

**ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES**

Inter-American Council for Integral Development

(CIDI)

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FINAL REPORT FROM THE WORKING GROUP TO PREPARE THE DRAFT INTER-AMERICAN BUSINESS CHARTER

(Item 5 of the order of business: Report of the Chairs of the Working Group and Permanent Committees of CIDI, CXVIII regular meeting of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development, held on October 26, 2021)

INTRODUCTION

This report refers to the activities carried out by the Working Group to Prepare the Draft Inter-American Business Charter, in compliance with the mandate of resolution AG/RES. 2954 (L-O/20) “Towards an Inter-American Business Charter" adopted by the General Assembly during its fiftieth regular session, held in October 2020.

INSTALLATION AND AUTHORITIES

In compliance with the mandate entrusted by the General Assembly and in accordance with the provisions of Article 51 of its Rules of Procedure, the Inter-American Council for Integral Development installed the Working Group for the Preparation of the Draft Inter-American Business Charter at its regular session held on January 26, 2021. The Delegation of Colombia was designated to chair the Working Group.

1. MANDATE

The tasks of the Working Group were framed within the mandate of resolution AG/RES. 2954 (L.O/20) by which the General Assembly resolved "To prepare a draft resolution entitled “Inter-American Business Charter” to buttress OAS instruments in order to promote the role of the private sector in integral development in the Hemisphere, and to use the accompanying preliminary draft proposed by the Government of Colombia to begin discussions as soon as possible, with a view to considering its adoption by the General Assembly at its fifty-first regular session”.

In this regard, CIDI entrusted the Working Group to conduct preliminary discussions and support it in the consideration of different proposals for each section of the draft Inter-American Business Charter presented by the Government of Colombia and, to that end, mandated it to conduct broad and inclusive internal consultations with interested parties in the context of the discussion process.

1. WORK SCHEDULE

The task assigned to the group and the format for the deliberations on the Draft Inter-American Business Charter were defined in document CIDI/doc.306/21 rev.2 approved by CIDI.

The Meeting Schedule was approved at the sessions of February 11 and July 8, 2021, respectively, and served as the general framework for the work of the Working Group.

The activities of the Working Group were structured in 3 stages:

1. Joint Reading of the Draft Inter-American Business Charter. Receipt of proposals.
2. Review and Negotiation of the Preambular and Operative sections: Chapter 1. Recognition of the Role of Businesses as Catalysts of Sustainable and Integral Development, Chapter 2. Strengthening of the Legal and Institutional Frameworks, Chapter 3. International Cooperation and Strategic Alliances, Chapter 4. Role of Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs), Chapter 5. Formalization, Employment and Education, Chapter 6. Business Innovation Technology Adoption and Creative Economies, Chapter 7. Promotion of Sustainable Development and Construction of Resilience, Chapter 8. Relationship with Complementary International Instruments.

On July 28, a virtual colloquium was held to hear the views of the business sector, academics, labor unions, and international organizations on the theme: "Businesses’ Contribution to Integral and Sustainable Development in the Americas", which was divided into two segments: Businesses as a Catalyst of Development in the Americas, and Business and Resilience Building.

1. Development and approval of the Report of the Working Group that includes the draft Resolution of the CIDI

III. ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN RELATION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MANDATE

The Working Group held its meetings, in virtual format, on the progress of which CIDI was informed periodically at its meetings of February 23, April 27, March 30, June 29, July 27, and September 28.

The following are the dates of the meetings held,

Date

1. February 11, 2021
2. February 17, 2021
3. February 24, 2021
4. March 2, 2021
5. March 9, 2021
6. March 16, 2021
7. April 6, 2021
8. May 7, 2021
9. May 11, 2021
10. May 18, 2021
11. May 28, 2021
12. June 4, 2021
13. June 24, 2021
14. July 8, 2021
15. July 13, 2021
16. July 20, 2021
17. July 28, 2021 (Colloquium)
18. August 24, 2021
19. August 31, 2021
20. September 7, 2021
21. September 14, 2021
22. September 21, 2021
23. September 27, 2021
24. October 4, 2021
25. October 12, 2021
26. October 18, 2021
27. October 22, 2021

The Working Group agreed to set an informal sub-working group where some delegations interested in being part of it would try to review the preambular section in order to present a proposal of a cleaner version to the plenary of the Working Group and thus facilitate its negotiation. This subgroup was conformed by the delegations of Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Canada, Brazil, Mexico, and Paraguay, which met on April 9 and 21, May 3 and 7, and June 15.

It is essential to highlight that, during the fulfillment of its tasks on the period mentioned above, the Working Group, in accordance with its mandate, met in an open format for the participation of all delegations of Member states, under the principles of transparency and inclusiveness to facilitate a sincere and focused dialogue among delegations to obtain, with great effort and a constructive spirit, a carefully balanced drafting which reflects the hemispheric consensus.

IV. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

During the session held on October 22, 2021, the Working Group agreed to send to CIDI the "Draft Resolution on the Inter-American Business Charter", contained in document CIDI/GTCEI/XXX rev.4, which is attached as an annex to this report. The draft resolution presented to CIDI contains as an annex the draft Inter-American Business Charter prepared by the Working Group, with all its agreed paragraphs, which has the consensus of all member states. In this regard, the Working Group recommends that CIDI transmit it to the General Assembly for consideration at its fifty-first regular session.

At the conclusion of the duties entrusted to the Permanent Delegation of Colombia, I am pleased to express my appreciation to the delegations of the Member States that participated in the tasks of the Working Group in a constructive and cooperative manner; to the staff of the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development, and the other technical areas of the General Secretariat; as well as to former Second Secretary Carolina Schlessinger, and Minister Plenipotentiary Gustavo Paredes, who fulfilled the responsibilities of the Chair; to the support team of the Mission of Colombia, to the interpreters; and to all those who made it possible to carry out the programmed activities.

Ambassador Alejandro Ordóñez Maldonado

Permanent Representative of Colombia

Chair of the Working Group

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