



XVI CONFERENCE OF DEFENSE MINISTERS OF THE AMERICAS



2023 - 2024
MENDOZA | ARGENTINA



Table of contents

TITLE I: NATURE	3
TITLE II: PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE	4
TITLE III: ORGANIZATION	6
CHAPTER I: GENERAL PROVISIONS	6
CHAPTER II: HOST COUNTRY FOR THE CONFERENCE	6
CHAPTER III: STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS.....	8
CHAPTER IV: HANDOVER OF CONFERENCE VENUE.....	11
CHAPTER V: MEMBER STATES	11
TITLE IV: OPERATION	13
CHAPTER I: MEETINGS	13
CHAPTER II: DEBATES.....	16
CHAPTER III: VOTING.....	17
TITLE V: DUTIES	18
CHAPTER I: BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY	18
CHAPTER II: BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF WORKING COMMITTEES	19
CHAPTER III: DELEGATES	21
CHAPTER IV: OBSERVERS.....	21
TITLE VI: DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION	22
CHAPTER I: DOCUMENT SECURITY.....	22
CHAPTER II: TYPES OF DOCUMENTS	22
CHAPTER III: RULES REGARDING DOCUMENT PREPARATION	23
CHAPTER IV: TREATMENT OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION	23
CHAPTER V: DOCUMENT DESTRUCTION AND INCINERATION.....	23
TITLE VII: FINANCING	24
CHAPTER I: GENERAL POLICIES	24
CHAPTER II: GENERAL FINANCING RULES	24
TITLE VIII: FINAL PROVISIONS	25

TITLE I: NATURE

The purpose of these Regulations is to provide a guide on the organization and operation of the bodies and activities of the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas, or their equivalent.

The Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas was created in 1995 with the objective of establishing a forum for debate and exchange of experiences among the Ministers of Defense of the Americas. Thirty-four countries participated in the first conference: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Consequently, the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas is an international multilateral and political forum directed by the Ministers, with authorization from the governments of their respective countries.

The Conference is comprised of the Defense Ministries of the hemisphere, or their equivalent, which are entities of the sovereign states of the Americas, whose existence is laid down in the respective national legislation with the mission of safeguarding national sovereignty and defense.

This ministerial conference is the most important meeting of the defense sector in the hemisphere and its key objective is to foster debate, analysis and exchange of experiences based on the "Thematic Agenda" proposed by the Host Country and approved by the Member States in the Preparatory Meeting.

In accordance with the mandate of Member States at the Ministerial Meeting in Cartagena de Indias (1998), the coordinating body of the Conference is the Pro Tempore Secretariat under the responsibility of the country hosting the next Conference of Ministers.

The Conference may bring together all Defense Ministers in the Americas whose governments are democratically elected and identify with the purpose of the Conference.

Defense Ministers may be Members or Observers. Other organizations may participate as observers only.

The organizational structure of the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas is flexible and rotational by nature, inasmuch as the management and organization of each conference and the formation of the committees fall under the responsibility of a different Ministry of Defense.

TITLE II: PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSE

ARTICLE 1

All countries in the Americas have the right to become members of the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas upon submitting an application and expressing a commitment to comply with the "Williamsburg Principles" agreed upon in 1995:

- a. Uphold the promise of the Santiago Agreement that the preservation of democracy is the basis for ensuring our mutual security.
- b. Acknowledge that military and security forces play a critical role in supporting and defending the legitimate interests of sovereign democratic states.
- c. Affirm the commitments of our countries in Miami and Managua that our Armed Forces should be subordinate to democratically controlled authority, act within the bounds of national Constitutions, and respect human rights through training and practice.
- d. Increase transparency in defense matters through exchanges of information, through reporting on defense expenditures, and by greater civilian-military dialogue.
- e. Set as a goal for our hemisphere the resolution of outstanding disputes by negotiated settlement and widespread adoption of confidence building measures, all of this in a time-frame consistent with the pace of hemispheric economic integration, and to recognize that the development of our economic security profoundly affects our defense security and vice versa.
- f. Promote greater defense cooperation in support of voluntary participation in UN-sanctioned peacekeeping operations, and to cooperate in a supportive role in the fight against narcoterrorism.

ARTICLE 2

The fundamental purpose of the Conference of Ministers of Defense of the Americas, or their equivalent, is to foster mutual knowledge, analysis, debate and exchange of ideas and experiences on defense and security matters, or any other mechanism of interaction that enables its achievement.

The purpose of the Conference is to deal with matters of mutual interest in the area of defense, a concept that allows for inclusion of other related themes in the future.

Expected results are to increase cooperation and integration and to contribute, from a defense and security planning perspective, to the development of Member States.

ARTICLE 3

In accordance with the aforementioned purpose, the following general principles will guide the operations, thematic agenda and activities of the Conference:

- a. Scope of action: The Ministries participating in this organization are vested with the authority conferred in their respective legal frameworks and their scope of action is set at a policy level. The government of each Member State should provide its respective delegation with appropriate credentials which must be presented to the Pro Tempore Secretariat prior to the Conference.

- b. Flexible Participation: It is essential for some countries to address specific issues that are not in the national interest of other countries. Consequently, for purposes of compatibility of the described needs, the Ministers may abstain from addressing specific issues.
- c. Acceptance of diversity: Closely related to the foregoing principle is the essential acceptance of differing points of view, perceptions and concepts stemming from a broad array of cultural, social and language factors. These differences should not hinder the promotion of common interests or a spirit of cooperation, but rather should complement them.
- d. Refrain from doctrine proposal: It is clearly stated that the purpose of the Conference is to share experiences and knowledge, thus no doctrine proposal should be made.
- e. Ongoing interaction: Maximum use should be made of capabilities and swiftness for transferring information through modern management systems, thus maintaining ongoing interaction between the Ministries of Defense. In this way, the actions of the Conference may be projected beyond the scope of the events that take place, making it unnecessary to wait for the relevant bodies to share experiences, hold academic debates or make decisions.
- f. Projection: The Conference must broaden the spectrum of its contacts to other organizations that are linked to its actions in one way or another, whether through the existence of common objectives or out of the necessity to broaden the scope of knowledge of the organization for the benefit of its members. These contacts should not affect the operation of the Conference, but rather should generate links for sharing useful information that contributes to the achievement of the organization's purpose.
- g. Increased bilateral contacts: The Conference should foster and facilitate bilateral contacts that support and contribute to the achievement of Conference objectives.

ARTICLE 4

Furthermore, and in keeping with the need to define "matters of common interest in the area of defense," it is hereby established that the general framework of the themes to be addressed will preferably include themes of national interest for most of the countries in the Americas. Consequently, it is essential to avoid specific national, bilateral or sub regional themes that could be viewed as interference in the internal affairs of Member States.

TITLE III: ORGANIZATION

CHAPTER I: GENERAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 5

The Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas will be composed of the following bodies:

- a. The Assembly of Member States
- b. Working Committees
- c. Pro Tempore Secretariat.

ARTICLE 6

The General Assembly brings together the majority of the delegations of Member States, headed by their respective Ministers or authorized representatives. The General Assembly includes the plenary sessions of the Preparatory Meeting and Conference.

ARTICLE 7

The Working Committees are technical meetings that analyze the contents of the Thematic Agenda and make recommendations or conclusions for approval by the Conference Assembly.

All Member States may participate in the Working Committees through their official delegations and other delegates, supported by civilian and military experts.

ARTICLE 8

The Pro Tempore Secretariat is the entity appointed by the Host Country to coordinate and organize the meetings, prepare the thematic agenda, and disseminate the conclusions and recommendations approved by the Assembly through the liaison of each Member State.

The Pro Tempore Secretariat will be chaired by the Secretary General of the Conference. The Executive Secretariat is a permanent working body.

CHAPTER II: HOST COUNTRY FOR THE CONFERENCE

SELECTION

ARTICLE 9

The Member State where the Conference is held is referred to as the Host Country for a period of two years.

ARTICLE 10

The Host Country will be designated not less than two years in advance at the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas from among those Member States that offer to host the next Conference during the Preparatory Meeting.

Member States that offer to host the Conference assume commitments of a political and economic nature before the other Member States at the Conference. If no Member State offers to host the Conference during the Preparatory Meeting, any interested Member State may express its intention during the Conference. If no offers are made during the Conference, the decision regarding the designation of the next Host Country will take into account the following:

- a. The principle of equitable geographic distribution.
- b. The Member States that have previously hosted Conferences.
- c. The preceding alphabetical order in Spanish.

In any case, the final approval must be ratified by the Conference by qualified majority vote.

ARTICLE 11

Where more than one Member State offers to host the Conference, the selection process will be based on the following priority criteria:

- a. The Member State that has never been the venue of the Conference.
- b. The Member State that has been the venue of the Conference the least number of times.
- c. The preceding alphabetical order in Spanish.
- d. If it is impossible to reach consensus, the matter will be put to a vote as the last recourse.

ARTICLE 12

If the designated Host Country is unable to assume its commitment during the preparatory period of the Conference, it must immediately provide official notice to the other Member States through the Pro Tempore Secretariat.

In such case, the Pro Tempore Secretariat will receive any extraordinary candidacies and obtain the approval of Member States in the manner stipulated for each case in particular.

ARTICLE 13

Declination by a country is not a limitation for serving as a venue in the future.

RESPONSIBILITIES

ARTICLE 14

The Host Country will have the following responsibilities, in addition to its responsibilities as Member of the Conference:

- a. To preside over the Conference.
- b. To establish the structure of the Pro Tempore Secretariat within its own organization, in accordance with the respective organizational rules and taking into account the provisions set out in these Regulations.
- c. To ensure the planning, direction, execution, control and evaluation of the meeting,

- guided by the purpose of the Conference and the agreements adopted therein.
- d. To prepare in advance the Thematic Agenda for the Preparatory Meeting, taking into account the historic agenda, the proposals received from Member States and those that are deemed of greater interest according to the hemisphere's security needs.
 - e. To carry out the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas and its respective Preparatory Meeting.
 - f. To propose to the Preparatory Meeting the list of Observers to be invited to the Conference, which must be ratified by an absolute majority of Member States present and voting.
 - g. To maintain communication with liaisons at the Ministries of Defense.

ARTICLE 15

The designated Host Country will take office on the date that this responsibility is handed over by the previous Host Country, which will be not later than ninety days after the Conference of Defense Ministers of Defense is adjourned.

ARTICLE 16

The Host Country will have the following responsibilities in relation to the meetings:

- a. To invite the Member States to the Preparatory Meeting and Conference.
- b. To invite Observers to the Conference on behalf of the Member States and in accordance with the agreements made at the Preparatory Meeting.
- c. To take into account that the list of Observers invited to the Conference must be approved at the Preparatory Meeting.
- d. To provide to the Member States, not less than thirty days before the Preparatory Meeting and Conference, respectively, the following documents:
 1. Informative Guide containing the administrative instructions for the Preparatory Meeting and Conference.
 2. Methodological Guidelines for the development of the meetings.
 3. General Work Program for both meetings.
 4. Proposal for final declaration.
- e. To schedule the plenary, inaugural and closing sessions of the Conference, inviting government authorities as deemed appropriate.
- f. To provide simultaneous interpretation and written translation of all interventions and documents in four languages: Spanish, French, English and Portuguese. In every case, the official language of the Conference will be that of the Host Country.
- g. To comply with the State Protocol of the Host Country in planning the activities and programs of the Preparatory Meeting and Conference.
- h. To organize and maintain secretarial, simultaneous interpretation, translation, communication and other services as may be necessary for the efficient development of the Conference.

CHAPTER III: STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

ARTICLE 17

The Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas will be comprised by the following:

- a. Chairman
- b. Pro Tempore Secretariat
- c. Executive Secretariat

CHAIRMAN

ARTICLE 18

The Chairman of the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas will be the Minister of Defense of the Host Country or other high-ranking official.

ARTICLE 19

The Chairman of the Conference of Ministers of Defense of the Americas will have the following duties:

- a. To preside over the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas.
- b. To represent the interests of the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas in all matters related to the organization.
- c. To implement the permanent management of the Conference, adopting any pertinent decisions to guide its sound performance and submitting to the consideration of the Ministers of Defense of the Member States those matters that surpass his scope of responsibility.
- d. To oversee compliance of the principles set forth in these Regulations.
- e. To ensure the monitoring and evaluation of the agreements and provisions approved by the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas.

PRO TEMPORE SECRETARIAT

ARTICLE 20

The Host Country will be responsible for organizing a Pro Tempore Secretariat, in accordance with the mandate of the Member States.

The Pro Tempore Secretariat will be chaired by the Secretary General of the Conference, who must be a high-ranking official of the Ministry of Defense of the Host Country.

ARTICLE 21

The Secretary General will have the following duties:

- a. Support the Chairman in the management of the Conference.
- b. Participate in the planning, direction, execution, control and evaluation process of the organization.
- c. Supervise and guide the activities of the Executive Secretariat.
- d. Propose, organize and direct the bilateral, multilateral or specialized meetings that may be deemed necessary to prepare the Thematic Agenda.
- e. Act as the Chief of the Organizing Committee of the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas, Chairman of the Preparatory Meeting and Secretary General of the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas.
- f. Ensure the monitoring and evaluation of the agreements.

- g. Submit the progress report on the compliance of the agreements.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

ARTICLE 22

The Executive Secretariat is a permanent body of the Conference that makes it possible to maintain a continuous functional relationship with Member States, establishing direct contact with the liaisons designated for this specific purpose by the Defense Ministers or pertinent authority. Staff resources will be determined by the Host Country. The Inter-American Defense Board, entity of the Organization of American States, will have the responsibility to host the institutional memory of the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas. Upon conclusion of the Conference, a thorough selection process will be undertaken to collect useful documentation that will form part of the historic files of the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas.

ARTICLE 23

The Executive Secretariat is the technical and coordinating body of the Conference, assisted by the Host Country and Member States in planning and carrying out the meetings and other related activities, and implementing the measures for which it is responsible according to the agreements and other instruments. The equipment and materials required for its operation will be provided by the Host Country.

ARTICLE 24

The venue of the Executive Secretariat will be the same as that of the country organizing the Conference.

ARTICLE 25

The duties of the Executive Secretariat are as follows:

- a. Assist the President of the Conference and the Secretary General in the performance of their responsibilities.
- b. Coordinate actions for compliance of the manuals, agreements, reports on the conclusions and recommendations, and other documentation.
- c. Organize and maintain the documentary history of the Conference.
- d. Support the Host Country in planning, coordinating and carrying out the Conference and Preparatory Meeting.
- e. Prepare the minutes of the work meetings, the Final Declaration and the Final Report of the Conference.

ARTICLE 26

The Executive Secretary will have the following duties:

- a. Direct the Executive Secretariat to ensure the performance of its mission.
- b. Steer the activities of the Executive Secretariat staff based on the provisions of the Conference Regulations, the reports on the conclusions and recommendations, and the agreements signed in the Conferences.
- c. Assume full responsibility for providing official information regarding the activities

- of the Executive Secretariat.
- d. Support the Board of Directors of the Meeting at the plenary sessions and the moderators of the Conference Working Committees.
 - e. Assist the Secretary General in carrying out the Preparatory Meeting and Conference.
 - f. Submit the management report of the Executive Secretariat during the two years of the Conference's planning and implementation.
 - g. Advise the new Host Country upon request and approval of the respective country.

CHAPTER IV: HANDOVER OF CONFERENCE VENUE

ARTICLE 27

The transfer of the Conference legacy and official handover of the organization will be coordinated between the incoming and outgoing Host Country during the Conference. The transfer will take place on the date agreed upon by the interested countries, within ninety days after the Conference is adjourned.

ARTICLE 28

A Troika of countries comprising the most recent, current and future host countries would assist the Pro Tempore Secretariat with arrangements for the Conference. The Troika countries should be represented by senior level officials of the country.

CHAPTER V: MEMBER STATES

STATUS, ENTRY AND CONTINUANCE OF MEMBERS

ARTICLE 29

All countries of the Americas that apply for membership and comply with the "Williamsburg Principles" are members of the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas.

ARTICLE 30

Member States and Observers may withdraw in the following cases:

- a. Voluntarily by submitting a written request.
- b. Failure to comply with any of the principles agreed upon at Williamsburg upon decision of the Meeting.

ARTICLE 31

Member States are those that participate in all Conference activities and, as a whole, adopt the decisions that guide the actions of the Conference. The delegates, once so appointed by the Head of Delegation, have the right to be heard and vote at all the meetings and will have full access to the Conference internal information.

ARTICLE 32

Member States will have the following rights and duties, among others:

- a. Volunteer as venue, assuming the responsibilities and duties described above.
- b. Respond to invitations to participate in the activities of the Preparatory Meeting and Conference, preferably within thirty days after said invitations are received.
- c. Send to the Executive Secretariat of the Host Country the personal data (résumé) of the Minister of Defense, Secretary of Defense, or head of the defense portfolio who will attend both the Preparatory Meeting and Conference, at least thirty days prior to the date of each meeting, so as to facilitate the reception process of the Host Country.
- d. Propose themes to be included in the Thematic Agenda, if deemed convenient, taking into account that they should be "of common interest in the area of Defense." The proposed themes should be made known to the Executive Secretariat of the Host Country at least sixty days prior to the Preparatory Meeting. The plenary of the Preparatory Meeting will approve the inclusion or non-inclusion of the proposed themes in the Thematic Agenda of the Conference.
- e. Participate, through their delegates, in the plenary sessions, Working Committees and other official activities that are agreed upon, complying with the provisions of these Regulations and those issued by the Executive Secretariat.
- f. Express an opinion in relation to the proposed themes so as to prepare the documents to be analyzed within the term and according to the conditions established by the Executive Secretariat.
- g. Monitor the agreements, informing the Executive Secretariat of any non-compliance.
- h. Establish a link with the Executive Secretariat of the Host Country, both in the Host Country's ministerial organization and Diplomatic Legation, preferably considering, with respect to the latter, the defense attaches who reside in the Host Country.

TITLE IV: OPERATION

CHAPTER I: MEETINGS

ARTICLE 33

As agreed by the Member States, the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas will hold the following meetings every two years:

- a. Preparatory Meeting.
- b. Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas.

ARTICLE 34

In addition to the aforementioned meetings, other special Member State meetings may be held, such as seminars and specialized conferences.

PREPARATORY MEETING

ARTICLE 35

The Preparatory Meeting is an assembly meeting. It should be held at least four months prior to the Conference, with the main objective of approving the Thematic Agenda to be analyzed in the ministerial meeting. The Preparatory Meeting is attended by the delegates of Member States with the right to vote.

The Chairman of the Preparatory Meeting will be the Secretary General of the Conference, who will preside over a Board of Directors composed of the advisers that the Host Country deems convenient in order to achieve the best results at the Preparatory Meeting.

The Preparatory Meeting will extend not more than three days.

In accordance with the spirit of the Conference, the meeting is to be held, preeminently, in person. Only in cases of force majeure where, for reasons of urgency and extreme necessity, there are circumstances that prevent the Host Country from holding it in person, virtual meetings will be authorized as an exception.

The Pro Tempore Secretariat shall notify not less than sixty days prior to the holding of the meeting the modality chosen by the Host Country. Likewise, in the event that a virtual meeting modality is chosen, such decision should be notified within the term established for the submission of documentation as referred to in Article 16, paragraph d) of these Regulations, and the relevant specifications, such as meeting structure and platform to be used, should be also provided in order to ensure that the Preparatory Meeting will be properly held.

ARTICLE 36

For purposes of planning its activities, the Preparatory Meeting will have the following basic documents prepared by the Executive Secretariat:

- a. The proposed Thematic Agenda for the Conference.
- b. Tentative proposals for updating the Conference Regulations.
- c. The administrative instructions for the Conference.
- d. A report on the candidates for Host Country.
- e. A draft of the proposed declaration.

ARTICLE 37

The plenary of the Preparatory Meeting will have the authority to define the Draft Thematic Agenda by seeking consensus or by a majority of votes, if necessary. In any case, a limited number of themes should be considered in accordance with the available time at the Conference.

ARTICLE 38

The definitive Thematic Agenda will be recorded in the Minutes of the Preparatory Meeting and disseminated by the Executive Secretariat before the Conference. After the Thematic Agenda is approved, only urgent matters may be added with the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Member States.

ARTICLE 39

The Preparatory Meeting, under the chairmanship of the Secretary General of the Conference, will be organized according to the same criteria established for the Conference of Ministers.

CONFERENCE

ARTICLE 40

The Conference will take place through plenary sessions with the character of a General Meeting, allowing for the formation of Working Committees for discussion of the themes on the Agenda, conclusions and recommendations. The Conference will extend not more than six days, including the dates of arrival and departure of the delegations.

ARTICLE 41

The Conference will be governed by the following general operational rules:

a. Plenary Sessions:

At least an Inaugural Plenary Session and Closing Plenary Session will be considered. The former will be directed by a Board of Directors presided by the Host Country's Minister of Defense in his capacity as Chairman of the Conference.

The Board of Directors will also include the Secretary General, other authorities or advisors as determined by the Chairman of the Conference and the Minister of Defense of the new Host Country in his capacity of Vice-Chairman, upon his ratification at the beginning of the Conference. Plenary sessions have the character of a General Meeting and serve as a framework for the adoption of agreements, recommendations or other multilateral instruments.

b. Working Committees:

The Working Committees are made up of the Member States appointed in the Preparatory Meeting to debate part of the Thematic Agenda or specific aspects of the Conference.

A Working Committee will be formed for each thematic line, presided by the delegate of the designated Member State, who will act as Moderator, assisted by the Recording Secretary and the staff designated by the Host Country.

The Working Committees will be confidential in nature. The delegates designated by the Member States and Observers may attend the meetings of the Working Committees when authorized in the Preparatory Meeting.

c. Delegates:

The Head of Delegation will have the right to participate and vote at the plenary sessions. Only the Head of Delegation, or relevant nominee from his delegation, may take the floor on behalf of the Member State.

The delegates that each Member State deems convenient may participate in the Working Committees, as stipulated by the respective Head of Delegation. Only one delegate will have the right to participate and vote on behalf of each Member State.

The maximum number of participants per Member State in the Plenary Sessions and Working Committees will be regulated by the Host Country, according to available space in each of the meeting rooms.

d. Support Staff

Support staff will be provided by the Executive Secretariat for both the Plenary Sessions and Working Committees, including:

- Spanish, English, French and Portuguese interpreters.
- Audiovisual system operators.
- Computer operators.
- Recording secretaries.
- Representatives of the Executive Secretariat.

ARTICLE 42

"Plenary Session" is any meeting attended by all delegations and presided by the respective Heads of Delegation.

ARTICLE 43

The first Plenary Session of the Conference will be the "Opening Session" which will be solemn in nature and scheduled according to the criteria of the Host Country. The program of this session will include the following activities:

- a. Opening address of the Conference by the authority indicated by the Host Country.
- b. Introduction of the authorities comprising the Board of Directors of the Conference.
- c. The Secretary General will read the General Program of the Conference and other matters of interest submitted by the Member States.
- d. Election of the next Host Country.
- e. Messages of the Ministers of Defense of the Americas.
- f. Closing of opening session.

ARTICLE 44

The final plenary session of the Conference will be the "Closing Session." It will be solemn in nature and include the following activities:

- a. The reading of the conclusions of the Working Committees and Final Declaration.
- b. The closing address, under the responsibility of the Host Country.
- c. The signing of the Minutes of the meeting.

ARTICLE 45

Special committees and *Ad hoc* groups may be appointed during the Preparatory Meeting and General Assembly of the Conference, if necessary. Each committee and working group will elect a Moderator or Chairperson, who will present a report to the Preparatory Meeting, Conference or Special Meetings. The presentation of the report may not exceed five minutes in duration, unless expressly authorized by the respective Chairperson. The General Assembly will hear the report and consider the projects, conclusions, resolutions, recommendations and declarations.

STYLE COMMITTEE

ARTICLE 46

A Style Committee will be established and comprised by the delegations designated in the Preparatory Meeting, Conference or Special Meetings, representing each of the four official languages of the Conference.

The Style Committee will receive the resolutions, declarations and recommendations approved in the Preparatory Meeting, Conference or Special Meetings to make corrections in style and to ensure the consistency of the texts in the Conference languages. If any style problem cannot be corrected, the matter will be submitted to the decision of the Board of Directors.

CHAPTER II: DEBATES

ARTICLE 47

Debates will be conducted in accordance with the following general rules:

- a. The plenary sessions of the General Assembly will be chaired by the President of the Conference, who will act as Moderator of the debate. The sessions of the Working Committees will be chaired by the delegate of the Member State elected as Moderator of each Committee during the Preparatory Meeting.

- b. All Member States will have a Head of Delegation who will have the right to vote and take the floor upon authorization from the Moderator. The Moderator will give the floor in the order of each request.
- c. The Heads of Delegation may request the reading of any official document related to the topic of debate in order to better understand the topic. Similarly, the Heads of Delegation may resubmit any proposal that has been withdrawn.
- d. Any delegation may raise a matter of order, which will be decided by the Moderator or Chairperson. This decision may be appealed and submitted to a vote. Upon raising a matter of order, the delegation that does so may not address the substance of the matter being debated.
- e. Only the Moderator or Chairperson may interrupt the debate to recommend the compliance of the programmed or regulatory provisions.
- f. After an observation has been made, the Moderator or Chairperson will attempt to resolve it by seeking consensus among the delegates or by submitting the proposal to a vote if no agreement can be reached.
- g. After a debate period ends and the respective vote has commenced or consensus arrived at, no delegation may ask for the floor.
- h. When a topic has been debated at length, the Moderator or Chairperson, acting on the petition of any Head of Delegation, will consult the delegations to determine whether or not they fully understand the topic. If the response is affirmative by simple majority of Member States present and voting, the debate will be closed and a vote will be taken.

CHAPTER III: VOTING

ARTICLE 48

Voting will be governed by the following provisions:

- a. The delegation of each Member State will have the right to cast one vote at the plenary sessions of the Conference and Committees.
- b. Once the debate on a topic has ended, all proposals and amendments thereof will be put to a vote and approved by the affirmative vote of the delegations present in person.
- c. No matter will be put to a vote at the plenary sessions unless two-thirds of the delegations are present in person.
- d. No delegate may interrupt a vote, except to make an observation regarding the voting procedure.
- e. The approval of any proposal will require the affirmative vote of:
 1. Two-thirds of the Member States present at the Plenary Sessions of the Conference.
 2. A simple majority of the Member States represented in each Working Committee, not including abstentions.
- f. All proposals or amendments may be withdrawn by their proponents before a vote is taken.
- g. The voting will be carried out by a show of hands. The Moderator, assisted by the Recording Secretary, will announce the voting results, indicating the number of votes in favor, votes against, and abstentions.

TITLE V: DUTIES

CHAPTER I: BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PRESIDENT

ARTICLE 49

The President of the Conference will be the Minister of Defense of the Host Country, with the following duties:

- a. To preside over the plenary sessions of the Conference according to the scheduled agenda.
- b. To moderate the debate of the General Assembly, encouraging the participants to interact and guiding the discussions in order to seek consensus in accordance with the proposed objectives.
- c. To supervise the operation of the Working Committees organized in accordance with the Agenda, verifying that their analyses and conclusions are oriented toward the proposed objectives.
- d. To put to a vote any issue related to the debates in the plenary session and other issues that need to be resolved.
- e. To direct the preparation of the Final Declaration and to receive, from the Secretary General, the conclusions and recommendations of the Working Committees, submitting them to the General Assembly for approval.
- f. To supervise the delivery of the Final Report to the Member States at the end of the Conference.

VICE- PRESIDENT

ARTICLE 50

The Vice-President of the Conference will be the Minister of Defense of the Member State hosting the next Conference upon ratification of the respective resolution by the General Assembly at the beginning of each Conference. The Vice-President may nominate a member of his delegation to vote on the assumption of his position. The Vice-President will have the following duties:

- a. Assist the President at the plenary sessions.
- b. Replace the President in the event of absence.
- c. Present his or her points of view and observations to the President with respect to the conclusions of the Working Committees and Final Declaration.

The Heads of Delegation, with the rank of Minister of Defense, may be *ex officio* Vice-Presidents of the Conference and may replace the President if the President is unable to perform such duties. When the Chairman of the meeting wishes to participate in the debate or vote, he or she must entrust the chairmanship to the respective person as set forth in the above paragraph.

SECRETARY GENERAL

ARTICLE 51

The Secretary General will have the following duties:

- a. Advise the President and Vice-President of the Conference with respect to the general operation of the ministerial meeting.
- b. Assist the President in controlling the pace of the ministerial meeting according to the approved program.
- c. Supervise the performance of the Executive Secretariat.
- d. Compile the conclusions of the Working Committees and propose the Final Declaration to the President, in accordance with the results of the Conference.
- e. Schedule the plenary sessions in accordance with the President's instructions.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

ARTICLE 52

The Executive Secretary will have the following duties:

- a. Direct support tasks for the Board of Directors with respect to administrative matters and the preparation of documents requested by the President or Secretary General.
- b. Support the Heads of Delegation in any tasks they may request, pursuant to instructions from the Secretary General.
- c. Supervise the execution of the specific plans of the different working areas of the Pro Tempore Secretariat.

RECORDING SECRETARY

ARTICLE 53

The Recording Secretary will be appointed by the Pro Tempore Secretariat and will have the following duties:

- a. Ensure that the Board of Directors has all the necessary documents to implement the work that has been programmed.
- b. Verify the adequate and timely distribution of the documents in the respective language in the working file of each delegate, so as to facilitate their analyses and work.
- c. Keep the minutes of the meetings according to the instructions of the Board of Directors.

CHAPTER II: BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF WORKING COMMITTEES

MODERATORS

ARTICLE 54

The Moderators of the Thematic Agenda are elected by the General Assembly during the

plenary sessions of the Preparatory Meeting, as agreed by the Member States that will assume said responsibility. The Moderator will have the following duties:

- a. To chair the Working Committee to which he or she is elected.
- b. To conduct the successive sessions on the different sub-themes comprised by the respective thematic line, seeking to maintain an adequate balance with respect to the time periods required by the rapporteurs for their presentations, leaving the necessary time for the debate.
- c. To prepare the conclusions at the end of the debate on the sub-themes, mediating if any diverging positions arise.
- d. To present the results of the deliberations of the respective Thematic Group to the Plenary of the Conference.

RAPPORTEURS

ARTICLE 55

The Rapporteurs of each theme on the Thematic Agenda will be ratified by the General Assembly in the plenary sessions of the Preparatory Meeting, with the prior agreement of the countries that will assume said responsibility. The Rapporteur will have the following duties:

- a. Prepare documents on the assigned theme, in the four languages of the Conference, for distribution to the Member States by the Executive Secretariat at least thirty days before the Conference begins.
- b. Incorporate in the documents the contributions made by the Co-rapporteurs in order to enhance the theme to be addressed during the Conference.
- c. Submit this work to the Moderator during the sessions of the Conference, adding the proposed conclusions and recommendations for the assigned theme.
- d. Assist the Moderator in drawing up the conclusions to facilitate the Moderator's presentation during the Conference.

CO-RAPPORTEURS

ARTICLE 56

The Co-rapporteurs of each theme voluntarily assume this responsibility, without requiring any ratification. Co-rapporteurs must provide to the Rapporteur their contributions on the respective theme in writing, within the time period mutually agreed.

RECORDING SECRETARIES

ARTICLE 57

The Recording Secretaries for each thematic line will be designated by the Pro Tempore Secretariat of the Host Country and will have the following duties:

- a. Assist the Moderator of each thematic line in drawing up the summarized minutes of each session.
- b. Keep a written record of the conclusions of the Moderator for each thematic line.

- c. Verify, in coordination with the Executive Secretary of the Conference, that the summarized minutes containing the conclusions are distributed to the delegations before the Closing Session of the Conference.

CHAPTER III: DELEGATES

ARTICLE 58

Delegates participate in the Preparatory Meeting and Conference on behalf of their respective countries, intervening in the debates and exchanging ideas during the sessions through their addresses, proposals and opinions. Each delegation will have a Head of Delegation, who may delegate such duties to any other delegation member. This decision may be communicated through intervention at the plenary session, or via the Secretariat, which will transmit the information to the President.

ARTICLE 59

It will be the responsibility of the Head of Delegation to sign the minutes and other documents of consensus upon conclusion of the sessions. The Head of Delegation may delegate this responsibility to another member of his/her delegation and inform the Secretary General in writing.

CHAPTER IV: OBSERVERS

ARTICLE 60

Observers are organizations, institutions or individuals that express an interest in attending the Conference and are invited by the General Assembly, in accordance with the agreements adopted in the Preparatory Meeting.

ARTICLE 61

Observers are not entitled to vote and may not sign any agreement, recommendation, resolution, minutes or any other official document of the Conference.

ARTICLE 62

Observers shall be required to establish a link with the Executive Secretariat similar to that established by Member States.

TITLE VI: DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION

CHAPTER I: DOCUMENT SECURITY

ARTICLE 63

All the themes of the Conference are public in nature when organized and distributed according to specific objectives or purposes. When the nature of the themes could compromise the Conference and its members, either immediately or in the future, they become classified. Henceforth, any violation of their contents causes "harm" to the Conference.

ARTICLE 64

Information is classified in different categories, according to the "type of harm" that any violation of the contents of a document or information could cause.

ARTICLE 65

Classified documents will be maintained under maximum protection and custody. They will be prepared in the offices where issues regarding the Conference are addressed, and their use and management will be restricted to those who are duly authorized.

ARTICLE 66

As a general rule, all documents emanating from the Conference will be public. Upon express request of a Member State, a document may be deemed as classified. Consequently, the other Member States must adopt the rules indicated in the foregoing article.

CHAPTER II: TYPES OF DOCUMENTS

ARTICLE 67

Conference documents are those used during the Conference with the objective of formalizing the aspects inherent to the events of the Conference. The following documents are used in the Conference meetings:

- a. Thematic Agenda containing the themes or subjects to be analyzed during the Conference.
- b. General Program containing the main activities to be undertaken during the Preparatory Meeting and Conference.
- c. Summary Minutes that summarize and describe the information emanating from the General Assembly of Member States or Working Committees.
- d. Draft Agreements recording the suggestions and recommendations resulting from the work carried out by the General Assembly or Working Committees.
- e. Report on the Conclusions and Recommendations: an official document that contains all of the documents prepared and activities carried out. This report is prepared after the meetings of the Working Committees conclude.
- f. Final Declaration indicating the agreements, recommendations, conclusions and acknowledgements of the Member States within the scope of the Conference.

- g. Final Report containing all the documents and activities carried out and approved.
This report is prepared after the Conference comes to a close.

CHAPTER III: RULES REGARDING DOCUMENT PREPARATION

ARTICLE 68

The preparation of Conference documentation must comply with the following rules:

- a. The paper used for the Conference documents must be white, letter-sized paper (8.5 x 11" or 21.5 x 28 cm.), font: "Times New Roman", size of font "12", line spacing "single" and "automatic" between paragraphs.
- b. After the Meeting Report is signed by the competent authorities, a copy will be distributed to all participants.
- c. Annexes, appendices, and insertions may be attached to the documents, if necessary.

CHAPTER IV: TREATMENT OF CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION

ARTICLE 69

Treatment of classified documents and information is the manner in which such documents must be handled and safeguarded by those who participate in the different stages of its preparation and the necessary controls and registration systems that must be set up for this purpose.

CHAPTER V: DOCUMENT DESTRUCTION AND INCINERATION

ARTICLE 70

No element that contains aspects related to the Conference (drafts, copies, slides, transparencies, audio or video tapes, diskettes, CDs, film, photographs, etc.) should be deposited in the waste collection system before it is processed in a shredder, incinerator or other device to ensure its veritable destruction. This process must be certified on a Destruction Voucher.

ARTICLE 71

It is advisable that special care be taken with computer-stored information, which will be kept in the memory until the ministerial meeting ends.

TITLE VII: FINANCING

CHAPTER I: GENERAL POLICIES

ARTICLE 72

The Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas does not have a financing system from Member States. Its activities will be financed by the Host Country and Member States according to their own needs.

CHAPTER II: GENERAL FINANCING RULES

ARTICLE 73

Member States and Observers attending the Conference will have the following obligations:

- a. To assume travel expenses of both their official delegation and other delegates to the venue of the Preparatory Meeting and Conference.
- b. To pay for the lodging of their additional delegates and other advisers who attend the meeting with their respective delegations.

The Host Country will have the following obligations:

- a. To pay for the cost of food, lodging and local transportation of the official delegates attending the official activities, both the Preparatory Meeting and Conference.
- b. To pay for the cost of food, lodging and local transportation of observers agreed to be invited to the Conference.

TITLE VIII: FINAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 74

Modifications to these Regulations may be submitted at the Preparatory Meeting, either by the Pro Tempore Secretariat or at the request of the delegations, and resolved at the Conference.

ARTICLE 75

These Regulations will enter into force upon their approval by the Ministers of Defense at the Seventh Conference of Ministers of Defense of the Americas.