

**PRESENTATION OF THE ACTIVITIES WITH CIVIL SOCIETY AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTORS IN THE  
FRAMEWORK OF THE 49<sup>TH</sup> REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE  
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)**

**FORMAT AND PRINCIPLES OF PARTICIPATION**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

- The 49th regular session of the OAS General Assembly will take place from Wednesday, June 26 to Friday, June 28, 2019 in Medellin, Colombia.
- The overarching theme of the General Assembly will: **“Innovating to Strengthen Hemispheric Multilateralism”**.

**PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT**

The present document was established to:

1. Present the format and objective of the **“Dialogue of Heads of Delegation, the Secretary General, the Assistant Secretary General and Representatives from Civil Society Organizations, Workers, the Private Sector and other Social Actors”** (the Dialogue) which will take place on Wednesday, June 26, 2019 in Medellin, Colombia, in the framework of the 49<sup>th</sup> regular session of the OAS General Assembly.
2. Guide Civil Society Organizations and Social Actors on format of the work through coalitions of organizations sharing common positions, in preparation for the Dialogue.
3. Establish the rules that must guide the participation of Civil Society representatives in the spaces and activities of the General Assembly.

## OBJECTIVE AND FORMAT OF THE DIALOGUE

The main activity planned at the General Assembly for Civil Society is the **“Dialogue of Heads of Delegation, the Secretary General, the Assistant Secretary General and Representatives of Civil Society Organizations, Workers, the Private Sector and Other Social Actors”**.

### **Objective and Format:**

This dialogue will follow the same formats established for the 47<sup>th</sup> and 48<sup>th</sup> OAS General Assemblies.

- The **objective of the event will be to foster an open and proposal geared dialogue** between civil society, the Member States and the OAS General Secretariat.
- The Dialogue will be divided into **the three segments**.

The sub-themes of the segments will be defined shortly.

Furthermore, we invite participating organizations to incorporate the themes of empowerment of women and gender equality in their interventions.

### **Venue, date and duration:**

- The Dialogue will take place on Wednesday, June 26 in Plaza Mayor, Centro de Exhibiciones, Medellin, Colombia. The event will begin at 9:00 am and will end at 1:00 pm. The duration of the segments will be adjusted in accordance with the interest expressed by civil society and social actors on the three thematic areas.

### **Results of the Dialogue:**

- The OAS General Secretariat will make a report of each segment of the Dialogue, which will include the topics of greater interest, as well as concrete proposals that may come out of the exchange.
- Furthermore, the OAS General Secretariat will issue a transcript of the segments for publication and distribution in the weeks following the General Assembly.



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## CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL ACTORS' COALITION – BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Since 2017, a new format has been instituted for the participation of Civil Society Organizations and Other Social Actors in the Organization of American States (OAS) General Assemblies and the Summit of the Americas, through the establishment of self-managed Coalitions.
- This system has received positive feedback as it facilitates the harmonization of exchanges and promotes concerted efforts by the Organizations and Social Actors grouped into Coalitions. The system further allows for those who are unable to attend the General Assembly, to participate in the preparatory work to the Dialogue.
- In order to guarantee its continuity and expand spaces for the participation of Civil Society and Social Actors in OAS activities, the establishment of Permanent Coalitions is deemed necessary.

## PROCESS OF ESTABLISHMENT OF PERMANENT COALITIONS

- Civil Society and Social Actors are invited to organize into self-managed, hemispheric and thematic Coalitions in order to facilitate a wider, more equitable and inclusive participation in the General Assembly.
- A “thematic Coalition” will be understood as a group of organizations with shared positions on at least one of the three segments of the Dialogue.
- Due to time constraints and in order to maintain a thematic balance, there will be a **maximum of 25 spaces for interventions by Coalitions during the Dialogue, and an additional maximum of 7 spaces for other Social Actors, with a maximum duration of 5 minutes by intervention.** This arrangement will also allow enough time for interaction with representatives of the Member States and the Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General.
- Within the total number, three (3) free places will be left in the event of new issues not previously contemplated by the existing Coalitions.
- The General Secretariat invites Civil Society Organizations and Social Actors to send their proposals for Coalitions **by May 10, 2019 at the latest.** The proposals will have to comply with the criteria established in the next section of the document.
- In case the number of Coalitions exceeds the number of spaces available for intervention, the General Secretariat will invite Coalitions with shared positions to form alliances, so that they might work together on a consensus intervention.

- The final Coalitions resulting from this exercise will become permanent for the purpose of future General Assemblies.
- The General Secretariat will publish the final list of permanent Coalitions by **May 24, 2019 at the latest.**

### CRITERIA FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PERMANENT COALITIONS

**Each coalition must:**

- Include a **minimum of ten (10) organizations** that have expressed an interest to attend the General Assembly. The Coalition can also include other Organizations that cannot participate in the General Assembly but wish to join in on the definition of the presentation that will be made in the Dialogue.
- **Include Organizations from three (3) of the four (4) sub-regions of the Hemisphere:** North America, Central America, South America and the Caribbean<sup>1</sup>.
- A Coalition cannot be composed exclusively of national or regional chapters of the same organization.
- Beginning in 2020, we will encourage members of the Coalitions - who haven't done so-, **to register with the OAS<sup>2</sup>.**
- **National Coalitions will not be accepted**, with the exception of the host country of the General Assembly. In this case, the host country will have the possibility of establishing a single<sup>3</sup> temporary Coalition.

The composition of the National Coalition must be plural and guarantee a wide and diverse representation.

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<sup>1</sup> The coalition can include regional organizations with headquarters in different countries but it cannot be composed exclusively of national chapters of one organization.

<sup>2</sup> Civil society organizations that wish to register with the OAS and participate in its activities must follow the rules established for this purpose by the OAS Permanent Council in the Guidelines for the Participation of Civil Society Organizations in OAS Activities..

<sup>3</sup> The General Secretariat of the Organization may allow for special cases to be considered, depending on the circumstances.

- Organizations of the host country will have the opportunity to participate in the National Coalition and/or in order Coalitions.
- **An Organization can be a member of more than one Coalition.**
- In this case, the Organization must inform the General Secretariat of its main Coalition; meaning this Organization will only be considered once for compliance with the structure requirements of the Coalitions.
- In order to speak in the Dialogue with the Secretary General and Member States, **at least 2 of the member Organizations of the Coalitions must have withdrawn their accreditations at the General Assembly<sup>4</sup>.**

In the contrary, the Coalition will participate as an observer and the General Secretariat will publish its presentation on the webpage of the General Assembly.

- The General Secretariat will work with Organizations that are new to the process to guide them towards existing or new coalitions.
- Organizations that do not wish to join Coalitions can participate in the Dialogue as observers. In such a case, they will have to inform the General Secretariat of their decision.

## WORK METHODOLOGY OF THE COALITIONS

- Each Coalition will determinate its membership and work methodology for the General Assembly.
- Each Coalition must **present the following information to the OAS General Secretariat, by May 30, 2019 at the latest**. The information must be submitted via email at [civilsociety@oas.org](mailto:civilsociety@oas.org) with a copy to [oassociedadcivil@gmail.com](mailto:oassociedadcivil@gmail.com):
  1. **Work methodology and membership rules**
  2. **The list of the Organizations and/or Social Actors forming the Coalition. (the email must be sent to OA General Secretariat copying all the organizations that are member of the coalition)**
  3. **The name of the Organization which will act as the coordinator of the Coalition.**
  4. **The priority Segment for its intervention.**

<sup>4</sup> In previous years, we noticed the presence of “ghost” coalitions that were actually composed by a single organization



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- No later than **Monday, June 10 2019**, each Coalition must send the following information to the OAS General Secretariat:
  1. **A summary (1 page maximum, font Calibri 11, single-spaced)** of the intervention of the coalition in the Dialogue.
  2. **The name and Organization of the Spokesperson for the Coalition.**
- In case an Organization does not belong to a Coalition, and upon their request, the OAS General Secretariat will channel them toward an existing Coalition for their participation in the work of the 49th OAS General Assembly. Those organizations who expressly decide not to join a Coalition will participate in the Dialogue as observers.
- **By Thursday, June 20 2019 at the latest**, the definitive Coalitions must send to the OAS General Secretariat, the text of the presentation or presentations to be made by the spokesperson(s) in the Dialogue, so that these can be distributed to the Member States, taking into account the maximum speaker's time of the spokesperson. A longer version of the presentation can also be included to the official website of the 49th General Assembly for dissemination.
- Each Coalition is asked to present proposals geared towards fomenting a constructive reflection and/or propose solutions or **actions** to address problems common to the region, in the framework of the thematic areas of the segments of the Dialogue and the OAS Agenda.
- All communications to OAS General Secretariat must be made through [civilsociety@oas.org](mailto:civilsociety@oas.org) with mandatory copy to [oassociedadcivil@gmail.com](mailto:oassociedadcivil@gmail.com)



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## METHODOLOGY CALENDAR

<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Friday, May 10, 2019	The CSO presents the information regarding their Coalitions to the OAS General Secretariat.
Friday, May 24, 2019	The OAS General Secretariat issues the final list of Coalitions and the speakers' time for the interventions.
Thursday, May 30, 2019	The Coalitions inform the OAS General Secretariat their work methodology and membership rules, final list of members, name of their coordinators and the segment of the Dialogue they wish to speak at.
Monday, June 10, 2019	The Coalitions inform the OAS General Secretariat the name of their spokesperson and present the summary of the text of their presentations.
Thursday, June 20, 2019	Submission of the final presentation



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## RULES OF PARTICIPATION IN THE ACTIVITIES AND SPACES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

A large number of representatives from Civil Society and other Social Actors will participate in the 49<sup>th</sup> OAS General Assembly, which will provide this sector an open forum for dialogue and exchange of views with OAS Member States.

The organizers of the General Assembly want this to be a safe and productive space for all participants. To this end, this document sets forth the rules of conduct expected from each one of the participants at the General Assembly:

- We are committed to having diverse points of view represented, as well as rich and constructive discussions based on plurality and respect. Thus, participants must commit to making these working forums welcoming and respectful places for all participants, regardless of their national origin, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, or physical appearance.
- **No harassment of any kind or disrespect toward General Assembly participants (Member State Delegates, Civil Society) or organizers will be tolerated.** Examples of harassment or disrespect include: offensive comments, verbal threats, intimidation, stalking, harassment through photographs or recording, disruptive behavior at sessions, events, or inside and outside of the bathrooms and unwanted physical contact.
- **During the Dialogue, participants must remain in their seat at all times.** They may not bring in or use placards, flags or other objects promoting a specific posture into the room.
- During the **plenary sessions**, representatives of civil society and social actors can be present as observers. This implies that they may not approach or interrupt the work of the Delegates of the Member States for any reason.
- **Participants must follow these rules of participation at all times.** If participants are requested to desist from any inappropriate behavior, they are to immediately comply with such request or face expulsion.
- Access to the designated spaces of the General Assembly will be strictly reserved for accredited persons. The accreditations will be delivered only to persons whose organizations have been approved by the Permanent Council and who have received an official letter of invitation from the General Secretariat of the OAS.

- In the event a participant violates these rules, the General Assembly organizers reserve the right to bar participants involved from remaining, inviting them to leave without a right to continue to participate, as well as to consider adopting the measures they deem appropriate to safeguard the principles of pluralism and respect. Individual sanctions, where applicable, will be determined at the organizers' discretion.