

ANNEX

**PLAN FOR GENDER PARITY
IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS AT THE
GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF THE ORGANIZATION
OF AMERICAN STATES**

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Preface by the Secretary General of the OAS

For more than two decades, the member states of the Organization of American States (OAS) have been adopting resolutions to increase the representation of women in decision-making positions. The OAS Permanent Council took further steps in that direction in 2020, with resolution CP/RES. 1149 (2278/20), focused on equal representation and participation of women in the OAS. It was unanimously adopted and contained a mandate to submit a Gender Parity Plan for the General Secretariat of the OAS (GS/OAS).

This is an extremely important resolution because it seeks to expedite the inclusion and representation of women on an equal footing in the Organization's decision-making positions, which is vital to eliminating discrimination against women in terms of them accessing those positions and to moving toward hemispheric policies that are more equitable and balanced.

A democratic principle, gender equality in decision-making means the historical absence of women must be redressed. Historically, women have been systematically underrepresented in all areas of the Organization, contrary to the obligations enshrined in international and inter-American treaties on women's rights and women's participation in public affairs at the international sphere.

The absence of women in the structures of the OAS is a problem that transcends just numbers. I am convinced that incorporating women and ensuring they are fully represented in decision-making roles will go a long way toward maximizing OAS efforts across the Hemisphere to formulate policies reflecting the desires, interests, dreams, aspirations, and needs of all genders.

That has been the goal of my efforts ever since I became Secretary General of the OAS in 2015, which was why I adopted the OAS General Secretariat's Institutional Policy on Gender Equality, Diversity, and Human Rights in 2016 and, in 2017, published the Plan of Action for implementing it. It is against that backdrop that we have pursued affirmative action, training, and have appointed women to strategic positions.

The progress we have made to date has been significant - practically reaching parity at the P4 and P5 levels, the highest levels within the technical structures of the GS/OAS. Even so, we must be better and stronger in our efforts to achieve parity in all decision-making positions and have it embedded in the Organization's institutional culture, if it is to be sustainable over time.

I view the Parity Plan, which is in line with and comes in response to the policy guidelines set by the member states, as a key tool for guiding this endeavor. The Plan is designed to increase women's participation and representation in decision-making positions, with a view to achieving parity in the General Secretariat while contributing to balanced hemispheric policies.

Implementing the Plan should lead us to parity in the Organization's decision-making positions by 2025 – a collective undertaking that calls for participation from the OAS member states, the involvement of all GS/OAS staff, and senior management's commitment to actually meeting the Plan's objectives and deadlines.

The Inter-American Commission of Women of the OAS (CIM/OAS) has played a central role in this process, with its leadership and experience enabling us to identify avenues and opportunities for establishing a policy that aims to deliver visible and lasting culture-transforming results. This process has also benefited from the efforts of the OAS Secretariat for Administration and Finance and the Secretariat for Legal Affairs.

Based on Permanent Council resolution CP/RES. 1149 (2278/20) and on how it is embodied in this Plan, I see parity in GS/OAS leadership positions as a new standard for measuring our Organization's standing. Let me also take this opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to keep pressing toward gender equality and equity in hemispheric policies.

Luis Almagro
Secretary General, Organization of American States

Overview by the Executive Secretary of the OAS Inter-American Commission of Women

Since its founding in 1928, the OAS' Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM/OAS) has played an instrumental role in protecting and guaranteeing women's rights, and its beginnings are closely linked to the campaign for women to be represented and to take part in all spheres of life and in decision-making on an equal footing. Indeed, one of its original goals was to extend women's voting rights and, to that end, it campaigned for the adoption by the OAS, in 1948, of the Inter-American Convention on the Granting of Political Rights to Women. Since then, CIM has played an increasingly active role on this issue, which is advancing today based on the concept of parity.

In the 1990s, CIM developed a working agenda on electoral gender quota laws, in which our region was a pioneer and the application of which led to more women getting involved in their national legislatures. Over the last decade, CIM has led the regional process to shift from quota balance to parity transformation on the road to democracy on an equal footing.

The lingering obstacles that democracies encountered in the 2000s as they sought to ensure equal representation of women prompted the new parity-based paradigm, which is no longer defined as a transitory measure like gender quotas, but rather as a permanent measure of justice, based on the idea that because they comprise half of the population, women should rightfully hold the same proportion of decision-making positions.

Since that time, many countries have adopted parity laws covering election issues, while certain countries have extended the parity mandate to apply nationwide. The parity rule has ushered in the largest number of women to hold office in the history of the region and – because of how successfully it was applied in national elections – has made the Americas the region with the largest number of women in legislative bodies worldwide. But we are still a long way from parity in terms of the numbers. On top of that, a persistent culture – which in many ways remains hostile to the advancement of women in decision-making – gives us compelling reasons to continue adopting policies and measures geared toward substantive equality, safeguarding what has been accomplished over time while preventing any backsliding.

Likewise, the international arena and international organizations cannot remain oblivious to this process of more and more women becoming leaders in their countries, and it therefore poses a challenge for the OAS and its member states to then bring it to the GS/OAS. Incorporating women's views and interests into the working agenda and into decision-making is definitely a new impetus for seeking the highest standards of equal participation and representation of women and for consolidating the progress made.

CIM contributed to the crafting of the GS/OAS Parity Plan, under mandates from the General Assembly and a recent Permanent Council resolution, and in keeping with the vision of the Secretary General, based on the conviction that effectively implementing it will redound to a stronger OAS for the 21st century while enhancing its capacity to meet the real needs and include the voices of the peoples of the Americas. We have no choice but to keep up with the times.

Alejandra Mora Mora

Executive Secretary, OAS Inter-American Commission of Women

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE OAS GENERAL SECRETARIAT'S GENDER PARITY PLAN

By resolution CP/RES. 1149 (2278/20) on women's representation and participation in the OAS, adopted on March 12, 2020, the OAS Permanent Council resolved to request the OAS General Secretariat (GS/OAS or General Secretariat) to adopt parity in decision-making positions within the Organization. Specifically, the Permanent Council instructed the GS/OAS to: (i) progressively increase women's participation and representation in decision-making positions within the Organization, as well as on all commissions, missions, panels, and collegiate groups, including electoral observation missions, with the aim of attaining parity, understood as the equal and active participation of women in their leadership and composition, and (ii) devise a plan for meeting this goal, for submittal to the Permanent Council no later than November 2020¹. As an accountability measure, under this resolution the Council urges the General Secretariat to furnish the Permanent Council, in March each year, with a report on progress made in implementing this resolution.

This is not a new issue for the OAS, given that since 1999 the General Assembly has issued resolutions on the appointment of women to senior executive positions within the Organization, with significant progress made, particularly in terms of women accessing decision-making positions at the technical level in the GS/OAS, with near-parity for women. A significant number of policies and tools have also been devised to promote gender equality, diversity, and inclusion. These have been developed under the OAS General Secretariat's Institutional Policy on Gender Equality, Diversity, and Human Rights, Executive Order 16-03² (hereinafter, PGD), and the Plan of Action for the Implementation of the PGD³, published in 2017 (hereinafter, PGD Action Plan).

CIM has defined parity as a justice measure comprising three dimensions: (i) equal participation of women and men (50/50) in decision-making positions in the public and private sectors, from the international to the local level; (ii) the exercise of power on an equal footing – that is, free from gender- and/or sex-based discrimination and violence; and (iii) the mainstreaming of the women's rights and gender equality agenda.

Accordingly, GS/OAS has adopted a comprehensive framework for implementing the principle of equality, consisting of (i) the IAP, which seeks to advance the *agenda for gender equality and women's rights* at the OAS and in the member states; (ii) the Gender and Diversity Policy and the associated Action Plan for its implementation, which seeks, among other things, to provide *equal working conditions*; and (iii) this Plan (hereinafter the Plan or Parity Plan), which specifically seeks to attain parity *in access to decision-making positions* within the GS/OAS, both at the technical level and in appointments and trust positions at the General Secretariat and in the specialized agencies, subsidiary bodies, agencies, and other entities of the OAS, for which staff appointments fall under the purview of the head of the GS/OAS.

This document lays out the objectives and time frame, outlines the spheres of operation, and establishes a set of measures to be implemented to meet this goal. It also includes a series of recommendations for

¹ CP/RES. 1149 (2278/20) "Women's Representation and Participation in the OAS" (March 12, 2020, available at http://scm.oas.org/doc_public/spanish/hist_20/cp42142s03.docx).

² <http://www.oas.org/legal/english/gensec/EXOR1603.pdf>

³ In Executive Order 16-03, the Secretary General instructs the areas of the General Secretariat responsible for the policy to start the necessary work to implement it. The PGD Action Plan is available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/CIM/docs/PlanAccionGDD-EN.pdf>

those entities that fall outside the scope of this Plan and contains a series of proposals for consideration by the member states, whose active participation is critical to meeting the parity objectives.

The Plan sets the goal for parity to be achieved at the GS/OAS by 2025 and establishes five types of measures that are considered critical to meeting this goal: Firstly, clarity in the responsibility for implementing the Plan and coordination with other instruments responsible for bringing about parity within the GS/OAS. Secondly, having a clear accountability system in place to make the process more reliable and thus contribute to the successful implementation of the measures. Thirdly, data collection and publication, which will enable all personnel to track progress made and identify areas for improvement. Fourthly, dealing with unconscious gender biases, particularly when dealing with staff selection, hiring, and promotions. Fifthly, use of special measures to fast-track equality in an effective manner – which measures are indispensable to delivering results within the deadlines established here. Lastly, a communication strategy will be used to educate GS/OAS personnel about the objectives and the reasons for implementing this Plan.

Goodwill, accountability, and special measures demand a culture shift to address and neutralize the gender stereotypes that are reproduced in organizations. The case of orchestras in the United States provides a good example, in which the number of women in orchestras began to increase when screens were used in auditions, to prevent judges from seeing the people they were auditioning – that is, they were unable to tell whether it was a man or woman playing.⁴

Gender biases can give rise to unintended discrimination in staff selection, promotion, and evaluation processes. Those biases can influence résumé evaluations, interview outcomes, or job performance appraisals. There are findings that show that women often choose not to apply for positions for which they do not meet 100% of the requirements, while men apply or express their interest even if they meet only 60% of the requirements. Job advertisements employed words associated with male stereotypes, such as leader, competitive, or dominant; while words such as supportive, understanding, and interpersonal are associated with female stereotypes. Studies have found that job advertisements for male-dominated occupations used more masculine wording; and that women perceived these postings as less appealing than the same postings with gender-neutral wording, regardless of whether they were in male- or female-dominated occupations. This means that using “gendered words” in job advertisements could make the job appear less attractive to a particular gender, which would limit the pool of applicants for those jobs, particularly in the case of women.⁵

Studies have also shown that evaluations are skewed negatively toward women. On average, male workers are rated as significantly more capable, likable, and valuable than women, even if they possess identical qualifications, performance, and behaviors. This gender gap in how women are evaluated relative to men is a major contributing factor in the gender asymmetries observed in the hiring, promotion, and compensation of women relative to men.⁶ Other studies have shown men to be perceived

⁴Goldin, Claudia, and Cecilia Rouse (2000). “Orchestrating Impartiality: The Impact of ‘Blind’ Auditions on Female Musicians.” *American Economic Review*, 90 (4): 715-741.
<https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.90.4.715>

⁵ Gaucher, D., Friesen, J., & Kay, A. C. (2011). Evidence that gendered wording in job advertisements exists and sustains gender inequality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 101(1), 109–128.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022530>

⁶ Lauren A. Rivera, András Tilcsik (2019) “Scaling Down Inequality: Rating Scales, Gender Bias, and the Architecture of Evaluation” *American Sociological Review*, Vol 84, Issue 2, 2019.
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0003122419833601>

as more dedicated workers than women and that gender biases persist in the workplace because of a widespread perception that female workers who are mothers put their colleagues, their clients, and the company itself at greater risk than do workers who are fathers.⁷

Persistent invisible gender biases at workplaces where meritocracy is emphasized lead to the so-called “merit paradox,” whereby working in an environment that emphasizes meritocracy can lead people to believe that they are fair and objective and, as a result, become more likely to display their gender biases, and that rewards are more likely to be given to a male employee than to an equally qualified female employee.⁸

In short, the challenge laid out in this Plan is to transform the Organization's culture and, beyond merely attaining numerical parity, for a truly inclusive culture to be fostered. Inclusive organizations benefit from the enhanced efficiency and productivity derived from gender balance in the workforce, according to the International Labor Organization (ILO), as well as from their policies and programs in the Hemisphere being more effective by incorporating the interests and needs of the genders represented. Inclusion refers to efforts to embrace differences so that people associated with the Organization feel welcome, respected, valued, and supported, all values tied to those enshrined in the OAS Charter.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF REACHING GENDER PARITY IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS AT THE OAS GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Attaining equal participation in decision-making positions at the GS/OAS is, first and foremost, a rights issue: On the one hand, having to do with women's right to participate in all public affairs on equal terms, from the international level to the local level, as recognized both in the inter-American human rights system and in the universal system for protection of these rights. Equal access to public office has been established in such norms as the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In that connection, the CEDAW Committee has argued that it is critical to ensure that women participate in public life, to be able to harness their contribution, guarantee that their interests are protected, and deliver on the guarantee that enjoyment of human rights is universal, regardless of a person's sex.⁹

Article 8 of the CEDAW speaks specifically to equal representation at the international level and participation in the work of international organizations. The CEDAW Committee has therefore held that globalization makes inclusion of women and their participation in international organizations, on equal terms, increasingly important. Equal representation has also been included in other political documents and agreements to which states have also adhered, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, the Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality (IAP),

⁷ Christina M. Sanzari , Alexandra Dennis and Corinne A Moss-Racusin. 2019. “Should I stay or should I go?: Penalties for briefly de-prioritizing work or childcare” 26 January 2021. Volume 51 Issue 4, Journal of Applied Social Psychology. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jasp.12738>

⁸ Emilio J. Castilla, Stephen Benard (2010) “The Paradox of Meritocracy in Organizations”. Administrative Science Quarterly. Vol. 55, Issue 4, 2010. <https://doi.org/10.2189/asqu.2010.55.4.543>

⁹ CEDAW, General Recommendation Nº 23: Political and public life. Available at: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/INT_CEDAW_GEC_4736_S.pdf

the Sustainable Development Goals¹⁰, or the Inter-American Commission of Women's (CIM) Declaration of Santo Domingo, which stresses the importance of parity in strengthening democracy.

Historically, the countries of the Americas have been committed to women's political rights and have made substantive contributions to the development of international and regional frameworks in this field. At the country level, progress has been equally substantive: firstly, through the adoption of gender quota laws and, more recently, with parity laws.¹¹ CIM has noted that, to date, parity has been the most effective measure for enhancing women's access to elected office at the country level; and that thanks to parity, the Americas, on average, tops the global ranking of women's participation in legislative bodies, which is issued by the Inter-Parliamentary Union.¹²

The internal experience of the countries of the region suggests that parity is the means for actual exercise of the right to equal access to decision-making positions in the areas in which it is applied. At the international level, the situation is rather different. Not as much progress has been made in promoting equal access for women to international positions, a situation partly explained by the fact that in this sphere affirmative action or parity measures have hardly been applied, even though they would have allowed more women in.

On that note, the CEDAW Committee has established that women get fewer opportunities to represent their governments in the international arena and to be involved in the work of international organizations on an equal footing, because objective criteria and processes for appointment and promotion to important positions or official delegations are often not followed.¹³ It further notes that "[m]any crucial decisions on global issues, such as peacemaking and conflict resolution, military expenditure and nuclear disarmament, development and the environment, foreign aid and economic restructuring, are taken with limited participation of women. This is in stark contrast to their participation in these areas at the non-governmental level."¹⁴

Furthermore, attainment of parity at the GS/OAS is also related to the right to equal employment opportunities, as enshrined in international and inter-American law. Under Article 7(c) of the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Protocol of San Salvador), the States Parties recognize the right of every worker to promotion or upward mobility in his or her employment, for which purpose account shall be taken of no other factors than qualifications, competence, integrity, and seniority.

Besides, the OAS has recognized the importance of the principle of nondiscrimination on the basis of sex – for example under Article 137, which establishes that the OAS does not allow any restriction based on

¹⁰ SDG 5 seeks to "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls," with target 5.5 thereof establishing the need to "ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life," which provides the framework for the objectives pursued under this Plan.

¹¹ As of December 31, 2021, the countries of the Americas that have passed parity laws are Ecuador, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Mexico, Honduras, Panama, Argentina, and Peru.

¹² The IPU's monthly ranking is available here: <https://data.ipu.org/women-averages>

¹³ CEDAW Committee, General Recommendation 23 on women's participation in public and political life.

¹⁴ *Idem*, paragraph 39.

race, creed, or sex, with respect to eligibility to participate in the activities of the Organization and to hold positions therein.¹⁵

Secondly, attaining parity is also a matter of legitimacy because, like governments, international organizations should resemble the societies they represent. It is very hard for citizens to view international organizations as legitimate when they only represent one segment of society. Likewise, female experts have argued that “when only a small fraction of the global population creates, develops, implements, and enforces rules for all, the legitimacy of their decisions and policies, and even of the institutions themselves, can be called into question.”¹⁶

Thirdly, achieving parity has to do with how comprehensive decision-making is within organizations and with its quality as well. Evidence shows that the more diverse the management team, the better the decision-making quality and outcomes. According to the ILO, company profits can increase by up to 20% if women are appointed to senior management positions.

Lastly, parity means that the equality agenda can be established in the Organization. A lack of women's involvement in decision-making hinders the advancement of gender equality policies at the OAS. Research has also shown that where women and men do not have an equal opportunity to influence them, policies and decisions will more likely be systematically skewed towards the interests of those with more influence, and gender inequality will be less likely to be addressed, thus causing it to persist.¹⁷ The demand for parity is premised on the idea that women are half of the population and have their own interests and needs. And not only is numerical equality what is therefore being sought after, but a qualitative representation of women's issues and of different perspectives and views on the hemispheric agenda that can be reflected in equitable policies and programs. This is critically important for the GS/OAS and for delivering better results in the four pillars of the OAS.

With respect to democracy, inclusion of women makes it more representative and more legitimate and makes for better decision-making by bringing a wider diversity of views as well as new issues to the agenda, thereby facilitating broader public action to address structural issues, such as caregiving and violence against women, which have a huge social impact. In the development arena, the ILO points out that the full incorporation of women into labor markets contributes to economic growth and poverty eradication, and that this in turn leads to higher levels of well-being for the population as a whole.¹⁸ Regarding human rights, equality and nondiscrimination in the exercise of human rights are fundamental principles. And lastly, within the security pillar, eradication of violence against women in the public and private arenas, in accordance with the mandates established in the Convention of Belém do Pará, would solve one of the Hemisphere's most pressing problems in this area.

¹⁵ Charter of the Organization of American States. Available at:

https://www.oas.org/es/sla/ddi/docs/tratados_multilaterales_interamericanos_A-41_carta_OEA.pdf

¹⁶ Viviana Kristicevic (2016), “Gender Equality in International Tribunals and Bodies: an achievable step with global impact,” GQUAL concept note. Available at: <https://gqualcampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/ENGLISH-2016-01-07-GQUAL-Concept-Note.pdf>

¹⁷ World Bank (2012), “World Development Report: Gender Equality and Development.” Available at: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/4391>

¹⁸ ILO (2017), “World Employment and Social Outlook: Women.” Available at: https://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/weso/trends-for-women2017/WCMS_557080/lang-es/index.htm

3. BACKGROUND: REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

Ever since it was founded under the Charter, one of the fundamental principles of the OAS is recognition of the right to equality and nondiscrimination. Article 3 of the OAS Charter proclaims the fundamental rights of the individual without distinction as to race, nationality, creed or sex; while Article 137 states that the OAS “does not allow any restriction based on race, creed, or sex, with respect to eligibility to participate in the activities of the Organization and to hold positions therein.” Since the Charter’s adoption in 1948, member states have become more committed to gender equality and equity and nondiscrimination through numerous binding legal and political agreements.

Gender equality and the right not to be discriminated against are rights in themselves. And they have an intrinsic value that is widely recognized by the OAS member states. The IACHR has made a distinction between formal equality and real equality as different concepts to understand human rights protection and observance in the Americas. In other words, not only does the inter-American system embrace a formal notion of equality – confined to requiring objective and reasonable criteria for making a distinction and, therefore, to prohibiting unreasonable, capricious, or arbitrary differences in treatment – but it is also moving towards a concept of material or real equality rooted in recognizing that affirmative steps must be taken to bring certain population segments on an equal footing. It means differential treatment is called for when, in certain circumstances, equal treatment entails suspending or restricting access to a service or benefit or the exercise of a right. The notion of material equality can be, as established by the IACHR, a highly useful tool for examining rules that recognize rights and also the orientation of policies that may serve to ensure or, on occasion, potentially impair them.¹⁹

The OAS’ legal framework for human rights, gender equality, and nondiscrimination has been complemented by a wide range of policy agreements, including the Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality (IAP, 2000),²⁰ the latter at the time giving the OAS General Secretariat a mandate to “implement measures to ensure full and equal access by men and women to all categories of posts in the OAS system, particularly in decision-making positions” (line of action 2.1.6).

In terms of the states’ political will, the OAS General Assembly spent more than a decade, between 1999 and 2009, adopting a resolution entitled²¹ “Appointment of Women to Senior Management Positions at the Organization of American States,” which urged the Secretary General to ensure that women occupy 50% of the positions at each grade level in the organs, agencies, and entities of the OAS, particularly at the P-5 level and higher, among other specific measures related to the appointment of women to decision-making positions. Binding on the GS/OAS because it was mandated by the General Assembly,²² the resolution was reiterated every year. As regards implementation, progress has been slow for the GS/OAS, but the gender gap for P4 and P5 posts has been steadily narrowing, so much so that we are now almost evenly split between the genders. Under this Plan, this positive dynamic will be able to extend to the D1

¹⁹ <https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/reports/pdfs/compendium-equalitynondiscrimination.pdf>

²⁰ CIM/RES. 209/98 and AG/RES. 1732 (XXX-O/00). Available at: <https://www.oas.org/en/CIM/docs/PIA-EN.pdf>

²¹ AG/RES. 1627(XXIX-O/04), AG/RES 1790 (XXX1-O/01), AG/RES. 1872 (XXXVII-O/02), AG/RES. 1954 (XXXIII-O/03), AG/RES. 1977 (XXXIV-O/04), AG/RES. 2096 (XXXV-O/05), AG/RES. 2191 (XXXVI-O/06), AG/RES. 2335 (XXXVII-O/07), AG/RES. 2427 (XXXVIII-O/08), AG/RES. 2452 (XXXIX-O/09).

²² According to the Legal Opinion of the Department of International Law on the value of General Assembly resolutions and of documents arising out of the Summits of the Americas (2011). Available at https://www.oas.org/dil/cajp-gt-rdi-169-11_eng.pdf

and D2 positions, hence the challenge will be to maintain parity levels in GS/OAS decision-making over the long term.

The PIA initially sought to bolster the gender mainstreaming efforts by the OAS and its member states, hence implementation has entailed internal components (within the inter-American system) as well as external components (with the member states). Over time, a need has arisen for the IAP general commitments to be translated into policies, plans, strategies, programs, projects, and other instruments to operationalize its mandates from a results-based management and accountability standpoint, with specific goals, deadlines, and responsibilities.

In view of the evident progress made in implementing the IAP, and given the recognition that the gender mainstreaming process needed to be further institutionalized within the GS/OAS, in 2016 the OAS Secretary General adopted the PGD, by way of Executive Order No. 16-03²³. The PGD seeks to advance equality in the exercise of rights, equal opportunity, and equal treatment in all the work of the General Secretariat of the OAS by strengthening its management, culture, and institutional capacities. In order to translate the PGD commitments into concrete objectives, goals, deadlines, and responsibilities, an Action Plan for Implementation of the Institutional Policy (2017)²⁴ was adopted in 2017. It covers five strategic lines of action:

1. Strengthening the institutionalization and mainstreaming of the OAS General Secretariat's Institutional Policy on Gender Equality, Diversity and Human Rights;
2. Strengthening GS/OAS staff expertise in gender, diversity, and rights with a view to consolidating the incorporation of a gender perspective into day-to-day activities;
3. Mainstreaming of a gender equality, diversity and rights perspective in GS/OAS programs and projects;
4. The image projected by the OAS is of commitment to equal opportunity and equal rights for more people; and
5. Incorporating an inclusive and equal opportunity perspective into the human resources policy and organizational culture of the GS/OAS.

Progress made in implementing the Action Plan included the establishment of new measures that advance the principle of equality in a number of domains, such as human resources, workplace configuration, and the work environment.

A study has been conducted on the situation of GS/OAS personnel, and a number of workshops and training initiatives have been staged on equality, also with a view to ridding the Organization of workplace and sexual harassment. Likewise, the "GS/OAS Guide to Inclusive Communication" was prepared as a reference tool to guide internal and external communication based on the criteria of equality and nondiscrimination.

One of the steps taken to implement the PGD specifically concerned the selection of staff. Article 120 of the Charter of the Organization of American States stipulates that *"in selecting the personnel of the General Secretariat, first consideration shall be given to efficiency, competence, and integrity; but at the same time, in the recruitment of personnel of all ranks, importance shall be given to the necessity of obtaining as wide a geographic representation as possible."*

²³<http://www.oas.org/legal/english/gensec/EXOR1603.pdf>

²⁴<http://www.oas.org/en/cim/docs/PlanAccionGDD-ES.pdf>.

This was the provision that has been followed – since the very beginning of the Organization – for personnel selection, and was included under Article 44 of the General Standards to Govern the Operations of the General Secretariat. While gender criteria were not considered at the time the Charter was adopted, the Staff Rule was amended in 2018²⁵, through Executive Order 18-01, to stipulate that *“at all stages of the selection process, gender equity and equality shall be borne in mind.”* Said Executive Order also instructs GS/OAS units to ensure that *“committees, commissions, and working groups are formed taking into account the criteria of gender equity and equality.”*

Based on the foregoing, in March 2020 the Permanent Council adopted resolution CP/RES. 1149/20²⁶ *“1149/20 “Women’s Representation and Participation in the OAS,” in which GS/OAS is requested to “progressively increase women’s participation and representation in decision-making positions within the Organization, as well as in all the commissions, missions, panels, and collegiate groups, including electoral observation missions, with the aim of attaining parity, the latter being understood as the equal and active participation of women in their leadership and composition.”*

4. METHODOLOGY FOR CRAFTING THE PLAN

On instructions from the Secretary General, CIM drew up this document in consultation with the Secretariat for Legal Affairs (Department of Legal Affairs) and the Secretariat for Administration and Finance (Department of Human Resources).

The process of preparing it involved meetings, consultations, and document and report reviews within the Organization, as well as consultation and identification of best practices of external entities.

Internally, the drafting process began after the Permanent Council resolution was adopted; however, the pandemic and its impact on the Organization’s agenda delayed the process.

This document is the product of a series of meetings held in 2020 and 2021 between CIM and the aforementioned Secretariats. The teams have jointly reviewed the regulatory framework and analyzed how consistent it is with both the legal framework and the policies and measures pursued prior to this Plan.

In February 2021, the CIM Executive Secretary provided the Secretary General with a progress report on the Plan. At that meeting, the Secretary General underscored the need for this Plan to cover GS/OAS trust positions, as well as the specialized agencies, subsidiary bodies, agencies, and other OAS entities the staff appointments of which are the responsibility of the head of the GS/OAS.

This Plan draws on the United Nations Equality Strategy, adopted in 2017, as reference.²⁷ Extensive effort has been put into studying the United Nations (UN) parity framework and the mechanisms that have been developed by the entity under this strategy. That effort included a meeting with the United Nations Secretary-General’s (SG/UN) Senior Policy Advisor in charge of the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality, as well as a series of consultations with UN Women.

²⁵ <http://www.oas.org/legal/spanish/gensec/EXOR1801.pdf>.

²⁶ http://scm.oas.org/doc_public/english/hist_20/cp42142e03.docx.

²⁷ The United Nations Gender Equality Strategy and the mechanisms developed to fulfill the mandate can be viewed on the website at <https://www.un.org/gender/content/strategy>

Interest in getting outside contributions has included civil society, hence meetings have been held with the GQUAL²⁸ campaign team and CIM has taken part in consultations on the issue of parity in international organizations, which GQUAL has also promoted.²⁹

At a special Permanent Council meeting held in February 2021, member states were strongly urged to nominate and elect suitable women judges to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in order to bring gender parity to its composition. The meeting drew considerable media coverage, with several OAS member states afterwards announcing they were nominating women to serve on the high-level Court. The process culminated in two women being elected to the Court as judges – twice the number of women it had before.

In July 2021, the United Nations Human Rights Council presented an outcomes report entitled “Current Level of Representation of Women in Human Rights Bodies and Mechanisms: Ensuring Gender Balance,” for which CIM had contributed a report on “The Representation of Women in the Bodies and Mechanisms of the Inter-American Human Rights System.” The latter included an assessment of the measures and their impact.

5. THE SITUATION OF WOMEN AND MEN IN THE OAS GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Women account for a majority of the GS/OAS structure; as of June 30, 2021, women were 57% of the staff, while men were 43%.³⁰ In examining the gender distribution among the grades, women are underrepresented in the higher grades, D1 and D2, where they account for about one third (1/3) of the positions, while at the P4 and P5 levels the distribution is practically even. It is important to note that, within the P5 positions, the Director positions by are held mostly by men.

Table 1 illustrates the percentage of women in the professional categories and trust positions over the last seven years. As of June 30, 2021, men accounted for 67% of D2 positions, 67% of D1 positions, and 52% of P5 positions. This trend is the opposite for the P1 through P3 levels: 28% of P1 positions, 36% of P2 positions, and 47% of P3 positions are held by men.³¹ In other words, GS/OAS replicates the traditional pyramid structure of inequality: with women concentrated at the bottom of the pyramid while men dominate the top.

From a time standpoint, the data show that since 2015 there has been a significant gender gap within D2-level trust positions, although it has been narrowing in recent years. Regarding the number of women holding D1 positions, the data show a decrease in the number of women from 2016 through 2018 and from 2019 onwards, with a slight reversal of this trend, increasing to 33% women in 2021.

²⁸ Campaign promoting gender parity in international representation, a civil society initiative. Information on GQUAL available at <http://www.gqualcampaign.org/home/>

²⁹ Virtual Regional Consultation on current levels of representation of women on human rights bodies and mechanisms, held on Wednesday, July 15, 2020, to gather input for the report on best practices and recommendations, which the United Nations Human Rights Council had commissioned the Advisory Committee to produce.

³⁰ According to DHR data, extracted from the Semiannual Report on Resource Management and Performance as of June 30, 2021.

³¹ Data extracted from the Staff Registry, as of June 30, 2021 for 2021 and as of March 31, 2022 for 2022. The OAS General Secretariat’s Department of Resources issues this document on a quarterly basis.

As stated earlier, the percentage of women at the P4 and P5 levels is quite close to parity, with the increase in women in the P5 category being especially noteworthy for the period under review.

It should be noted that this ratio does not include all of the Organization's human resources, such as individuals on performance contracts (CPRs), associate members, or those working under a volunteer or scholarship agreement or on an internship agreement.

Table 1: Percentage of women in the GS/OAS Professional category and in Management, Leadership, and Trust Positions, by grade, from 2015 to 2022³²

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
D2	18%	13%	25%	22%	22%	29%	33%	33%
D1	50%	40%	38%	29%	33%	33%	33%	33%
P5	39%	35%	48%	44%	45%	49%	50%	49%
P4	48%	42%	42%	45%	49%	44%	47%	47%
P3	52%	50%	50%	46%	48%	52%	56%	58%
P2	65%	64%	59%	64%	67%	64%	62%	61%
P1	67%	69%	68%	69%	66%	75%	69%	72%

In sum, despite an acknowledgment that significant progress has been made toward parity at the P4 and P5 levels, men still occupy most of the D1 and D2 trust positions, which translates to more men holding the highest paid positions as well as those closest to the echelons of decision-making within the GS/OAS.

6. ROAD TO GENDER PARITY AT THE OAS GENERAL SECRETARIAT

6.1 OBJETIVE, GOALS, AND TIMELINE

This Plan is designed to have more women participate and be represented in the decision-making levels of the General Secretariat, in order to reach parity and thus contribute to equitable and even-handed hemispheric policies.

The goal under the Plan is to reach gender parity (50/50) by the year 2025, by category, and where appropriate, by category and area, in the professional P4 and P5 positions and in (P4, P5, D1 and D2) trust positions, for which the head of the GS/OAS is responsible for making appointments.

Given the current near-parity composition of the P4 and P5 professional category posts, the main focus of the measures under these categories will be to sustain parity over time. It is with this in mind that these measures must be understood. Every effort must be made with regard to D1 and D2 trust positions. To that end, advantage should be taken of all hiring and/or appointment opportunities arising since this Plan was adopted.

The deadline for achieving parity may be extended to 2028 for those GS/OAS areas where no hiring opportunities have opened up.

³² The data in this table were taken from the Personnel Register as of December 31 for each year (2015 to 2021). The data used for 2022 come from the Personnel Register as of March 31, 2022.

6.2 REGULATORY AND BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS

This Plan will be implemented under the rules stipulated in the OAS Charter, the General Standards to Govern the Operations of the GS/OAS, and the OAS General Assembly resolutions and the Permanent Council resolution on parity between women and men holding decision-making positions at the GS/OAS.

The Plan will be executed using available GS/OAS resources.

Furthermore, in applying the measures contained in this Plan, account will be taken of the intersectionality perspective – a concept the IACHR has defined as “a basic concept for understanding the scope of the general obligations of State parties, [...] the discrimination of women based on sex and gender is inextricably linked with other factors that affect women, such as race, ethnicity, religion or belief, health, status, age, class, etc. This overlapping of various layers of discrimination—or intersectionality—leads to a form of deepened discrimination.”³³

Under this Plan, GS/OAS will also safeguard the principle of equal pay between the genders for work of equal value, as well as women’s right to remain free of violence in the workplace.

6.3 SCOPE OF APPLICATION

Without prejudice to the provisions of the OAS Charter and the General Standards to Govern of the Operations of the GS/OAS, under the terms set forth herein, this Plan is applicable to GS/OAS staff regardless of the fund from which the employment contract is financed, for:

- a) Trust positions (P4, P5, D1, and D2) and for those positions whose appointment falls to the head of the GS/OAS.
- b) P4 and P5 professional category posts.
- c) Commissions, committees, electoral observation missions, special missions, panels, and working groups created within the GS/OAS.
- d) Specialized agencies, subsidiary bodies, agencies, and other entities of the OAS for which staff appointment falls to the head of the GS/OAS.

Although the Plan is intended specifically for GS/OAS staff at the P4 level and above, some of the measures included in it apply to all GS/OAS staff at the P1, P2, and P3 levels, as well as to other groups that are not OAS staff, such as consultants, interns, and volunteers, since they are a potential pool from which to fill the positions that are the focus of this Plan.

The Plan also includes recommendations for those OAS agencies and entities the staff of which is not appointed by the head of the GS/OAS (section 7 of this Plan).

6.3.1 Parity in P4, P5, D1, and D2 trust positions and in positions for which appointments fall to the person who heads the GS/OAS

- Trust personnel shall be appointed taking into account the objectives and deadlines established in this Plan, so that, by 2025, GS/OAS expects to have reached parity in P4, P5, D1, and D2 level trust positions.

³³ <https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/reports/pdfs/compendium-equalitynondiscrimination.pdf>

- With a view to achieving parity, the head of the GS/OAS will consider appointing women at every opportunity arising to fill trust position vacancies.
- As regards positions falling to the head of the GS/OAS to fill, nominations for which directly involve the member states:
 - The Office of the Secretary General, in close collaboration with CIM, will devise a regional campaign to promote nominations of women to fill vacant positions.
 - In official calls for nominations to fill positions, the relevant area of the GS/OAS will include:
 - A reminder about the importance of nominating women for vacant positions in order to achieve parity.
 - A statistical report containing the gender composition of the bodies concerned. Said report should highlight the progress made in terms of their gender composition.
 - A summary of good practices followed by member states in process for appointing women to international posts.
 - Promotion of the “threshold” standard in agencies and entities where the number of positions to be filled is not sufficient to reach parity. New composition of such agencies and entities should reflect at least the same number of women as before.

6.3.2 Parity in P4 and P5 professional positions

To implement this Plan, each Secretariat and other areas of the GS/OAS will work with the Office of the Strategic Counsel for Organizational Development and Management for Results (SCODMR), through the Strategy, Organizational Development, and Knowledge Management Section, in consultation with DHR, on a document entitled “Actions for Implementing the Parity Plan.” This commitment will be made by the head of the SCODMR Strategy, Organizational Development and Knowledge Management Section. According to the document under reference, each GS/OAS area will set its annual parity goals - i.e., whatever changes each GS/OAS Secretariat or unit must make, on an annual basis or as necessary, in order to reach parity by the year 2025.

Such commitments should be made according to the competencies and functions that such staff members perform in the selection processes, pursuant to the provisions of the General Standards to Govern the Operations of the GS/OAS and the GS/OAS Staff Rules.

Measures for GS/OAS-wide implementation of the Plan must be submitted to the Office of the Secretary General no later than January 2023. Such measures will be the basis for tracking fulfillment of the Plan.

6.3.3 Parity on commissions, committees, electoral observation missions, special missions, panels, and working groups established within the GS/OAS

The Permanent Council resolution establishes the application of parity on all commissions, missions, panels and collegiate groups, including OAS electoral observation missions, both at headquarters and in the member states. To ensure this mandate is complied with, each GS/OAS secretariat and other units covered under this Plan must report to the Office of the Secretary General every six months (in June and January) on how it has complied with this mandate.

The outcome of implementing this mandate will be included in the annual report on implementation of this Plan, which the head of the GS/OAS will deliver to the Permanent Council, noting the areas that have fulfilled the parity requirement; and will issue a warning regarding any non-compliance. GS/OAS will also adopt suitable means to discourage its staff from serving in areas that make no provision for equal participation of women.

6.3.4 Parity in the specialized agencies, subsidiary bodied, agencies, and other OAS entities the staff of which are appointed by the head of the GS/OAS and the staff of which report to the GS/OAS

Specialized agencies, subsidiary bodies, agencies, and other entities of the OAS for which appointment to the highest office is made by the head of the GS/OAS and the staff of which report to the GS/OAS must also implement the parity measures set forth in this Plan.

These agencies and entities will devise their own parity plans for submittal to the Office of the Secretary General by April 2023. Those plans shall be prepared based on the objectives, deadlines, and measures outlined in this Plan, in addition to other arrangements deemed suitable for achieving parity by 2025.

6.4 MEASURES FOR IMPLEMENTING GENDER PARITY IN THE OAS GENERAL SECRETARIAT

6.4.1 Responsibilities for implementing the Plan and coordinating with other agencies responsible for achieving gender equality in the OAS General Secretariat

The Parity Plan will be directly implemented by the Office of the Secretary General, as part of the obligation of accountability to the Permanent Council, as required under resolution CP/RES. 1149 (2278/20), which urges the GS/OAS to furnish the Permanent Council, in March each year, with a progress report on implementation of this resolution.

This Parity Plan includes and expands on the mechanisms and actions envisaged in Strategic Line of Action 5 of the PGD Plan of Action, aimed at *“Integrating an inclusive and equal opportunity approach into the human resources policy and organizational culture of the GS/OAS.”* In that connection, it is imperative that the Gender Parity Plan be implemented in coordination with the PGD Action Plan and the IAP.

Under the terms of CIM’s definition of parity, which states that parity is achieved using a holistic approach that includes i) men and women having equal access to leadership positions, ii) equal access to and exercise of positions on an equal footing, and iii) consolidation of the gender equality agenda. Only when these three dimensions are satisfied will we have laid the foundations for equality allowing us to sustain the changes over the long term.

6.4.2 Accountability

Accountability falls to specific individuals, who must take responsibility for the outcomes – positive or negative – and be accountable to the head of the GS/OAS for the effects of the outcomes.

a) *Person who heads GS/OAS*

- Report to the OAS Permanent Council on the Plan. Starting in 2023, the Secretary General will report annually, in March, on the implementation of the Parity Plan, outlining the progress made and the challenges to implementing it effectively.

- Include, in the annual performance goals for managers responsible for personnel selection, a goal tied to achievement of parity in the categories referred to in this Plan, according to the roles played by such personnel in the selection processes, pursuant to the provisions of the General Standards to Govern the Operations of the GS/OAS and the GS/OAS Staff Rules.
- Include, in the annual performance goals for managers, a target tied to achievement of parity on commissions, committees, electoral observation missions, special missions, panels, and working groups established by the GS/OAS.
- Oversee compliance with senior management's parity objectives.
- Recognize, within the annual report to be delivered to the Permanent Council, managers who meet the parity objectives.
- Other incentives for meeting the objectives of this Plan may be established, such as the creation of an annual parity award.

b) *Managers with parity objectives*

- As part of their role in selection, and in keeping with the Organization's current rules, they will be accountable to the head of the GS/OAS for helping to meet the specific staff parity goals within the established time frame.
- As part of their role, they will be responsible for ensuring compliance with parity on commissions, missions, panels, and collegial bodies that are formed under their direction.

c) *All personnel with staff selection responsibilities*

- Must be aware of the statistical situation of the unit for which a new hiring is to be made, in terms of gender parity, the consequences of their potential recommendation on the proportion of women and men, and how this relates to the goals and objectives of this Plan, prior to making a final decision on a specific candidate.

d) *DHR management*

- Must provide staff with responsibility for recruitment with the latest updates on gender balance in the category in question, as well as gender-disaggregated information, at each stage of the selection and hiring process.
- Must ensure that individuals with staff selection responsibilities are aware of and personally approve of the implications of their hiring recommendation with respect to the parity objective and goals set forth in this Plan.

6.4.3 Data collection and transparency

- On the OAS website, DOITS will create a section where DHR will post data about the demographic composition of GS/OAS staff by category and by secretariat and other units. That section is to become operational by February 2023. All of the information published on this website will be broken down by sex.

6.4.4 Communication

- To ensure that all GS/OAS employees are kept up to date on and committed to the objectives of this Plan, as soon as it is approved it must be accompanied by a strategy to raise awareness and share information on parity and the rationale behind the plan, i.e., to achieve equal representation of women and men in GS/OAS decision-making – by eliminating discrimination against women in access to decision-making positions – and thereby help promote even-handed and equitable hemispheric policies; and on the implications of the Plan. The Office of the Strategic Counsel for Organizational Development and Management for Results (SCODMR) and, in particular, its Department of Press and Communications (DPC), in consultation with CIM, will be responsible for preparing and implementing the Plan. The communication strategy must be prepared and put in effect by February 2023 at the latest.

6.4.5 Addressing Unconscious Gender Bias in Personnel Selection Processes

GS/OAS will continue with and expand all efforts to combat unconscious biases in the personnel selection and recruitment processes, which include training for those responsible for hiring and for the DHR, related to calls for applications, recruitment, hiring, and staff promotions.

Biases will be addressed in résumé evaluations, interview assessments, and outcomes, as well as in job performance appraisals. A review of job announcements with a gender focus will also be conducted, covering content and scores.

The following action will be taken:

a) *In the selection of personnel*

- DHR, with support from CIM, will draw up the gender-neutral terms of reference and eliminate qualifications which, for gender reasons, may limit the number of female candidates.
- DHR must gradually undertake an in-depth review of job descriptions to rid them of gender biases.
- The CIM Executive Secretariat will conduct training sessions for GS/OAS staff, addressing unconscious bias, for those responsible for selection and recruitment to fill each job vacancy in the categories covered by this Plan as soon as this Plan has been approved.
- The SCODMR Strategy, Organizational Development, and Knowledge Management Section and the CIM Executive Secretariat will create spaces for dialogue with the OAS member states in order to compile good practices in removing unconscious biases.

b) *On the composition of commissions, committees, electoral observation missions, special missions, panels and working groups*

- The Secretariats and other GS/OAS units must meet the required criteria to ensure gender parity in how they are composed.

6.4.6 Special measures

Article 4 of the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women establishes that the adoption of temporary special measures “aimed at accelerating *de facto* equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination.” Meeting the parity objectives within a

given period of time requires the application of appropriate special measures, which, by their very nature, are temporary. Accordingly, the CEDAW Committee has said that these should be understood as a means to achieving equality and not as an exception to the rules of nondiscrimination and equality.³⁴

The OAS has likewise underscored the importance of special measures in a number of resolutions and policy agreements. As early as 1999, CIM asked the IACHR for an external legal analysis of the compatibility of affirmative action measures with the principle of nondiscrimination for reasons of gender, and the IACHR established that “affirmative measures are fully in compliance with the principle of nondiscrimination and the applicable provisions of human rights law; in fact, such measures may well be required to bring about substantive equality of opportunity. Achieving the free and full participation of women in political life is a priority for our hemisphere.”³⁵

These “measures” – as the CEDAW Committee defines them – encompass a wide range of executive, administrative, and regulatory instruments, policies and practices, such as outreach or support programs; resource allocation or reallocation; preferential treatment; recruitment and promotion targets; time-bound quantitative objectives; and quota systems.

The following steps will be taken:

a) *In the selection of personnel*

- Recruitment officers will draw up a short list of candidates to be interviewed. It will comprise 50% women and 50% men, for each of the categories covered under this Plan.³⁶
- Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 120 of the OAS Charter, should the parity objectives set forth in this Plan not be fulfilled, a mandatory selection of women will be made, respecting, in any case, the provisions of the OAS Charter and the General Standards to Govern the Operations of the GS/OAS.

b) *In promoting employment opportunities*

- In collaboration with all areas of GS/OAS, DHR will develop a database of female candidates, which can be used to advertise job opportunities. The database will include women who work for GS/OAS or have done so as consultants.
- DHR will also establish a database of universities, professional associations, women's organizations, etc., and will form partnerships with these entities to further publicize job opportunities.
- DHR and the recruiting areas will make greater use of technology and diversify the options for announcing job opportunities.

³⁴ CEDAW Committee: General recommendation No. 25, on article 4, paragraph 1, of the

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, on temporary special measures
[https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/General%20recommendation%2025%20\(English\).pdf](https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/General%20recommendation%2025%20(English).pdf)

³⁵ <https://www.cidh.oas.org/annualrep/99span/capitulo6a.htm>

³⁶ This involves interviewing at least four female candidates.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACHIEVING PARITY IN OAS AGENCIES AND ENTITIES THE STAFF OF WHICH IS NOT APPOINTED BY THE HEAD OF THE GS/OAS

To ensure gender parity Organization-wide, it is recommended that OAS-related agencies and entities of which the highest official is not appointed by the head of the GS/OAS, and of which the personnel do not report to the GS/OAS, observe the parity mandate and for that purpose adopt the necessary measures, for which this Plan serves as an effective guide.

8. MEMBER STATES' ASSISTANCE TO GS/OAS FOR IMPLEMENTING GENDER PARITY IN THE OAS GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Resolution CP/RES. 1149 (2278/20), which is the basis for this Plan, refers to the member states' obligation to put in place the conditions and opportunities for women to be nominated and/or appointed to the organs and entities of the OAS. To that end, in keeping with the UN recommendations, states could consider applying the following measures³⁷:

- a) Use all media (including social media) to publish information about vacancies for international positions and take proactive steps to ensure that such information reach women who meet the requirements.
- b) Develop and adopt formal, open, and transparent national appointment procedures.
- c) Include gender parity as a specific and objective selection criterion in formal appointment procedures.
- d) As part of appointment procedures, bear in mind the gender composition – current and historical – of the OAS organ, agency, or entity in question and strive to appoint a candidate from the lesser represented gender to fill each vacancy.
- e) In appointment procedures, vote for female candidates in successive rounds of voting if the goal of parity or inclusion of the underrepresented sex is not achieved in the first round of voting.
- f) When voting to fill positions that are up for re-election, vote in accordance with the obligations assumed by the states under international treaties.

Furthermore, in order to fully effect the Plan, the member states will be actively involved in implementing said Plan using the accountability mechanisms for its application, mainly through the annual report to be submitted by the head of the GS/OAS in March of each year. States may also decide to fund the mechanisms and the staff needed to implement the Plan and, in general, to support the maintenance of an inclusive GS/OAS workplace.

³⁷ Human Rights Council Advisory Committee Report. Current levels of women's representation in human rights organs and mechanisms: ensure gender balance. May 2021

9. TIMETABLE FOR THE MAIN ACTIVITIES OF THE PLAN IN THE LAST FOUR MONTHS OF 2022 AND THE FIRST FOUR MONTHS OF 2023

Outcome	2022				2023			
	SEPT 2022	OCT 2022	NOV 2022	DEC 2022	JAN 2023	FEB 2023	MAR2 023	APRIL 2023
Parity Plan adopted by GS/OAS and submitted to the OAS Permanent Council								
Transmittal of Parity Plan to OAS agencies and entities the staff of which is not appointed by the head of GS/OAS								
Document “Actions for the Implementation of the Parity Plan” sent to the Office of the Secretary General								
Public awareness and dissemination strategy for the Parity Plan prepared and execution started								
OAS website section (DOITS) with data on the demographic composition of GS/OAS staff (DHR), published								
Parity plans for specialized agencies, subsidiary bodies, agencies, and other entities of the OAS of which the highest official is appointed by the head of the GS/OAS and of which the staff reports to the GS/OAS, submitted to the Office of the SG								
Database of qualified internal and external female candidates for P4 posts and higher, prepared								
First report on fulfillment of parity on all commissions, missions, panels, and collegiate groups, since the Plan was approved, submitted by the GS/OAS Secretariats and other areas to the Office of the Secretary General								