

**STATUTES FOR THE OPERATION OF THE NETWORK OF
PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIES OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE
CARIBBEAN (BPALC, by its Spanish acronym)**

The undersigned institutions, **WHEREAS**

1. Latin American and the Caribbean countries form a cultural community with a shared interest to protect their cultural heritage and the need to combine efforts to achieve common goals.
2. Parliamentary libraries and legislative information services have a specific knowledge on legislative support, preparation of laws and other parliamentary duties.
3. There is a strong decision to find solutions to common problems through shared and coordinated actions.
4. Parliamentary libraries have gathered an important bibliographic and documentary heritage that must be organized, preserved, and disseminated to contribute to the development and integration of Latin American and the Caribbean nations.
5. The experience gained during these years of individual and team work has led founding members to conclude that it is necessary to join efforts and knowledge throughout the region to achieve common goals.

Agree on the following statutes:



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CHAPTER I

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

PURPOSE

Article 1. The NETWORK OF PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARIES OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (BPALC, by its Spanish acronym) is hereby established with legal status to achieve the objectives set out herein.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

Article 2. The Network shall have the following objectives:

- a. To promote the integration of Latin America and the Caribbean;
- b. To contribute to the strengthening of democracy and the enforcement of the open parliament principles in our countries;
- c. To contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Goals of the 2030 Agenda and the subsequent international road maps proposed by this organization;
- d. To strengthen cooperation among parliamentary libraries of Latin America and the Caribbean, with the express purpose of promoting the exchange of experiences and knowledge based on the Valparaíso Declaration signed on March 15, 2017;
- e. To enhance the performance of parliaments in the region by supporting their legislative, representative and supervisory functions and all other powers granted to them by their national constitutions;
- f. To create reference sources at a national and regional level to foster research, study and information sharing;
- g. To foster cooperation between parliamentary libraries and other libraries, networks, associations, and information systems;
- h. To share technical support among members;



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- i. To promote the exchange of experiences, information, legislative studies and professional training aimed at officials of member institutions;
- j. To guarantee access to reliable and timely information, by creating partnerships with relevant governmental agencies, international organizations, academic institutions and civil society groups in order to achieve these objectives;
- k. To carry out any other activity agreed upon by the Parties to enforce these Statutes.

CHAPTER II

MEMBERS OF THE NETWORK

Article 3. Information units of national parliamentary institutions from Latin America and the Caribbean that have signed the Valparaíso Declaration may become members of the Network, according to the procedures established in chapter V herein.

Article 4. Information units of subnational and supranational parliamentary institutions from Latin America and the Caribbean may become associate members of the Network.

Article 5. Members of the Network shall have the right to speak and vote and shall work to achieve its objectives. Every member institution shall have the right to one vote for each chamber of Parliament in which it provides services.

Article 6. Associate members shall have the right to speak but not to vote and shall contribute to achieve the objectives of the Network.

CHAPTER III

GOVERNANCE OF THE NETWORK

Article 7. The Network comprises the following bodies:

- a. General Assembly
- b. Board of Secretariats
- c. General Secretariat - and Undersecretariat
- d. Agreement Secretariat - and Undersecretariat
- e. Communication Secretariat - and Undersecretariat
- f. Information Technology Secretariat - and Undersecretariat

Article 8. Each Secretariat shall be assisted by an Undersecretariat in the performance of its duties.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 9. The General Assembly is the main body of the Network and it is formed by all the members.

Article 10. The Assembly shall have the following functions:

- a. To appoint the members of Secretariats and Undersecretariats;
- b. To formulate policies and strategies to achieve the purpose of the Network;
- c. To approve the rules of procedure of the Network;
- d. To approve projects and validate their development;
- e. To choose the venue to hold in-person Assemblies;
- f. To engage in activities and processes that most members may deem necessary or that have been stated herein.

Article 11. The General Assembly shall meet regularly once a year, either virtually or in person, and it shall meet in extraordinary sessions at the request of at least a two-thirds majority of its members. A simple majority of its members shall be present to constitute a quorum and decisions shall



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be adopted by an absolute majority of the votes cast. Minutes of the meetings of the General Assembly shall be recorded and signed by the members present to express their approval.

Article 12. The organization and coordination of plenary meetings shall be carried out by the Secretary General, who shall also chair said meetings.

Article 13. Associate members, representatives of international associations and related institutions may be invited to attend the General Assembly as observers.

Article 14. The Assembly may establish subcommittees to work in specific areas.

BOARD OF SECRETARIATS

Article 15. The Board of Secretariats is a body acting on behalf of the General Assembly to monitor and manage the Network. The Board is composed of the heads of the secretariats.

Article 16. The Board of Secretariats shall be convened and chaired by the General Secretariat, that shall have the casting vote.

Article 17. The Board of Secretariats has the power to propose agenda items to be voted by the Assembly.

SECRETARIATS AND UNDERSECRETARIATS

Article 18. The General Secretariat is the executive body of this Network and shall have the following functions:

- a. To represent the Network before international bodies or other agencies;
- b. To coordinate the undertaking of the activities of the Network;
- c. To execute and enforce decisions adopted by the Board of Secretariats and by the General Assembly;

- d. To convene and organize the meetings of the General Assembly;
- e. To prepare the action plan of the Network;
- f. To promote the constant exchange of information and cooperation activities among the members of the Network;
- g. To perform the functions assigned to it by the General Assembly.

Article 19. The Agreement Secretariat shall have the following functions:

- a. To ensure the necessary quorum to hold sessions at each meeting;
- b. To act as a secretariat at the meetings held by the representative bodies of the Network;
- c. To prepare, sign, approve, distribute and keep the minutes of the Network;
- d. To organize and update the digital archive of the Network and to transfer it to the incoming head of the Secretariat upon termination of his term of office;
- e. To prepare the annual reports of the Network.

Article 20. The Communication Secretariat shall have the following functions:

- a. To define the policies on content creation and dissemination;
- b. To publish the activities and/or projects developed by the Network;
- c. To plan, design and gradually implement the communication system of the Network and any device, channel and platform already existing or to be developed in the future;
- d. To establish a regular channel of communication with the Information Technology Secretariat to keep digital platforms updated with the latest news and activities of the Network;
- e. To give priority to communication actions, together with the General Secretariat.

Article 21. The Information Technology Secretariat shall have the following functions:

- a. To ensure the correct development and implementation of the information systems and digital platforms of the Network;



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- b. To maintain and update the technological infrastructure of digital platforms;
- c. To establish policies related to the management of data published by the Network in digital format;
- d. To submit proposals for IT platform modernization so as to ensure the sustained renewal and innovation of the Network;
- e. To establish a regular channel of communication with the Communication Secretariat to keep digital platforms updated with the latest news and activities of the Network.

CHAPTER IV

ELECTIONS

Article 22. Every two years the General Assembly shall elect the heads of Secretariats and Undersecretariats, who shall take office immediately after their election.

Article 23. The duration of their terms of office shall be two years and office holders shall be eligible by immediate re-election. At the end of their term of office, the Undersecretariats shall become Secretariats.

Article 24. In the event of any legal impediment, administrative restriction or personal limitation, the head of the undersecretariat shall carry out the duties of the secretariat until the expiration of the term of office.

Article 25. In the event of any vacancy, the General Assembly shall fill the positions within a period of 60 days as from the day the vacancy occurs.

CHAPTER V

MEMBERSHIP

Article 26. Any institution wishing to become a member of this Network may submit, at any moment, a written notice to the General Secretariat, expressing its willingness to sign and ratify the Valparaiso Declaration and to observe the terms and conditions of these Statutes.

Article 27. Requests to join the Network shall be approved by the General Assembly and shall be informed to all members.

Article 28. Instruments of acceptance shall be kept in the archive of the Network.

CHAPTER VI

EFFECT, RATIFICATION AND SIGNING OF STATUTES

Article 29. These Statutes shall have an indefinite duration.

Article 30. These Statutes shall be subject to ratification upon written notice to the General Secretariat by member institutions.

Article 31. These Statutes shall be in effect as from the date of its approval at the General Assembly.



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CHAPTER VII

AMENDMENTS

Article 32. Any member institution may propose amendments to these Statutes before the General Secretariat, which shall convene an extraordinary meeting within 60 days as from the reception of the proposal.

Article 33. Amendments to these Statutes shall enter into force with the approval of a two-thirds majority of the members of the General Assembly.

These Statutes were approved and ratified at the General Assembly of the Network of Parliamentary Libraries of Latin America and the Caribbean held on July 8, 2021, and were executed in four counterparts written in Spanish, Portuguese, English and French.

*Translation into English of the document "BIBLIOTECA 57" made by the **Translation Bureau of the Argentine Library of Congress** (traducciones@bcn.gob.ar)*