

PROGRAM OF ACTION  
FOR THE DECADE OF THE AMERICAS  
FOR THE RIGHTS AND DIGNITY  
OF PERSONS WITH

# DISABILITIES

(2016-2026)



# OAS

More rights for more people



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>I. VISION</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>II. MISSION</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>III. GOALS</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>IV. CONCRETE ACTIONS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>V. STRATEGIES</b>	<b>53</b>



PROGRAM OF ACTION  
FOR THE DECADE OF THE AMERICAS  
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OF PERSONS WITH  
**DISABILITIES**

(2016–2026)

THE MEMBER STATES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF  
AMERICAN STATES,

**BEARING IN MIND** the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS), the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, the American Convention on Human Rights, the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights—the Protocol of San Salvador, and the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities;

**STRESSING** that the member states of the OAS have focused on persons with disabilities in various resolutions, among which resolution AG/RES.1249 (XXIII-O/93) “Situation of Persons with Disabilities in the American Hemisphere,”

resolution AG/RES.1356 (XXV-O/95) “Situation of Persons with Disabilities in the American Hemisphere,” and resolution AG/RES.1369 (XXVI-O/96) “Panama Commitment to Persons with Disabilities in the American Hemisphere,” as well as in various declarations, such as the 1993 Declaration of Managua and the 2005 Declaration of Panama by the Fourth Summit of the Heads of State and/or Government of the Association of Caribbean States;

**ALSO BEARING IN MIND** that various instruments have been adopted globally to set the guidelines for disabilities, focusing on providing services to persons with disabilities and establishing their rights, in particular, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006),

**RECOGNIZING AND RESPECTING** the multicultural and multilingual character of persons with disabilities among indigenous peoples and cultures and the importance of their contribution to the development, plurality, and cultural diversity of our societies, the commitment to their participation in this new Program of Action for the Decade of the Americas for the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities (PAD) to 2026 is reiterated in order to address the intersectional nature of all of its variables aimed at achieving economic and social well-being, respecting their human rights and cultural identity;

**VALUING** the importance of the United Nations Declaration “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” which contains the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2015-2030 to promote the development and social inclusion of persons with disabilities using a cross-cutting approach and, specifically, with some concrete goals;

**RECALLING** the Proclamation of 1981 as the International Year of Disabled Persons, the Proclamation of the International Day of Disabled Persons (1992), the Final Report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission for Social Development on Monitoring the Implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1996), and resolution 2005/65 of the United Nations Human Rights Committee “The Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities”;

**HAVING PROGRESSED IN IMPLEMENTING** the Program of Action for the Decade of the Americas for the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, adopted at the thirty-sixth regular session of the General Assembly of the OAS, held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, in June 2006, and

**CONSIDERING** resolution AG/DEC. 89 (XLVI-O/16), approved at the second plenary session of the forty-sixth regular session of the General Assembly of the OAS, held on June 14, 2016, whereby a ten-year extension up to the year 2026 was approved; and resolution AG/RES. 2908 (XLVII-O/17) “Promotion and Protection of Human Rights” adopted at the forty-seventh regular session of the General Assembly, Chapter x, pp.104 and105,



## HEREBY ADOPT THE FOLLOWING PROGRAM OF ACTION:

### I. VISION

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By the year 2026, the member states will have consolidated substantive progress in building an inclusive society, one based on solidarity, accessible to all, and recognizing the full and egalitarian enjoyment and exercise of human rights and basic liberties of persons with disabilities, eliminating social prejudices, stereotypes, and stigmas and the many discriminations against groups in situations of vulnerability and/or who have been historically discriminated against, which prevents their development and full and effective participation and inclusion in society.

Persons with disabilities must be recognized and appreciated for their effective and potential contributions to the general welfare, diversity, and respect for their plurality, in both urban and rural areas, and inside groups in situations of vulnerability and/or who have been historically discriminated against.

## II. MISSION

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The member states pledge to prevent persons with disabilities from being victims of multiple discrimination, focusing special attention on discrimination because of their belonging to other groups in situations of vulnerability and/or who have been historically discriminated against.

The member states pledge to carry out national, regional, and local programs, recognizing, promoting, and protecting their human rights to mitigate the harmful impact of poverty and inequality on persons with disabilities compared to the rest of the population, in view of their situation of vulnerability, discrimination, and exclusion, recognizing, promoting, and protecting their human rights.

The States Parties pledge to harmonize their domestic legislation with the principles and standards of international human rights law in this area, enshrined in Article 12 of the CRPD as interpreted by General Comment No. 1 of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The member states pledge to adopt gradually and irreversibly administrative, legislative, and judicial measures, as well as the public policies needed, to the utmost of their available resources and, when necessary, in the framework of international cooperation, in order to progressively achieve the full exercise of the rights of persons with disabilities, without detriment to the rights that are immediately applicable by virtue of international law for the effective application of the present Program of Action, stemming from the extension of the Decade of the Americas for Persons with Disabilities (to the year 2026), in the domestic legal system, so that persons with disabilities can be on an equal footing with other persons and improve their living conditions.

They also pledge to remove administrative, judicial, or any other kind of practices that are not compatible with the vision and goals of the PAD, immediately adopting measures conducive to this end, in order to ensure that persons with disabilities are on an equal footing with other persons.

### III. GOALS

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#### ▲ 1. AWARENESS-RAISING OF SOCIETY

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To ensure promotion of knowledge about the situation of persons with disabilities, recognition of all of their human rights, protection of their dignity, their due valuation, as well as the elimination of all forms of discrimination and all constraints in terms of culture and attitudes, including social prejudices, stereotypes, and stigmas and many discriminations because of their belonging to other groups in situations of vulnerability and/or who have been historically discriminated against that prevent their development and their full and effective participation and inclusion in society.

#### ▲ 2. HEALTH

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To broaden, enhance, and ensure the access of persons with disabilities to health services, including sexual and reproductive health services, on an equal footing with other persons and ensuring that existing services mainstream the disability perspective and, when relevant, adding that of other groups

in situations of vulnerability and/or who have been historically discriminated against, especially to the services required as a consequence of their situation of disability, including prompt detection and intervention, when appropriate, and services aimed at preventing and reducing to the utmost the appearance of new deficiencies or the aggravation of those already existing. It shall be guaranteed that all health services shall be provided on the basis of the free and informed consent of the person with the disability. Also, to promote the related investigation with treatment, rehabilitation, and prevention in order to reduce to the utmost the appearance of new disabilities.

### **3. REHABILITATION AND EMPOWERMENT**

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To promote multidimensional systems of rehabilitation and empowerment for persons with disabilities that envisage addressing their disabilities throughout their life cycle, focusing on them at an early age and during childhood, encouraging availability, knowledge, and the use of assistive technologies and devices aimed at persons with disabilities and the training of professionals.

## ▲ 4. EDUCATION

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To ensure and guarantee that persons with disabilities have access, on an equal footing with other persons and without any discrimination, to quality education, with cultural and inclusive relevance, including their registration, permanence, progress, grading, accreditation, and certification in the education system at all levels, as well as lifelong learning, that would facilitate their development to the maximum of their personality, talents, and creativity, as well as their full inclusion and participation in all areas of society.

## ▲ 5. WORK AND EMPLOYMENT

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To guarantee, for persons with disabilities, full, decent, and paid inclusion in the labor force in all spheres of productive activities, in both the public and private sectors, on the basis of technical and vocational training, as well as equal opportunities for work, including the availability of accessible occupational and working environments, in line with the domestic regulatory frameworks of each country, and to ensure the provision of reasonable adjustments to this end.

## ▲ 6. ACCESSIBILITY

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To ensure the autonomous and safe access of persons with disabilities, taking into account cultural relevance and, on an equal footing with other persons, the physical environment, spaces, urban facilities, buildings, transportation services, and other services, whether public or open to the public, in both urban and rural areas, as well as guaranteeing access of persons with disabilities to information and communication systems and technologies, regardless of the technological platform involved; which includes both computer software and hardware, their interaction, and availability.

## ▲ 7. CITIZEN, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

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To ensure the full and active participation and inclusion of organizations representing persons with disabilities and persons with disabilities, while respecting their political ideology, with special emphasis on women with disabilities, in public and political life, including the effective exercise of the right to vote and to run for office at all levels, with accessible electoral materials, procedures, and facilities.

Their participation in drafting, adopting, and evaluating public policies aimed at protecting and promoting their rights, on an equal footing with everyone else, shall also be promoted and guaranteed, as well as the promotion and facilitation, on the basis of various forms of support, of their participation in their own organizations and those representing them, encouraging the participation of persons with disabilities living in rural and remote areas, including those belonging to indigenous or Afro-descendant peoples or communities.

## ▲ 8. PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL, ARTISTIC, SPORTS, AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES

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To guarantee the participation of persons with disabilities in cultural and artistic life, sports, leisure, recreation, and tourism, and to promote a culture of accessible tourism, as well as any other activity that might promote social inclusion and the integral development of individuals on an equal footing. The use of technical means shall also be promoted to develop creative, artistic, and intellectual capacities in their various manifestations.



## ▲ 9. DEVELOPMENT, WELL-BEING, AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

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To promote the social inclusion and development of persons with disabilities, on an equal footing with other persons, ensuring access to welfare and social security programs, which include their families, as well as to guarantee that, in the poverty abatement and elimination programs that are undertaken, the additional expenses associated with disability conditions are duly taken into account.

## ▲ 10. EXERCISING LEGAL CAPACITY

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To ensure the support and safeguards needed for the effective exercise of the legal capacity of persons with disabilities.

## ▲ 11. PERSONAL AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENT LIVING

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To guarantee the legal and material conditions for the full enjoyment of personal autonomy and independent living of persons with disabilities.

## ▲ 12. ACCESS TO JUSTICE

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To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to justice on an equal footing with other persons, guaranteeing the provision of reasonable adjustments to this end.

## ▲ 13. EMERGENCY, CATASTROPHIC, AND DISASTER SITUATIONS

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To guarantee the integral management of person with disabilities in a situation of risk, taking into account their needs before, during, and after the emergency, including their assistive products or means of personal assistance in order to safeguard their autonomy, displacement, and independence.

## ▲ 14. LIFE WITHOUT VIOLENCE

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To guarantee that persons with disabilities do not suffer from situations of violence for any reason and under any context, ensuring the full and effective participation of organizations of persons with disabilities in creating mechanisms to eliminate and address violence. To ensure that persons with disabilities who have been victims of violence and abuse have an equali-

tarian access to the mechanisms for investigating and punishing said incidents, guaranteeing the provision of reasonable adjustments needed to this end.

## ▲ 15. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

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To ensure the participation of the organizations of persons with disabilities in all international cooperation plans, programs, and projects as an effective instrument of support for regional and national efforts, for the purpose of creating the full inclusion of, and nondiscrimination against, persons with disabilities, preventing their exclusion.

## IV. CONCRETE ACTIONS

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### ▲ 1. AWARENESS-RAISING OF SOCIETY

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#### A. Education and dissemination

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- a. To promote the development of inclusive public plans, programs, and policies at all levels of the education system, so as:
  - 1. To create and build up a culture of positive perception about the human potential, self-determination, and individual independence, knowledge, merits, skills, and contributions to society by persons with disabilities, promoting respect for, and protection of, their dignity and rights.
  - 2. To mainstream the human rights approach and disabilities into academic curriculums and study programs, using a cross-cutting approach, with special emphasis on the issue of groups in situations of vulnerability and/or who have been historically discriminated against.

3. To establish training programs aimed at civil servants from all branches of government and at the private sector on promoting and protecting human rights and basic liberties of persons with disabilities, focusing on the elimination of derogatory terms, social stigmas, uses, and customs that involve deeply rooted prejudices, stereotypes, and discriminatory attitudes against persons with disabilities.
- b. To undertake and continue public awareness-raising campaigns on persons with disabilities, including the following actions:
  1. To promote a positive image of persons with disabilities in local and national media, respecting diversity and fostering equal opportunities, including a perspective for groups in situations of vulnerability and/or who have been historically discriminated against.
  2. To mainstream in government actions or advertising campaigns those practices that integrally promote the social inclusion of persons with disabilities, taking into consideration accessibility criteria.

3. To establish legal and judicial mechanisms so that persons with disabilities, through the organizations that represent them, can play a role in how their image is used in all advertising campaigns by public or private institutions, in all media or communication systems.
4. To develop awareness-raising and training programs about Universal Design aimed at the public and private sectors.

## **B. Support role of civil society**

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To foster the creation of social networks, community support groups, or volunteers that promote recognition and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities and their full and effective participation in society.

## **▲ 2. RIGHT TO HEALTH**

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### **A. Promotion and protection of health**

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- a. To guarantee the access of persons with disabilities to health services, on an equal footing with other persons

and with due attention to their specific needs because of their disability, in the most inclusive environment possible, as well as to guarantee the access of women, girls, and adolescents with disabilities to health services, with the required adjustments made to ensure quality comprehensive care.

- b.** To guarantee that states adopt concrete and effective legislation and measures to ensure that all persons with disabilities benefit from procedures that enable them to provide their free and informed consent for medical treatments, with the application of reasonable accessibility, support, and adjustment measures.
- c.** To provide persons with disabilities free or affordable health programs and services, with the same diversity and quality as those provided to other persons, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and public health programs aimed at the general population.
- d.** To promote training and accessibility of healthcare service establishments, in terms of both infrastructure and equipment and human resources, for providing services to persons with disabilities.

- e. To guarantee due and timely quality healthcare services to persons with disabilities, taking into consideration their belonging to groups in situations of vulnerability and/or who have been historically discriminated against, and to provide, free of charge or at affordable prices, the treatments and medicines needed, as well as to prevent the deterioration of health or worsening of the deficiency, while respecting their autonomy and on the basis of their free and informed consent.
- f. To design and implement educational strategies that promote healthy lifestyles for persons with disabilities.
- g. To ensure access of persons with disabilities, on an equal footing with other persons, to the physical premises, information, and communications of establishments that provide health services in both urban and rural areas and indigenous territories, including the training of healthcare professionals to transmit this information in language that is easy to understand, planning for sign language interpreting services and interpreter-guides.



- h.** To ensure that all information provided by the healthcare sector is available in the modes, means, forms, and formats that are accessible to, and apt for use by, persons with disabilities.

### **3. REHABILITATION AND EMPOWERMENT**

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#### **A. Rehabilitation**

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- a.** To develop comprehensive rehabilitation policies and programs that ensure the full inclusion, participation, and development of persons with disabilities.
- b.** To promote among international organizations and regional and international funding and cooperation bodies, as well as cooperating countries, their development or funding of research activities relative to treatment, rehabilitation, and prevention in order to reduce to the utmost the appearance of new disabilities.
- c.** To promote the availability of, and access to, assistive technical, technological, and biomechanical products, specialized mobile devices and applications for persons with disabilities, taking into account their socioeconomic, geographical, and cultural conditions.

- d. To strengthen existing empowerment and rehabilitation services so that all persons with disabilities can gain access to the services they need, close to their place of residence, including in rural areas and indigenous and Afro-descendant territories.
- e. To promote community-based empowerment and rehabilitation strategies with emphasis on primary healthcare services, integrated into the health system and adjusted to the specificities of each country, with the participation of organizations representing persons with disabilities in designing and implementing them.
- f. To promote the adequate training of professional and technical staff for the provision of comprehensive services to all persons with disabilities, as well as in their ethical responsibility in terms of the autonomy of persons with disabilities and obtaining their free and informed consent for any medical treatment.
- g. To promote the development of specific national training and education programs for the production and supply of equipment, assistive technical and biomechanical products, specialized mobile devices and applications,

as well as the participation of persons with disabilities in these programs.

- h.** To take measures for the establishment of intersectoral commitments and programs that coordinate actions for achieving the integral rehabilitation of persons with disabilities since childhood.

## **B. Empowerment**

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- a.** To promote quality early stimulation programs aimed at developing the potential and skills of children with disabilities, especially during early childhood, in accordance with their specific needs.
- b.** To organize and broaden general empowerment services and programs, in particular in the areas of health, employment, education, and social services that contribute to the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in the community.

## **4. EDUCATION**

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- a.** To reassert the commitment to transitioning from special education to inclusive education.

- b. To guarantee the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the general education system, in an inclusive environment and with quality education services, considering cultural relevance.
- c. To ensure that persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system because of their disabilities and that children and adolescents with disabilities are not excluded from free and mandatory primary and secondary school education because of their disabilities. Also, to guarantee the access of students with disabilities to technical, higher, and vocational training, among other actions, promoting the granting of scholarships to this end.
- d. To ensure that persons with disabilities have general access to higher education, vocational training, education for older persons, virtual education, education in gender equality, sexual and reproductive health, and lifelong learning, without any discrimination and on an equal footing with everyone else. To this end, states shall ensure that the reasonable adjustments that are needed be made.

- e. To provide the necessary didactic and teaching resources to meet the specific educational needs of the students according to their disabilities, including textbooks and reading materials in accessible modes, means, forms, and formats.
- f. To guarantee the participation and interaction of students with disabilities in all areas of school and academic life, as well as all extracurricular activities, which include, among others, securing their participation in the decisions that are taken with respect to reasonable adjustments in the teaching-learning and grading process.
- g. To eliminate illiteracy among persons with disabilities by means of effective public policies.
- h. To implement learning of the Braille reading and writing system, alternative writing, others forms and modes of alternative and augmentative communication, orientation and mobility skills, the learning of sign languages, and the promotion of the linguistic and cultural identity of deaf persons.

- i. To ensure that deaf persons obtain quality and inclusive education and bilingual education in sign and native languages, respecting multiculturalism with local, regional, and national characteristics.
- j. To ensure the dismantling of physical, communicational, technological, and attitudinal barriers preventing students with disabilities from having access to all levels of education.
- k. To promote continuing and specialized training and education in inclusive education for teachers of all levels of education and for other professionals that fosters the drafting and development of inclusive education policies, with emphasis on respect for human rights and basic liberties.
- l. To guarantee access of students with disabilities to information and communication technologies in the education system.

## 5. WORK AND EMPLOYMENT

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- a. To guarantee to persons with disabilities the right to decent employment chosen autonomously and

independently in open, inclusive, and accessible working environments, in accordance with their capacities and competencies, with all the guarantees provided by law, the possibility of advancement and being promoted and wage-earning equality on an equal footing with others, respecting their right to work and belong to a trade union.

- b.** To strengthen the labor inclusion of persons with disabilities and affirmative actions for the development of the regulatory framework, public policies, plans, and programs in the area of employment and economic development.
- c.** To implement national employment services that make it possible to provide formation, training, brokering services, recruitment, job adaptation, implementation of reasonable adjustments, permanence, and performance evaluation of persons with disabilities on the labor market.
- d.** To promote the creation of house-based or distance work (telecommuting) using information and communication technologies as a means to facilitate

greater opportunities on the labor markets for persons with disabilities.

- e. To promote the hiring of persons with disabilities in the private sector on the basis of affirmative action policies, fiscal incentives, subsidies, or special funding, among other similar actions.
- f. To provide incentives for entrepreneurial opportunities for persons with disabilities, free-lance work, the establishment of cooperatives, and the creation of micro and small businesses, as well as consolidation of those that already exist.
- g. To stimulate public and private entities to engage in the purchase and procurement of goods and services provided by the micro and small businesses of persons with disabilities.
- h. To support persons with disabilities in developing production projects and promoting products from micro and small businesses, considering the creation of funds and flexible lines of credit for such purposes.
- i. To adopt measures to guarantee that workers with disabilities who work on a permanent or intermittent



basis as day laborers or in the building industry can enjoy the protection granted by law and national practices to other workers in the same sectors, in the framework of labor security and health, in particular to persons with disabilities belonging to other groups in situations of vulnerability and/or who have been historically discriminated against.

- j. To promote efforts to ensure that actions aimed at recognizing the labor capacity of workers with disabilities is taken into consideration in trade union collective bargaining agreements.
- k. To implement effective policies to support the family or community work of persons with disabilities.
- l. All the information about job supply and/or merit-based competitions for civil service jobs; job training and education; economic development, promotion and creation of small and medium-sized enterprises and the solidarity-based sector must be presented in accessible modes, means, forms, and formats for each type of disability. Internet platforms and websites must be accessible and guarantee interaction with persons with disabilities.

## ▲ 6. ACCESSIBILITY

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- a. To guarantee compliance with the technical norms of access to physical premises, transportation, communications, and information and communication technologies, mainstreaming international standards into national legislation and public policies, among others, in accordance with General Comment No. 2 (2014) on Article 9: Accessibility of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- b. To promote the adoption and/or strengthening of legislative measures that might be needed:
  - 1. To guarantee, for persons with disabilities, accessibility to all goods and services provided by public institutions ensuring their easy use and interaction.
  - 2. To guarantee, for persons with disabilities, accessibility to all goods and services co-funded by public or cooperation resources ensuring their easy use and interaction.

3. To guarantee, for persons with disabilities, full access to information, communication, and management of services of public interest that are offered online or electronically.
  4. To guarantee, for persons with disabilities, access to the autonomous use and management of personal and electronic payment systems.
  5. To guarantee, for persons with disabilities, access to information affixed to consumer products.
- c. To guarantee the full participation of persons with disabilities in designing, adjusting, implementing, and monitoring legislation, public policies, and administrative decisions in terms of access to physical premises, transportation, and information and communication technologies.
  - d. To promote the dismantling of existing urban and architectural barriers in all public institutions.
  - e. To take measures to ensure that all buildings or services and facilities for public use envisage universal accessibility and to foster said practice in the private sector.

- f. To promote the dismantling of existing barriers in all means of transportation to facilitate the access of persons with disabilities, aimed at guaranteeing that information relative to transportation systems takes into consideration the use of forms of transmitting information such as written language, sign languages, the Braille reading and writing system, auditory information, pictorial and high-relief information, easy-to-understand wording, and other alternative and augmentative means of communication.
- g. To guarantee the autonomous and independent access of persons with disabilities to ICTs, virtual portals, websites, multimedia contents, books regardless of their original format, the Internet, and social networks. To this end, states may wish to consider, depending on the case, the possibility of granting subsidies, tax exemptions, and access to funding plans aimed at acquiring these new systems and technologies, in line with the needs of each person with a disability.
- h. To guarantee interpreting and translation services in sign languages and interpreter-guides for deaf persons, deafblind persons, and language-minority groups with

disabilities, promoting professional development and the certification needed for interpreters, translators, and interpreter-guides.

- i. To guarantee accessible facilities and services for persons with disabilities who have been displaced by armed conflicts, disasters, and emergencies, forced migration, or any other reason requiring their displacement.
- j. To guarantee the availability and usability of suitable technologies at affordable prices that guarantee the independent, autonomous, and egalitarian access of persons with disabilities to information and communications. They include alternative and augmentative devices, subtitles, screen readers and magnifiers, as well as other systems of personal support.

## 7. CITIZEN, POLITICAL, AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

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- a. To ensure the exercise of citizen rights and duties and basic liberties of persons with disabilities, harmonizing any regulatory framework, policy, or practice that would

prevent or hamper their participation in the citizen, political, and social sphere.

- b.** To guarantee, on an equal footing with other persons, the full participation of persons with disabilities in elections, whether as voters or candidates running for office, taking into consideration the necessary mechanisms of accessibility, including assisted voting by a person of their own choosing, electronic voting, and distance voting, among others, adjusting electoral systems to this end.
- c.** To promote access of persons with disabilities, on an equal footing, to public office and civil service in their respective countries.
- d.** To consult, openly and broadly, persons with disabilities about designing, drafting, implementing, and monitoring legislation, administrative decisions, and public policies, especially those involving political, citizen, and social participation, as well as all the decisions directly affecting them, including persons with disabilities belonging to groups in situations of vulnerability and/or who have been historically discriminated against.

- e. To promote the participation in, and establishment of, organizations of persons with disabilities, as well as coordinating these organizations for the purpose of strengthening their participation in the debate on public policies at all levels and consolidating the defense of their interests. Also to promote the creation of a funding mechanism that would make it possible for organizations of persons with disabilities, representing groups in situations of vulnerability and/or who have historically been discriminated, to build up their management.
- f. To promote formation and training policies aimed at the organizations representing persons with disabilities, in order to develop their public affairs management skills.
- g. All information about human rights and basic liberties, international humanitarian law, and political, electoral, and citizen participation must be presented in modes, means, forms, and formats that are accessible to each type of disability.
- h. To promote the participation of organizations representing persons with disabilities so that they can

encourage political parties to include proposals for the enforcement of the rights of persons with disabilities into their campaigns and platforms.

## 8. PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL, ARTISTIC, SPORTS, AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES

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- a. To guarantee, by means of national plans of action, the inclusion of persons with disabilities in cultural, artistic, sports, and leisure activities, as well as to ensure their participation and that of their sports and cultural organizations in designing, adapting, implementing, and monitoring legislation, administrative decisions, and public policies for sports, leisure, entertainment, and culture.
- b. To earmark resources to foster the cultural, traditional, artistic, sports, and leisure activities of persons with disabilities.
- c. To foster the practicing of high-performance sports of persons with disabilities in recreational, leisure, and well-being modalities, involving national entities responsible for these areas.



- d. To promote the creation and sustainability of high-performance sports entities for persons with disabilities, guaranteeing that they benefit from the relevant institutional structure and equipment.
- e. To strengthen, in technical, administrative, and financial terms, sports organizations for persons with disabilities.
- f. To guarantee access to, and use of, accessible sports facilities, materials, and equipment for persons with disabilities to practice sports.
- g. To promote conditions of accessibility to tourism, recreational and leisure services, and cultural, sports, and other public events.
- h. To promote the training of persons with disabilities so that they can work in the tourism, culture, sports, and leisure sectors.
- i. To foster the training of operators of tourism infrastructure about the adequate treatment of persons with disabilities in order to prevent attitudes underrating them, leading to discrimination and restricting their access to, use, and enjoyment of tourism.

- j. To guarantee, for persons with disabilities, access to all cultural assets and products, regardless of their modes, means, forms, and formats, such as printed matter, dance, theater, and audiovisual products.
- k. To stimulate the training and professional development of persons with disabilities in artistic activities and to design programs that foster the cultural production of persons with disabilities and the communication, broadcasting, and dissemination of their cultural works and products.
- l. To guarantee that children with disabilities have access, on an equal footing with other persons, to recreational, leisure, cultural, and sports facilities, plans, programs, and services.

## ▲ 9. DEVELOPMENT, WELL-BEING, AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

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- a. To ensure the participation of persons with disabilities in social and economic development by building up their capacities and fostering their productive and sustainable activities.

- b. To guarantee access of persons with disabilities, in particular those belonging to groups in situations of vulnerability and/or who are historically discriminated against, to social welfare programs and poverty abatement strategies, duly considering the additional expenses required or heightened by the condition of having a disability, taking into consideration, among other variables, the type of disability.
- c. To ensure access of persons with disabilities and their families, on an equal footing, to food security programs, clean water supply, basic sanitation, and housing, implementing to this end affirmative actions that ensure their effective access to, and enjoyment of, rights.
- d. To design mechanisms to ensure a level playing field for opportunities making it possible to absorb the costs of assistive products and technologies that guarantee the autonomy, independence, and security of persons with disabilities for the enjoyment of an independent life.
- e. All information about social, welfare, nutrition, food security, clean water, environmental sanitation, and housing plans, programs, and projects must be

presented in modes, means, forms, and formats that are accessible to persons with any type of disability. Internet platforms and websites must be accessible and must ensure that persons with disabilities can interact with them.

- f. To create development and welfare programs for the families of children and adolescents with disabilities to make sure poverty is not an impediment to their inclusion.

## 10. EXERCISE OF LEGAL CAPACITY

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- a. To eliminate the substitute decision-making [guardianship] model for persons with disabilities and to develop relevant actions to provide access to the support these persons might need to exercise their legal capacity, as well as to take decisions.
- b. To provide adequate and effective safeguards to prevent abuses and ensure respect for the rights, will, and preferences of persons with disabilities.
- c. To design and implement a Continuing Training Program aimed at all operators of justice, in coordination

with institutions specializing in issues involving the recognition of the legal capacity of persons with disabilities.

- d. To guarantee, for persons with disabilities, access to information by means of assistive systems and services and reasonable adjustments so they can make their own decisions directly, in order to guarantee the free exercise of their legal capacity, using the visualization of texts, the Braille reading and writing system, touch communication, Macrotype, easy-to-access multimedia devices, written language, hearing systems, subtitling, interpreters and translators of sign languages, native and interpreter-guides, materials in easy-to-understand language and pictograms, among others.
- e. To call on the agencies and institutions involved, as well as the organizations representing persons with disabilities and their families, to design, create, and implement assistive services for persons with disabilities so they can exercise their legal capacity.

## ▲ 11. PERSONAL AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENT LIVING

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- a. To guarantee the right of persons with disabilities to live in the community, making sure they have the opportunity to choose their place of residence and with whom to live, on an equal footing with other persons.
- b. To promote the access of persons with disabilities to home-based care and other community support services to facilitate their existence and inclusion in the community and to prevent them from being isolated.
- c. States shall facilitate, by means of public programs and fiscal incentives, the access to and usability of assistive technologies and equipment for independent living, promoting mechanisms for their low-cost production.

## ▲ 12. ACCESS TO JUSTICE

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- a. To ensure that persons with disabilities have access to justice on an equal footing with other persons.
- b. To guarantee the existence of a regulatory framework that facilitates and enables the implementation

of procedural adjustments when a person with a disability participates in a judicial proceeding, at all stages of the proceeding. Such measures must take into consideration aspects relative to accessibility, belonging to other groups in situations of vulnerability, and/or who have been historically discriminated against, modality of the disability, among others.

- c. To guarantee the access to justice by providing adequate training and education to those working in the administration of justice, including civil servants of the judiciary, security personnel, and penitentiary staff.
- d. To implement effective measures to monitor the conditions in which persons with disabilities who are deprived of their liberty are living, for the purpose of ensuring that the situation of disability shall not be an aggravating factor when serving a prison sentence, arising from greater constraints on their rights or greater limitation on activities that other persons deprived of liberty can carry out. Reasonable adjustments and the right to rehabilitation, as well as the elimination of all forms of discrimination, shall be ensured.

## ▲ 13. EMERGENCY, CATASTROPHIC, AND DISASTER SITUATIONS

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- a. To include the cross-cutting perspective of disabilities in all risk prevention and emergency, catastrophe, and disaster service plans and programs, focusing special attention on groups in situations of vulnerability and/or who have been historically discriminated against.
- b. To ensure that all massive dissemination and prevention campaigns are presented in modes, means, forms, and formats accessible to each type of disability.
- c. To ensure training in this matter for public agents and response corps tackling emergencies.
- d. To ensure that the participation of persons with disabilities be considered when carrying out drills and drafting service protocols, guides, and manuals.
- e. To ensure that national and local contingency plans incorporate and identify attention and evacuation centers that are accessible for access and use by persons with disabilities.



- f. To promote the implementation of a voluntary registry of persons with disabilities that would facilitate their identification in the event of an emergency, catastrophe, or disaster.
- g. To ensure that the channels of humanitarian aid include equipment, products, and elements that take into consideration attention given to persons with disability.
- h. To include the perspective of disability in reconstruction processes subsequent to emergencies, catastrophes, and disasters, applying principles of universal accessibility and design, focusing attention on the specific needs of persons with disabilities.

## 14. LIFE WITHOUT VIOLENCE

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- a. To ensure that all public and private institutions in charge of duly preventing, protecting, defending, and redressing the exploitation, violence, and abuse of groups in situations of vulnerability and/or who have been historically discriminated against include guarantees for accessible and quality protection, defense, redress, assistance, and services for persons

with disabilities in all of its policies, programs, plans, projects, and actions.

- b.** To implement measures to prevent, eliminate, and punish all forms of violence perpetrated in the public or private sphere against persons with disabilities, especially obstetric violence against women with disabilities.
- c.** To establish comprehensive care and protection mechanisms, measures, and policies for victims with disabilities, as well as to redress the harm caused.
- d.** To incorporate the denial of reasonable adjustments in any sphere of life of persons with disabilities as an act of discrimination.
- e.** To conduct dissemination campaigns on accessible modes, means, forms, and formats that highlight the situation of higher vulnerability and risk of violence among persons with disabilities, especially in those groups in situations of vulnerability and/or who have been historically discriminated against.
- f.** To promote, coordinate, and strengthen coordination networks and mechanisms at the intergovernmental

and intersectoral levels, in organizations of persons with disabilities, and in the private sector, in order to address and prevent all kinds of violence against persons with disabilities.

- g.** To include accessible modes, means, forms, and formats into general awareness-raising campaigns about various types of violence, as well as about the prevention, reporting, and punishment of this violence.
- h.** To design, implement, execute, and monitor the plans, programs, and projects of national mechanisms for the protection against torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or sentences, for the education, awareness-raising, and prevention of all forms of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatments or sentences against persons with disabilities, emphasizing the measures of action for institutionalized persons with disabilities or residents in care institutions or related entities.
- i.** To prevent, forbid, and punish the mistreatment, sexual abuse, and exploitation of persons with disabilities, especially in the domestic and institutional sphere, in particular groups with disabilities in situations

of vulnerability and/or who have been historically discriminated against, in the framework of national regulatory frameworks.

## 15. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

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- a. To promote, from the OAS framework and in the international sphere, programs and projects for the exchange of experiences and information, training, skills creation, and institutional capacity building among states, multilateral organizations, the private sector, civil society organizations, and organizations that represent persons with disabilities.
- b. To promote and foster other cooperation initiatives among OAS member states, as a genuine mechanism for solidarity in the Americas to design and implement programs and projects that facilitate the exchange of experiences and information, strengthening human and institutional capacities, with the collaboration and participation of multilateral organizations and organizations of persons with disabilities.

- c. To promote the establishment of a fund comprised of volunteer contributions making it possible for persons with disabilities to participate in related forums in order to build up their capacities.
- d. To instruct bodies, organs, and entities of the OAS, as well as other inter-American institutions, to collaborate with the General Secretariat in all planning and implementation aspects in the area of disabilities.
- e. To encourage specialized organizations of and for persons with disabilities to support the Secretariat and the member states in implementing the Program of Action, in line with the guidelines for the participation of civil society in OAS activities, as well as its follow-up and the general and specific assessment of the progress made by the states, under the third subparagraph of Article 33 of the CRPD.
- f. To ensure that all international cooperation projects launched, promoted, funded, or co-funded with resources from the Inter-American System or multilateral organizations guarantee the inclusive and sustainable development of persons with disabilities.

- g.** To launch, promote, and create mechanisms that ensure the cross-border exchange of cultural and technological assets and products that are accessible for persons with disabilities.
- h.** All information associated with international cooperation projects and programs must be presented in accessible modes, means, forms, and formats for each type of disability. Internet platforms and websites must be accessible and must guarantee the interaction of persons with disabilities.

## V. STRATEGIES

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1. States make a political commitment to put this Program of Action into practice, mainstreaming it into the corresponding national plans, for which they shall allocate the resources needed and shall ensure their timely and proper implementation, follow-up, and evaluation.
2. Without detriment to adopting the national measures needed, states shall review, harmonize, update, and improve their legislation for the purpose of adapting it to a hemispheric vision, to ensure the effectiveness of this Program of Action and its compatibility with international human rights instruments.
3. When preparing, developing, and implementing the corresponding legislative norms, states shall work in close collaboration with persons with disabilities and with organizations of and for persons with disabilities.
4. States shall promote the capacity building of organizations of persons with disabilities, for the purpose of creating capacity for action to strengthen state initiatives and create optimal conditions for the drafting of public policies that

guarantee the enforcement of rights and respect for the inherent dignity of persons with disabilities.

5. States shall promote training or capacity building of government bodies for the coordination and implementation of international treaties and the present Program of Action, in fulfillment of international obligations and the Sustainable Development Goals associated with persons with disabilities.
6. To promote the training or capacity building of government institutions that enforce the Paris Principles for the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities.
7. To promote regional harmonization of the standards and methodologies to gather information and disaggregated statistics, as well as use a standardized classification of the classes, types, and subtypes of disabilities, bearing in mind the classifications made by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Washington Group on Disability Statistics (WG), in order to benefit from comparable national databases and the standardization of statistical information, with indicators on the quality of living of persons with disabilities that contribute to drafting



effective public policies, as well as comparability in the region.

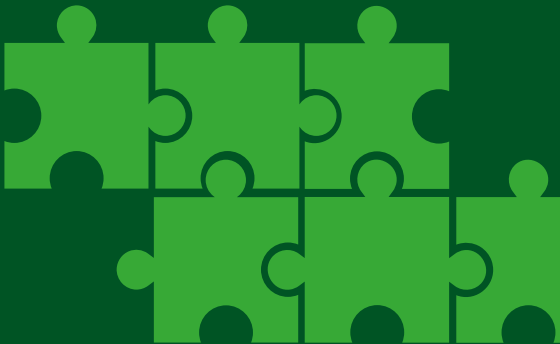
8. To strengthen mechanisms of access of the public to government information, transparency, and accountability that facilitate processes of follow-up and evaluation of the implementation of public policies for the benefit of persons with disabilities.
9. To guarantee respect for confidentiality and the proper use of statistical information, which can never be used against the rights of persons with disabilities.
10. To assign support, monitoring, and follow-up on the present Program of Action to an independent mechanism with the participation of the states and organizations of and for persons with disabilities, whose purpose shall be to plan activities conducive to the achievement of its concrete goals and actions, as well as to provide technical support to the member states and the Technical Secretariat.
11. To establish, on the basis of the present Program of Action for the Decade, targets and indicators for each goals and their corresponding concrete actions, for the purpose of

ensuring a better implementation and a favorable impact on the improvement of the living conditions of persons with disabilities in the Americas.

12. Periodic reports shall be required and interactive dialogues shall be conducted with States Parties, in coordination with, and to the extent that it is relevant, the Committee for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (CEDDIS).



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