**ACTIONS TO ENSURE EDUCATIONAL CONTINUITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION DURING AND AFTER THE PANDEMIC, FOCUSING ON ACCESS AS WELL AS THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION, INCLUDING REMOTE LEARNING**

Resolution presented by the Delegations of Nicaragua, Mexico, Haiti and El Salvador

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

NOTING that member states have agreed, in Article 34 (h) of the OAS charter, to devote their utmost efforts to accomplishing basic goals including the rapid eradication of illiteracy and expansion of educational opportunities for all;

VALUING the remote solutions implemented by member states and the commitment of educators during the pandemic to maintain educational processes, while noting that the adoption of measures was only to the extent of their respective resource capabilities and they were, for the most part, partial substitutes for in-person learning;

CONSIDERING Article 24 of the Convention on the rights of persons with disability that “states parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels…” against the background of UNICEF’s reports of countries’ COVID-19 education responses being rarely designed to meet the developmental needs of students with disabilities who were consequently excluded;

DEEPLY CONCERNED that the COVID-19 pandemic has generated learning losses in education across the Americas as illustrated by UNICEF reports of largely inequitable learning losses as students are now at risk of losing $17 trillion in lifetime earnings in present value due to school closures, which amounts to approximately 14% of today’s global GDP, far more than the $10 trillion estimated in 2020,

RESOLVES:

1. To assess the needs of households and schools and implement capacities to ensure internet access is equitably distributed within member states, thereby reducing the digital divide, increasing access to education, increasing opportunities to capitalize on digitalization, as well as fostering socialization, inclusion and narrowed information and technology gaps during and after the pandemic.
2. To request expert assistance from the OAS’ Department of Human Development, Education and Employment and other competent bodies to:
3. conduct national studies to identify teacher skill gaps and facilitate teacher training in ICT
4. provide IT infrastructure for teachers to modernize curricula and properly equip them for more inclusive pedagogy, thereby catalyzing transformational change in remote and hybrid learning in member states.
5. To urge the Ministries of Education to include in their school syllabi: Computing, Information Technology and Electronic Document Preparation and Management courses that are age-appropriate as well as accommodating of groups with specific requirements.
6. To seek assistance from organizations such as UNICEF to provide hygiene kits including soap, sanitizers and cleaning supplies to underfunded and overcrowded public schools.
7. To adopt measures to close data gaps in order to advance inclusive education responses for children with disabilities in member states, thereby informing programmes, policies and infrastructure development to ensure equality and accessibility in education.
8. To develop and launch ‘Operation Educational Relief Fund’ which will require financial pledges from member states to be used to bolster education infrastructure in vulnerable member states, which is crucial for facilitating and prioritizing face to face and or blended learning for all students.