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RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE

TWENTIETH PAN AMERICAN CHILD CONGRESS

TO BE HELD IN THE CITY OF LIMA, PERU, IN SEPTEMBER 2009
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I. NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE CONGRESS

Venue and Date

**Article 1.** In accordance with the Resolutions approved by the Directing Council of the Inter-American Children’s Institute (IIN), CD/RES. 05 (82-R/07) and CD/RES. 07 (83-R/08), the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) is requested to declare the Twentieth Pan American Child Congress an “Inter-American Specialized Conference”, in accordance with Articles 122 and 123 of the OAS Charter.

The Inter-American Children’s Institute, as a Specialized Inter-American Organization and in agreement with the country hosting the Congress, has appointed September 2009 to be the date on which it shall be held. The General Secretariat and Permanent Council of the OAS shall be informed and the OAS General Secretariat shall be requested to convene the governments of the Member States so that they may attend this event.

Topics

**Article 2.** The Twentieth Pan American Congress, in accordance with Directing Council Resolution CD/RES. 07 (83-R/08), dated 16 October 2008, shall consider the following agenda:

a) To commemorate the 82nd Anniversary of the foundation of the IIN, the 60th Anniversary of its inclusion in the Organization of American States (OAS) as a Specialized Organization and the 20th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

b) The participation of children in the building of citizenship and its impact on public policies.

c) Public policies in comprehensive protection systems, including local systems.

d) The development of international, regional and bilateral cooperation with regard to public policies.

Objective

**Article 3.** The Pan American Child Congress “is an Inter-American ministerial meeting that has the purpose of promoting the exchange of experience and knowledge among the peoples in the Americas on the issues within the competence of the Institute and of proposing the relevant recommendations”. The principal representatives of the States must be Ministers, Secretaries of State or other high-ranking governmental authorities with jurisdiction in this matter.
II. PARTICIPANTS

Delegations

Article 4. The governments of the OAS Member States may accredit delegations to the Congress. Delegations may be made up of a principal representative, alternate representatives, advisors, and such other members as the governments may deem necessary. Accreditations shall be effected by means of a written communication to the OAS Secretary General.

Participation of the Secretary General of the OAS

Article 5. The Secretary General. The Secretary General of the OAS, or a Representative appointed by him, shall participate in the Congress with voice, but without vote, in accordance with Article 110 of the OAS Charter.

Other Organs and Bodies of the Organization

Article 6. Representatives of OAS organs or bodies whose spheres of competence are related to the agenda of the Congress shall have the right to speak but not to vote.

Precedence

Article 7. The order of precedence of the delegations shall be alphabetical, according to the names of the Member States, in Spanish, unless the delegations deem it necessary to establish an alternative procedure.

Permanent Observers

Article 8. Representatives of permanent observer countries to the OAS who have been duly accredited may attend the Congress, with the right to speak but not to vote.

Other Observers

Article 9. The following may accredit observers to the Pan American Child Congress, by invitation duly extended by the General Directorate of the IIN:

a) Inter-American Specialized Organizations and Inter-Governmental Regional Organizations of the Americas.


c) International or national organizations that maintain cooperative relations with the Inter-American Children’s Institute, or others, should the Permanent Council so decide.

d) Governments of States that are not members of the OAS when these governments have expressed an interest in attending and have been duly authorized by the Permanent Council.

e) National and international civil society organizations whose activities are related to the subject of the Congress.
The OAS General Secretariat (“General Secretariat”) shall extend invitations to the international institutions mentioned in this article as well as in Articles 6 and 8.

**Special Guests**

**Article 10.** Special guests are:

a) Children who represent organized groups in all of the regions of the Americas, when not formally part of a State’s Delegation.

b) Persons of acknowledged expertise in the topics to be considered by the Congress may attend as special guests. Invitations shall be extended by the Inter-American Children’s Institute.

The Twentieth Pan American Child Congress shall encourage the participation of a variety of actors, with a rights-based approach and an inter-disciplinary, inter-institutional and inter-cultural vision.

**Opportunities for Observers and Special Guests to Address the Congress**

**Article 11.** Permanent observers, other observers, and special guests may speak during the plenary sessions, conferences and activities in general of the Congress, as well as during the meetings of the Thematic Committees, when invited to do so by the President or Committee Chair.

**Structure and Nature of the Plenary Sessions**

**Article 12.** The plenary sessions of the Twentieth Pan American Child Congress shall have the following structure and nature:

a) Preliminary Session – closed.
b) Inaugural Session – public.
c) General Plenary Session – public.
d) Representatives Plenary Sessions – closed.
e) Closing Session – public.

The contents of the Twentieth Pan American Child Congress shall be circulated by the IIN in due course.

**III. THE PRESIDENCY**

**Article 13.** The Twentieth Pan American Child Congress shall be presided over by a President, who shall be elected by a simple majority of the Delegations, in accordance with the provisions of Article 20 of these Rules of Procedure.

**Article 14.** The President shall have the following powers and duties:

a) To preside over the sessions of the Congress and put forward the topics of the agenda in accordance with the order of business.
b) To recognize delegates in the order in which they request the floor.

c) To decide on points of order that may arise during the deliberations of the Congress, without prejudice to the rights of the delegations as established in Article 28 of these Rules of Procedure.

d) To put the points under discussion to the vote and announce the results.

e) To transmit, through the Secretariat, the order of business of each plenary session to the Delegates as far in advance of the session as possible.

f) To convene the heads of delegation whenever the business of the Congress so requires.

g) To take such steps as he or she considers appropriate in order to advance the work of the Congress and enforce the Rules of Procedure.

**Article 15.** The Plenary of Representatives shall name two Vice-Presidents who shall stand in for the President in the event of his or her absence.

**IV. THE SECRETARIAT**

**Article 16.** The OAS General Secretariat and the IIN shall provide technical and secretarial services to the Twentieth Congress, in cooperation with the Government of the host country. To this end, an Agreement shall be signed between that Government and the General Secretariat of the OAS. The specialized services of the OAS shall be supervised by the officer appointed for this purpose by the OAS Secretary General.

**Secretary General of the Congress**

**Article 17.** The Director General of the Inter-American Children’s Institute shall serve as Secretary General of the Congress.

**Article 18.** The Secretary General of the Congress shall have the following duties, amongst others:

a) To cooperate with the President in all arrangements inherent to the proceedings of the plenary sessions.

b) To facilitate the operation of each aspect of the Agenda planned for the Twentieth Pan American Child Congress.

c) To receive the output arising from the various planned events during the Twentieth Pan American Child Congress, which shall be submitted to the Plenary of Delegates for approval.

d) To support the President of the Pan American Congress and facilitate the operation of the special committees.
V. CONFERENCE SESSIONS

Article 19. The Congress shall be formally inaugurated following the 84th Regular Meeting of the Directing Council of the IIN.

Further to the provisions of Article 12 of these Rules of Procedure, the Congress shall provide several opportunities for exchange between participants, a preliminary session of representatives, as well as an inaugural session for the Twentieth Pan American Child Congress, and a general Plenary Session, during which the following shall take place: specialized conferences, working sessions for thematic committees, good practices exchange sessions, panels and workshops. In addition, plenary sessions with representatives of the Member States shall be held, a closing session, and all of the other activities described in Article 43 of these Rules of Procedure.

Article 20. Before the inaugural session, the heads of delegation shall hold a preliminary session, coinciding with the 84th Regular Meeting of the Directing Council of the IIN, with the following order of business:

a) Agreement on the election of the President.

b) Report on the Agenda.


d) Agreement on the Thematic Committees and the subjects assigned to each of them.

e) Agreement on the Credentials Committee, the Rapporteurs Committee and the Style Committee, which shall be presided over by the President of the Twentieth Pan American Child Congress. The Rapporteurs Committee shall be composed of the Chairs and Rapporteurs of the Thematic Committees. The delegates of the Member States may register at will to participate in these committees.

f) Agreement on the deadline for submission by delegations of draft resolutions or any other drafts or proposals they may wish to submit.

g) Any other business.

Article 21. Agreements reached during the preliminary session shall be formally adopted during the first Plenary Session.

Article 22. The sessions of the Congress and of the Thematic Committees shall be public or closed, in accordance with Article 12 of these Rules of Procedure.

The Congress President shall make the final Resolution and the General Report public during the plenary of the Twentieth Pan American Child Congress, once these documents have been approved by the Plenary of Representatives.
The meetings of the Credentials Committee, the Rapporteurs Committee and the Style Committee shall be closed, and shall be declared so by the President of the Pan American Child Congress.

VI. DEBATES AND PROCEDURES

Article 23. The official languages of the plenary sessions of the Congress shall be English, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

Article 24. A simple majority (50% + one) of the Member States delegations attending the Congress shall constitute a quorum in the plenary sessions. In the Thematic Committees, a simple majority of the delegations making up the committee in question shall constitute a quorum.

Article 25. Proposals shall be submitted in writing to the Secretariat and shall be distributed to the Member States as far in advance as possible of the session at which they are to be discussed. However, by a majority vote of the delegations of the States represented at the Congress, the Congress may authorize discussion at its Plenary Session of Delegates of a proposal that has not been previously distributed. In every case, a working group shall be formed to study the proposal, unless it concerns matters that can only be discussed at a Plenary Session of Representatives.

Article 26. During the consideration of a proposal, a motion may be made to amend it. A motion shall be considered to be an amendment to a proposal only when it eliminates, modifies or adds to a part of the proposal. A motion that would totally replace the original proposal or that is not directly related to it shall not be considered an amendment.

Article 27. A proposal or an amendment may be withdrawn by its proponent before it has been put to the vote. Any delegation may resubmit a proposal or amendment that has been withdrawn.

Article 28. In order for a decision taken at a Plenary Session of Representatives to the Congress to be reconsidered, a motion to reconsider must be approved by a majority vote of the delegations of the attending States. For reconsideration of decisions taken in Thematic Committees, a motion to reconsider shall require approval by a majority of the delegations making up the body in question.

Article 29. During the discussion of a topic, any delegation may raise a point of order, which shall be decided upon immediately by the President. Any delegation may appeal the President’s decision, in which case the appeal shall be put to the vote.

While raising a point of order, a delegation shall not discuss the substance of the matter under discussion.

Article 30. The President or any delegation may propose the suspension of the discussion. Only two delegations may speak in favour of, and two against, the suspension, which shall then be put to the vote immediately and approved or rejected as the case may be, by a simple majority of the delegations of the participating States.
Article 31. The President, or any delegation, may propose that discussion of a topic be closed when it is considered that the matter has been sufficiently discussed. This motion may be opposed by two delegations, after which it shall be declared approved if it receives a majority vote of the delegations present at the session.

Article 32. During any discussion, the President or any representative may propose that the session be suspended or adjourned. Such a motion shall be put to the vote immediately and without discussion, and shall be approved or rejected, as the case may be, by a simple majority of the delegations of the participating States.

Article 33. The following motions shall have precedence over all other proposals or motions submitted, in the order set forth below:

a) Suspension of the session.

b) Adjournment of the session.

c) Suspension of discussion on the matter under consideration.

d) Close of discussion on the matter under consideration.

Article 34. The provisions contained in this chapter pertaining to discussions and procedure shall govern both the plenary sessions of Member States Representatives and the sessions of the Thematic Committees.

VII. VOTING PROCEDURES

Article 35. Each delegation shall have the right to one vote; in the case of a tie, the President of the Congress shall have the deciding vote.

Article 36. At plenary sessions of Member States Representatives, decisions shall be adopted by the vote of a simple majority of the States attending the Congress.

Article 37. In the Credentials Committee, Style Committee and Rapporteur Committee, decisions shall be taken by a majority of the delegations present.

Article 38. Votes shall be taken by a show of hands; however, any representative may request a roll-call vote, which shall begin in the order of precedence of the delegations.

No representative may interrupt the voting except for a point of order relating to the manner in which it is being conducted.

The voting shall conclude when the President has announced the results.

Article 39. Once discussion is closed, the proposals submitted, together with any amendments, shall be put to the vote immediately.

Proposals shall be voted upon in the order in which they have been submitted.
Article 40. Amendments shall be submitted for discussion and put to the vote before the proposals they intend to modify are put to the vote.

Article 41. When several amendments to a proposal are submitted, the vote shall be taken first on the one that departs furthest from the original text. The remaining amendments shall be voted upon in like order. In case of doubt in this respect, they shall be considered in the order of their presentation.

Article 42. When the adoption of an amendment necessarily implies the exclusion of another, the latter shall not be put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the proposal as amended shall be put to the vote.

VIII. THEMATIC COMMITTEES

Article 43. In addition to the sessions determined by Article 20 of these Rules of Procedure, four Thematic Committees shall be established during the Congress, with inter-disciplinary and inter-cultural participation.

These Thematic Committees shall be presided by a Chair and a Rapporteur. The Chair shall be elected from amongst the State Representatives who are part of each Thematic Committee whereas the Rapporteur shall be an IIN-accredited official. The committees shall be established on the basis of the four central topics:

a) To commemorate the 82nd Anniversary of the foundation of the IIN, the 60th Anniversary of its inclusion in the Organization of American States (OAS) as a Specialized Organization and the 20th Anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

b) The participation of children in the building of citizenship and its impact on public policies.

c) Public policies in comprehensive protection systems, including local systems.

d) The development of international, regional and bilateral cooperation with regard to public policies.

In addition, several further informative, cultural, recreational and social events shall take place during the Congress, and shall be the responsibility of the IIN, together with the host State.

Each delegation shall have the right to be represented on each of the Thematic Committees as well as at each of the activities which take place during the Congress.

Article 44. Each of the Thematic Committees shall be exclusively responsible for analyzing, discussing and making recommendations with regard to the topics which were assigned to that committee.

Article 45. In addition to the Thematic Committees described in Article 43, a Credentials Committee, a Style Committee and a Rapporteurs Committee shall also be established.

Article 46. The Credentials Committee shall be made up of delegates appointed at the preliminary session. This committee shall examine the credentials of the delegations and submit a report thereon to the Congress Plenary.
Article 47. The Style Committee shall be made up of delegates appointed at the first plenary session, each representing one of the four official languages. This committee shall receive the drafts approved by the Thematic Committees, as well as the draft Congress Resolutions, before they are submitted at a plenary session for consideration, and shall introduce any changes in form it deems necessary. Should the Style Committee find that a draft contains defects of form that it cannot correct without altering the substance, it shall raise this question with the group concerned or at the plenary session.

Article 48. Reports arising from the Thematic Committees shall be drafted by the Rapporteurs, with the assistance of the Congress Secretariat. Once the work of the Thematic Committees has ended, the conclusions of all of the committees shall be combined in a single document, and thus constitute the General Report of the Twentieth Pan American Child Congress. This Report shall be prepared under the coordination of the Congress Secretariat with the support of the Chairs and the Rapporteurs of the four Thematic Committees. This document shall be submitted to the Style Committee prior to its presentation for the consideration of the Plenary Session of Representatives for approval.

Article 49. The reports of the Thematic Committees shall be delivered to the Congress Secretariat sufficiently in advance of the Plenary Session of Member States Representatives at which they are to be discussed, so that they can be distributed to the delegations.

Article 50. All of the Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Twentieth Pan American Child Congress must have sufficient funding for their implementation.

Article 51. Summary minutes shall be kept of the plenary sessions and of the committee meetings; the Congress may decide to add verbatim statements as it sees fit.

Article 52. The minutes shall be prepared and distributed as promptly as possible. They shall be published first in provisional form, and, once approved, in final form, once the text has been revised and any corrections in style requested by the respective delegations have been included.

Article 53. The host country, in coordination with the IIN, shall prepare the report of the Twentieth Pan American Child Congress, which shall include the conclusions and agreements adopted, the presentations made at the preliminary session, as well as all of the presentations made during the Congress, and the full text of the reports submitted by the Rapporteurs of the four Thematic Committees. The original text of this report shall be published in electronic format and distributed to each official mission. The IIN and the authorities of the host State of the Twentieth Pan American Child Congress shall publish all of the contents of the report on their web site.

Ottawa, 16 October 2008