

CHAPTER XV – STATUTES OF THE OPEN PARLIAMENT NETWORK

1. The Open Parliament Network (OPN), previously known as the Latin American Network for Transparency, Access to Public Information, and Probity, was integrated into ParlAmericas' structure following the adoption of Resolution 38-01, approving its establishment, during the 12th Plenary Assembly of ParlAmericas' members, which took place in Panama City on September 5, 2015.
2. The purpose of the OPN is to develop topics related to Open Parliament and to encourage their discussion in order to undertake legislative actions to strengthen legislative openness. It shall be led by a president elected during its Gathering.
3. **Mandate.** The OPN has the following objectives:
 - (i) Reinforce mechanisms that ensure democratic institutions are transparent and in compliance with the highest ethical principles for political work;
 - (ii) Urge congresses and legislative and national assemblies of the Americas and the Caribbean to commit to combatting corruption through the adoption of measures that build on agreements issued in international treaties, and other agreements related to transparency and access to public information;
 - (iii) Strengthen parliamentary ethics standards through the establishment of clear rules that regulate conflict of interest, ethics codes and committees, as well as rules that allow for the active participation of citizens and for citizen control, among others;
 - (iv) Promote the exchange of knowledge and experience on issues related to combatting corruption, and in particular, to share good practices implemented in the region, where relevant;
 - (v) Implement a legal framework for accountability that includes participative mechanisms for the evaluation of management to enable public authorities to explain legislation, justify their actions to citizens, and receive sanctions where merited; as well as other aspects linked to access to public information, the fight against corruption, prevention of conflict of interest and influence peddling, internal control and political financing, and a clear sanctioning framework;
 - (vi) Promote engagement with citizens through openness initiatives fostering dialogue, participatory methods for developing standards, setting of an agenda for using new technologies and open data, and participation driven by citizen control.
4. **Governance.** The OPN will be governed by an Executive Committee composed of one president, 4 vice-presidents, and 2 ex-officio members, appointed based on the role they serve in ParlAmericas.
 - (i) **OPN Presidency.** The President will be elected by the delegates of the member parliaments attending the OPN Gathering. The mandate of her/his term will be 2 years, with the possibility of re-election. The President will also automatically serve as 2nd Vice-President of the Board of Directors of ParlAmericas.
 - (ii) **OPN Vice-Presidency.** The Vice-Presidents will be elected by the delegates of the member parliaments attending the OPN Gathering, ensuring, when possible, gender parity in the positions. The term of their mandate will be 2 years, with the possibility of re-election. In the case of an elected Vice-President stepping down from their role or becoming unable to continue their mandate, their position will become open for election at the following OPN Gathering.
 - (iii) **Ex-officio Members.** The President of the Board of Directors of ParlAmericas will be an ex-officio member of the OPN Executive Committee and will have voting rights. The

Director General (or another designated person) will also be an ex-officio member but will not have voting rights.

- (iv) **Regional composition of the Vice-Presidents.** To maintain regional balance, the 4 Vice-Presidents will come from each of the following four sub-regions:
- a. North America: Canada, United States of America, United Mexican States.
 - b. Caribbean: Antigua and Barbuda, Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago.
 - c. Central America: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama.
 - d. South America: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela.
5. **Roles.** The roles and responsibilities of the positions of President and Vice-President are constituted as follows:
- (i) Presidency
 - a. Represent the OPN in the inter-American system;
 - b. Consult on relevant topics and contribute to ParlAmericas' agenda;
 - c. Review and approve the annual OPN work plan, prior to its adoption by the Board of Directors of ParlAmericas;
 - d. Provide information on the progress of OPN activities at every ParlAmericas Board of Directors meeting;
 - e. Chair the meetings of the OPN Executive Committee;
 - f. Co-chair the OPN Gathering with the host; and
 - g. Serve as 2nd Vice-President on the Board of Directors of ParlAmericas.
 - (ii) Vice-Presidencies
 - a. Assist with the representation of the OPN with an emphasis on their respective sub-region;
 - b. Consult on relevant topics and contribute to the development of ParlAmericas' agenda by offering a sub-regional perspective;
 - c. Review and approve the annual OPN work plan, prior to its adoption by the Board of Directors of ParlAmericas;
 - d. Fulfill the responsibilities of the President in her/his absence, with prior designation by the President, except in meetings of the Board of Directors of ParlAmericas; and
 - e. Attend the OPN Gatherings.
6. **Electoral process**¹. The International Secretariat will be responsible for organizing the electoral process for the positions on the OPN Executive Committee.
- (i) The delegations will be comprised of parliamentarians representing member states, who will be chosen by each parliament.
 - (ii) The delegations representing their parliaments will be able to vote for the President and 4 Vice-Presidents.
 - (iii) The parliamentary candidates for the positions of President and Vice-President must show interest in and commitment to the Network's mandate and have been designated by their respective parliaments.

¹ In accordance with Resolution 34-03 of the Board of Directors of ParlAmericas, ratified during the 11th Plenary Assembly, the member legislatures must pay their respective dues in order to present a candidacy. The payment for the current year must be received at the latest one day before the elections in order to present a candidacy.

- (iv) Every authorized delegation will receive one (1) official electoral ballot. Following the reading of the rules at the Gathering, a representative from the International Secretariat will visibly hand an electoral ballot to the voting delegate from each delegation.
- (v) An official ballot box will be placed so as to be visible to the Assembly where the representative of each delegation in attendance can place their vote, within the stipulated time.
- (vi) In the event that there is no competition for a position due to having only one candidate for the vacancy, the Director General or her/his designated representative will announce that the position has been designated by acclamation and will name the winning candidate.
- (vii) In the event of a tie, the candidates nominated for the position will have two (2) minutes to give a presentation in front of all of the delegations, in order to then hold a second round of voting. In the event that this also results in a tie, the ParlAmericas Board of Directors will need to vote to decide the winning candidate.
- (viii) The Director General or her/his designated representative will announce the election results and the length of the mandates.
- (ix) An official announcement of the results will be published on the website.
- (x) Succession plan for the Presidency.
 - a. In the event that the President is absent for an activity in which she/he must represent OPN, she/he will designate one of the Vice-Presidents to fulfill her/his functions during the activities of the organization, with the exception of her/his responsibilities related to the role of 2nd Vice-President of ParlAmericas.
 - b. In the event that the OPN President must resign or retire from her/his role between OPN Gatherings, the ParlAmericas Board of Directors, through a vote, will designate one of the Vice-Presidents of the OPN as acting Interim President,² including in the position of 2nd Vice-President of the ParlAmericas Board. The new President will be elected at the next Gathering.

² The designated Vice-President's position will remain vacant until the next election.