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**Conferencia Interamericana de Seguridad Social  
Inter-American Conference on Social Security  
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21 August 2020**

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**English – Or. Spanish**

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**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Permanent Committee of the  
Inter-American Conference on Social Security**

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## **MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COMMITTEE OF THE INTER-AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL SECURITY, 2020**

At 11:11 am on August 21, 2020, in order to hold the Ordinary Meeting of the Permanent Committee of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security (CISS), the following members of the aforementioned body met virtually: Zoé Alejandro Robledo Aburto, General Director of the Mexican Institute of Social Security and Chairman of the CISS; José Bernardo Pineda Jurado, from the Guatemalan Institute of Social Security and Deputy Chairman of the CISS for 2020; Manuel Di Benedictis, from the National Administration of Social Security of Argentina, on behalf of the Deputy Chairman of the CISS for 2021; Jorge Wated, from the Ecuadorian Institute of Social Security, and Representative of the Subregion I Andean; Vilma Morales Montalván, from the Honduran Institute of Social Security, and Representative of Subregion II Central America; Rogerio Nagamine Costanzi, on behalf of the Special Secretariat for Social Security and Labor of Brazil, and Representative of the Subregion III Southern Cone; Timothy Hodge, on behalf of the Social Security Board of Anguilla, and Representative of Subregion IV North America and the Anglo Caribbean; Yamira Yusimí Campos Suárez, from the Ministry of Labor and Social Security of Cuba and Representative of Subregion V Mexico and the Latin Caribbean, and Héctor Santana Suárez, from the Institute of Social Security and Services for State Workers, and Representative of Associate Members; as well as Gibrán Ramírez Reyes, Secretary General of the CISS; Daisy Corrales Díaz, Director of the Inter-American Center for Social Security Studies (CIESS), and Eduard del Villar Liranzo, Comptroller of the Conference. Later, during the development of the first item on the Agenda, Narlón Gutierre Nogueira, from the Special Secretariat for Social Security and Labor of Brazil and Deputy Chairman of the CISS for 2022 joined the meeting.

Before starting the scheduled points, Mr. Zoé Robledo Aburto, thanked the enormous commitment that the members of the Permanent Committee and the entire CISS during the difficult times that the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the nations of the continent, and acknowledged, in the midst of this unprecedented health crisis, the spirit that gave rise to the Conference and, of course, the Committee, as well as the need, as the Secretary-General, Gibrán Ramírez has done, to renew those values, to look back with pride that long path that this forum has traveled for nearly 80 years.

Subsequently, the Chairman asked Mr. Ramírez Reyes, to carry out the verification of the quorum to formally start the meeting, in compliance with Article 16 of the Regulations of the Permanent Committee. Consequently, the Secretary-General mentioned the present members of the Committee. He indicated there were nine members with the right to vote present, so there was a quorum to hold the meeting in accordance with articles 53 of the Statute of this Conference and 17 of the Permanent Committee Regulations.

Once the quorum was confirmed, the Chairman read the agenda of the day, set, as follows:

### **Agenda**

1. Progress of the Work Plan by the General Secretariat;
2. Strategic Plan of the Inter-American Center for Social Security Studies 2020;
3. Draft of the Virtual Center of Knowledge and Information of Social Security;
4. Draft of the Creation of the PROGRAMA-DOS Brand;
5. Approval of the Permanent Committee Minutes of November 9, 2018;
6. Approval of the Permanent Committee Minutes of January 17, 2019;
7. Approval of the Permanent Committee Minutes of August 20, 2019, and
8. Approval of the Permanent Committee Minutes of September 20, 2019.

### **Progress of the Work Plan by the General Secretariat.**

The Chairman gave the floor to the Secretary-General in order for him to present the content of this item on the agenda.

In this regard, the Secretary-General indicated a very difficult year had been faced. The pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2, unleashed unprecedented health crises with repercussions of all kinds: social, political and economic, generating changes not only in the ways of work, but in the way of conceiving life, including the welfare of the population.

After the first work report presented on January 28, the Secretary-General added, the Conference team continued with the planning for 2020, including the International Pension Forum planned for the end of March of the same year, which had to be canceled due to COVID-19. Public health decisions forced us to rethink the ways of working and interacting with the members and the regular public at CISS events.

Thus, it was decided to carry out in this way, virtually, the Social Security Week from April 27 to 30 which was named “COVID-19: Political tools for resilience”, whose objective was to put forward feasible public policy routes on the table for discussion focused on caring for vulnerable population groups and guaranteeing minimum levels of welfare such as universal basic income in terms of pensions, as well as health and economics matters and

the world of work in general, too. For this, colleagues from the ILO, ECLAC, and institutions from Costa Rica, Mexico and Panama participated.

Along with the development of the Work Plan, the Secretary-General indicated, but aware of the needs of the CISS members to have relevant information for making public decisions in the face of the emergency, the digital platform on COVID-19 was started, which is a repository that holds more than 17 specialized articles with impact studies and recommendations of the pandemic and vulnerable populations such as platform workers, migration, care systems, etc.

Special numbers of these articles were also devoted to analyzing comprehensive treatments in specific countries such as Ecuador, Brazil, Canada and Chile. This information is intended to make a critical and rigorous publication, a book by the end of 2020 so that it does not remain as a mere anecdote of the contingency and we systematize the experiences of our countries as quickly as possible.

In the same way, more than 10 virtual seminars have been carried out, with various discussions on the right to health of senior citizens, social security in maritime work, mental health, the impact of sport on population welfare, as well as the management in health services, highlighting the treatments and particular experiences of countries such as Argentina, the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, and Guatemala, among others.

By the same token, and as every month, we continued with the seminar on "Wellbeing in the Americas" adapted also to the thematic needs arising from the pandemic and which, as of this second semester, had some of its broadcasts within the framework of the subregions.

Making use of alliances with sister organizations such as LASSC (CLACSO) and ECLAC, the Secretary-General indicated that the CISS was coordinating the free virtual course "Human Rights of the Senior Citizens: Knowledge for Analysis and Action".

The bimonthly publication was also maintained with the main activities of the CISS and those of the members contained in the CISS Gazette, whose last issue was dedicated to the issue of the pandemic.

During these months and aware of the need to demonstrate and identify community dynamics that contribute to reducing gender inequalities, "Women for Autonomy and Welfare (MAB)" was promoted, an initiative to strengthen organizational capacity and political advocacy to through the articulation of groups of organized and interested women in the issue of access to rights for welfare.

To follow up on the Triennial Work Program of each American Social Security Commission, as well as to put the work and products of the CISS at their service and coordinate various activities that benefit the member countries and the region, in the eight months covered by the report, seven working meetings had been held. Of the American Commission for Occupational Hazards, on February 5, 2020, and August 20, as well as other Commissions' meetings on February 20, March 11, August 19, July 13, and July 21, 2020. Derived from these meetings, in addition to the exchange of information, various topics on the work agenda that are of interest to the membership and that have come to gain relevance due to the current situation in the region and the world were updated.

Moreover, the Secretary-General indicated that two great achievements had been attained: one, the “Bienestar Journal. Debate and Social Policy” (Debate y Política Social), a biannual publication that brings together relevant academic studies on social security and welfare made available to our Continent. The first issue, published in July 2020, gave thoughts on the political economy of health, in particular on the takeover of the pharmaceutical industry and its laboratories through the most current and relevant scientific contributions worldwide.

The second achievement was the Report on Social Security and Welfare for the Americas, which is an investigation that is intended to become a world reference on the main characteristics of coverage of social security systems in the Continent to contribute to public debate and the formulation of policies that would guarantee the human right to social security for all people.

The Secretary-General pointed out that he would like to specify that after restructuring and adapting the agenda to the so-called new normal, the second semester would be devoted to virtualizing the various forums and work sessions that were postponed and in some cases adjusted to the needs of the pandemic, such as the Regional Forum on Pension Systems, to be held the last week of September, as well as other forums on the purchase of medicines, universalization schemes, conferences on domestic workers and social security, and on the issues of the care system and the best strategies to reduce gender inequalities in the Continent. The Secretary-General, also indicated the subject of mental health would be delved into with the holding of the Inter-American Conference on Mental Health and Social Security.

Finally, the Secretary-General announced the First International Forum on Welfare and Social Security in the Americas would be held in November. This would allow the conclusion of the collaboration agreement promoted with the Pompeu Fabra University of Barcelona.

The Chairman thanked the Secretary for his participation and, since there were no additional participations by the other members of the Committee, he submitted the following resolution to said body, who approved it unanimously

**Resolution No 1:** Under the provisions of Title VI, Article 16, paragraphs g) and l) of the Conference Statute, the Permanent Committee becomes aware of the 2020-2022 Work Plan's progress by the General Secretariat.

### **2020 Strategic Inter-American Center for Social Security Studies Plan.**

In order to address the second item on the agenda, the Chairman gave the floor to Dr. Daisy Corrales, Director of the CIESS.

Dr. Corrales indicated she had taken office, as of November 2019, the Direction of CIESS in an environment of challenges. The Director continued by stating that CIESS is an operational structure that manages to convert the proposals of social policies and general policies that are generated from the Conference into some important products of the Conference such as research, education processes, training and also technical extension projects. In this sense, she added, the challenge was assumed and began as a process of re-founding the CIESS in which important aspects such as having a functional structure that allows carrying out these tasks and meeting the goals were considered.

In order to achieve those goals, a strategic planning process had to be carried out, along with a process analysis, and the creation of the necessary profiles to occupy the different positions of the structural organization, for which international selections were held to the appointment of the officials who would work in the team.

The Strategic Plan generates a work route that is based on a policy that had been generated prior to the preparation of the plan in which innovation, cooperation of all that is commitment, action and impact are considered as important components or as its principles.

The Director emphasized that not only did CIESS and CISS depend on the successes of what was done, but that there must be a very active participation of all countries through the Commissions, the Subregions and also the people who would like to join the different teams.

The first objective of CIESS, indicated the Director, was to generate and disseminate knowledge that would allow the improvement and strengthening of Social Security through research and innovation. This axis was managed through the body of researchers who was hired by agreement of the Assembly to support the American Commissions and who



dedicated themselves full time to research, generating inputs for both the transversal thematic axes generated by the Commissions for the entire membership, as well as to generate inputs that will provide feedback for the training that will lead to the second objective.

The second objective, she pointed out, was to increase the managerial and technical capacities of the people linked to Social Security in the member countries through training and education. In this sense, there were established programs; However, there was also an innovative window within what the academy is, which is to have the space for innovation and strengthening of Social Security that gives the capabilities to receive, in addition to programming, activities for the needs that arise in countries or, for example, with the issue of the pandemic.

The third objective, continued the director, is to link in practical terms academic and investigative work in Social Security Systems through technical extension. The CIESS does nothing, but generates training and education if the countries are not accompanied in the field to make this effective.

She added that there was a very important objective of positioning the CIESS as a benchmark in Social Security issues at the inter-American level through the establishment of the Virtual Center for Knowledge and Information, which would be a support axis for the internal management of the Conference.

In relation to the last objective, which would be how to evaluate that really through all these efforts made prior to the Conference, there is a real impact. For CIESS, stated the Director, one of the most important foundations had been the contribution of the Secretary on the subject of welfare throughout the review and strengthening of this theory that was made in light of current events and that in some way it had to be transmitted, disseminated and made effective.

In this way, the Director raised the subject of evaluation as the fifth objective, indicating that there would be different scenarios for evaluation, but that there was also a new program that would be presented later in the session.

The Chairman thanked Dr. Daisy Corrales and, since there were no additional participations by the members of the Committee, he submitted the following resolution for consideration by said body, which was unanimously approved:

**Resolution No 2:** By the provisions of Article 16 paragraph I) of the Statute, the Permanent Committee becomes aware of the Strategic Plan of the Inter-American Center for Social Security Studies for 2020-2022.

### **Draft of the Virtual Center of Knowledge and Information of Social Security.**

In order to account for the next item on the agenda, the Chairman of the Conference gave again the floor to Dr. Daisy Corrales, Director of the CIESS.

The Director recalled that one of the proposed objectives was to set CIESS as a benchmark on the issue of Social Security at the international level, and pointed out that such positioning depended on an improvement in internal management, as well as an improvement in the transmission of knowledge to the member countries.

She pointed out also that there were significant challenges and that within the Conference, there was a series of programs concerning which interoperability had to be achieved so that by articulating all the CISS procedures, it would be possible to streamline administrative procedures, communication, uniting more departments, and so on.

But perhaps the main objective in all this, said the director, would be that we would all know that there is a practically uncontrolled production of information at the international level, where we talk of scenarios such as Big Data and artificial intelligence. Thus, a series of concerns are being generated regarding how, on the one hand, the updated information could be kept, but more importantly, being able to ensure that health teams know how to make decisions with that information, so it would be a first challenge order to achieve digital literacy. Regarding this matter, she added, she had been in contact with the Pan American Health Organization. The project was presented, from which an interest arose in working together, especially in digital literacy in the Americas and Caribbean.

This project, said the director, was considered one of the most important within the Innovation Axis. The CIESS Directorate, she stated, was strongly promoting the use of information and communication technologies for the benefit of the membership. In this sense, if we wanted to leap into the future, the Center is one of the principles that would allow it and, above all, it would be doing a transformation in managing the Conference.

Finally, the Director pointed out that the Committee had already seen all the effort presented by the Secretary-General in the products that have been made directly from the General Secretariat team and that, together with CIESS, they were working on the designs. Above all, to be able to drive towards the future for the enhancement of Social Security at the regional level.

After the participation of the Director, the Chairman invited to observe a minute of silence in tribute to all the people who died from COVID, and thanked the participants after the tribute.



Subsequently, Timothy Hodge requested the floor to express that Anguilla had had zero cases of COVID since March and took the opportunity to thank the frontline workers who worked from their hospitals and all the border workers who collaborated in the repatriation of individuals.

Mr. Hodge indicated that Anguilla's Social Security system had been able to provide temporary unemployment benefit compensation that was not available during normal times. He stressed that the reason why he was not wearing a mask was because there had been no cases of COVID. He was also very concerned about what he was observing in different countries, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean, that is, the high numbers of cases and deaths, so he wanted to share with the Committee his concern and acknowledge both those affected as the frontline workers.

Once the participation of Mr. Hodge had finished and, since there were no additional participations by the Permanent Committee, he submitted the following resolution for consideration by said body, who unanimously approved it:

**Resolution No 3:** The Permanent Committee, in accordance with the provisions of article 16 paragraph I) of the Statute, becomes aware of the Draft Project of the Virtual Center for Information and Knowledge of Social Security.

#### **Draft of the Creation of the PROGRAMA-DOS Brand.**

To address this item on the agenda, the Chairman gave again the floor to Dr. Daisy Corrales, Director of the CIESS.

The Director pointed out that there was a critical issue: as long as the management of any kind was carried out and it was not measured, it was impossible to know the results. She stressed that an attempt was being made to structure a mixed strategy that would give an overview of the progress made in the different countries.

What is not measured cannot be improved, said the Director, also pointing out that this was one of the principles adopted at CIESS. The theory and strategy of brands at an international level had been a scenario that had been developed, for example, in the Mother and Child-Friendly Hospital Program that generated at an international level ordering some hospital parameters to demonstrate what quality of care in the mother-child binomial was.

The Director added that in this sense, there had been several important experiences, for example, in Costa Rica, with the Blue Flag Program, which was an ecological

accreditation that began with primary and secondary educational establishments and ended up involving companies; Having the seal of the Blue Flag was a mark of quality in everything that is environmental management.

And so many programs, including country brands that help promote tourism, and so on. This CISS program would have important objectives, and that is how CISS would have a diagnosis of the progress made by Social Security institutions.

This program was proposed, said the Director, both for institutions and for national transversal programs. It is very difficult to accredit a country as a promoter of welfare, but its institutions could be accredited and, at the same time, generate a competitive environment among the institutions to have a system according to standards.

The Conference would also distinguish itself with leadership as an accrediting entity of Social Security institutions, with that international seal of quality in terms of promoting welfare in the Americas and the Caribbean.

The institutions that promote the strengthening of Social Security worldwide have a vision, mission and many activities in common. But, the Director indicated, this would give the Inter-American Conference a distinctive stamp by becoming an accreditor of promoters of welfare. In addition to this, the accredited institution would receive an international seal that would distinguish it and have a scope of participation in the promotion of welfare.

Since there were no further participations by other members of the Permanent Committee, the Chairman put forward the following resolution for their consideration. It was unanimously approved by said body:

**Resolution No 4:** Under the provisions of article 16 paragraph I) of the Conference Statutes, the Permanent Committee becomes aware of the Preliminary Draft to create the PROGRAMA-DOS brand.

### **Approval of the Permanent Committee Minutes of November 9, 2018.**

In relation to the next item on the agenda, the Chairman suggested that the reading of the minutes of this subject matter should be omitted and approved, by virtue of the fact that they had been sent to the members of the Committee beforehand.

Since there were no objections to the suggestion, the reading of the respective minutes was omitted and the Chairman submitted the following resolution to the consideration of the members of the Committee, which was unanimously approved by said collegiate body:

**Resolution No 5:** Under the provisions of Article 16, paragraph I) of the Conference Statutes, the Permanent Committee approves the Minutes of the Ordinary Annual Meeting of the Permanent Committee, held on November 9, 2018 (CISS/CP/O/01/ 2018).

**Approval of the Permanent Committee Minutes of January 17, 2019.**

In relation to the next item on the agenda, the Chairman suggested that the reading of the minutes of this subject matter should be omitted and approved, by virtue of the fact that they had been sent to the members of the Committee beforehand.

Since there were no objections to the suggestion, the reading of the respective minutes was omitted and the Chairman submitted the following resolution to the consideration of the members of the Committee, which was unanimously approved by said collegiate body:

**Resolution No 6:** Under the provisions of Article 16, paragraph I) of the Conference Statutes, the Permanent Committee approves the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Permanent Committee, held on January 17, 2019 (CISS/CP/O/01/ 2019).

**Approval of the Permanent Committee Minutes of August 20, 2019.**

In relation to the next item on the agenda, the Chairman suggested that the reading of the minutes of this subject matter should be omitted and approved, by virtue of the fact that they had been sent to the members of the Committee beforehand.

Since there were no objections to the suggestion, the reading of the respective minutes was omitted and the Chairman submitted the following resolution to the consideration of the members of the Committee, which was unanimously approved by said collegiate body:

**Resolution No 7:** Under the provisions of Article 16, paragraph I) of the Conference Statutes, the Permanent Committee approves the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Permanent Committee, held on August 20, 2019 (CISS/CP/O/01/ 2019).

**Approval of the Permanent Committee Minutes of September 20, 2019.**

In relation to the next item on the agenda, the Chairman suggested that the reading of the minutes of this subject matter should be omitted and approved, by virtue of the fact that they had been sent to the members of the Committee beforehand.

Since there were no objections to the suggestion, the reading of the respective minutes was omitted and the Chairman submitted the following resolution to the consideration of the members of the Committee, which was unanimously approved by said collegiate body:

**Resolution No 8:** Under the provisions of Article 16, paragraph I) of the Conference Statutes, the Permanent Committee approves the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Permanent Committee, held on September 20, 2019 (CISS/CP/O/10/ 2019).

Once the entire order of the day had been addressed, the Chairman thanked the General-Secretary, Gibrán Ramírez Reyes, and since there was no other matter to be discussed, at 12:29 p.m. on August 21, 2020, he closed the Ordinary Meeting of the Permanent Committee of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security, following Article 17 of the Statute of the Conference .-----