

Americas Policy Group Welcomes Boost in Funding to the Inter-American Human Rights System

Ottawa, July 21, 2017 – The Americas Policy Group (APG) welcomes the resolution adopted by the Organization of American States (OAS) to increase the annual budget of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR).

The OAS adopted the resolution at its last General Assembly, held in Mexico City on June 19–20. During its regular session, the [Member States agreed to increase the annual budget](#) of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (I/A Court), two essential bodies that play a key role in strengthening the rule of law and protecting human rights in the Americas.

Following several months of uncertainty, the Member States ultimately adopted a resolution by consensus which will [double](#) the financial resources allocated from the OAS Regular Fund to the IACHR and the I/A Court. This gradual increase of 33% per year per body, to be allocated over the next three years, will allow these flagship institutions to pursue their mission of defending and promoting human rights on the continent.

“This increase in funding for the Inter-American Human Rights System marks an important step in resolving the structural financial crisis that has limited the system’s capacity to act,” says Rachel Vincent, the co-chair of the Americas Policy Group. “This decision reduces the body’s dependency on variable voluntary contributions, and reaffirms the commitment to very important tools for advancing human rights in the Americas.”

A worthwhile investment

In 2016, the Inter-American Human Rights System (IAHRS) underwent an unprecedented financial crisis which jeopardized the IACHR’s ability to fulfill its mandate. At the time, the [IACHR sounded the alarm](#), revealing that, unless its yearly budget was increased, it was in danger of losing nearly half its staff, as well as having to suspend planned visits in some countries and cancel two upcoming sessions.

In response to the crisis, the [Americas Policy Group called on the Government of Canada](#) to provide substantial and ongoing support to the IACHR and the I/A Court to fulfil their respective missions.

The APG is now pleased to see that Canada committed to provide \$ 2 millions to the IACHR. We hope Canada will continue to give both political and financial support for the proper functioning and fulfillment of the essential duties of the Inter-American Commission and Court in the long term. To fully participate in the Inter-American Human Rights System Canada should ratify the American Convention on Human Rights and other regional human rights protection instruments.

The Inter-American Human Rights System plays crucial role in promoting the respect of human rights. It oversees the protection of thousands of human rights defenders under threat, combats discrimination against vulnerable groups – including women, Indigenous peoples, people of African descent, sexual minorities and migrants – and often acts as a last resort for victims unable to obtain justice in their own country.

The IACHR's structure, operations and jurisdictions are determined by the American Convention on Human Rights. The I/A Court is an autonomous judicial institution whose purpose is the application and interpretation of the American Convention on Human Rights.

About the APG

The [Americas Policy Group \(APG\)](#) is a Canadian civil society policy group focused on development and social justice issues in the Americas. It brings together more than thirty international development and humanitarian NGOs, human rights groups, labour unions, research institutions, faith based organisations and solidarity groups.

Its mandate is to provide a space for collective reflection and the articulation of co-ordinated policy positions, as well as dialogue and advocacy with the Canadian government, other governments, and other decision-making bodies.

For further information

Isabelle Bourassa
Regional Working Group Officer
Canadian Council for International Co-operation
613-241-7007 (321)
ibourassa@ccic.ca