



FINAL DECLARATION

Third Inter-American Meeting of Experts and Representatives of Electoral Bodies of the Member Countries of the Organization of American States (OAS)

“Approach towards a Reference Framework of common criteria and optimal procedures for electoral processes management and control”.

Caracas, Thursday 29 and Friday 30 of July 2010

HAVING SEEN the Resolutions AG/RES. 2337 (XXXVII-0/07) and AG/RES. 2428 (XXXVIII-0/08) “Modernization and Use of the Electoral Technologies in the Hemisphere”, whereby the General Assembly of the Organization of American States approved satisfactorily the offer of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela of holding the “First and Second Inter-American Meeting of Experts and Representatives of Electoral Bodies”, aimed at exchanging experiences and best practices in the countries of the Hemisphere on core electoral processes, among others, voter identification systems, voter registration processes and automated electoral systems.

RECALLING that the conclusions and recommendations of the “First and Second Inter-American Meeting of Experts and Representatives of Electoral Bodies”, were submitted to the Fifth and Sixth Inter-American Meeting of Experts and Representatives of Electoral Bodies held in Quito on April 22nd - 24th and Canada on June 21st - 23rd, 2009, respectively.

CONSIDERING that by means of Resolution AG/RES. 2528 (XXXIX-O/09) “Modernization and Use of the Electoral Technologies in the Hemisphere”, the

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General Assembly of the Organization of American States requested the Permanent Council to convene the “Third Inter-American Meeting of Experts and Representatives of Electoral Bodies”, in the year 2010; and by means of resolution CP/RES 973 (1761/10), the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States, convened this Third Inter-American Meeting to be held in Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, aimed at compiling the common criteria and optimal procedures that the electoral bodies and authorities use to guarantee the management and control of the electoral processes.

REAFFIRMING that the participatory nature of democracy in our countries in the different areas of the public activity is based on the principles of sovereignty, freedom and solidarity.

RECOGNIZING the efforts made by the electoral authorities and bodies of the Member States of the Organization of American States to assure guarantees in the electoral process considering the complexity, idiosyncrasy and culture of each country, as well as the need to continue working to ensure the comprehension, acceptance and trust of all stakeholders in the electoral process and in face of the different challenges in the electoral systems in the Region.

CONFIRMING that the Electoral Bodies share technological-instrumental knowledge of common criteria and procedures, on electoral matters, with the purpose of guaranteeing the will of the citizens through vote.

The Experts and Representatives of the Electoral Bodies conclude to:

- 1. Confirm the importance of an open, broad and honest debate based on the respect and recognition of the different experiences in electoral process management and the valuation of the similarities and*

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- differences identified by the electoral experts and authorities of the Hemisphere.*
- 2. Based on the foregoing, build a Reference Framework of common criteria and optimal procedures that the electoral authorities and bodies use to guarantee the management and control of electoral processes, considering the participatory nature of democracy, the sovereignty and independence principles of the States and the respect for the cultural personality of the peoples of the Region.*
 - 3. Take on the initiative of the Delegation of the Republic of Haiti to conform a delegation formed by experts and technicians of the Electoral Bodies present in this meeting to support the process as of August up to the holding of the elections on November 28th, 2010.*
 - 4. Convene a meeting in the Dominican Republic on August 2010 to decide the terms, conditions and modalities of cooperation and support that the electoral bodies of the hemisphere will provide to the electoral authority of the Republic of Haiti in the holding of the elections on November 2010.*
 - 5. Express the gratitude to the National Electoral Council, as the highest body of the Electoral Branch of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, for the organization of the "Third Inter-American Meeting of Experts and Representatives of Electoral Bodies", and acknowledge the progress made by the Venezuelan electoral process in the innovation and use of technology, by incorporating automation as a tool for the development of its electoral system.*
 - 6. Recognize the efforts and valuable contributions made by the electoral authorities, bodies and experts of the hemisphere in the compilation of*



- the common criteria and optimal procedures used by the electoral bodies and authorities to guarantee the management and control of electoral processes.*
- 7. Recognize the public nature of the Electoral Roll without jeopardizing the confidentiality of the voters data, and promote mechanisms that enable its auditability by the citizens and social groups, with political purposes, and promote a permanent vigilance of the processes related to the issue of birth certificates, establish guarantees to prevent identity theft so as to guarantee the consistency and integrity of the Electoral Roll and keep a harmonic relation with the Civil Registry.*
 - 8. Endorse the adoption of measures that approach voters to the possibility of exercising their right to vote, thus, reducing significantly the distances to polling centers, and guaranteeing that all polling centers are located at the same distance to each community where the voters are registered, with special attention to disabled people and the areas where indigenous groups live, providing them with the best facilities of access to polling centers and instruments and technical staff aware of their culture.*
 - 9. Recognize new experiences developed in countries of the hemisphere in the construction of mechanisms associated with the regulation, monitoring and control of electoral campaigns, for the dissemination of information addressed to the voters and for the establishment of conditions needed to publish electoral messages through traditional and alternative media.*
 - 10. Recognize the progress made in terms of control and funding of electoral campaigns in Mexico and Ecuador.*



11. *Promote, in the member states, with the purpose of maintaining the transparency and auditability of the electoral process, the search for accountability mechanisms on funding by political parties.*
12. *Agree that the nomination systems of all countries of the Hemisphere share the common search for simplification, safety, cost reduction, and minimization of the number of challenges, and promote, to the extent possible, the implementation of automated systems or technological support to achieve this objective.*
13. *Continue promoting the development of a referential framework with the experiences of the electoral bodies in the different processes comprising the electoral system. Such referential framework shall include all the elements contributing to improving the process quality in terms of information protection, auditability, feasibility of use, and give all possible guarantees to the voters in order to consolidate trust on the electoral system. Create a virtual forum that would allow for the permanent exchange of information, in order to ensure the development of the referential framework based on the goals pursued, and get products that can be discussed in the next meetings of electoral experts and bodies.*
14. *Agree that for the purposes of optimizing the tallying and dissemination times of electoral results, it is necessary to guarantee a robust, safe system for the transmission of results both in automated and manual voting processes; preserving the autonomy and transparency of the electoral process by auditing and validating the system used to transmit electoral results.*

As a result, we recommend:

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1. *Submitting the conclusions and recommendations of this Third Inter-American Meeting to the Eighth Inter-American Meeting of Electoral Authorities.*
2. *Entrusting the National Electoral Council of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in the first quarter of the year 2011, with the Minutes of the Three Inter-American Meetings of Experts and Representatives of the Electoral Bodies of the State Members of the Organization of American States, held in the city of Caracas in 2008, 2009 and 2010.*
3. *Entrusting the National Electoral Council of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela with the preparation and validation of the compilation "Approach to a Reference Framework of common criteria and optimal procedures used by the electoral bodies and authorities to guarantee the management and control of the electoral processes".*
4. *Requesting the Permanent Council to submit to the General Assembly in its forty-first period of ordinary sessions, the Report of the "Third Inter-American Meeting of Experts and Representatives of Electoral Bodies", held in Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on July 29th and 30th, 2010 and present the Compilation on common criteria and optimal procedures in compliance with the Resolution AG/RES. 2528 (XXXVIII-0/09) "Modernization and Use of the Electoral Technologies in the Hemisphere".*

In Caracas, on the 30th day of July, 2010