacres, extrajudicial executions, forced disappearances, torture, and illegal detentions. The freedom of individuals who have been illegally detained has been secured, and cases of serious human rights violations have been clarified through the courts after years of impunity. The IACHR has also adopted precautionary measures in favor of thousands of individuals and communities at risk.

The IACHR has played a vital role in promoting the adoption of constitutional reforms, laws, and public policies with a human rights focus, and judgments in accordance with inter-American norms and standards. Its recommendations have led States to eliminate discriminatory laws, policies, and practices; provide comprehensive reparations to victims; prevent the repetition of human rights violations; and strengthen the protection of these rights. The Commission's reports have helped the OAS to adopt collective and structural actions to protect rights and democratic freedoms in member states. With the transcendental role and impact of the IACHR in the Americas in mind, the Commission takes this opportunity to evaluate the context and plan its future actions through the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan.





MESOAMERICA REGIONAL CONSULTATION

III. PARTICIPATORY PROCESS OF FORMULATING THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2021

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In order to generate spaces for reflection and discussion with key actors in the human rights agenda, the IACHR decided to conduct public consultation processes for the development of its 2017-2021 Strategic Plan. The Commission designed a participatory methodology for its planning, which was presented to the Permanent Council of the OAS. In order to maximize its opportunities and address preeminent challenges, the IACHR developed this participatory methodology in the context of over a year of preparation of the Plan.

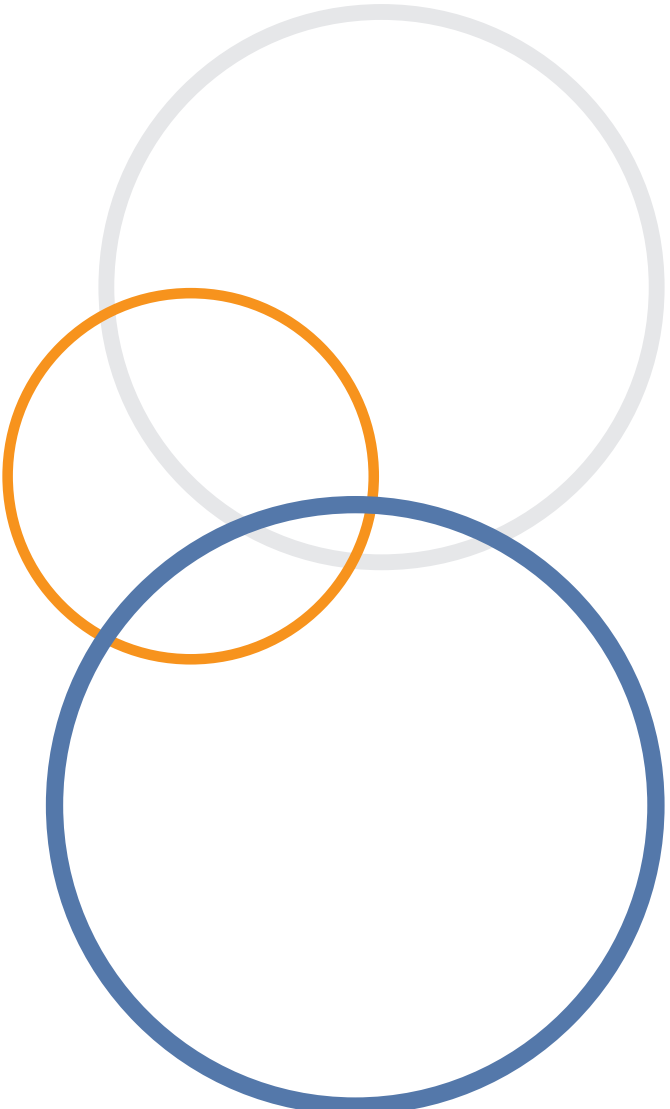
The development of the new IACHR Strategic Plan was divided into three stages of participation: a. a conceptual phase, b. a phase consisting of the design and development of specific proposals, and c. a discussion and approval phase.



The **first consultation phase** began with a questionnaire that was made available to civil society and the member states in November 2015, in order for them to send their initial contributions for the preparation of the plan. A total of 49 responses were received with inputs on the effects, impacts, advances, and opportunities for improvement with respect to the previous Strategic Plan. The consultation also allowed for the identification of challenges and definition of priorities and issues to be addressed by the IACHR in its new Plan. Based on these inputs, the IACHR developed a Concept Note with the main lines for discussion of the Strategic Plan, which served as a basis to receive comments and suggestions from the member states through meetings held in July 2016.



During the **second phase**, the Commission expanded the participation channels and mechanisms to receive specific proposals for the design and elaboration of the Strategic Plan and to discuss its first draft. Between December 2016 and March 2017, various workshops were conducted with experts, civil society, international agencies, the IACHR Executive Secretariat team and Commissioners. Inputs for the Plan were also received in workshops conducted during the 159th and 160th Periods of Sessions.



The first version of the Strategic Plan was submitted to **four Regional Participatory Consultations** with civil society, social movements and academics. These were held in North America (Washington, D.C.), Mesoamerica (Tegucigalpa, Honduras), South America (Lima, Peru) and the Caribbean (Kingston, Jamaica) both on site and on-line. During these consultations, the challenges and trends in human rights in the region for the next five years were analyzed, and comments and specific proposals based on the draft Plan were received. The first version was also discussed in February 2017 in Washington, D.C. with groups of member states, specifically CARICOM, ALADI, SICA and North America. The IACHR received comments and suggestions from the States through direct consultations in February and in writing through March 2017.

This participatory planning process for the Strategic Plan generated a great deal of information that was analyzed and organized in order to identify key human rights issues, the Commission's value-added for implementing the strategy, and effective proposals that it should implement in order to address the challenges identified in the process. In addition, the process benefitted from other sources of information including internal documents, relevant publications, in-depth interviews, analyses of statistics, measures achieved and evaluation of projects and the previous plan, and the opinions of experts and interested parties.

Various workshops were also held at the IACHR with the various technical areas and with the entire Executive Secretariat team and the Commissioners to promote a process of staff participation and include their proposals and suggestions in the document. The Executive Secretariat also created a **Strategic Plan Committee** with representatives of all of the technical areas who were responsible for coordinating the work, analysis, and organization of proposals for the Commission.



3

The **third phase** of discussion and approval required the IACHR to review the results and information collected, expand the analysis of the regional context, evaluate the proposals made in regard to the Plan, and construct a strategic response. This proposed Strategic Plan was discussed and approved during the 161st Ordinary Period of Sessions of the IACHR, which was held March 15-22, 2017 in Washington, D.C.

The Commission designed this Strategic Plan collectively, with the broadest participation of all interested parties and based on careful consideration of the context. The IACHR considered the inputs submitted and made the decisions, on the basis of its autonomy, that it felt would optimally fulfill its mandate, ensuring the highest level of effectiveness, efficiency, and transparency in all of its actions. The broad participatory and collective process has been fundamental for identifying regional expectations and needs, and for ensuring social participation in the definition of the work program and actions of the Commission, reinforcing a democratic culture and one of transparency. Through this process, the priorities necessary for achieving more strategic IACHR action in the next years were identified.

In total, during the process of developing the Strategic Plan the following activities were conducted and the participation of 343 entities and 536 participants was mobilized, according to the tables below:

Phase I – Conceptual

STAGE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	NUMBER OF ENTITIES
Public Consultation Questionnaire sent to States and civil society organizations	49 responses	34 civil society 11 States 4 academy
Consultation on Concept Note	21 States	21 States
TOTAL PHASE I	70	70 entities

Phase II – Design and Proposals

STAGE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	NUMBER OF ENTITIES
Overview of the assessment and context analysis - In-depth interviews	31 people	18 entities
Workshop 1 – Experts – Panama	10 people	
Workshop 2 – Civil society –Members of the coalition of organizations for human rights in the Americas and their guests– Panama	29 people	25 entities
Meeting with Civil Society – 159th Period of Sessions of the IACHR, Panama	16 people	12 entities
3 meetings with UN organizations – Panama	30 people	20 entities
Workshops with Secretariat and Commission team	80 people	
4 Workshops with regional blocs of States (ALADI, SICA, CARICOM, and North America)	36 representatives	21 Estates
Workshop 3 – experts in the IASHR – Washington	12 people	
TOTAL	244 people	96 entities

Four Participatory Regional Consultations with civil society, social movements and academia

LOCATION	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS				NUMBER OF ENTITIES			
	Registered	Present	Virtual	Total	Registered	Present	Virtual	Total
North America	66	45	8	53	44	37	8	45
Mesoamerica	56	29	7	36	37	24	7	31
South America	89	68	28	96	56	46	28	74
Caribbean	39	34	3	37	28	24	3	27
	250	176	46	222	165	131	46	177

TOTAL PHASE II – People
466

TOTAL PHASE II – Entities
273

TOTAL PHASE I and II – People
536

TOTAL PHASE I and II – Entities
343

For the implementation process of this plan, the IACHR will continue to employ channels of constructive dialogue with different actors of the system in order to move forward, jointly, in the promotion and protection of human rights in the region.



NORTH AMERICAN REGIONAL CONSULTATION

IV. ASSESSMENT OF THE PREVIOUS STRATEGIC PLAN (2011-2016)

IV. ASSESSMENT OF THE PREVIOUS STRATEGIC PLAN (2011-2016)

The IACHR adopted a Strategic Plan for the first time in late 2010. The document covered the period 2011-2015¹ and organized the Commission's activities around seven strategic objectives which were deployed in eight programs and plans of action. This plan sought to make transparent its programmatic vision and to make its activities more efficient, indicating the resources necessary to fulfill its mandate. The 2011-2016 Plan sought to introduce medium- and long-term programmatic cooperation in which potential donors could contribute to a shared fund with a single annual report that would offer them a clear and transparent overview of the IACHR's work. Some of the key institutional achievements of this plan are briefly described below.

1 Petition and Case System

1.1 Initial Review Stage and Procedural Delay Group (PDG)

The IACHR undertook concrete actions to address the chronic delay that existed in the initial review stage and created the Procedural Delay Group, achieving results that were unprecedented in the history of the petition and case system, reviewing a total of 6,405 petitions between December 2014 and July 2016. The petitions analyzed by the PDG had been filed between 2007 and 2013. Concurrently, the Registry Group continued to evaluate petitions received in 2014 and 2015 in the calendar year immediately following receipt of the complaint. Through this initiative, the Commission overcame the procedural delay in the initial review stage, making decisions on all of the petitions filed through 2015 during 2016, with the completion of the administrative execution of these decisions remaining to be completed.

1.2 Other initiatives to address the procedural delay at the admissibility and merits stages

During the period covered by the plan, an institutional strengthening process² was conducted in order to make the Commission's work more effective and continue to strengthen its capacity to execute its mandate. As such, among other measures, the IACHR defined criteria for the simplification and optimization of reports, the reorganization and specialization of the work on petitions and cases, the systematization of admissibility criteria to increase efficiency, and the proactive application of Article 42 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure on archiving.

1.3 Friendly Settlements

The Commission offered greater impetus to this mechanism as well as to its efforts to provide training

and dissemination of information related to its use. In relation to the dissemination of information on the mechanism, it published a report on the impact of friendly settlements that described the evolution of the mechanism and summarized the agreements approved through 2012 by type of reparation, thereby illustrating with examples of best practices. The Commission also produced a practical guide to the use of friendly settlements along with a website containing specialized information on friendly settlements, including a list of the most emblematic examples in the region. The Commission also made efforts to encourage practices to promote the mechanism. Further in relation to efforts to promote friendly settlements for petitions and cases, the IACHR increased its activity as a facilitator to bring together the parties for the negotiation and implementation of agreements, increasing the number of working meetings held at its headquarters and elsewhere, adopting a protocol, reviewing and updating processes, providing technical legal assistance to the parties, and promoting compliance with friendly settlement agreements approved by the Commission.

1.4 Precautionary Measures

Requests for precautionary measures have increased exponentially over the past few years. The progress made includes: the implementation of reforms to the Rules in 2013, including the issuing of public resolutions and updating of records; the development of protocols and consultations with the IACHR to provide more detailed monitoring of compliance with the measures ordered by the Commission; and the increase in the number of working meetings held at the Commission's headquarters and during IACHR visits to the States. In relation to this work, through its country and thematic monitoring work the IACHR has paid special attention to the mechanisms created by the States for individuals at risk and beneficiaries of precautionary measures.

¹ El Plan fue extendido hasta finales de 2016:
<http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/docs/pdf/IACHRStrategicPlan20112015.pdf>

² Proceso de fortalecimiento de la CIDH:
<http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/mandato/fortalecimiento.asp>

2 Geographic Monitoring

The IACHR broke new ground with the development of a mechanism for rapid and comprehensive response to the case of Ayotzinapa. The reports of the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts (GIEI, by its initials in Spanish) designated by the IACHR in the context of the technical cooperation agreement reached between the Commission, the Mexican government and representatives of the victims, and based on precautionary measures granted by the IACHR, resulted in the opening of new lines of investigation into the disappearance of the 43 students.

Other positive experiences include: the immediate visit by the IACHR to the border between Colombia and Venezuela in September 2015 to monitor the situation of the human rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers of Colombian nationality who were deported or returned to Colombia; the visit to the southern border of the United States in October

2014 to monitor the human rights situation of unaccompanied minors and families who had crossed the border; and the December 2013 visit to the Dominican Republic to analyze the human rights situation, particularly concerning the rights to nationality, identity, equality and non-discrimination as well as related rights and issues. In addition, the IACHR adopted a multiplicity of immediate actions through continuous monitoring of the situation of human rights in Honduras. In addition, the Commission closely monitored the negotiation of the peace accords to end the conflict in Colombia and the implementation of the Peace Agreement to ensure conformity with inter-American human rights standards.

The IACHR significantly expanded the coverage of its public hearings, increasing the number of hearings held from 55 in 2012 to 125 in 2015. The mechanism of public hearings has facilitated the identification of new issues as well as monitoring of existing ones, improving the institution's monitoring capacities.

3 Thematic Rapporteurships

During the period of the first Strategic Plan, the IACHR strengthened the existing thematic Rapporteurships and consolidated the work of two in particular: the Rapporteurship on human rights defenders and the Rapporteurship on lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) persons. Through the specialized work conducted by all of its Rapporteurships, the

IACHR developed some 30 reports that identify and analyze the many problems that affect specific groups of people or situations of human rights violations in certain countries or sub-regions, allowing the Commission to make visible conditions that had been invisible. The Rapporteurships' work also allowed the IACHR to make progress on monitoring the risks and threats of human rights violations against these groups. Through the cases brought forward by these areas, the IACHR and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights issued emblematic decisions that advanced inter-American standards.

4 Standards and Case Law Developments

The Commission developed standards and case law on new topics not yet addressed. These topics include, for example, the response to the criminalization of human rights defenders; political rights and safeguards to avoid reprisals for their free exercise; the rights of children in processes of international adoption; discrimination on the basis of sexual

orientation in the application of sanctions; discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in pension rights; the rights of refugees and asylum seekers; the responsibility of the state for lack of oversight of blood banks and HIV contamination; discrimination against those living with HIV; the rights of persons with disabilities, particularly persons deprived of liberty; freedom of expression and the radio spectrum; freedom of expression and the internet; and standards to prevent and protect, and to obtain justice in relation to violence against journalists, among others.

³ Grupo Interdisciplinario de Expertos Independientes (GIEI); disponible en: <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/actividades/giei.asp>

5 Communication and Dissemination

The IACHR adopted steps to strengthen the dissemination of its activities and communications tools. Noteworthy developments include: (i) the significant expansion of the reach of IACHR messages through the use of social media and the integration of

tools such as Flickr, YouTube and Pinterest; (ii) the use of new technologies for the creation of interactive mini-sites for the dissemination of the main conclusions and recommendations of thematic and country reports; (iii) the implementation of periodic training activities for journalists at IACHR headquarters and in countries of the region; and (iv) improvement of site navigation to facilitate user access to information.

6 Channels for Communication with the States

The Commission conducted dissemination, training, advising and technical assistance activities for member

states and promoted inter-American and international instruments and inter-American human rights standards. It also strengthened the promotion of public policies with a human rights approach through the consolidation of a specific area that has strengthened communications with and assistance for the States.

7 User Portal on the Individual Petition System

The Individual Petition System Portal has been one of the most important advances in technological modernization and access to information for IACHR

users. Petitioners and States can access information on petitions, cases and precautionary measures pending before the IACHR immediately and free of charge, and on an equal basis. In addition, the transmission of communications and documentation was streamlined. In its first year of operation, 52,013 documents were processed and 1,089 new complaints were received, which had an impact on making processes before the IACHR more automatic.

In spite of the progress made, the consultations conducted by the IACHR as part of the construction of its new Strategic Plan have revealed a series of elements that have been taken into account in this Plan, such as:

- A. The importance of the participation of and consultation with key groups from the region in the process of developing the Strategic Plan;
- B. The need to obtain the commitment and align efforts and budgets based on the goals and indicators defined. The previous plan set goals and indicators based on various possible scenarios associated with obtaining budgetary resources that did not materialize. In addition, the Commission faced its most serious financial crisis during this period, which compromised the achievement of some of the results.
- C. The relevance of strengthening alliances and cooperation with key actors; universal, regional and sub-regional entities; and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in order to make the IAHRs more effective. The new institutional structure on human rights in sub-regional entities represents an opportunity to systematically address the degree to which the decisions of international human rights bodies have been met with compliance.
- D. The urgency of access by civil society to information, which is key for responding to, disseminating, and giving greater transparency to the work of the IACHR. Despite the existence of the portal and improved Website, individual users have consistently referred to the importance of improving access to information on IACHR procedures and decisions, and the need for the Commission to establish a policy of transparency and access to information as part of the plan.

Along with the achievements listed above and lessons learned, the IACHR has identified a series of operational and institutional challenges that are briefly described below and will be addressed through the 2017-2021 Plan.

1. Financial Sustainability

Though it has overcome the acute financial crisis that threatened the work of the Commission in 2016, uncertainty regarding the financial sustainability of the operation of the IAHRs and the Commission itself remains. The difficult global scenario has created a highly challenging situation and requires greater efforts on the part of States to provide structural solutions for IACHR funding through the regular fund. In addition, the IACHR must promote the optimization of its work and develop a comprehensive, sufficient, and sustainable budget that includes the diversification of funding sources. The autonomy and independence of the Commission are compromised when they depend on voluntary contributions each year, as this affects its possibilities for stability and predictability.

2. Procedural Delay and Timely Response

The important advances reported by the Commission following the implementation of diverse measures designed to overcome procedural delay in the processing of petitions and cases are indisputable. However, challenges continue to affect the Commission's ability to provide timely responses to the individuals who turn to the system. The reduction of procedural delay continues to be the priority of this Commission. As a result, it will continue to explore and implement initiatives to address this issue using existing resources and within the parameters of its Rules of Procedure.

The Commission needs sufficient human, financial, and technological resources to respond to the ever-increasing demand for inter-American justice. In addition, it will be important to expand capacities to facilitate the use of friendly settlements in order to provide reparations to victims who turn to the IACHR. The Commission is aware of the need to strengthen monitoring of precautionary measures in a more expedited manner in order to guarantee fundamental rights and prevent serious and urgent situations that pose a risk of irreparable harm to persons or to the possibilities of an effective response to a petition or case pending before IAHRs organs.

Furthermore, there is a need to strengthen rapid and integrated response mechanisms to emerging situations in order to prevent possible rights violations and protect those who may be at risk.

3. Mainstreaming and Compliance with Recommendations

The Inter-American Commission continues to face external and internal challenges that impact its capacity and efficiency. An initial challenge faced by the Commission and OAS member states has to do with the need to move forward with the universal ratification of the instruments of the inter-American system as a critical factor for the full respect for and guarantee of human rights in the Americas, in particular the American Convention on Human Rights. Another challenge is reinforcing the work of protection, promotion, and collaboration with the Caribbean and Central America.

On the other hand, given the always shifting challenges in the area of human rights, it is important to highlight the importance of other non-jurisdictional mechanisms for monitoring the human rights situation and contributing to State action in the area of prevention and identification of risk factors for human rights violations and fulfillment of their international obligations.

In this sense, considering the situation of limited resources and in order to avoid fragmentation or duplication of efforts, the IACHR must define strategies for the integrated and coordinated use of its diverse mechanisms to promote and protect human rights; foster balance among its thematic Rapporteurships; and incorporate new ad hoc mechanisms that can serve to improve the situation of human rights in the Americas and respond to current and future challenges. To that end, there is a need for a modernized IACHR on the cutting edge of the incorporation of information technologies in its work.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the recommendations made by the Commission to the States through its reports on cases and friendly settlements, precautionary measures, thematic and country reports and other monitoring mechanisms were identified as a foundation on which the organization should redouble its efforts. In this sense, the Commission considers it important to rethink the reach of the recommendations that are formulated and concentrate efforts in the design of uniform, measurable, and concrete methodologies for evaluating their full compliance.



SOUTH AMERICAN REGIONAL CONSULTATION / Credit: Milagros Arias Pérez

V. THE HUMAN RIGHTS CONTEXT IN THE AMERICAS

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Over the past decades, the American continent has experienced an increasing incorporation of human rights standards at the sub-regional, national, and local levels; improvements in institutional structures in the area of human rights; and with this a greater level of awareness of rights in the region. These advances are mutually reinforced by the growing consolidation of the guarantees necessary to promote democracy which, in the words of the Democratic Charter, “is indispensable for the effective exercise of fundamental freedoms and human rights.”

Activism in favor of human rights demands has been strengthened by the participation of more social organizations and movements and their struggles against attempts to restrict their rights. Constitutional developments and greater participation of historically marginalized groups following transitions to democracy and the processes of consolidation already mentioned have given rise to new agendas and demands for rights in the region. Further, the expansion of Internet access has provided a vibrant space for the expansion of freedom of expression and access to information.

Despite the progress made on various fronts, situations persist that present challenges for human rights at the global level and in the Americas. Recent changes and the lack of solutions to historical problems in the region have led to a situation in which there are serious risks of setbacks in the advances made in the area of human rights.

A combination of elements has a direct impact on the enjoyment of rights by the inhabitants of the Americas. These include: the fragility of democratic systems in some countries of the region, which is strongly related to the questioning of their institutions’ legitimacy, with corrupt practices and serious issues of impunity; the economic crisis that is affecting various countries and that generates disproportionately strong and serious effects for historically discriminated and marginalized groups along with social and economic inequalities and inequities; and high levels of conflict and violence that generate a context of insecurity.

In addition, some countries in the region have witnessed public expressions by authorities and

different social sectors directed at consolidating a rhetoric that openly or covertly proclaims exacerbated nationalism and forms of discrimination such as xenophobia, misogyny, homophobia, and, in general, discourses of fear and/or hatred. This has led to situations of serious concern at the political, economic, social and cultural levels, and national human rights protection systems have not been able to adequately combat them.

With respect to democratic systems, a large number of countries in the region transitioned from dictatorial regimes and internal armed conflicts to democracy during the 1980s and 1990s. The region is in a process of consolidation of democracies and the rule of law and has the opportunity to respond to historical debts related to serious past human rights violations. Within this context, the work of the Commission and, more broadly, the IAHR, has been fundamental for promoting transitions to democracy in many of these countries and processes of transitional justice through its various mechanisms. The popular election of officials through electoral processes that are universal, transparent and competitive undoubtedly represents great progress, although it is one step of many towards the construction of broadly representative systems. Challenges include the persistence of great historical debts in the area of the representation of excluded and discriminated groups in the region as well as the satisfaction of their social, economic and cultural rights.

One immediate consequence is that the safeguards necessary to ensure the independence of judges have not been consolidated, which undermines the balance of powers and impartiality of judicial systems. In the same sense, the main challenges of some countries’ judicial branches are related to their own institutional weakness as well as the processes for the election, appointment, and removal of judges. Lack of balance among government branches, lack of judicial independence, the absence of transparency, obstacles in access to justice, judicial selectiveness, the politicization of the justice system, and high levels of impunity are signs of the difficulties that some States in the region are facing.

The diverse economic challenges in the region have had a particular impact in some countries in terms of

decreased public resources available for meeting citizens' needs, mainly economic, social, cultural and environmental needs. This has a particularly serious effect on sectors of the population who are living in poverty and extreme poverty. The effect of emerging issues has also been observed, for example, the effects of climate change and the human rights impacts related to business activities.

In addition, the difficult economic-financial situation of some countries in the region has heightened social unrest. Economic adjustments have caused confrontations between groups in favor of and opposed to the measures that governments adopt. In addition to social protests, situations of conflict have been observed that particularly affect indigenous peoples, Afro-Descendants, rural communities, and other social and union movements. The States' responses to social conflicts vary by country. However, in an important number of countries in the region there is a trend towards the excessive use of force and restrictions on the rights to social protest, freedoms and expression.

In that context, threats, criminalization, reprisals, and violence against members of various historically discriminated groups and particularly human rights defenders are exacerbated and deepened in the Americas. The work of defending human rights, particularly the rights of indigenous peoples, Afro-Descendant communities, rural communities, and the right to a healthy environment, have translated into numerous victims killed in Central and South America. The failures that affect many justice systems in the region result a large number of these crimes remaining in impunity, or waiting for justice that is slow to arrive.

While the press has become a fundamental factor in the struggle against corruption and abuse of authority, the evidence gathered suggests that over the past few years the issue of violence against journalists in the Americas has become more serious. Various countries of the region register elevated rates of murders of and aggressions against journalists for reasons related to the exercise of freedom of expression. Despite the seriousness of these crimes and the efforts undertaken by some States to address them, those responsible for these attacks enjoy impunity.

Over the past few years there has been a tendency

toward an upswing in discourses of hatred against migrants or discourses based on race and ethnicity, which has been joined by an increase in the numbers of hate crimes and diverse forms of harassment of these individuals. Human mobility is a natural and historical phenomenon in the world that is caused by various factors such as violence, war, social vulnerabilities, and limited opportunities for development in the place of origin. Migrants and other persons in the context of human mobility face complex processes of adaptation and uprooting, and also have to confront a critical situation of rejection. Nationalism based on xenophobia and discrimination has promoted the passage of laws and public policies oriented towards stigmatizing and criminalizing migrants and their families. In these contexts, the children of migrants, accompanied and unaccompanied, suffer the consequences in very specific ways.

In some sub-regions, this context is aggravated by the high rate of violence which affects the exercise of fundamental rights of the population. Institutional violence by state actors such as arbitrary arrests, torture, extrajudicial executions, human trafficking, forced disappearances and internal and cross-border displacement (by police, army, prison authorities, migration authorities and other state security forces) and violence by non-state actors (drug traffickers, illegal armed groups, paramilitaries and gangs) are important factors in this complex scenario. In this context, police repression and the disproportionate use of force are affecting populations in a situation of vulnerability such as those who live in poverty, indigenous peoples, Afro-Descendent communities, rural communities, union members, women, children and adolescents, migrants, refugees, stateless persons, internally displaced persons, and LGBTI persons. The situation of those deprived of liberty is another reflection of the seriousness of the current context. In many countries in the region, inmates experience conditions of acute overcrowding and lack access to basic hygiene and healthcare with the corollary of high rates of prison violence.

The foregoing factors exacerbate the tensions, conflicts and social confrontations in which the State has a key role in preventing violence. However, rather than focusing on preventing the factors that generate violence and protecting groups at greater risk of being affected by violence, a significant number of States in the region opt to focus on the implementation of

“hardline” policies to strengthen the role of security forces and increase the use of criminal law as a mechanism for controlling social unrest. As a result, public budgets for security forces and the acquisition of arms and ammunition tend to be strengthened instead of public policies designed to prevent insecurity and violence.

The sum of all of these elements and others create a complex scenario for the protection and defense of human rights in the region.

For the purposes of achieving the final goal of the IAHR, through the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan the IACHR shall seek to optimize and mainstream all of the mechanisms for providing timely responses to emerging situations; guarantee effective access to inter-American justice for victims of human rights violations in a more efficient and rapid manner; articulate and coordinate with the States and their diverse institutions as well as civil society organizations, academic and other international, regional, and sub-regional agencies in order to strengthen societies based on a culture of human rights and respect for differences that have national, regional and international mechanisms for protection of rights and peaceful and just resolution of their conflicts.





CONSULTATION OF STATES

Strategic Plan

»»»» 2017-2021

I. MISSION

To stimulate awareness and promote the observance and defense of human rights in each and every one of the States of the Americas in accordance with the highest international standards in order to safeguard the dignity of all people and consolidate the rule of law and democracy.

II. VISION

To be a leading autonomous and independent organ in the effective and timely promotion and protection of human rights in the Americas with a focus on populations in a situation of vulnerability through the development and application of the highest standards that guarantee all rights for all people.

III. INSTITUTIONAL VALUES

Independence and autonomy in its functions

Leadership in the establishment of international human rights standards

Commitment to victims of human rights violations

Permanent dialogue with social actors and Member States

Diversity, equity, impartiality, integrity, and responsibility in its work

Excellence in results

Transparency, participation, and accountability in management



161 SESSION WASHINGTON DC / Credit: Daniel Cima/IACHR

IV. PRIORITY TOPICS AND POPULATIONS

VI. PRIORITY TOPICS AND POPULATIONS

In order to carry out its work, the IACHR has decided to prioritize the following issues for the 2017-2021 period, some of which it has addressed over time through its Rapporteurships. These priorities are described below, and other populations of special interest are included, such as persons with disabilities, older persons, and the issue of memory, truth and justice.

It is important for the IACHR to have a multidimensional strategy on all of these issues, including the development of new standards, work with the States to promote their implementation, and dissemination of knowledge on the new conventions.

In the context of this work, the IACHR considers the universal, indivisible and interdependent nature of all human rights and recognizes the close link between the protection of civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights, as well as the issue of memory, truth and justice. Its objective is to ensure that all of the work is carried out in coordination and strategically considering principles of equality and non-discrimination and the intersection of identities and risks that can accentuate human rights violations against diverse persons, groups, and collectivities in the hemisphere.

The IACHR will also consider the indispensable connection between the protections recognized in the Inter-American system and the universal human rights system, and that close collaboration with all of the regional protection systems and UN mechanisms serves to strengthen progress on human rights in the hemisphere.

Indigenous Peoples

The goal of the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was created in 1990, is to provide special attention to the situation of indigenous peoples in the Americas, who are especially exposed to human rights violations due to their situation of vulnerability, structural discrimination and risk, and to strengthen, promote, and systematize the work of the Inter-American Commission on this issue.

Based on the main challenges that have been observed in the region, the Rapporteurship will seek to implement activities that allow it to address: (i) obstacles to and full guarantee of the right of

indigenous peoples to their lands and natural resources, particularly in view of extractive activities, development and investment in the region; (ii) challenges in the implementation of all of the dimensions of the right to prior, free, informed and culturally appropriate consultation, to consent and to effective participation in decisions that are relevant to indigenous peoples; (iii) the obstacles that indigenous authorities and leaders face in the defense of their rights such as threats, murders and incidents of criminalization; (iv) structural, generalized and intersectional discrimination faced by indigenous peoples, including indigenous women; (v) institutional, cultural, linguistic, economic and geographic barriers in access to justice; and (vi) obstacles in the exercise of the economic, social and cultural rights of indigenous peoples, such as their rights to water, a clean environment, healthcare and others.

Women

The IACHR established its Rapporteurship on the Rights of Women in 1994 in order to focus specialized attention on the obstacles and barriers that prevent

women from freely and fully exercising their human rights. The Rapporteurship was created to review the degree to which the legislation and practices of Member States meet the general obligations of regional human rights instruments, especially the

Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará).

The Rapporteurship will prioritize the main challenges that continue to prevent women from fully exercising their rights in the region. The Rapporteurship's activities during the period covered by this plan will focus on the following issues: (i) the prevalence of forms of extreme violence against women in the region, including physical, psychological, sexual, economic, spiritual, obstetric, institutional and other forms; (ii) failure of States to act with due diligence including to prevent, investigate, punish, and provide reparations in cases of human rights violations against women and to guarantee timely access to justice and information held by state entities that is key for the exercise of their human rights; (iii) multiple forms of

discrimination that affect women, which generate increased vulnerability for indigenous, Afro-descendant and disabled women, women living with HIV/AIDS, children, lesbians and trans women among others; (iv) challenges in the protection and exercise of the sexual and reproductive rights of women; (v) the triple condition of risk that women human rights defenders face because of their work as leaders, the cases they handle and their sex and gender; and (vi) obstacles for the exercise of economic, social and cultural rights by women in areas such as healthcare, education, labor and access to and control of economic resources.

Migrants, refugees, stateless persons, victims of human trafficking and internally displaced persons

The Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families was created in 1996 to promote and protect the rights of the growing number of migrant workers in the continent. In 2012, the IACHR decided to modify the mandate of the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (now the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants) in order to respond to the multiple challenges posed by human mobility in the region as a result of international, internal, forced and voluntary migration. The current mandate is focused on respect for and guaranteeing the rights of migrants and their families, asylum seekers, refugees, stateless persons, victims of human trafficking, individuals who are internally displaced and other groups of vulnerable people in the context of human mobility.

The Rapporteurship has identified a series of persistent challenges in the region and will mainly work on the following topics: (i) the profound challenges for the protection of the human rights of refugees and the internal displaced in the region and the obstacles that these individuals face in terms of accessing effective protection in the territory in which they find themselves; (ii) the existence of diverse forms of discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes and other forms of violence against migrants, internally displaced persons, refugees and others in a situation of vulnerability in the context of human mobility; (iii) laws, administrative practices and judicial decisions that disproportionately affect the capacity of persons or populations of a given nationality to enjoy their human rights; (iv) the automatic and generalized use of migratory detention, summary and arbitrary deportations, and lack of alternatives to detention; (v) barriers in access to justice, legal aid, and in the area of due process guarantees; and (vi) obstacles to the exercise of economic, social and cultural rights and insufficient policies for the integration of migrants and others in a situation of vulnerability in the context of human mobility.

Freedom of expression

The Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression was created in 1997 as a permanent office with its own organic structure and functional independence that acts with the support of and within the context of the IACHR. Its purpose is to encourage the hemispheric defense of the right to freedom of thought and expression given its fundamental role in the consolidation and development of the democratic system as well as in the protection, guarantee, and promotion of the other human rights. Since its inception, the Special Rapporteurship has enjoyed the support of the OAS member states, observer states, civil society organizations, media, journalists and, principally, victims of violations of the right to freedom of expression.

Twenty years after the creation of the Special Rapporteurship, the region has made significant strides in the recognition and protection of the right to freedom of expression. The passage of 23 laws on access to information in countries around the region and decriminalization of the offense of “desacato” (criminal defamation) reflect the impact of the

Inter-American system on the promotion of the right to freedom of expression in the Americas. However, challenges remain. These include the alarming number of murders, attacks and arrests of journalists and their impunity; the criminalization of political criticism and opinion; repression of social protest; obstacles to the promotion of media diversity and pluralism; disproportionate barriers in access to information sought by members of historically marginalized or discriminated groups; and the opportunities and challenges that the development of the Internet has presented for the exercise of freedom of expression.

Attentive to these challenges and in order to comply with its mandate, over the next years the Special Rapporteurship plans to focus its work on strengthening States capacities to create and maintain, on the normative level and in practice, an environment that is safe for those who exercise freedom of expression, particularly the eradication of violence against and criminalization of journalists; the implementation of laws on access to information as part of the commitments expressed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the promotion of diversity and pluralism in the media both online and offline; and the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of expression in the digital age.

Children and adolescents

The Commission created the Rapporteurship on the Rights of the Child in 1998 in order to strengthen and promote the human rights of children and adolescents within the jurisdiction of the OAS member states.

For the execution of the 2017-2021 Plan, the Rapporteurship will focus on: (i) the dissemination of its report on national systems for the comprehensive protection of the rights of children and adolescents and recommendations for strengthening such systems; (ii) in the area of juvenile justice, the drafting of a report to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the IACHR report on Juvenile Justice and Human Rights in the Americas (2011), which will contribute to the process of drafting a UN Global Study on this topic, as well as disseminating the report and recommendations

contained in the report on the treatment of children as adults in the U.S. adult criminal justice system; (iii) follow up on citizen security policies and “hardline” policies, taking as reference the IACHR’s recommendations on the topic; (iv) efforts to advance standards in the area of sexual violence against girls and adolescents and all of the human rights issues associated with this form of violence; (v) the guarantee of sexual and reproductive rights, linked to alarming rates of child pregnancy, common-law relationships and early and forced marriages; (vi) monitoring the problem of child labor exploitation identified in the region; (vii) violence in the educational sphere and school bullying; (viii) development of standards in the area of the media and the rights of children in collaboration with the Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression; and (ix) monitoring of the issues of migrant children in collaboration with the Rapporteurship on Migrant Persons.

Human Rights Defenders

In 2011, the IACHR created the Rapporteurship on Human Rights Defenders based on the denunciations received and in order to provide greater visibility for the important role of defenders and justice operators in the construction of a democratic society in which the rule of law is fully in force.

In view of the main challenges identified in the region, the Rapporteurship seeks to focus attention on the following issues: (i) the prevalence of forms of violence against human rights defenders in the region,

who have been subjected to a high level of aggression, threats, and murders as well as a lack of investigation, prosecution and punishment of those acts, along with the criminalization of activity in defense of human rights; (ii) the lack of adequate and sufficient policies, measures, and mechanisms to structurally address the situation of risk in which human rights defenders find themselves; (iii) threats against and murders of justice operators in the region; (iv) undue use of penal law to criminalize human rights defenders; (v) restrictions on freedom of association and meeting; (vi) the special vulnerability of and risks faced by defenders working on issues concerning the environment, indigenous communities, the LGBTI population and the rights of women; and (vii) the lack of guarantees for the independence of justice operators.

Persons deprived Of liberty

The Rapporteurship has as its general mandate the implementation of activities to protect and promote the rights of persons deprived of liberty. Since its creation in 2004, it has monitored the situation of incarcerated persons throughout the region through working visits to prisons.

During the development of its activities, the Rapporteurship has identified a set of important challenges in the region that it will emphasize during the period covered by this plan. These are: (i) the

excessive use of pretrial detention in the majority of the States of the region, which has a direct impact on prison overcrowding; (ii) the main challenges in the implementation of alternatives to pretrial detention; (iii) the situation of overcrowding and overpopulation; (iv) conditions of imprisonment that do not guarantee the lives and personal integrity of inmates; (v) the lack of mechanisms for fully guaranteeing the human rights of groups and populations in the greatest situation of risk such as women, indigenous peoples, Afro-Descendants, LGBTI persons, and children and adolescents; (vi) corruption and lack of transparency in prison management; and (vii) the situation of economic, social and cultural rights of persons deprived of liberty.

Afro-Descendants

The Inter-American Commission created the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Afro-Descendants and against Racial Discrimination in 2005 in order to raise awareness of the duty of the States to protect the rights of persons of African descent and eliminate all forms of racial discrimination, analyze the challenges confronting the region, and formulate recommendations on measures and best practices for overcoming them.

During the period covered by this plan, the Rapporteurship seeks to continue to work on the protection of the rights of

Afro-Descendants, focusing on the following challenges in the region: (i) generalized, interrelated, and structural discrimination and racism towards persons of African descent including women, children, and adolescents; (ii) accentuated risk of persons of certain racial or ethnic origin to be victims of excessive use of force by the police and other forms of criminalization; (iii) the existence of laws, administrative practices, and judicial decisions that disproportionately affect the capacity of individuals or populations of certain ethnic or racial origin to exercise their human rights; and (iv) obstacles to the exercise of the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of persons of African descent.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex persons- LGBTI

The Rapporteurship on the Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Persons (LGBTI) began its work in 2014 and addresses issues of sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression and body diversity. Its objective is to address existing challenges in the enjoyment and exercise of human rights at the intersection of sexual orientations, gender identities, non-normative gender expressions and diverse bodies based on priorities it has identified in the region.

For 2017-2021, the activities will mainly focus on the following thematic lines: (i) killings and acts of violence against individuals who defend the human rights of LGBTI persons; (ii) the prevalence of multiple forms of violence against LGBTI people in the hemisphere, including physical, psychological, sexual, economic, institutional and other manifestations of

violence; (iii) the pathologization of LGBTI adults, adolescents and children with a special focus on non-consensual medical practices on intersex children; (iv) the failure to comply with due diligence, including the prevention, gathering of statistics, investigation, punishment and reparation of human rights violations against LGBTI individuals and their family members; (v) the cycle of poverty and exclusion that affects LGBTI people in the hemisphere; (vi) the human rights of trans individuals, particularly in relation to economic, social and cultural rights (work, education, healthcare and housing; with a cross-cutting theme of the recognition of the right to gender identity); (vii) setbacks and obstacles in the recognition and protection of the rights of LGBTI persons from conservative groups; and (viii) the existence of good practices implemented by the Member States of the OAS in regard to the recognition of the rights of LGBTI persons.

Economic, social, cultural and environmental rights

In 2012, the Commission decided to create the Unit on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR Unit). In 2014, it decided to transform the Unit into the Special Rapporteurship on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights (Special Rapporteurship on ESCER), initiating a process for its creation and seeking the necessary resources. In the context of the new Strategic Plan, the IACHR decided to launch the Special Rapporteurship on ESCER in 2017 as a major step in the history of human rights in the region.

In that sense, a series of persistent challenges has been identified in the region. The Special Rapporteurship will continue to work mainly on the following issues: the situation of poverty in the region; rights to water and food; obstacles in access to justice in cases of violations of economic, social, cultural and environmental rights; special threats to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights of vulnerable individuals, collectivities and groups in a

situation of vulnerability such as women, children and adolescents, persons living with HIV, indigenous peoples, the LGBTI population and Afro-Descendants, among others; obstacles to the right of access to information and participation in relation to economic, social and cultural rights; and violations in the context of activities conducted by companies, particularly in regard to extraction, development and investment projects. The ESCER Rapporteurship will coordinate with the 2030 Agenda in order to accomplish its objectives.

To meet these challenges, the IACHR considers that over the next years there are four categories of obligations of States in this area that must be analyzed and developed: (i) the state obligation to adopt measures to eradicate situations of structural discrimination regarding the enjoyment and exercise of economic, social, cultural and environmental rights, which is an immediate obligation and one that is independent from the resources available in the State in question; (ii) the prohibition of the adoption of regressive measures regarding ESCE rights; (iii) the state obligation to take progressive measures in the area of ESCE rights; (iv) and obligations deriving from the duty to guarantee the satisfaction of minimum content of each economic, social, cultural and

environmental right for the inhabitants subject to their jurisdictions. In addition, the Special Rapporteurship proposes to move forward in the treatment of national and transnational companies and their impacts on human rights based on the UN's "Guiding Principles on Businesses and Human Rights" in order to develop inter-American standards in this regard; develop and strengthen inter-American

standards related to the right to dignified and equitable working conditions and the right to freedom of association for unions; as well as the human right to a healthy environment and emerging challenges concerning climate change.

Persons with disabilities

Reaffirming that persons with disabilities have the same human rights and fundamental freedoms as other persons and that these rights, including the right to be free from discrimination based on a disability, emanate from the dignity and equality that are inherent in all people, the IACHR has been working on the topic since the 1990s in the individual petition and case system, hearings and precautionary members, among others, generating an emerging body of case law on the topic.

The prioritization of this topic points out the need to generate the technical and institutional capacity necessary to ensure effective protection at the

regional level, new mechanisms, and to identify synergies for moving forward on the construction of inter-American standards in the context of the Inter-American Conventions, particularly the Inter-American Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities and the more recent Inter-American Convention Against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance. The IACHR has observed first hand that the situation of persons with disabilities continues to be invisible within the agendas of the States of the Americas and that their human rights are being violated. Through the prioritization of the situation of this population, the IACHR will seek to make visible the challenges that these persons face and to promote policies and practices so that the States provide effective protection.

Older Persons

In order to promote, protect and ensure the equitable recognition and full enjoyment and exercise of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of older persons and contribute to their full inclusion, integration and participation in society, the OAS has approved a new Inter-American Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of Older Persons. Among other things, the Convention establishes older persons' right to care, the need to include and prioritize the issue of aging in public policies, the importance of facilitating the formulation and fulfillment of laws and programs on preventing abuse, abandonment, neglect, mistreatment and violence

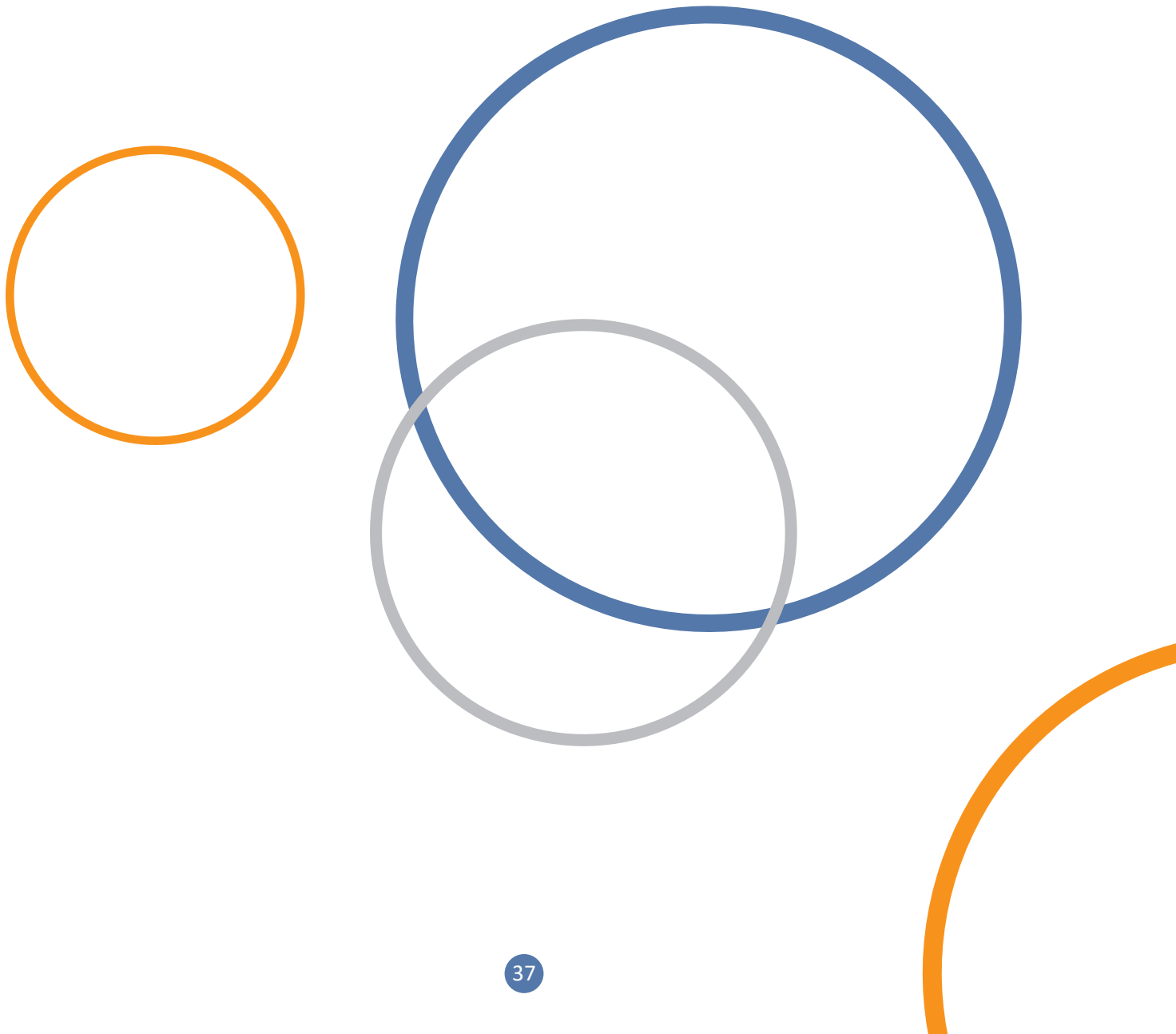
against older adults, and the need for national mechanisms that protect their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In regard to the human rights of older persons, the IACHR considers it necessary to identify synergies in order to advance in the construction of inter-American standards in this area as well as the development of new working mechanisms, particularly to promote this new Inter-American Convention on Human Rights. It will be necessary to make visible the situation of older people in the region, promoting their rights and working on the issue in the system of cases, precautionary measures, hearings and monitoring.

Memory, truth And justice

The issue of Memory, Truth and Justice continues to be a challenge in terms of the implementation of judicial and political measures in the countries of the region for reparation of massive human rights violations. The IAHR, through both of its organs, has made a great contribution to these advances, intervening on behalf of the victims and their families, and ensuring that States meet their obligations in accordance with the principles of transitional justice. In recent years some countries of the hemisphere have moved forward with the creation of National

Truth Commissions as well as the opening of historical files containing information on grave human rights violations, recognition of the right to comprehensive reparation (economic, moral and psychological), and a set of policies on memory. However, it is necessary to strengthen and move forward with investigations, trials and sanctions against perpetrators, the material and intellectual authors, of human rights violations, establish guidelines for the treatment of historical archives and preservation of sites of memory and awareness in order to prevent and attack the patterns of structural impunity present in the majority of the countries of the region. There will be an important emphasis on the discussion of structural links between the past and the present.





CIDH
Comisión Interamericana
de Derechos Humanos

Grupo 1-4
Recomendaciones de la mesa
Reda. Reunión de los expertos de
Consejo de Amas

2. Establecer Planes de Acción
- Hacer el Plan para la sostenibilidad
de nuevos casos, Planes
- Crear una Oficina de Respuesta
Inmediata a los peticioneros
3. Sobre medidas cautelares, Hacer
el Plan de cumplimiento
de Medidas
- Generar un sistema de alerta
temprana sobre el cumplimiento
de los Estados en la R.E.
- Reciprocidad con el tema
de plazos
- Colaborar con Estrategia de
Educación, Información y Promoción
de los Derechos Humanos

MESOAMERICAN REGIONAL CONSULTATION

V. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

V. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

The Commission hopes to raise awareness of and have an impact on the human rights agenda and oversee, through its mechanisms and functions, the situation and progress on priority issues in the region. The new Plan also proposes observing some structural aspects in order to follow the degree to which States have moved forward with implementation of their international obligations and inter-American human rights standards.

The issue that is addressed in each one of the priority themes is multidimensional, covering aspects from the use of violence and discrimination with respect to individuals, groups and collectivities in conditions of vulnerability, poverty and exclusion, to the lack of public policies that include a human rights approach and institutional structures that respond to their protection or spaces that ensure that individuals or groups can advance a claim for rights.

Considering this multidimensionality, the IACHR will address each of its priority themes and groups with a broad and cross-cutting approach, recognizing the interdependence of common causes and problems that manifest themselves in different ways, impacting persons and groups in a situation of vulnerability.

The cross-cutting themes, in the use of its diverse mechanisms will be:

A DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONALITY

Restrictions on political rights and freedoms, association and meeting, the limits on freedom of expression and dissemination of thought, the lack of independence of the judicial branch, corruption, the criminalization and repression of protest, the lack of transparency, the influence of organized crime in key State structures, and poverty are signs of the principal challenges in democracies in the Americas.

Through this cross-cutting theme, the Commission

also seeks to examine mechanisms of social participation in order to observe the connection between democratic institutions and the public in order to understand, from a human rights perspective, the necessary relationship between the population and the formal spaces for claiming the effective protection of rights from the State; identify and analyze state strategies for encouraging social participation in the development, implementation, and monitoring of public policies; ensure social participation as a management method; and provide ongoing opportunities for dialogue with civil society, respecting its autonomy, free functioning, and independence, among other points.

B JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE, INDEPENDENCE OF THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE, AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Access to timely, transparent, effective, impartial and non-selective justice continues to be a serious pending issue in the Americas, particularly for persons and groups in a situation of vulnerability. The problems of the judicial systems in the countries of the region include not only the lack of access to justice, but also the lack of independence in the institutions of the judiciary and the public prosecutor's office among other weaknesses.

Included in these weaknesses are the politicization of the justice system; the selectiveness of the system; problems in accessibility and non-discrimination; absence of information, transparency and accountability; impunity in situations of serious human rights violations such as disappearances, executions, torture, among others; and the absence of practices to ensure that judicial decisions review compliance with international human rights obligations as part of the applicable legal framework (control of conventionality). In this context, judicial systems exist in a state of constant tension with other formal and de facto powers, as some sectors seek to influence the independence of judges, prosecutors and public defenders, essential actors for guaranteeing access to justice, effective judicial

protection, and due process.

The IACHR highlights the fundamental role that justice operators play in preserving the rule of law, making it possible for every complaint to follow the correct path through the jurisdictional mechanisms made available by the State. In cases of human rights violations, they make it possible to investigate what happened, effectively punish those responsible and provide reparations while guaranteeing due process to anyone who is subjected to the criminal jurisdiction of the State. In this sense, the guarantee of access to justice and to an independent judiciary and public prosecutor's office is fundamental in the current context and for the coming years; accordingly, it is necessary to identify the obstacles that persist in the Hemisphere for improving access to justice and protection of human rights.

C INSTITUTIONALITY IN HUMAN RIGHTS

In order to analyze how public institutions are responding to human rights issues, it will be important to understand how public policies, laws and institutions in general are set up, their characteristics, and how they are linked. Public and state institutions are understood as the spaces in which public policies are designed, executed and overseen; in all these spheres it is essential that the importance of the promotion and protection of human rights is underscored. Public policies incorporating a focus on human rights guide and coordinate state action to protect and promote these rights, focused on solving issues that are politically defined within a social and economic context. Institutional strengthening in human rights is key to achieve full respect for and implementation of inter-American human rights standards.

A complementary aspect to the perspective on institutions and public policies in human rights is the analysis of fiscal policies and the state budget available to finance human rights. It is necessary to consider whether there are resources allocated and whether they respond to structural issues of human rights in accordance with the goals and objectives that they should pursue, whether they are clearly focused on specific aspects to be addressed and whether their execution can be traceable and transparent in order to measure the impact of public policies on human rights. Fiscal policy can contribute to the redistribution of wealth in order to reduce inequalities; to corrections of market deficiencies and the protection of public property; to the financing of rights according to what is required; and to the promotion of investment in respect for human rights; and to accountability between the State and the public. Those are issues that deserve to be observed given that they directly impact the implementation of human rights. It is important to highlight the importance of the institutional structure of human rights as a State agenda.

D SECURITY AND VIOLENCE

The conditions of insecurity, violence, and crime in the hemisphere are important factors of concern and constitute a complex scenario due to their multiple causes and the interrelation of their diverse forms of expression and other

human rights violations. Policies of control and repression of criminal groups have contributed, in practice, to frequent abuses and arbitrary actions by state security forces; the prioritization of punitive and retributive responses through the criminal justice system and the deprivation of liberty, to the detriment of restorative justice programs, and the logic of social rehabilitation and reintegration, including in the case of adolescents and young people; proposals to reduce

the age of criminal responsibility; and other measures such as executions, arbitrary detentions and forced disappearances; police repression or disproportionate use of force; and overcrowding, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in places of detention. These policies have not, however, adequately addressed the underlying causes of these problems, nor have they focused enough on prevention or programs oriented toward social investment and rights promotion, which results in a loss of trust in State institutions and the rule of law.

Some countries suffer the scourge of violence with greater intensity, particularly due to the presence of non-state criminal actors such as gangs, drug traffickers, and illegal armed groups that engage in illicit activities such as the

trafficking of drugs, arms and people, robbery and extortion, among others. The inadequate response of the State to serious human rights violations contributes to the intensification of the climate of insecurity and violence. The contexts of inequality, violation of rights, loss of legitimacy of State institutions, crime, and violence are intensified by structural situations of socio-economic exclusion and frequently have a differentiated impact on some groups, such as human rights defenders, young persons and adolescents.

This thematic focus seeks to verify issues of prevention of and protection against violence, as well as more global aspects related to citizen security in accordance with States' obligations in the fulfillment of their duty to guarantee human rights.

E DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The hemisphere presents rates of poverty, extreme poverty and profound social gaps that limit access to opportunities in conditions of equity for all persons, particularly for the most vulnerable populations. The protection of and respect for ethnic groups, particularly in cases of macro-projects for development and extraction; challenges with the implementation of the duty to consult with indigenous and tribal peoples in a prior, free and informed manner and to guarantee their participation in all decisions regarding any intervention that

impacts their territories; the impact of climate change on the environment and the violation of the human rights of different groups are some of the recurring problems in the region.

As such, during the 2017-2021 period, the IACHR will coordinate its action with the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda in order to bring together the efforts of the international community, the States, and civil society to generate social development and equity in the Americas, especially for persons and groups subjected to discrimination. The application of the Sustainable Development Goals will inevitably serve to improve human rights as they are connected together within a structure that provides mutual reinforcement.

F GENDER EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Throughout the hemisphere, women and girls continue to face forms of structural discrimination illustrated by acts of violence and inequalities in employment, education, healthcare, political participation and other social scenarios. This situation is particularly acute in the case of women who are indigenous or of African descent, and women who are part of LGBTI communities, among other groups at risk. The perspective of gender and diversity is essential so that all of the human rights strategies that are implemented in the Americas consider the discrimination and gender

stereotypes that have historically affected women, adolescents and girls; problems that have severely impacted the exercise of all of their human rights.

The Commission intends to fully incorporate the transversal perspective of gender, diversity and intercultural respect that should guide all the work oriented towards the respect and guarantee of the advancement of human rights in the Americas. The framework for this action is set by the main inter-American instruments in the area, such as the American Convention and Declaration, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women ("Convention of Belém do Pará"), the Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Related Forms of Intolerance, and the Inter-American Convention against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance, among others.



VI. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAMS

VI. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

The 2017-2021 Strategic Plan is the main institutional management instrument that establishes the priorities the IACHR will implement in order to successfully fulfill its mission and face current and future challenges for addressing and protecting human rights in the hemisphere.

The design of the Strategic Plan uses the principles of results-based management (RBM) and maintains coherence with the IACHR's first Plan (2011-2016) in an effort to continually improve the institution based on collective reflection on the results that it wishes to achieve and how it will achieve them. The strategic objectives and programs guide the changes that the Commission intends to adopt or developing order to improve its operation, results, and desired impacts. The process of change developed over time will allow it to reach these goals and will be complemented by oversight and accountability mechanisms that allow the proper adjustments to be made to the various aspects of the Plan.

This second plan institutionalizes the culture of strategic planning of the IACHR and in this way strengthens the organization itself in order to optimize the use of resources, promote better coordination of its actions, optimize levels of efficiency, and make the results achieved transparent through measurable indicators and concrete goals.

On the basis of the lessons learned from the past Strategic Plan, a contextual analysis, and the reflections shared in the consultation process, this next plan formulates statements of mission, vision and institutional values. It also identifies the priority issues and populations that will be addressed over the next five years along with the transversal themes that will cut across all of its work. Additionally, it reinforces the commitment to the mainstreaming of a gender and diversity perspective in its culture, organizational structure, functioning and mechanisms.

Each program will be translated into its own action plan that will be integrated into the IACHR Strategic Plan in order to design projects and seek complementary resources for their implementation. Following the approval of the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan, two documents will be generated that will put into practice the definitions made in this context: the Program Plans of Action and the Comprehensive Monitoring and Follow-up Plan.

The drafting of the Plans of Action will give concrete form to the lines and definitions contained in the programs of the Strategic Plan and will indicate the specific manner in which the respective programs will be implemented. As such, the following will be defined for each Plan of Action: (i) the products that each program must generate; (ii) the set of activities that must be executed; (iii) the areas responsible; (iv) the timeframes; and (v) the resources necessary to implement them based on the available sources or quantification of the budget where it will be necessary to seek funding. The Plans of Action will be an effective instrument for coordinating all of the activities that are executed in the IACHR in order to achieve the results and fulfill the Strategic Plan. The Plans of Action may produce projects specific to certain programs or cross-cutting projects.


At the same time, based on the lessons learned and advances produced over the past few years, the IACHR will focus on improving the capacity for monitoring and follow-up on the Strategic Plan with accountability mechanisms for the progress made and analysis of the challenges faced in implementation. The Monitoring and Follow-up Plan and evaluation of its Plans of Action will support the implementation of the Strategic Plan and alignment of resources in order to achieve the expected results.

One of the components of the Monitoring and Follow-up Plan will be the definition of indicators. The indicators will allow a rapid and accurate vision of the status of a particular situation to be analyzed, which in this case will be the progress of the implementation of the Strategic Plan. Indicators, baselines, and expected goals for each measurement period will be defined for each program.

This monitoring and follow up will provide a better analysis of the strategic context of the Commission, and the information generated will serve as the basis for adjusting the strategy and execution on an ongoing basis. The promotion of innovation, and evaluation and active mitigation of the multifaceted risks that affect the results and programs, as well as the documenting of lessons learned will also form part of the periodic analysis of the IACHR. As such, over the course of this Strategic Plan, a process of ongoing evaluation and learning will be deployed.

The Plan sets out the format of the global strategy to be followed with the description of the **five Strategic Objectives and 21 work Programs** that it contains, which will allow the expected results to be achieved. These programs have logical coherence on four levels that are transversally applicable to each Objective. The entire Plan is linked transversally by a **21st Special Program** that seeks to substantially improve the monitoring of the recommendations issued by the IACHR at all levels.

As such, there are five Strategic Objectives and 21 Programs that will enable the IACHR, in 2021, to reach its goals in terms of the coordination of its mandates and functions and mechanisms aimed at avoiding setbacks and proactively strengthening the area of human rights in the hemisphere in order to improve the levels of **effectiveness of the Inter-American Human Rights System as a pillar and common commitment in the Americas.**



Strategic Objective 1 seeks to contribute to the development of a more effective and accessible system of inter-American justice in order to overcome practices of impunity in the region and achieve comprehensive reparations for victims through decisive measures for the strengthening of the petition and case system, friendly settlements and precautionary measures. SO1 will have the following programs: P1: Special Procedural Delay Reduction Program, P2: Program to Expand the Use of Friendly Settlements, P3: Program to Strengthen Precautionary Measures, and P4: Program for Transparency and Access to Information

1

Strategic Objective 2 seeks to have an impact on prevention measures and the factors that lead to human rights violations through the coordinated use of IACHR mechanisms and functions to achieve improved capacity for monitoring and coordinating relevant, timely and appropriate responses. SO2 will have the following programs: P5: Program to Improve the Scope and Impact of the Monitoring of Human Rights Situations by Theme and Country, P6: Special Rapporteurships Program, P7: Rapid and Integrated Response Coordination Unit, and P8: Integrated Information Analysis and Management Platform (IIAMP).

2

Strategic Objective 3 aims to promote democracy, human dignity, equality, justice, and fundamental freedoms based on an active contribution to the strengthening of State institutions and public policies with a human rights approach in accordance with inter-American norms and standards and to the development of the capacities of social and academic organizations and networks to act in defense of human rights. SO3 will have the following programs: P9 Expanded Program for Training and Promotion of Thought and Culture on Human Rights, P10: Program for Attention and Collaboration with Central America and the Caribbean, P11: Technical Cooperation on Institutional and Public Policies with a Human Rights Approach and P12: Program on Social Participation and Contribution to Capacity Building for Actions by Social and Academic Organizations and Networks in Defense of Human Rights

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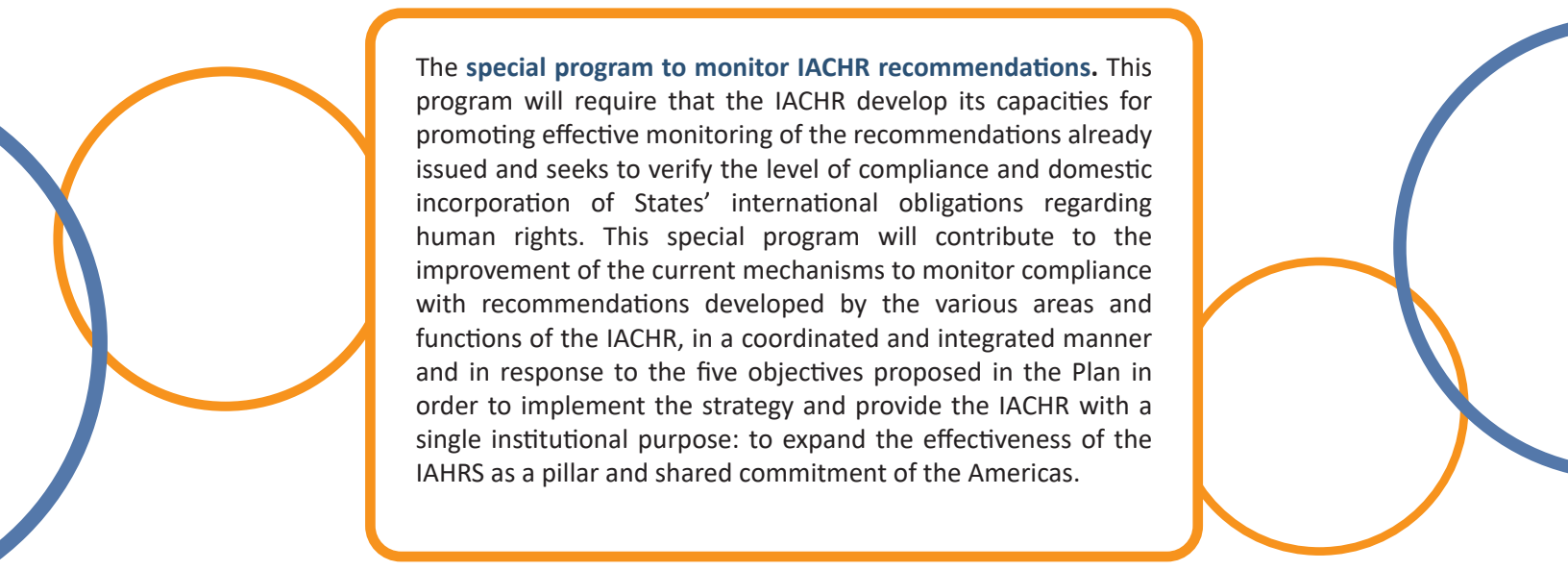
Strategic Objective 4 intends to promote the universalization of the Inter-American Human Rights System through coordinated initiatives with the Inter-American Court, and to cooperate with other international, regional, and sub-regional human rights agencies and mechanisms. SO4 will have the following programs: P13: Cooperation and Coordination with the Universal Human Rights System and other international agencies, P14: Program of Coordination and Complementarity with Regional Systems and Sub-Regional Mechanisms in the Area of Human Rights, P15: Mechanism of Protection for Human Rights Defenders in the Americas (with the OHCHR) and P16: Program for the Universalization and Coordination of the IAHR with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

4

Strategic Objective 5 requires the IACHR to guarantee the human resources, infrastructure, technology, and budget necessary for full implementation of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights' mandate and functions by means of results-based institutional management for efficient, effective and measurable institutional development. SO5 will have the following Programs: P17: Institutional Management and Development Program, P18: Program of Technological Innovation Applied to Human Rights, P19: Financial Sustainability Plan and P20: Center for Attention to Users of the System.

5

Finally, and in order to ensure that the search for effectiveness has a viable instrument to promote the new Plan, the IACHR will develop a special shared program that cuts across all of the Strategic Objectives and Programs:



The **special program to monitor IACHR recommendations**. This program will require that the IACHR develop its capacities for promoting effective monitoring of the recommendations already issued and seeks to verify the level of compliance and domestic incorporation of States' international obligations regarding human rights. This special program will contribute to the improvement of the current mechanisms to monitor compliance with recommendations developed by the various areas and functions of the IACHR, in a coordinated and integrated manner and in response to the five objectives proposed in the Plan in order to implement the strategy and provide the IACHR with a single institutional purpose: to expand the effectiveness of the IAHRs as a pillar and shared commitment of the Americas.

The 21 Strategic Objectives Programs were designed to contemplate 4 logical lines for their establishment: strategic measures linked to improving current practices; strategic measures designed to make a new contribution to or reformulation of an area of action; measures for contributing to structural issues in the area of human rights; and measures related to conditions for user access to the IACHR. As such, the Strategic Objectives can be read vertically or horizontally.

Mission: To stimulate awareness and promote the observance and defense of human rights in each and every one of the States of the Americas in accordance with the highest international standards in order to safeguard the dignity of all people and consolidate the rule of law and democracy.

Vision: To be a leading autonomous and independent organ in the effective and timely promotion and protection of human rights in the Americas with a focus on populations in a situation of vulnerability through the development and application of the highest standards that guarantee all rights for all people.

Values: Independence and autonomy in its functions; Leadership in the establishment of international human rights standards; Commitment to victims of human rights violations; Permanent dialogue with social actors and Member States; Diversity, equity, impartiality, integrity, and responsibility in its work; Excellence in results; Transparency, participation, and accountability in management

GENERAL SO: "To stimulate the effectiveness of the Inter-American Human Rights System as a pillar and shared commitment of the Americas"

Strategic Objectives

SO1: To contribute to the development of more effective and accessible inter-American justice in order to overcome practices of impunity in the region and achieve comprehensive reparation for victims through decisive measures for the strengthening of the petition and case system, friendly settlements and precautionary measures.

SO2: To have an impact on prevention measures and the factors that lead to human rights violations through the coordinated use of IACHR mechanisms and functions to achieve improved capacity for monitoring and coordinating relevant, timely and appropriate responses.

SO3: To promote democracy, human dignity, equality, justice, and fundamental freedoms based on an active contribution to the strengthening of State institutions and public policies with a human rights approach in accordance with inter-American norms and standards and to the development of the capacities of social and academic organizations and networks to act in defense of human rights.

SO4: To promote the universalization of the Inter-American Human Rights System through coordinated initiatives with the Inter-American Court, and to cooperate with other international, regional, and sub-regional human rights agencies and mechanisms.

SO5: To guarantee the human resources, infrastructure, technology, and budget necessary for full implementation of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights' mandate and functions by means of results-based institutional management for efficient, effective and measurable institutional development.

Improvements

P1: Special Procedural Delay Reduction Program

P5: Program to Improve the Scope and Impact of the Monitoring of Human Rights Situations by Theme and Country

P9: Expanded Program for Training and Promotion of Thought and Culture on Human Rights

P13: Cooperation and Coordination Program with the Universal Human Rights System and other international agencies

P17: Institutional Management and Development Program

Innovations

P2: Program to Expand the Use of Friendly Settlements

P6: Special Rapporteurs Program

P10: Program for Attention to and Collaboration with Central America and the Caribbean

P14: Program of Coordination and Complementarity with regional systems and sub-regional mechanisms in the area of human rights

P18: Program of Technological Innovation Applied to Human Rights

Structural Contributions

P3: Program for Strengthen Precautionary Measures

P7: Rapid and Integrated Response Coordination Unit

P11: Technical Cooperation Program on Institutional and Public Policies with a Human Rights Approach

P15: Mechanism of Protection for Human Rights Defenders in the Americas (with the OHCHR)

P19: Financial Sustainability Plan

More Accessibility

P4: Program for Transparency and Access to Information

P8: Integrated Information Analysis and Management Platform (IIAMP)

P12: Program on Social Participation and Contribution to Capacity Building for Actions by Social and Academic Organizations and Networks in defense of human rights

P16: Program for the Universalization and Coordination of the IAHRs with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights

P20: Center for Attention to Users of the System

P21: Special Program to Monitor IACHR Recommendations

Priority Issues

Afro-Descendants

Persons Deprived of Liberty

Migrants, Refugees, Victims of Human Trafficking

Children and Adolescents

LGBTI

Indigenous Peoples

Freedom of Expression

Persons with Disabilities

Women

Memory, Truth and Justice

ESKER

Older Persons

Cross-cutting Themes

Democratic Institutional

Judicial Independence, Independence of the Public Prosecutor's Office, and Access To Justice

Institutionality in Human Rights

Security and Violence

Development and Human Rights

Gender Equality and Diversity

CHART

GENERAL SO: "To stimulate the effectiveness of the Inter-American Human Rights System as a pillar and shared commitment of the Americas."

<p>SO1: To contribute to the development of more effective and accessible inter-American justice in order to overcome practices of impunity in the region and achieve comprehensive reparation for victims through decisive measures for the strengthening to the petition and case system, friendly settlements and precautionary measures.</p>	<p>SO2: To have an impact on prevention measures and the factors that lead to human rights violations through the coordinated use of IACHR mechanisms and functions to achieve improved capacity for monitoring and coordinating relevant, timely and appropriate responses.</p>	<p>SO3: To promote democracy, human dignity, equality, justice, and fundamental freedoms based on an active contribution to the strengthening of State institutions and public policies with a human rights approach in accordance with inter-American norms and standards and to the development of the capacities of social and academic organizations and networks to act in defense of human rights.</p>	<p>SO4: To promote the universalization of the Inter-American Human Rights System through coordinated initiatives with the Inter-American Court, and to cooperate with other international, regional, and sub-regional human rights agencies and mechanisms.</p>	<p>SO5: To guarantee the human resources, infrastructure, technology, and budget necessary for full implementation of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights' mandate and functions by means of results-based institutional management for efficient, effective and measurable institutional development.</p>
<p>P1: Special Procedural Delay Reduction Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strict application of the requirements to initiate the processing of petitions - Policy of final deactivation and archiving of matters - Systematization of criteria for exhaustion of remedies and timely filing - Specialization by portfolio at all stages - Creation of report formats at the merits stage regarding recurring issues - Review of case portfolios in meetings with States - Development of country-based strategies - Unit for management unit - Resolve the current delay with measures aimed at progressively achieving the goal of processing petitions at all stages within 5 years 	<p>P5: Program to Improve the Scope and Impact of the Monitoring of Human Rights Situations by Theme and Country</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Integration of the methodology and work processes for thematic and country monitoring - Methodology of context analysis (causes and actors) - Mapping of trends and structural situations - Identification of protection gaps - Ad hoc mechanisms for emergency situations - Construction of country and thematic strategies - Regular working visits - Calendar of decentralized activities - Action Plans with minimum equitable funding base for balancing the thematic Rapporteurships - Redesign of Annual Report - Inclusion of 3 new priority themes: Memory, Truth and Justice; rights of Persons with Disabilities; and rights of Older Persons 	<p>P9: Expanded Program for Training and Promotion of Thought and Culture on Human Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinated activities with the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights - Awareness and prevention campaigns - Annual Inter American Human Rights Conference - Seminars, events - Activities to disseminate reports - Activities in human rights education - Training policy and guidelines - Training course on public policies in human rights - Training courses on the IAHR and Inter-American standards - Thematic training courses - Support national and regional moot courts 	<p>P13: Cooperation and Coordination Program with the Universal Human Rights System and other international agencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of common points of interest - Cooperation agreements and projects - Joint working agenda, activities and responses - Exchange of staff, good practices and lessons learned - Promote joint sessions and hearings with the participation of United Nations experts in IACHR activities and vice versa - Focal point in the Human Rights Council and the OHCHR Office - Roadmap with Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council - Coordination with other international organizations and multilateral financial institutions with a human rights agenda 	<p>P17: Institutional Management and Development Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More integrated and horizontal administrative structure - Management model based on dialogue and participation - Work processes based on result-based management - Coordinated project management - Evaluation and accountability system - Mechanism for monitoring the Strategic Plan - Communications strategy and plan - Human resources management plan for an optimized work environment and promotion of professional incentives and recognition - Policy on gender equality, inclusion and diversity among staff - Program to expand the IACHR's public presence in the region: periods of sessions away from IACHR headquarters

<p>P2: Program to Expand the Use of Friendly Settlements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updated protocol and application methodology for friendly settlements - Use of new practices and alternative means of conflict resolution - Exchange and dissemination of good practices in friendly settlements 	<p>P6: Special Rapporteurships Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuation of the two Special Rapporteurships: Freedom of Expression and Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights - Strengthening of the Annual Action Plans of the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression - Implementation of the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights and of its Annual Action Plans 	<p>P10: Program for Attention to and Collaboration with Central America and the Caribbean</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definition of an outreach strategy in accordance with IACHR mandates - Technical cooperation in the field of development and human rights - Special projects focused on the cross-cutting themes of the Strategic Plan: democratic institutions, public institutionalidad in human rights, participation mechanisms and strengthening of civil society, financing of human rights, judicial independence, access to justice, security, and institutional violence 	<p>P14: Program of Coordination and Complementarity with regional systems and sub-regional mechanisms in the area of human rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of common points of interest - Strengthening of institutional relations with European, African, Arab and Asian systems/mechanisms for the protection of human rights - Program of coordination and complementarity with sub-regional human rights mechanisms in the Americas (CAN, CARICOM, MERCOSUR, SICA, UNASUR) to avoid duplication of efforts and generate optimization 	<p>P18: Program of Technological Innovation Applied to Human Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the promotion of human rights - Electronic processing system and digitalization of all procedural stages - Digitalization of files - Interactive system for searching through decisions and recommendations - Automation and integration of work processes - New management systems - Technology innovation and communications plan - Technological platform for information management - Technological base for center for attention to users
<p>P3: Program for Strengthen Precautionary Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Systematization of criteria and procedures - Compendium of precedents in the use of precautionary measures - Methodology for the initial study reviewed to ensure due prioritization - Manual on the Use of Precautionary Measures 	<p>P7: Rapid and Integrated Response Coordination Unit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordination of the timely use of IACHR mechanisms (hearings, reports, cases, visits, precautionary measures, press releases, requests for information, etc.) - Coordination of priorities and strategies for impact - Early alert for emergency situations - Generation of rapid responses - General coordination of programs - Coordination of the special monitoring program - Integration of the general work agenda - Coordination and integration of projects - Coordination of internal work committees 	<p>P11: Technical Cooperation Program on Institutionalidad and Public Policies with a Human Rights Approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation of diplomatic/institutional dialogue sessions - Cooperation for strengthening state institutions on human rights and national human rights plans - Cooperation with national justice systems, public prosecutor's offices and ombudspersons - Technical assistance in public policies with a human rights approach - Exchange of good practices and lessons learned - Associate personnel - Closer relations with national human rights institutions and autonomous institutions 	<p>P15: Mechanism of Protection for Human Rights Defenders in the Americas (with the OHCHR)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exchange of information and joint communications - Joint report on protection mechanisms - Manuals of good practices on protection - Training of actors with differentiated approach for groups at special risk - Promotional campaign 	<p>P19: Financial Sustainability Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint proposal with the Inter-American Court to strengthen financing through the regular fund - Funding strategy with state, private and collective actors - Sustainable Funding Plan aimed at diversification of sources - Committee to Mobilize Funds - Bank of fundraising projects

<p>P4: Program for Transparency and Access to Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy on access to information - Criteria for registering and processing at all procedural stages - Policy of information on petitions under study - Generation of updated statistics - Active transparency measures 	<p>P8: Integrated Information Analysis and Management Platform (IIAMP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protocols for production, organization, analysis and dissemination of information - Methodology for gathering, documenting, producing and managing information - Methodology for the integrated use of information - Alliances with local observatories - Panels on the current panorama and situation analysis 	<p>P12: Program on Social Participation and Contribution to Capacity Building for Actions by Social and Academic Organizations and Networks in defense of human rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Channels of periodic dialogue with civil society and academia - Mechanisms for social participation in IACHR activities - Training program for young human rights defenders in the regional human rights system - Collaboration with and contribution to capacity strengthening for civil society action in defense of human rights - Specialized academic network focused on the IAHRs - Agreements with academic centers pursuing research on the IAHRs - Studies, research projects and other joint activities - System of scholarships, internships and staff exchanges 	<p>P16: Program for the Universalization and Coordination of the IAHRs with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint working group with the Court to expand alignment and ongoing cooperation within the IAHRs - Joint annual agenda and work plan - Annual meeting between plenaries - Pro-active joint strategy for the promotion of the universalization of the IAHRs 	<p>P20: Center for Attention to Users of the System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Center for Attention to all IACHR users - Administrative and technological assistance unit - Mapping and alignment of flows, procedures and processes - Services Manual and user guides
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P21: Special Program to Monitor IACHR Recommendations

- Database of IACHR recommendations
- Inter-American Recommendations Monitoring System
- Indicators for the monitoring of compliance with recommendations
- Monitoring of information generated by States and civil society for the production of Reports
- Successful strategies, good practices and lessons learned in compliance with recommendations
- Assistance to States for the implementation of recommendations and incorporation of standards
- Joint strategy with international agencies and other actors for the on-site verification of the implementation of recommendations
- Sub-regional liaisons for the monitoring of recommendations at local and regional levels
- Follow-up on friendly settlement agreements

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAMS

SO1: To contribute to the development of more effective and accessible inter-American justice in order to overcome practices of impunity in the region and achieve comprehensive reparation for victims through decisive measures for the strengthening of the petition and case system, friendly settlements and precautionary measures.

The IACHR has a unique mechanism for protecting human rights in the region: the system of petitions and cases and friendly settlements. Precautionary measures, whether related to a petition or not, offer a crucial form of protection in the face of situations of imminent risk where there is a need to avoid irreparable harm to persons. Through the presentation of a petition to the Inter-American Commission, individuals who have suffered violations of their human rights can obtain measures of justice and reparation. The Commission analyzes the situation and if it establishes that a human rights violation has been committed, it may formulate recommendations to the State responsible so that the enjoyment of the rights is reestablished to the extent possible, so that the acts are investigated and reparations are provided, and so that similar acts are not repeated in the future. To the extent that this mechanism operates properly, persons whose rights have been violated have an instrument for protection and resolution of their demands; this not only addresses their specific case but also offers a strong capacity to change structural situations of human rights violations through IACHR recommendations or as a result of friendly settlement agreements that it approves.

However, one of the main challenges that the IACHR faces is reducing the procedural delay in the system of petitions and cases because it affects the Commission's ability to provide timely response to the individuals who turn to the IAHR system to denounce violations of their human rights. The primary cause of procedural delay is the constant increase in the number of petitions that the IACHR receives in a context of structural deficiencies in funding for the organs of the IAHR. The Commission does not have the human resources necessary to provide the timely response required and that may reduce effectiveness and serve as a disincentive to its use.

Given this situation, the IACHR has been exploring and implementing initiatives to confront procedural delay using existing resources and within the parameters of the norms of the system and its Rules of Procedure. Over the past few years, the Commission has prioritized changes in the petition and case system. A first step has been eliminating delay in the initial review phase, and the next steps focus on the need to streamline the processing in the admissibility and merits stages, reviewing and adjusting methods, tools, organization and procedures that are necessary to achieve that result. All of this will be addressed in coordination with an active transparency program that allows anyone to access the criteria, mechanisms, and results of the decisions made by the IACHR along with updated and relevant statistical information. In addition, the IACHR has decided to deepen its efforts to expand the use of friendly settlement and access to it through changes in procedure and methodology that provide information and actively encourage the use of this mechanism when the parties have expressly indicated their willingness to use it.

P1: Special Procedural Delay Reduction Program

The IACHR will make decisions in order to implement the measures necessary to respond in a timely and effective manner to victims and States. The special procedural delay reduction measures that have been implemented and the new measures that will be implemented more decisively include: the strict application of requirements for initiating the processing of a petition, the policy for archiving and final deactivation of petitions, the systematization of criteria for exhaustion of remedies and timely filing, specialization by portfolios in all procedural stages, the creation of merits report formats applicable to recurrent issues, the review of case portfolios with States, and formulation of country strategies. A management unit will be created that will be responsible for providing required administrative support; developing and updating protocols, instructions, and guides; mapping flows and procedures; and creating new tools and generating updated statistics and reports that can be used to gather and produce information that is relevant for the users of the system.

P2: Program to Expand the Use of Friendly Settlements

In the context of the Individual Petition and Case System, the friendly settlement procedure is a mechanism used for peaceful and consensus-based dispute resolution. It is a process facilitated by the IACHR that aims to allow the State in question and presumed victims and/or petitioners to reach an agreement outside of the contentious route that allows for the solution of the alleged human rights violation based on the willingness of the parties. Friendly settlements are an effective means of obtaining reparations for victims of human rights violations based on their interests and needs when the process is used, but its use is limited and it faces certain challenges in putting it into practice. Challenges include lack of information about the mechanism, delays in processes during negotiations, possible distrust between the parties, and the need to promote greater opportunities for dialogue for effective monitoring of the fulfillment of agreements by the State.

The program will focus on the application of an updated protocol and methodology for friendly settlements, the development of tools that make it easier for individual users of the petition and case system to access information on friendly settlement procedures, expanding the technical advice provided to the parties, and providing updated examples of results achieved in favor of victims of human rights violations, their relatives and society. It will promote the exchange and dissemination of good practices in friendly settlements and training on the use of the mechanism. Further, steps will be taken to advance in establishing new practices and dispute resolution methods directed at promoting the procedure and negotiations as well as the fulfillment of agreements in the exercise of its role as facilitator of friendly settlement processes.

P3: Program to Strengthen Precautionary Measures

The Commission reaffirms the importance of precautionary measures and the need to provide a timely and effective response to requests for protection. The precautionary measures mechanism has been the subject of a recent and profound process of reflection as well as accelerated growth in regard to the number of requests received. In order to best respond to new challenges, the IACHR will systematize and disseminate the criteria and procedures that it uses to evaluate the elements of seriousness, urgency and irreparable harm in the analysis of requests for precautionary measures. It also will develop and publish practical guides on the subject, a compendium of precedents in the use of precautionary measures, and will review and improve the methodology for the initial study of requests.

P4: Program for Transparency and Access to Information

The IACHR is aware of the importance of guaranteeing access to information connected to the fulfillment of its mandate, whether it is generated by the Commission itself or under its control, and is committed to advancing in the design and implementation of a policy on access to information. The design of this policy will pay special attention to the principles set out in the American Convention on Human Rights, the framework of the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression of the IACHR, pertinent dispositions of the Model Inter-American Law on Access to Public Information and the IACHR's Rules of Procedure. This policy will promote a culture of active transparency and access with respect to all of the information under its control, including data on petitions and cases, criteria, mechanisms and results of the decisions made by the IACHR as well as the generation of updated and relevant statistics and other active transparency measures.

SO2: To have an impact on prevention measures and the factors that lead to human rights violations through the coordinated use of IACHR mechanisms and functions to achieve improved capacity for monitoring and coordinating relevant, timely and appropriate responses.

The work of monitoring has been essential to the protection of human rights and prevention of their violation through the integrated use of the mechanisms that the IACHR provides for the identification of risk factors and structural or systematic situations that have an impact on the enjoyment of human rights. In response to the demands of users of the IAHR and challenges in the area of human rights that require a thematic and specialized focus, the IACHR has adopted various measures for monitoring with a thematic and country-based approach. The functional separation of monitoring by theme and country does not preclude the use of shared methodologies and information management.

The work of monitoring is conducted through a cross-cutting approach that includes information pertaining to the petition and case system, as well as observation and promotional activities conducted through the following mechanisms: (i) thematic and country hearings; (ii) requests for information directed to States; (iii) on site and working visits; (iv) thematic and country reports; (v) meetings and consultations; (vi) press releases and other statements; and (vii) other types of specific mechanisms.

In order to optimize this work and considering the limited resources available, it is imperative to efficiently link the different functions and mechanisms available to the IACHR and prioritize its interventions in order to effectively protect human rights. In order to achieve this objective, measures directed at optimizing information gathering, processing, analysis and production processes in the area of human rights in the hemisphere will be implemented to have a broad, ongoing and swift flow of data that will allow the Commission to identify the various human rights situations presented in the region that require attention. The strengthening of the monitoring function will contribute to optimizing the capacity to identify and evaluate structural and systematic situations as well as emerging situations that adversely affect human rights.

At the same time, improvements in capacities for identification and analysis will contribute to the provision of more timely and adequate responses to factors that signal a risk of violations and to better protection of human rights. In a context of limited resources, the generation of a comprehensive, timely response with greater impact requires the construction of strategic alliances with state entities, civil society organizations, academia and other organizations with specializations in various themes, as well as increased use of ICTs.

P5: Program to Improve the Scope and Impact of the Monitoring of Human Rights Situations by Theme and Country

This program is directed at improving the scope and impact of the IACHR's work in the monitoring of human rights situations at the geographic or thematic level through the coordination of its various functions and mechanisms by a Rapid and Integrated Response Coordination Unit. The purpose of the unit will be to identify risk factors for human rights violations and generate early alerts for emerging situations. This program will also map trends and structural situations in the area of human rights in order to generate coordinated strategies for addressing them.

Based on the assessments generated by this program, country-specific and thematic strategies will be developed with a greater capacity to generate timely recommendations to prevent human rights violations or prevent them from being repeated. To this end, annual plans of action will be drafted with a minimum equitable funding base to ensure balance among the Thematic Rapporteurships and in order to guarantee their effective and coordinated operation. In order to increase the scope, the program will be oriented towards achieving greater presence on the ground by setting a calendar of activities with regular working visits to countries around the region.

Further, various actors within the IAHR have progressively called on the IACHR to pay more attention to the situation of groups that have historically faced discrimination, such as persons with disabilities and older persons as well as to intensify its work on memory, truth and justice.

In its thematic work, the IACHR will act to: (i) ensure that all of its work and monitoring is performed in a coordinated and strategic manner considering the intersection of identities and risks that can accentuate human rights violations against persons, groups and collectivities in the hemisphere; (ii) achieve sustained and effective collaboration with all of the units and pillars of the work of the IACHR in order to take into account the full reflection of the needs of individuals and groups that have historically faced discrimination and marginalization in its statements and development of standards; (iii) facilitate that it serves as a complementary mechanism of protection for individuals who face obstacles in obtaining access to justice at the national level; and (iv) promote the development and effectiveness of legal standards for the protection of the human rights of people, groups and collectivities at risk.

P6: Special Rapporteurships Program

The Commission has identified the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of expression and economic, social, cultural and environmental rights as fundamental issues for the establishment and consolidation of the democratic rule of law. The Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression works to promote the right to freedom of expression through technical support to the IACHR in the processing of petitions and cases, precautionary measures and hearings in this area and in regard to access to information. The RELE also prepares thematic and regional reports, conducts official and academic visits and provides technical advice to the States. Over the past 20 years, this Special Rapporteurship has made significant contributions to the development of inter-American standards in the area of freedom of expression and access to information. The standards set have increased the level of protection of freedom of thought and expression throughout the hemisphere, with a critical impact on the legislation and practices of member states.

In 2017, the IACHR also prioritized the creation of its Special Rapporteurship on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights (REDESCA) and gave it standing as a special rapporteurship in order to build standards and good practices in the area of economic, social, cultural and environmental rights for the region. The REDESCA will promote these rights through its technical support to the IACHR in processing petitions and cases, precautionary measures and hearings on the topic. It also will prepare thematic and regional reports, will conduct official and academic visits and will provide technical assistance to the States.

Along these lines, one of the pillars of this Program relates to the development of strategic plans of action and financial sustainability plans for the RELE and the REDESCA, as well as setting up the functioning of the REDESCA in relation to all the IACHR's mandates, functions and mechanisms.

P7: Rapid and Integrated Response Coordination Unit (RIRCU)

In order to coordinate responses that are more timely, appropriate and accessible, it is planned that the RIRCU will be created within the office of the Executive Secretary. It will serve as the area responsible for strategically coordinating the various functions and mechanisms of the IACHR, including: requests for information directed to States and other interested actors, hearings and working meetings, press releases, country visits, country and thematic reports, the annual report, precautionary measures, the petition and case system, friendly settlements and ad hoc mechanisms for emergency situations. The RIRCU will allow for the identification of priority structural and emerging situations as well as the definition of thematic and country impact strategies based on coordination and timely use of IACHR mechanisms. The RIRCU also will be responsible for generating early warnings and rapid responses to urgent and/or emerging situations that are identified through the Integrated Information Analysis and Management Platform. It will also handle the general coordination of the programs of this Strategic Plan, the

special monitoring program, the overall agenda and coordination and integration of the projects generated on the basis of that agenda. At the operations level, the RIRCU will be responsible for coordinating internal work committees and ad hoc mechanisms of the IACHR.

P8: Integrated Information Analysis and Management Platform (IIAMP)

The purpose of this platform is to consolidate a unified approach to gathering, recording, analyzing, managing, and producing information by the IACHR. This platform will establish the research methods and parameters to be used by the IACHR and will focus on the diversification and verification of primary and secondary sources generated by states, academic and research centers, civil society organizations, the media, international organizations and the IACHR itself through its various mechanisms. In order to better carry out its work in a context of limited resources, the Commission plans to build strategic alliances with observatories and other key actors. Through a methodology of integrated information use, the Commission seeks to ensure that it is able to take decisions that are strategic and timely, as well as to apply this information in the preparation of reports. The IIAMP will present the results of its analyses at periodic panels on the situation of human rights in the Americas.

SO3: To promote democracy, human dignity, equality, justice, and fundamental freedoms based on an active contribution to the strengthening of State institutions and public policies with a human rights approach in accordance with inter-American norms and standards and to the development of the capacities of social and academic organizations and networks to act in defense of human rights.

One challenge in the hemisphere continues to be the need to reinforce the democratic institutional structure of the States as well as the strengthening of their capacities to implement public policies with a human rights focus that can have a specific impact on the enjoyment and exercise of these rights for persons, groups, and collectivities with guarantees of human dignity, equality and justice. To that end, the IACHR will promote the awareness and implementation of inter-American human rights standards in legal frameworks, national human rights protection instruments, and in the formulation of public policies with a human rights approach in the member States. The strengthening of state institutionality is currently the foundation for putting rights into practice in the countries. During this period, the IACHR will proactively contribute to States' ability to make the high inter-American standards a reality, that is, to bring them down to earth. The effectiveness of the IAHRs, in turn, has as its pillar the action of social and academic actors given that it is civil society that promotes conquests in human rights.

The IACHR will develop technical assistance and cooperation activities with member States for the development of public policies with a human rights approach, providing responses to specific requests formulated by the States. The emphasis will be placed on achieving greater knowledge and use of the IAHRs by the States, promoting the application of inter-American standards and compliance with its recommendations.

With this goal, the IACHR will pay special attention to capacity building in the Caribbean and Central America given that it considers that these regions require special efforts to: promote the knowledge and use of the IAHRs; strengthen state capacities for the implementation of inter-American recommendations; and deepen its working links with civil society.

Civil society, social movements, and academia have been a fundamental pillar in the work of the IACHR since its inception. In its strategic agenda, the IACHR will seek to strengthen the participation of social actors through the formalization of channels for periodic dialogue and participation and will establish alliances with key actors in the region. The IACHR also intends to generate active spaces for collaboration with academic centers in order to increase knowledge and the network of interest in the defense and protection of human rights in the Americas.

P9: Expanded Program for Training and Promotion of Thought and Culture on Human Rights

The IACHR will focus dissemination and training activities on inter-American human rights standards that have been generated through IAHRs doctrine and case law in order to promote better understanding within civil society, networks of social actors and member states of their scope and application, as well as incorporation in decisions, normative frameworks and public policies with a human rights focus.

To that end, the IACHR will address the development of a "comprehensive promotion and training program on the inter-American system." It will include awareness and prevention campaigns; inter-American human rights conferences, seminars and events; activities for disseminating reports; measures to have an impact on education in human rights; training courses on public policies on human rights and on the inter-American system and inter-American standards; thematic courses; and support for national and regional competitions related to the inter-American system. The IACHR will coordinate actions and programs with the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights for the design and implementation of this program.

P10: Program for Attention and Collaboration with Central America and the Caribbean

The IACHR will establish an impact strategy in keeping with its mandates in order to move forward with technical cooperation in the area of development and human rights with Caribbean and Central American states, and will implement special projects with a focus on the cross-cutting themes of the Strategic Plan. These include democratic institutions, public institutions related to human rights, security and violence, and strengthening of social actors, among others. The IACHR will also continue its promotional activities through working visits to the region and events during the periods of sessions.

P11: Technical Cooperation Program on Institutional and Public Policies with a Human Rights Approach

One of the Commission's mandates is to advise States on matters concerning human rights. It has carried out this function, in particular, through recommendations in thematic and country reports, as well as a wide range of activities and responses designed to offer information to States on the standards and precedents of the system. Three years ago, the IACHR created a public policy area to expand its advisory actions for States.

As such, this program will develop activities aimed at expanding and strengthening relations with OAS member states, facilitating assistance and technical cooperation in the area of human rights for state entities that request it, and provide support to OAS political organs and promote the incorporation of human rights standards in documents produced by these organs. Specifically, the Commission will organize diplomatic-institutional dialogues, cooperate with the strengthening of state institutions for human rights and national human rights plans, coordinate with national justice systems and public prosecutor's offices and public defender's offices, and strengthen ties with national human rights institutions and autonomous institutions.

The IACHR also will promote public policies designed to strengthen respect for human rights as a central element of processes to strengthen national capacity to implement inter-American human rights standards. This Plan therefore provides for assistance and technical collaboration and training on public policies with a human rights focus, the exchange of good practices and lessons learned, and the associated personnel program.

P12: Program on Social Participation and Contribution to Capacity Building for Actions by Social and Academic Organizations and Networks in Defense of Human Rights

This program seeks to strengthen the participation of civil society, social movements, and academia in the IACHR; collaborate with and contribute to the strengthening of civil society capacities for defense of human rights; and establish alliances with key actors in the region. It also reflects the IACHR's commitment to the promotion of human rights in the region, by training young human rights defenders in the regional human rights system.

The Commission will also strengthen agreements with academic research centers and promote the creation of an academic network specialized in the IACHR that can contribute studies, research and other joint activities for expanding knowledge, and generating important information for the promotion and defense of human rights in the region. It also will formalize alliances to receive professionals through internships, scholarships, or personnel exchanges.

SO4: To promote the universalization of the Inter-American Human Rights System through coordinated initiatives with the Inter-American Court, and to cooperate with other international, regional, and sub-regional human rights agencies and mechanisms.

The Commission recognizes the inexhaustible nature of the human rights agenda in the region and the need to work effectively to protect and promote the human rights of the inhabitants of the Americas. Coordination and complementarity with other agencies will generate benefits by strengthening international human rights protection standards and contributing key experience and knowledge to the countries. To this end, the IACHR proposes to collaborate on challenging issues in the area of human rights; offer programs to improve efficiency and share lessons; and promote and support innovation, given that international organizations are playing a relevant role in the implementation of approaches and innovative methods that could benefit the countries.

In that context, the IACHR proposes improving coordination in the inter-American system through close collaboration with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. There is currently a lack of balance between the various OAS member states given that not all of them have ratified the inter-American instruments or accepted the jurisdiction of the Court. Only 23 of the 35 OAS member states are party to the American Convention on Human Rights. The Commission proposes a proactive agenda with countries in which ratification of inter-American instruments is still pending in order to open dialogue and interchange to identify obstacles to the completion of this process.

The IACHR is also part of the international system for defense and protection of human rights. As such, it will strengthen cooperation and technical exchange with similar agencies and institutions from elsewhere in the world to improve its capacities and collaborate on defense of human rights. Specifically, the IACHR will maintain and strengthen its coordinated work with the OHCHR with a focus on broader protection and support for the work of human rights defenders, particularly those working on the environment. Finally, the IACHR will also coordinate with regional systems and sub-regional mechanisms on human rights to exchange experiences, improve existing capacities, and have a greater impact on populations and a more effective and coordinated use of its resources.

P13: Cooperation and Coordination Program with the Universal Human Rights System and other international agencies

The IACHR has worked with the UN since its inception. This relationship has been strengthened over the past few years, and this program seeks to coordinate work with the OHCHR and other UN agencies in order to strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights in the hemisphere. In light of the agreement signed in 2014 by the IACHR and OHCHR, during this period the Plan will identify shared interests and areas of action and seek to ensure a constant exchange of information and agendas in order to identify joint activities and responses. Focal points have been designated and the Commission seeks to establish an IACHR focal point at the OHCHR's headquarters in Geneva. There will also be a staff exchange program with various agencies in order to train personnel and facilitate mutual coordination and knowledge. The Commission will work on a formal road map between the IACHR and Special Procedures of the United Nations, like the one that exists with the African Commission, which could strengthen coordination and formalize a shared path.

P14: Program of Coordination and Complementarity with Regional Systems and Sub-Regional Mechanisms in the Area of Human Rights

Coordination and complementarity will be strengthened with sub-regional human rights mechanisms in the Americas (the human rights issues dealt with by CAN, CARICOM, MERCOSUR, SICA and UNASUR) in order to strengthen the promotion and protection of human rights, paying special attention to coordinating in areas of

common thematic interest, and in the search for new opportunities to follow up on implementation of IACHR recommendations.

Another priority is to strengthen coordination with the African system, South Asian Human Rights System (ASEAN), and the Arab Human Rights Committee. Over this four year period, we will strengthen these alliances through ongoing exchanges of information and case law and the continuation of meetings for the purpose of collaboration. The IACHR will work with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights on specific topics. The annual meeting of focal points of the regional human rights mechanisms coordinated by the OHCHR is a key opportunity for getting to know one another and for achieving more efficient coordination. Through the execution of this Strategic Plan, the coordination mechanisms will be streamlined and ongoing. The IACHR will also continue to strengthen its relationship with the European Human Rights System to develop greater reciprocal awareness of the work being done and to facilitate cooperation.

P15: Mechanism of Protection for Human Rights Defenders in the Americas (with the OHCHR)

One of the most pressing challenges in our hemisphere is the situation of serious violence against human rights defenders, particularly those who defend environmental and land rights against tourism, energy and extractive activities. Dozens of people have been murdered, criminalized and harassed for exercising their right to defend human rights. In response, the IACHR and the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights decided to join forces in December 2016 and develop a joint mechanism for protecting these actors.

P16: Program for the Universalization and Coordination of the IHRS with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights

Through this program, the IACHR will seek to improve its coordination with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights by strengthening the joint working group that was created in August 2016 to achieve greater alignment and coordination between the two organs in areas such as financing for the system, the creation of an agenda and annual plan for joint activities, and at least one annual meeting with all of the members of both organs.

Joint efforts to strengthen the inter-American system should involve a strategy with States that have not yet ratified all of the inter-American human rights treaties with a view to achieving the universalization of the system, with a special emphasis on ratification of IAHR instruments.

SO5: To guarantee the human resources, infrastructure, technology, and budget necessary for full implementation of the mandate and functions of the IACHR by means of results-based institutional management for efficient, effective, and measurable institutional development.

The IACHR has redoubled its efforts to carry out its work and make substantive contributions to the strengthening of human rights in the Americas. However, the demands have increased. New circumstances require a more radical transformation process that overcomes the gaps and promotes a holistic vision of its structure and operation in order to meet its mandates. The strategies for facing the challenges and structuring a solid financial base must involve changes in the way that the work is being done, for example, through the review of work flows and processes; analysis of workload distribution within an appropriate organizational structure; and promotion of improved working conditions and better delivery of expected results. This must also involve improved capacity for action in order to achieve more comprehensive results, better communication, better systems, improved attention for users of the system and more transparency and accountability.

The IACHR understands clearly the context of decreased availability of financial resources that has developed over the past few years and that the application of the Strategic Plan must include the need to seek complementary resources, for example, for prioritizing the programs directly related to its principal mandate. The logic is that everything that is done will be strengthened and that with respect to the innovations set out in the Plan, new sources of financing must be sought. As such, the Commission will continue to work with donors, guaranteeing quality in the execution of programs and projects, and recognizing the complexity of current financial structures.

It will be necessary to address institutional management modernization with more innovation in order to achieve greater efficiency in the application of resources and integrate the work conducted. As such, the results-based management methodology will be used in a structural manner with the redesign of internal coordination mechanisms, improved communication between various areas and with civil society, improvements in the working conditions and environment, with annual plans of action that outline specific contributions to common results and monitoring of planning, with greater transparency and accountability. A route to financial sustainability for the IACHR and the strengthening of the IAHRs will be created with diversification of sources, the creation of a bank of project proposals for capturing resources, and effective proposals for strengthening funding through contributions from the States.

P17: Institutional Management and Development Program

Over the next few years, decision-making models will be improved with mechanisms of coordination through dialogue, participation, and transparency of the IACHR Executive Secretariat and review of the administrative structure that reflects a more comprehensive and horizontal design. Work processes will be implemented based on a results-based management model to structure and align the work in a common framework, applying its methodology and principles for efficiency, measurement and accountability. A coordinated project management mechanism will be implemented to facilitate the execution, implementation, and reaching of results, and to seek synergy through alliance with other actors. The Strategic Plan Monitoring Mechanism will be implemented, which will facilitate the integration and reinforce the coherence between the policy decisions and programs. It also will ensure that activities and processes can be implemented in a coordinated manner in the IACHR Executive Secretariat. The strategies and Communications Plan will be implemented to boost coverage of IACHR topics and activities in the media and increase communication regarding the actions that it implements.

The program will also include a human resources management plan for an optimized labor environment and promotion of professional incentives and recognition. The Commission's greatest asset is its staff's knowledge, dedication and commitment. In order to preserve this important comparative advantage, promote an optimal work environment and ensure the team's satisfaction with the work that it does, the IACHR must respond to training needs, improve work conditions and strengthen the management skills necessary to maximize the impact of the organization's limited financial resources. It expects to implement the Work Environment Improvement Plan and strengthen labor policies through assessment mechanisms and measures for promoting gender equality, inclusion and staff diversity. This Plan is directed towards creating and sustaining a positive labor

environment for strengthening the performance and commitment of the Commission's personnel.

This program also includes the expansion of IACHR's public presence in the region. The Commission will seek the commitment of Member States for developing roaming periods of sessions in countries throughout the Americas.

P18: Program of Technological Innovation Applied to Human Rights

The Commission shall make better use of ICTs for prioritizing analyses of operations, improving productivity, reducing transaction costs, promoting sustainability and providing direct support to programs and projects. It will also use ICTs for promoting human rights. The reformulation of an Electronic Processing System will be fundamental to guaranteeing the computerization of all procedural stages, improving user information and expanding the transparency of procedural management, including the computerization of the Commissioner voting system. As such, all IACHR files should be digitalized and updated in the system.

The design of new management systems for the automation and integration of work processes at the strategic, tactical and operational levels; the acquisition of software; and the creation of smart applications for improving institutional management will be crucial for guaranteeing that the commitments and goals of the Strategic Plan are reached. In addition, the technological foundations will be prepared for integrated information management and a center for attention to users of the system.

The promotion of technological and communications innovation with a specific plan for achieving this goal will give the IACHR the best tools for facilitating its work and communications and put it on a new level of institutional action with a significant impact on the contributions that it makes and relationship that it establishes with IAHR users.

P19: Financial Sustainability Plan

In times of financial restrictions, the IACHR has the responsibility to efficiently manage its financial and human resources with transparency and to seek structural solutions. Strategies to guarantee funding must be submitted through a joint proposal with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights to strengthen adequate and sustainable financing for the IAHRs, in a structural manner, with regular funds, with the aim that OAS member states be the main funders of both bodies for the benefit of all of the people who inhabit the Americas.

Moreover, a Financial Sustainability Plan will be prepared seeking the diversification of sources to fully implement the mandates and functions of the IACHR. The financing strategy may include: projects with cooperation and development agencies, private donors, and crowd funding. Each year, thematic areas will be identified according to the priority agenda of the IACHR in order to identify funding sources, and outreach actions will be carried out via a Fund Mobilization Committee in order to contact potential actors with interests in common with the work of the IACHR. A bank of project proposals will be established with a portfolio of programs associated with the Strategic Plan along with defined parameters for their presentation.

P20: Center for Attention to Users of the System

The Commission will establish a center with the aim of improving the assistance given to all users. For this purpose, mapping and standardization of flows, procedures, and processes for all of the different internal areas will be carried out; telephone and virtual help desks will be set up for individual users, with the required technological resources; service manuals and guides will be developed; and the assigned personnel will receive the guidance, support, and training needed to carry out their tasks. For this purpose, protocols and instructions and new tools will be developed. The Center for Attention to Users will be an administrative support management unit of the IACHR and a unit for addressing requests for public information.

P21: Special Program to Monitor IACHR Recommendations

One essential condition for the effectiveness of the IAHR is that States comply with the recommendations and decisions of the IACHR. While progress has been made and some States have, for example, introduced legislative reforms to enforce international decisions, the challenge of reaching a level of implementation that ensures the effectiveness of the IAHR remains.

Therefore, and as a central component of the Plan's strategy, the IACHR intends to develop a cross-cutting program in which it expects to initiate coordinated actions to follow up on recommendations using all available mechanisms (case reports, resolutions on precautionary measures, thematic and country reports, hearings, and monitoring of friendly settlement agreements). This program will include the creation of a database of the recommendations of the IACHR for the development of an Inter-American System for Monitoring Recommendations (IASMR).

In order to create this System it will be important to produce a common methodology for the formulation and measurement of recommendations in the different mechanisms that allow monitoring to be carried out; the design of indicators; a shared strategy and tools to monitor the recommendations; the monitoring of information generated by States and civil society for the production of reports; the mapping of successful cases, good practices and lessons learned in the implementation of the recommendations; and a joint strategy with international agencies and other actors on the ground to verify the implementation of recommendations.

This Program also includes the strengthening of dialogue and cooperation with States, as well as better assistance for the monitoring of the recommendations, their implementation, and the incorporation of standards. In addition, sub-regional liaisons will be created for the monitoring of recommendations at the local and regional levels.



VII. EXPECTED STRATEGIC RESULTS

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The programs and actions associated with each of the strategic objectives will have immediate, short and medium term effects and transformations, which will contribute to the achievement of the vision and the ultimate goal of the Plan. The medium and long-term effects will constitute the "Expected Strategic Intermediate Results," which in turn will include "immediate" and "short-term" results.

After five years, the IACHR expects to obtain the following strategic results:

Strategic Objectives	Expected Strategic Intermediate Results	Intended Changes	Expected Strategic Intermediate Results	Final Results
<p>SO1: To contribute to the development of more effective and accessible inter-American justice in order to overcome practices of impunity in the region and achieve comprehensive reparation for victims through decisive measures for the strengthening of the petition and case system, friendly settlements and precautionary measures.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Management and adoption of optimized and streamlined decisions in the petition and case system to reduce the total processing time and progressively achieve the goal of processing a petition through all stages within five years. 2. Mechanism of friendly settlements expanded and strengthened. 3. Mechanism of precautionary measures strengthened through timely and improved actions. 4. User access to IACHR information improved. 	<p>This means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victims of human rights violations, particularly individuals and groups historically subjected to discrimination, have better and more effective access to the IAHRs. • The IACHR makes progress in the international development of human rights through the establishment of Inter-American standards. • Victims of human rights violations have alternative ways of accessing comprehensive reparations. • The IACHR will have guaranteed greater accessibility and transparency in its processes. 	<p>RES 1. More effective and accessible inter-American justice for the inhabitants of the hemisphere.</p>	<p>The ultimate goal sought through the actions, programs and projects of the IACHR's Strategic Plan is to contribute to the effectiveness of the Inter-American Human Rights System as a pillar and common commitment of the Americas.</p>
<p>SO2: To have an impact on prevention measures and the factors that lead to human rights violations through the coordinated use of IACHR mechanisms and functions to achieve improved capacity for monitoring and coordinating relevant, timely and appropriate responses.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Improved, integrated and coordinated monitoring for greater impact. 6. Coordination unit set up for timely and rapid responses to situations of risk and human rights violations. 7. Public presence of the IACHR in the countries of the region expanded. 8. Increased production and enrichment of Inter-American human rights standards. 9. Analysis of the panorama and situation of human rights in the Americas carried out. 	<p>This means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IACHR has the capacity to respond in a timely and appropriate manner to situations of risk of human rights violations, particularly with regard to the situation of vulnerable individuals, groups and populations. • The IACHR has improved its coordinated capacity for action. • Knowledge is produced using a common and integrated methodological basis for information and is widely shared and disseminated. • New reports are produced on the human rights situation in countries and sub-regions of the Americas or on the situation and human rights of individuals and specific groups 	<p>RES 2. Timely prevention of risks and violations of human rights and production of strengthened Inter-American human rights standards.</p>	

<p>SO3: To promote democracy, human dignity, equality, justice, and fundamental freedoms based on an active contribution to the strengthening of State institutions and public policies with a human rights approach in accordance with inter-American norms and standards and to the development of the capacities of social and academic organizations and networks to act in defense of human rights.</p>	<p>10. Training and promotion of human rights thinking and culture and of the Inter-American human rights standards consolidated within the IACHR. 11. Advisory and technical cooperation to States for the strengthening of institutions and public policies with a human rights approach reinforced. 12. Mechanisms for collaboration and social participation with academia and civil society implemented and expanded.</p>	<p>This means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the mandate of the IACHR and of Inter-American human rights standards by the users of the IACHR has been improved. • Decisions and recommendations of the IACHR are implemented by the member states. • Member States incorporate inter-American human rights standards at the domestic level, and institutional frameworks and public policies with a human rights approach are strengthened. • Effective collaboration is established with the countries of the Caribbean and Central America for the strengthening of human rights and democratic institutions. • Channels of collaboration and mechanisms of social participation for civil society and academia in the activities of the IACHR are strengthened and expanded. 	<p>RES 3. Capacities created and strengthened in States and in civil society organizations for the defense and promotion of human rights in accordance with inter-American norms and standards.</p>
<p>SO4: To promote the universalization of the Inter-American Human Rights System through coordinated initiatives with the Inter-American Court, and to cooperate with other international, regional, and sub-regional human rights agencies and mechanisms.</p>	<p>13. Coordination, cooperation and complementarity with United Nations bodies and other agencies, regional and sub-regional human rights systems strengthened and expanded. 14. Coordination with the Inter-American Human Rights Court strengthened and expanded. 15. Pro-active strategy implemented for the universalization of inter-American instruments adopted.</p>	<p>This means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work of the IACHR to defend and promote human rights and Inter-American standards is recognized and used not only in the hemisphere but in other regional systems. • The relationship with the Court and with United Nations mechanisms and other agencies and with international, regional and sub-regional human rights bodies has been strengthened. • OAS member states are aware of the need to ratify inter-American instruments and promote their universal adoption. 	<p>RES 4. Increased coordination with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights along with international, regional and sub-regional human rights bodies for coordinated action in the defense and promotion of human rights in the Americas.</p>
<p>SO5: To guarantee the human resources, infrastructure, technology, and budget necessary for full implementation of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights' mandate and functions by means of results-based institutional management for efficient, effective and measurable institutional development.</p>	<p>16. Results-based management implemented. 17. Plan for the improvement of the work environment implemented. 18. Plan for financial sustainability implemented. 19. Institutional processes and technology platform modernized. 20. User services facilitated and improved.</p>	<p>This means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organizational structure, decision-making model, planning and accountability are aligned to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the IACHR. • The work environment is optimized, with motivated staff who have a sense of belonging. • The IACHR has taken measures to secure sustained and diversified funding. • Visibility and accessibility of information on human rights mechanisms and on inter-American human rights standards have been strengthened. • Key IACHR policies, programs and processes are aligned with the organization's mission to promote respect for human rights. 	<p>RES 5. Modern institutional management with a focus on results, with efficient, effective and measurable institutional development, financial sustainability, with transparency, accountability and policies for gender and diversity.</p>

The ultimate goal sought through the actions, programs and projects of the IACHR's Strategic Plan is to contribute to the effectiveness of the Inter-American Human Rights System as a pillar and common commitment of the Americas.




LOGIC OF CHANGE

The transformations or changes that are expected to be achieved with the development of the Plan are the optimization and streamlining of management and decision-making; reduction of procedural delays in the petition and case system; expansion of the mechanism for friendly settlements; strengthening of the mechanism for precautionary measures; improvement of users' access to the IACHR; strengthening of the mechanism and system of monitoring of recommendations and standards to increase the effectiveness of the IAHRs ; victims of human rights violations will be able to achieve more and better access to national and inter-American systems for the protection of human rights; and members of groups historically subjected to discrimination will have better access to justice, reparations for violations, and protection and enjoyment of their rights.

The IACHR hopes that through the adoption of measures to reduce procedural delays and strengthen and expand the friendly settlement mechanism, victims of human rights violations will obtain access to comprehensive reparations more quickly. This means that, with the development of the programs in SO1, the IACHR will contribute to achieving "more effective and accessible inter-American justice for the inhabitants of the hemisphere" (RES 1).

The IACHR also hopes that with improved, integrated monitoring and early warnings; with the work of the IACHR coordinated and integrated; with the coordination and strategic use of the mechanisms to provide a more timely response to situations of human rights violations; with the generation of information on a shared platform; and with an extension of the reach of the IACHR in the countries of the region on its priority issues, the IACHR will be better able to respond in a timely and appropriate manner to situations of risk of human rights violations, particularly of groups and populations in a situation of vulnerability. That is, with the implementation of the SO2 programs, the IACHR will contribute to the "Timely prevention of risks and human rights violations and production of inter-American human rights standards [will be] strengthened" (RES2).

The IACHR hopes that, through the expanded and consolidated programs of promotion and training on the IAHRs and its standards; through strengthened technical assistance and cooperation with States; and with the collaboration of academia and civil society for the promotion and defense of human rights, at the end of the five-year period, a better understanding of the mandate of the IACHR and of the Inter-American standards of human rights will be achieved by the users of the system, and that the decisions and recommendations of the IACHR will be implemented on a regular basis by the member States which will fully incorporate inter-American human rights standards. That is to say, with the implementation of the SO3 programs, "States and civil society organizations will create and strengthen capacities for the defense and promotion of human rights, in accordance with inter-American norms and standards" (RES3).



Likewise, the IACHR hopes that with the strengthening and expansion of coordination and complementarity with United Nations bodies and other international organizations, as well as sub-regional human rights bodies, coordinated initiatives with the Court, and with a pro-active strategy with the Court to promote the universal adoption of inter-American instruments, the OAS Member States will become aware of the need to ratify inter-American instruments and promote their universal adoption, and that the work of the IACHR to defend and promote human rights will be recognized and used not only in the region but in other regional systems. With enhanced coordination, it is expected that these bodies will act in collaboration in the defense and promotion of human rights in the Americas (RES 4).

Finally, the IACHR expects that, through the implementation of results-based management and through the modernization of institutional processes and their technological bases; with review of the organizational structure and of the model for taking decisions; with the implementation of a plan for financial sustainability, it will be able to increase its efficiency and efficacy in the implementation of its mandate. Likewise, it will be able to ensure that the relevant policies, programs, and processes of the IACHR will be aligned with its mission to promote respect for human rights. Through the SO5 programs, the IACHR will become a modern organization with motivated personnel and an optimized working environment, financially sustainable, transparent, and with gender and diversity policies, in order to provide timely and effective assistance to victims who resort to the System through the different mechanisms available (RES5).

If the IACHR manages with this plan to have an impact on more effective and accessible inter-American justice for victims of human rights violations in the Americas; if through its monitoring and protection mechanisms it manages to prevent risks and violations of human rights; if it can strengthen capacities in States and civil society organizations for the protection and defense of human rights; if more States comply with the recommendations, incorporate international standards, and ratify Inter-American human rights instruments, and also improve public policies and adopt normative frameworks that are more protective of human rights, then through this Plan the IACHR will have stimulated the effectiveness of the Inter-American Human Rights System and, therefore, the greater enjoyment and protection of human rights by the populations of the Americas.



IACHR Inter-American
Commission on
Human Rights



OAS | More rights
for more people