



**REPORTS OF THE WORKING GROUPS**  
**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*

**TOPIC No. 1**  
**Electoral Roll**

**Opening:**

**Cesar Alvarado**

**How to guarantee the auditability, contestability and the public aspect of the Electoral Roll?**

- 1. The bodies responsible for the Electoral Roll must establish terms for their review by the citizens and organizations with political purposes, in order to guarantee the contestability of the roll.*
- 2. The Electoral Roll must be public and totally auditable by citizens and organizations with political purposes.*
- 3. Birth certificates are the fundamental basis for the establishment of Civil Registry and the issuance of the identity documents of citizens. Therefore the monitoring of the issuance of this important document is indispensable, which results in consistency and data integrity of the Electoral Registry.*
- 4. Cooperation is needed among the institutions that are responsible for the identification data of citizens and Electoral Bodies to strengthen the validation and certification of data for the Registry and the Electoral Roll.*
- 5. There is a tendency to introduce technological elements such as biometric validation, digital photography and digital signature for the incorporation of citizens and citizens in the Electoral Roll.*
- 6. The assurance that citizens will be registered in voting centers near their residence is a basic element in the struggle for inclusion of the population in the electoral process.*
- 7. There is a tendency to use advances in technology and information in order to strengthen the public character of the*

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*Electoral Roll and facilitate retrieval of data by voters and political organizations.*



## **Agreement:**

### **Topic 1. Electoral Roll.**

- 1. Recognizing that the Electoral Roll is public and mechanisms should be promoted for their auditability by citizens and groups for political purposes.*
- 2. Generating mechanisms that allow introducing technological elements for the incorporation of citizens in the Electoral Roll.*
- 3. Promoting permanent vigilance of the processes related to issuance of birth certificates, in order to guarantee the consistency and integrity of the Electoral Roll.*



## **TOPIC No. 2**

### **Polling Center Management System**

#### **Opening:**

**Guillermo Santeliz**

#### **How to guarantee the availability, integration with other state entities and accessibility in polling center management procedures?**

*Regarding this issue we observed a particular interest to improve the possibility of voters to exercise their right to vote, by significantly reducing distances and making each polling center as close as possible to the community where they live, with special treatment to the areas with indigenous people, providing the highest level of comfort from the physical location to the instruments, and human talent who knows their idiosyncrasies.*

*The means of transport used to incorporate people in the electoral roll mostly land, river, air, and non-automotive; with the exception of some countries that use only land transportation due to geographic reasons.*

*The polling centers have between 50 and 650 voters, depending on the characteristics of each country, with the exception of those in indigenous areas and with difficult access, which may have less than 50.*

*The infrastructure that is used as polling stations is mostly school buildings, universities, and public -sometimes private- infrastructure.*

*Preferential treatment is given to people with disabilities to exercise their right to vote, which they preferentially do in the first station of the polling center.*

*We noticed two types of treatment regarding the issue of allocation of polling centers, domicile vote and vote by residential area. It is domiciled in some countries, while in others it is not.*



*The physical conditions of polling centers or facilities for collection of ballots was considered of great importance, because we noticed that it is indispensable that polling centers be in the best conditions regarding infrastructure and can offer a comfortable space for voters. In some cases, these are installed in streets or avenues.*

*Security was considered by all as a vital factor to guarantee the right to vote.*

*Mobile centers as alternative infrastructure for areas with difficult access was shared along with other experiences of huts in indigenous areas.*

*Automation of cadastre system is a common issue in the participating countries, and allows more voters to have access to exercising their right to vote.*

*Polling centers and electoral districts were mostly classified into three: A urban, B rural and C difficult access.*

### **CONCLUSION:**

*Regarding this issue we observed a particular interest to improve the possibility of voters to exercise their right to vote, by significantly reducing distances and making each polling center as close as possible to the community where they live, with special treatment to the areas with indigenous people, providing the highest level of comfort from the physical location to the instruments, and human talent who knows their idiosyncrasies.*

## **TOPIC No. 3 Nomination and Ballot Production**

### **Opening:**

**Dr. Luis Emilio Rondón**

**How to guarantee the reliability, efficiency and service to the citizens in the procedures of nomination and ballot production?**



*Nomination Systems of the countries participating in this 3rd Meeting have in common the search for simplicity, security, cost reduction, and the number of contests. Therefore, the general trend is to implement automated systems or technology assistance to achieve greater trust by political organizations, candidates, citizens in general.*

*After achieving this goal, we will obtain greater efficiency in the production of electoral ballots, reducing time, costs, minimizing errors and guaranteeing greater level of security.*

#### **TOPIC 4**

### **Operation of polling stations**

**Opening:**  
**Ibrahim Colina**

#### **How to guarantee the reliability, optimization, randomness, and inclusion in the operation of the polling station?**

*1.-Creation of a roll of eligible candidates, in accordance with the regulative precepts The creation of the database is established in accordance with the regulative precepts of each country, prevailing the random selection of voters, lists of professional associations, university students and/or public employees.*

*In some countries a recruiting system for voluntary participation is foreseen to elect the members of the polling stations Automation is established to purge and manage the database The inclusion of all citizens is fostered to guarantee transparency*

*2.- Selection, notification, training, and accreditation of polling station members Selection is made publicly and the political parties audit it.*



*In countries in which the creation of the polling stations is established by nomination of political parties, the concerted participation of the parties that got the most votes in the previous elections is guaranteed in order to guarantee balance.*

*Notification is made through the publishing of official notices, personal mail, and through the media and TIC (SMS, web pages)*

*Where the lots are drawn, an algorithm that guarantees the randomness is established, based on criteria such as constituency, month of birth, or alphabetic disaggregation.*

*In the cases of voluntary participation, the selection is carried out based on the performance of the individual during the training process and by professional profile.*

### *3.- Polling station members follow-up and control*

*National electoral bodies perform the follow-up of the notification, training, and accreditation of the polling station members. Automation is established as the tool of choice for the optimization of the follow-up*

### *4.- Operation of the polling station*

*Polling stations or their equivalents are temporary collegiate bodies, working mostly with three members and one secretary, with their respective substitutes. Observers from the different political parties are also present.*

*Proper training guarantees the expeditiousness and suitability in the optimal operation of the polling station. In the case of Guatemala, the representation of the indigenous people and of women is established in the polling station.*

*Incentive and penalties systems are established to guarantee the participation of the members of the polling stations.*

## **TOPIC 5**



## **Topic: Electoral Financing**

### **Opening:**

**Mr. Saúl Bernal**

### **How to guarantee the registry, control, efficiency / promptness and reliability in electoral financing procedures?**

#### *Procedures:*

*Manual: It refers to the existence of accounting systems grounded in standards applicable nationally and internationally.*

*Automated: Information Systems for the economic and financing activities of the Organizations with Political Purposes in their regular activities and electoral campaigns.*

*Criteria established: Registry, control, efficiency /promptness and reliability.*

#### *Remarks:*

- *Financing types: In accordance with the remarks of the representatives to the meeting, different financing types were identified, with emphasis on Public and Private Financing; and Mixed financing, which corresponds to the combination of public and private financing.*

*Likewise, different modalities were identified as to the disbursement of resources in the case of public and mixed financing.*

- *Supervision of the funding: In general, the participants verified that resources are actually supervised; however, some weaknesses in results is seen as a consequence of the legal framework, which fails to establish sanctions that compel the political stakeholders to comprehensively fulfill their accountability from a coercive viewpoint.*
- *Legal Framework: In Venezuela and Panama, the legal framework for financing control has constitutional enforceability; nevertheless, it was observed that most of the participating countries have specific laws to perform their control.*



- *Civil participation: In Panama's case, the access to financing controls is of public nature, through the web release of the financing results of the political stakeholders.*
- *Control bodies: Various state bodies are in charge of controlling public financing. In the case of private or mixed financing, the control is performed by the electoral bodies, with the particularity of Panama, where donations are controlled separately.*
- *Control system: Two (2) modalities were identified*
  - *Accounting system: deployed in all the participant countries and grounded in national and international applicable standards, whose application is manual through entries in accounting ledgers and archives of the supporting documents. The volumes of information render the control, efficiency and promptness difficult in terms of results and provide low levels of reliability.*
  - *Automated system: From the participant countries, Venezuela, Panamá and Brazil expressed they have automated systems, with differences regarding their purposes, contents and results, among them, the guarantee of the records made by political stakeholders themselves, follow-up and control by the administrators of said systems, high levels of real-time efficiency and promptness in the knowledge of the information registered by the users, which ensures reliability from the IT perspective and for the records they customized.*

#### *Recommendation:*

*We suggest the following:*

- *The development and application of automated systems in the participant countries must be adapted to the electoral characteristics of each country.*
- *To create technical units with high auditing and financial investigation capacities.*





- *To prepare an efficient legal framework concerning sanctions adapted to the specificities of each type of financing.*
- *To create technical supervision units that allow for real-time pre-electoral and post-electoral follow-up so as to establish penalties and sanctions timely.*

## **TOPIC 6**

### **Education, motivation to participate and regulation of electoral campaign**

#### **Opening:**

**Mr. Eduardo González**

#### **How to guarantee that the participation conditions of stakeholders and the timeliness of the information in the education, motivation to participate and regulation of electoral campaigns procedures?**

*To acknowledge the new experiences developed in the countries of the Hemisphere for the construction of mechanisms for the regulation, follow-up, and control of electoral campaigns, for the spreading of information aimed at the voters, and for the establishing of conditions to broadcast electoral messages through the traditional or alternative media.*

## **TOPIC 7**

### **Voting, vote counting, tally, and publishing of results**

#### **Opening:**

**Mr. Carlos Quintero**

#### **How to guarantee the safety, auditing, and citizen's verification in the voting, vote counting, tally and publishing of results procedures?**

#### **1. VOTING:**

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Based on the criteria established for the development of voting parameters in each of the participant countries, systems characterized by manual and automated processes are determined, of which the following may be mentioned:

Matching characteristics:

- *Safeguarding of the integrity of the vote (total safety of the voter at the time of voting).*
- *Physical safety guaranteed by the State's bodies.*
- *Guarantee of the secrecy of the vote.*
- *Establishing of schedules based on internal regulations of each country.*
- *Improvement of the quality of the voting process in terms of the participation of the voter (increase in the number of polling stations, polling centers, among others).*
- *Certification of the identity of the voters.*
- *Permanent participation of the political parties or political organizations during the development of the whole electoral process.*
- *Permanent certification of the electoral roll of the country.*

## 2. VOTE COUNTING:

The vote counting process is the determination of the results, emphasizing that each country has its own set of characteristics based on their system (manual or automated), thus generating the following aspects:

Matching characteristics:

- *Participation of political parties or organizations (witnesses) in the vote counting process, in order to guarantee the development of the process itself.*
- *Direct responsibility of the Electoral Body, in terms of the managing and guaranteeing of the fulfilling of the vote counting process.*
- *Establishing of the vote counting process as a Public Event, participation of polling station members, and witnesses of the political parties or organizations.*

## 3. TALLY:

The tally process is characterized by the collection and adding of all the ballots obtained from the electoral process.

Matching characteristics:

- *Efficiency in the delivery of final results, through technological mechanisms, in order to expedite the tally process.*
- *Automation of the tally process.*



- *Participation of political parties or organizations in the development of the tally process.*

#### **4. PUBLISHING OF RESULTS**

*The publishing of the results includes the public presentation of the results obtained from the tally process, after the electoral event. In this publishing we will find:*

*Matching characteristics:*

- *Direct responsibility of the Electoral Body for the publishing of the results.*
- *Delivery of the results for their publishing through the media by the Electoral Body.*

*CONCLUSIONS: To 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 that would contribute to the improvement of the quality of the processes, in terms of the safeguarding of information, auditability, feasibility of use, and offer guarantees to the voters in order to consolidate the trust in the electoral system.*

*RECOMMENDATIONS: To create a virtual forum that would allow for the exchange of information in a permanent manner, in order to ensure the development of the referential framework based on the goals set, and achieve products that could be discussed in the next meetings of electoral experts and bodies.*

### **TOPIC Nº 8**

#### **Transmission of electoral results**

**Opening:**

**Ing. Luís Ramírez**

#### **How to guarantee the safety, auditability, reliability and performance in the transmission of electoral results?**

##### *1. Transmission of results*

*The experts and representatives of the Electoral Bodies highlighted the following:*

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- *Applying the best international practices and standards in the matter*
- *Using redundant land, cellular and satellite transmission media for data transmission, adapted according to the geographical area that will host the event.*
- *Measuring the times for polling station closing and delivery of results, respecting the socio-cultural phenomenon and political tradition of each country. Based on the foregoing, it is necessary to establish priorities in the issuance times of results and the issuance of official results.*
- *Working towards achieving rapidness and accuracy in transmission processes in order to disseminate electoral results in an accurate, truthful and timely manner.*
- *Regulating the dissemination of results by the bodies responsible of the electoral process to guarantee the certainty and accuracy. In this regard, it is worth highlighting the importance of issuing the official results as a mechanism to reinforce the legitimacy of the results and the strengthening of the institutions.*
- *Implementing the “Before, During and After” audits in the process.*
- *Need to establish simulations and test protocols to verify the electoral procedure in its entirety.*
- *Having a high-performance technological infrastructure to strengthen data transmission massively.*
- *The responsibility of the general electoral process must be attributed to an independent public power or entity not associated to any governmental entity.*

## *2. Final Declaration*

*Agreeing that, for the purposes of optimizing the electoral result tallying and dissemination times, it is necessary to guarantee a robust, safe system for the transmission of results both in automated and manual processes; preserving the autonomy and transparency*



of the electoral body in this process, by auditing and validating the electoral result transmission system.

### **TOPIC Nº 9**

#### **Electoral logistics: deployment and removal of electoral materials and instruments**

**Opening:**  
**Cap. Alberto Avena**

**How to guarantee the contingency, proper location, optimal conditions, effective transfer (transportation) capacity and the safety and custody in the electoral logistics procedures?**

*As far as the electoral logistics are concerned (deployment and removal of electoral materials and instruments), participants shared the importance of fulfilling the electoral calendars or schedules and of having the material at time and complete at every station or electoral office.*

*The arrival of the electoral material to the voting site must be from 2 to 3 days, at least, before the voting process starts.*

*Most of the countries engage private companies for the production of electoral materials and instruments.*

*The importance of foreseeing contingency plans to be put in place as soon as possible.*

*In most cases, the electoral body is not the one that orders the transfer of the material.*

*The armed forces of each country are an undeniable support in deploying and removing electoral materials.*

*The voting system is manual just as in most of the countries, the importance of the equipment removal is fundamental because the documents must be carried under custody.*

*In some cases, the production of ballots is regulated by the electoral body. In other cases, it is regulated by the political parties. Ballots are produced even when the vote is automated.*

*Not all the countries distribute the material in the same way, some do it in only one package and others separately.*



Voting records are digitalized in order to expedite the counting, in some cases, this has brought problems of political nature rather than technologic ones.

*CONCLUSION: As for the electoral logistics (deployment and removal of electoral materials and equipment), the countries share the importance of fulfilling the electoral timelines or schedules and having all the materials on time at each electoral station or center.*

## **TOPIC Nº10**

### **Electoral Logistics**

#### **Opening:**

**Dr. Guillermo Santeliz**

#### **How to guarantee the contingency, proper location and optimal conditions, effective capacity of transfer (transport) and the safety and custody in the procedures inherent to the electoral logistics?**

*The electoral logistics includes a stock of contingency of materials and equipment to cover any event, the percentage of contingency may vary depending on geographical aspects and the incidence of failures or operation errors. The identification of materials and equipment is done through different ways, such as bar coded labels with the destination address. The sending of the technologic materials and/or equipment is performed through two (2) distribution stages; one central stage that reaches the regions and another stage in which materials are distributed to the voting centers. The distribution periods to the voting centers depend on the geography of the country. Proper location is guaranteed through processes of verification of the technologic materials and/or equipment, this process is performed by the electoral officers, and it can be automated. It is performed in the voting centers or storage places. The Custody before, during and after the electoral event is provided by the National Armed Forces and the Police.*



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