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**Conferencia Interamericana de Seguridad Social  
Inter-American Conference on Social Security  
Conferência Interamericana de Seguridade Social  
26 November 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**

**Inter-American Conference on Social Security**

**26 November 2020**

**English - Or. Spanish**

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

At 11:35 a.m. on November 26, 2020, with the purpose of holding 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: David Razú Aznar, on behalf of the Mexican Institute of Social Security, Chairman of the CISS; José Bernardo Pineda Jurado, from the Guatemalan Institute of Social Security and Deputy Chairman of the CISS for 2020; Hernán Bernasconi, from the National Administration of Social Security of Argentina, on behalf of the Deputy Chairman of the CISS for 2021; Narlon Gutierrez Nogueira, from the Special Secretariat for Social Security and Labor of Brazil and Deputy Chairman of the CISS for 2022; Betzabé Vázquez, 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; Jesús Otamendiz Campos, 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.

To start the session, David Razú asked the Secretary-General and Secretary of the Committee, Gibrán Ramírez, to verify a quorum's existence in compliance with article 16 paragraph c) of the Regulations of the Permanent Committee. Consequently, the Secretary-General indicated that there were 10 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 Regulations of the Permanent Committee.

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

## **Agenda**

1. Quorum verification
2. 2020 Activity Report and 2021 Work Program of the Inter-American Center for Social Security Studies.
3. 2020 Activity Report and 2021 Work Program of the Subregions of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security.
4. 2020 Activity Report and 2021 Work Program of the American Social Security Commissions.
5. 2020 Activity Report and 2021 Work Program of the General Secretariat of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security.
6. Financial Report of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security and Proposed Budget 2021.
7. Presentation and, where appropriate, approval of the Balance and Income and Expense Account of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security.
8. Annual Report of the Comptroller's Office and Annual Report of the Internal Audit Program.
9. External Audit Report.
10. Acknowledgment of the document presented by the Secretary-General of the Conference.
11. General Affairs
  - a) Membership and Disenrollment Requests Report and,
  - b) Report about the possible suspension of rights to certain members.

### **2020 Activity Report and 2021 Work Program of the Inter-American Center for Social Security Studies.**

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

The Director began by pointing out that 2020 had been a complex and unusual year. Nevertheless, a rethinking process had begun considering that they wanted to have an offer that would be able to project themselves into the future with a different form of virtuality, on all, taking up all the experience that had been had in previous years as one of the important inputs due to the history and positioning of CIESS at an international level.

The Director stated that the proposal for the creation of a Virtual Center had begun in November. Said project was in progress when the offer of services with 2 Diploma Courses and 14 Courses had been proposed that at the beginning of the pandemic it was not possible to reactivate in their entirety, because the infrastructure of the Inter-American

Conference was planned to be face-to-face or semi-presential, so it was necessary to virtualize as much as possible of the service offer.

The Director recalled that in an extraordinary session of the Committee, the Inter-American Study Center's Strategic Plan had been considered, and five important objectives had been established. One in Research, another in Training and Education, another in Technical Extension, another referring to strengthening the positioning of CIESS as a benchmark in Social Security, and another in promoting Well-being as a product of Social Security in the Americas and the Caribbean. m

Moreover, she indicated, a research area was created to accompany the Academic area and an Extension area. In this sense, in the Research area, there were six researchers accompanying the American Social Security Commissions who had generated a series of documents already in the process of publication. The 2020 documents were in the American Commission for Organization and Administrative Systems, where there were a deliverable product and two tables of analysis. The offer of the researchers was aimed to generate these deliverable products, also to participate in webinars, forums, virtual workshops, and also to collaborate with the academic area. This was one of the important results of 2020, the Director added. A series of professionals, who worked full time at the Conference, was incorporated, dedicating part of their time to the teaching area.

Thus, costs were reduced because it was not necessary to proceed to external payment. Still, responsibilities in the academic area were assumed within the same programming, considering that most of the professionals hired in the Conference had the academic experience, were professors in centers of postgraduate and university and, also, they had mostly doctorates and master degrees.

In the American Commission on Health and Safety and Social Welfare, five deliverables were presented, and we participated in four discussion tables. In the American Commission for the Prevention of Occupational Risks, three deliverables and six analysis tables were given, in addition to the fact that these experts are working on the preparation of teaching materials for 2021. In the American Actuarial and Financing Commission, there were two deliverable products and two analysis tables. They had had active participation in the academic offer of CIESS by participating in the Course of Analysis and Interpretation of Actuarial Studies. The American Commission for Senior Citizens presented three deliverables and two analysis tables, in addition to intervening in the Aging, Analysis, Planning and Decision-Making Course and preparing Didactic Materials for 2021. For its part, the American Social Legal Commission had three deliverable products and two tables for analysis and teaching participation.

In this way, the Research area began its activities, where there was an entire organization process. Because it was a new area, the organizational structure and the functional structure had to be established. This structure began by the hiring of experts through an international call. The offers were received, they passed through the Conference's internal jury, and selected according to their strengths to be part of the American Commissions.

Due to the situation of the pandemic, said the director, there had been a significant upturn in the use of virtual media. There were several accesses to the Digital Library. 29 thousand people had participated in the library until 2019 the average that had been reached annually was around 6 thousand people.

In the Academic area, it was possible to establish the Academic Program adjusted due to the pandemic, with a Face-to-Face Diploma in Senior Management in Social Security Institutions, with an online course on Quality and Safety in Health Services of Social Security Institutions, with the analysis and interpretation of actuarial studies in another course and an online course planned for December 14-16 in Aging, Analysis, Planning and Decision Making.

An important incursion in the subject of spreading of the courses became, for example, in the Graduate of High Direction 1.116 requests for a course were had that had a reach of 50 people generally. To comply with this excess demand, it was possible to make two simultaneous groups of the Diploma Course, so that there were 97 students.

The CISS Instructional Design area assumed a very intensive task in preparing the course materials and contacting the teachers to virtualize their lessons.

One of the important things in the 2021 offer is that there will be the possibility of taking the classes in any language from the courses that start under the new program. Thus, the barrier that had prevented having a truly democratic and accessible service offer for all people would be broken. A powerful platform, Zoom, would be acquired for this, which would have this possibility and accept more users.

In the recently created area of Technical Extension, the exchange of experiences between member countries was carried out with the collaboration of CISS. Thus, there is an Extension Project with Guatemala in the Actuarial area, as well as a Technical Assistance Agreement with the Honduran Institute of Social Security.

On this same topic, the Director mentioned a series of agreements with various intentions, one of the most important being to have strategic alliances to establish the master and training projects that would be needed. The Director pointed out that there was an agreement with the Central American Institute of Public Administration, also with the

Distance State University of Costa Rica, and with the Technical Institute of the Dominican Republic.

The Director pointed out that an important objective in the 2020 tasks was to strengthen the positioning of CIESS and the Conference at the Inter-American level. This objective was developed because when the Strategic Plan was made, the Social Security Institutions were analyzed. The magnitude of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security in the Americas was documented. Thus, it was considered very important to strengthen the position of CIESS through the structure of the Conference.

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In this regard, a CIESS positioning strategy was developed at the regional and central headquarters of international cooperation agencies by making important alliances. For example, she said, there was a project with the International Labor Organization in the joint launch of a global Social Protection database and its Data Dashboards.

There was another project coming from the Italian Center for Training and Knowledge of PAHO in Washington to develop a Digital Literacy Project. This is because there was an important effort by PAHO to promote the use of Information Technologies.

There was also a collaboration in the Academic area with regard to the 2030 Agenda and in the research area with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with the Regional Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean. Another strategic ally is the Latin American Network of Social Studies on Aging, and there was also the International Association of Gerontology and other international entities associated with this network of studies that gave the possibility of accessing and exchanging with a series of experts.

The second positioning project noted by the Director was the Virtual Information and Knowledge Center Project. The fifth objective led to work promoting Welfare as a Social Security product in the Americas and the Caribbean, acknowledging that the Secretary-General had decided to propose a reinforcement and a new Welfare Theory.

On the subject of the organization of institutions and their development for Social Security, a project was developed, the DOS Program, which allows categorization of institutions that promote Well-being, to generate a certification process so that the Inter-American Conference will award an award to the entities that consider themselves promoters of Wellbeing and, after meeting a series of indicators, they will carry out a self-evaluation, in addition to being evaluated by peers of the member entities of the Conference.

Concerning the 2021 Strategic Plan, a preliminary effort was carried out in the Research area and the Extension area, pending. However, the American Commissions and the Subregions to establish everything that would be done in 2021. The important areas for

the subregions were identified. That is Health, Actuarial, Policies, Social Security, Directive Management, Service Management, Welfare, and Human Rights.

In all of them, stated the Director, it was possible to establish a generous offer, for example, with virtual courses of 24 and 40 hours. There were, she pointed out, 15 virtual courses of 15 hours, 12 of 40 hours, and five diploma courses. Besides the established Academic Program.

She stated that it had been considered important to maintain an additional project to the Innovation and Strengthening Program for Health Services, INFOSSA. In this project, there was a permanent window so that topics, such as the 2030 Agenda Courses and the countries' needs in specific topics, could be developed even when they did not have strict programming. Thus, the offer of services began on Social Security with a Course on Governance and Innovation of Information and Communication Technologies for Institutional Strengthening, with two courses also on Social Security in the Americas and the Caribbean.

There had been a request from the countries to update the conceptual frameworks of Social Security. There was also a Course for the Evaluation of Social Security Programs and Projects. On the subject of Health, there were two Diplomas, one Diploma in Mental Health for the staff of Health Services of the Americas and the Caribbean. A Diploma Course in Gerontology and Social Security, with two 24-hour courses, one on Addressing Loneliness, Violence and Grief, in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic and a Basic Epidemiology Course.

There would be a Senior Management Seminar in Social Security Institutions in the Executive Management Program, a 40-hour Course on Disruptive Planning of Health Services. This is because to face the post-pandemic, important changes would have to be made in managing services. The generation of the Diploma in Senior Management of Social Security Institutions for 2021 also began. And there was also a Course on Dialogue, Negotiation, and Decision Making in Social Security.

Regarding the Actuarial topic, a Diploma Course on Actuarial Techniques and three courses on Analysis and Interpretation in Actuarial Techniques were projected. On the subject of Health Services Management, Health Services Management of the First Level of Attention, Quality and Safety in Health Services and a Hospital Management Course in health services networks were offered, especially in the management of lists Standby.

In the Wellbeing area, there were two courses on Wellbeing, Happiness and Social Security, also requested through the needs detection certificate and which had been

consistently raised, such as the topic of Actuarial Techniques and an Analysis of Life Tables.

On the Policy Issue, there were Achievements and Advances in Public Policies of the OECD in the Americas. Three courses of the 2030 Agenda in determining the topics of interest in the Social Security Institutions that were working with the UNDP. There was, also, that on the Management of New Figures of Labor, on the subject of Policies.

On the subject of Human Rights, a Course on Migration was offered, and there is a Diploma Course on issues related to the Gender Approach. In this way, most of the topics detected would be covered.

With the American Commission, topics for research and active participation in CISS courses were advanced.

Finally, the Director indicated a significant proposal for creating a School of Actuary for Central America and the Dominican Republic. The proposal was made by the Guatemalan Social Security Institute through SICA and which could be presented at one of the CISSCAD assemblies. CISS assumed the responsibility of preparing the design of this School, in which critical issues would be considered according to the reality of the different countries.

There was also the proposal that through the School, an analysis be made to have a pool of scholarships for future actuaries in undergraduate training. There was a Diploma Course that would begin in the second semester of 2021, sheltered by the Central American School of Actuary and supported by the Central American Institute of Public Administration, also with the support of the Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo, because the Dominican Republic had plenty of experience in the topic.

Although it would be a Central American School, the offer would be open to the entire membership. We hope it will be beneficial, with the 2021 offer, it would be the baseline for starting school. So they would be working hard trying to cover different points, for example, the subject of Mental Health.

David Razú, thanked Dr. Corrales for her participation and, since there were no more comments on the part of the attendees, he submitted the following resolution for consideration by the Committee, which was approved unanimously:

**Resolution No 2:** The Permanent Committee, based on Articles 16, paragraphs g) and l) of the Conference Statutes, approves the 2020 Activity Report, and the Work Program of the Inter-American Center for Social Security Studies, for the year 2021.



### **2020 Activity Report and 2021 Work Program of the Subregions of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security.**

Regarding the next item on the agenda, the Chairman recalled the documents had previously been sent to the Committee members. He suggested that they waive their presentation and proceed to their discussion and, where appropriate, approval.

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 by the members:

**Resolution No 3:** Under the provisions of Articles 16, subsections g) and l) of the Conference Statute, and 7, second paragraph of the Regulations of the CISS Subregions, the Permanent Committee approves the 2020 Activity Report and the 2021 Work Program of the Subregions of the Inter-American Conference.

### **2020 Activity Report and 2021 Work Program of the American Social Security Commissions.**

Similar to what happened with the previous point, the Chairman suggested to waive its presentation and proceed with its approval. Since there were no objections from the members of the Committee, the Chairman submitted the following resolution for consideration, which was approved unanimously:

**Resolution No 4:** Under the provisions of articles 16, paragraphs g) and l) of the Conference Statute, the Permanent Committee approves the 2020 Activity Report and the 2021 Work Program of the American Social Security Commissions.

### **2020 Activity Report and Work Program of the General Secretariat of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security.**

To account for the next item on the agenda, the president gave the floor to the Secretary-General.

Gibrán Ramírez began by noting that COVID had left sequels around the world and as agreed by international agencies, the Latin American and Caribbean region would experience the worst economic contraction since World War II with declines in GDP equivalent to or greater than those arising from the 2008 crisis, increasing inequality gaps, and diminishing the quality of life of peoples.

He indicated that CISS continued with the purpose of channeling the historical reason that gave rise to it and establishing the minimum basis for developing a Theory of Welfare according to the needs of the 21st Century marked by the trace of the COVID pandemic.

During 2020, 11 thematic lines could be worked on and 26 research projects had been developed. Similarly, two objectives set out in the arrival of management could be achieved. The Bienestar Journal and the Report on Social Security and Welfare in the Americas, the two periodic publications of our Conference. The Social Security and Welfare Report in the Americas, ISSBA, is one of the most ambitious projects carried out. And it arises with the aim of knowing the situation of the Social Security Systems of the countries of membership; identify historical trends and the circumstances that marked the origin and development of Social Security Systems in the region; and to know the extent to which the governments of the Americas meet the social security and welfare needs of their populations. The report which started in 2019 and presented in 2020, has an extensive and abbreviated version that would also see the light in English.

For its part, the first issue of the Bienestar Journal "Debate and Politics in the Americas" framed a new debate on social policy in the Americas, particularly on the new challenges of Social Security and the welfare approach according to the challenges that arose along with the 21st Century. This new approach was to reflect particularly on the political economy. The first issue reflected on the political economy of health and pointed out the problems that large pharmaceutical companies and laboratories generate to those who contribute to access to the effective exercise of the right to health.

The second issue would focus on Food Security and the Food Market and would aim to reflect on the political, social and economic dynamics that condition food regimes in countries across the Continent.

Similarly, as part of the research results, the Disaster Protocol was finalized, which outlined the bases for the integration and participation of Social Security Institutions in national strategies for disaster risk reduction to contribute to the management of disaster risk reduction, through the strengthening of the coordination of Social Security institutions before, during and after an emergency and/or disaster situation and thus increase the general levels of aid to the most vulnerable. In order to effectively link this instrument, a fluid dialogue and collaboration with ECLAC was held.

In turn, the Bienestar Gazette was continued, which sought CISS members to know what CISS members do. This year, 31 publications were issued.

In addition to the above and given the members' needs to have relevant information for making public decisions in the face of the health emergency, a Digital Platform on COVID

was developed. A repository that housed more than a dozen specialized articles, some in English and Portuguese, with impact studies and policy recommendations for vulnerable populations.

Special issues were also dedicated to analyzing comprehensive treatments in countries like Ecuador, Brazil, Canada, and Chile. Besides that, we also have the Cartographic Platform to provide quantitative information on the situation of Social Security in the Americas.

Both aimed to serve as an input to nurture the design of public policies for welfare. The CISS platform was unique in the region, although there may be similar platforms in the ILO and the International Social Security Association.

During 2020, the Secretary-General reported, 7 Framework Collaboration and Technical Cooperation Agreements were managed; two extensions with the Guatemalan Social Security Institute and with the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System; and 5 new ones with the Ibero-American Social Security Organization, with the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico, the Ministry of Labor of the state of Puebla de México, the State Distance University of Costa Rica and, recently, with the Latin American Council of Social Sciences, CLACSO.

In addition, 3 more agreements were under negotiation with the Central American Institute of Public Administration, the Instituto Tecnológico de Santo Domingo, in the Dominican Republic and Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona.

One of the objectives pursued by the signing of these agreements was to provide technical assistance. Thus, during 2020, 4 assistance projects were developed for members on Targeting for Solidarity Pensions and Indirect Contribution Pensions, usually called non-contributory, the Systematization of Direct Beneficiaries and Actuarial Training.

Based on the agreements described, the CISS alliance with sister organizations such as PAHO, ECLAC, SELA, CLACSO, and a series of joint courses and seminars was strengthened, for example, Human Rights of Senior Citizens and Knowledge for Analysis and the action. There were also discussions on Pension Systems in Latin America, organized in conjunction with the National Autonomous University of Mexico and CLACSO.

An introductory course on Health Systems and Health Sovereignty was held in conjunction with PAHO; an International Seminar "The Fight for Social Security in Latin America and the Caribbean", organized by CLACSO, the SOL Foundation, the Rosa Luxemburg

Foundation. In addition, the First Latin American and Caribbean Conference on Critical Thinking on Health Systems would also be held in December 2020.

By the same token, the Conference carried out 16 virtual events that include forums, seminars, conversations, tables, and regional and international work sessions, such as the Regional Forum of Pension Systems and the Conference of Successful Experiences in the Region of Incorporation of Workers of the Home to the Social Security that took place in September, the Commemoration of the Senior Citizens' Day and the presentation of the Disaster Protocol. The Discussion Panel and the Platforms "My Friends Don't Take Care of Me," and the Mental Health Days held in November. The latter aimed to analyze health comprehensively even from the rights approach which has become more relevant nowadays.

The rest of the webinars were around various working groups on the Right to Health of Senior Citizens, Social Security in Maritime Work, and the Impact of Sport on the Population's Welfare, as well as Management in Health Services, highlighting the treatments and particular experiences of countries such as Argentina, the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, and Guatemala, among others.

Likewise, each month the Permanent Seminar on Welfare in the Americas was continued, adapted to the thematic needs arising from the pandemic. This year, nine sessions were developed, three of them face-to-face at CISS and with virtual sessions. The sessions were attended by universities and institutions from the member countries, as well as the ILO, the UN, CLACSO, ECLAC, IMSS, Women in Informality, Columbia University, the National University of Colombia, the Center for Research and Innovation of the United Kingdom, the Institute of Public Policies and Goods of Spain, the CIESS, and the National Coordination of Civil Protection of Mexico.

During those months, and aware of the need to demonstrate and identify community dynamics that reduce gender inequalities, Women for Autonomy and Welfare were promoted, an initiative to strengthen organizational capacity and political advocacy by articulating organized women interested in access issues to Rights for Welfare. With 101 women formally subscribed to this Network, distributed in the Mexican Republic and several countries of the region and in 31 Organizations allied amongst them. As a result of this project, 13 articles were disseminated, three feminist training workshops were held, and three Accompaniment and Articulation Conversation Panels were held for the Organization.

To follow up on the Triennial Work Program of each American Commission and put the work and products of the CISS at their service and coordinate various activities that benefit the membership and the region, 15 Meetings were held. Of these bodies, in which the

Work Programs were monitored, the study lines for next year were determined, and the 2020 Work Reports and the 2021 Work Programs were approved.

To recognize and promote those experiences of public policy aimed at improving and expanding access to the right to Social Security and Welfare of the populations, implemented by the institutions that make up the membership, a recognition was established through the awards to the best Welfare promotion experiences in the Americas. Nearly 48 program proposals were received and the Panel of judges consisting of three specialists from the region, a member of the CISS Permanent Committee and one from the CISS Board of Directors, decided to award to 12 of the selected experiences in institutions such as IMSS, ISSSTE and the Costa Rican Social Security Institute.

Finally, from the change of domain from .net to .org made in December 2019, about 30,000 monthly visits had been received, on average, on the website and followers on Twitter increased by 100 percent and 200 percent on Facebook.

Afterwards, the Secretary-General reported on the publications and 26 projects for 2021. The publications were:

1. Notebooks of History, Theory and Welfare.
2. The Foundation of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security in 1942.
3. A Conceptual Proposal for Social Security Analysis from CISS.
4. Chronicle of an Institutional Day. History of the Inter-American Center for Social Security Studies, from 1963 to 2012.
5. Architecture and Art at the Headquarters of the Inter-American Center for Social Security Studies.
6. Social Security in the Face of Disaster Risk.
7. Melancholy and Depression in Time. Body, Mind and Society in the Origins of an Emotional Disease.

Now the Welfare Policy Notebooks.

1. Social Security for Domestic Workers in Mexico. A Proposal
2. Abortion, Maternity and Social Security.
3. Brief History of Sports in Mexico. A Diagnosis from the State and Social Security.
4. A Proposal to Reform the Pension System in Mexico.
5. Home Workers. Analysis and Proposal for Improvements to the Pilot Program of Incorporation to Social Security.
6. Maternity and Social Security.
7. Financial Sustainability in Social Security.

8. Social Security for Agricultural Workers in the American Continent.
9. Maternity and Social Security.
10. Desirable Model for an Equal, Fair and Sustainable Pension System.
11. Maritime Work, Conditions of Employment and Social Security in the Americas.
12. Disaster Protocol for Social Security Institutions in the Americas, Recovery of Welfare from Socio-Environmental Contingencies.
13. Precariousness and Labor Organization in Latin America.
14. Proposal for the Construction of a Disaster Protocol for Social Security Institutions in the Americas.
15. Social Security for Migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean.
16. Health and Social Security Services as Part of a Comprehensive Policy against Gender-Based Violence. Experiences from the Region.
17. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in the Americas. Priorities for The Recovery of Welfare before COVID-19.
18. Comparative Studies of Health Systems in Latin America.
19. Basic Elements of a Labor Policy for Digital Platform Workers.
20. Challenges of the Labor Organization. Working on Digital Platforms.
21. The Production of Information on Social Security in the Americas.
22. The Virtual Center for Emergency and Disaster Operations of the Mexican Institute of Social Security.
23. The Single Digital Health File of the Costa Rican Social Security Institute.
24. The Safe Hospital Program of the Mexican Institute of Social Security.

We prepared a thematic document, the Report on the Status of the Social Security Dimension of the 2030 Agenda, in the CISS members and four notebooks of the American Social Security Commissions that, although they are coordinated from the General Secretariat, they worked attached to CISS. The first one entitled Financial Sustainability of Social Security Pension Systems in Latin America and the Caribbean and the second one Actuarial and Governance Aspects; Social Security and Youth Inclusion Challenges in America; Enforceability of the Right of Access to Health and Compulsory Licenses for Medicines; The Long-Term Care System for Senior Citizens.

The following technical notes were also prepared:

1. A Proposal for a New Pension System.
2. Lights and Shadows of the National Institute of Health for Welfare of Mexico.
3. Beyond legalization, the Incorporation of Abortion into Social Security.
4. Proposal to Reorient Government Budgets Destinated to Contributions for Pensions.
5. The Unit of Measurement and Update and Pensions in Mexico.
6. Sport, Welfare, and the COVID-19 Pandemic.

7. Tax Costs of the Pension Reform in Mexico.
8. The race for the vaccine against COVID-19, Science, and Geopolitics to Understand the Way.
9. Gender Equality in the Sustainable Development Goals.
10. Senior Citizens in the Sustainable Development Goals.
11. Maternity and Social Security in the Caribbean.
12. Disasters related to Water Security in the Americas between 2000 and 2019.
13. People with Disabilities in the Sustainable Development Goals.

Additionally, three periodicals were also made. The first is the Bienestar Journal; the second issue of this journal, which mentioned that it is dedicated to Food Security and the Food Market, would have its presentation on December 10, 2020. The Social Security and Welfare Report in the Americas, a very ambitious project First level Social Science, carried out with the support of institutions such as ECLAC.

The Inter-American Gazette for Welfare was also published, which published numbers in March, August, and one more shortly. Another publication was the Manual of Style of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security made by the editorial supervisors. There were, additionally, two virtual platforms, the Cartographic Platform and the CISS Information Systems and, the second, the COVID-19 Platform, which has the following incorporated publications:

1. Analysis on the Impact of COVID-19 on Care.
2. Maternity and Paternity in times of Coronavirus.
3. Senior Citizens and COVID. Urgent recommendations to safeguard the most vulnerable ones.
4. The COVID-19 Outbreak and its disproportionate effect on women.
5. Household work in the Times of COVID.
6. Measures adopted by member countries regarding paid work in the face of COVID-19.
7. Agricultural male and female workers facing COVID.
8. Corpse handling in the pandemic.
9. Infrastructure and Drinking Water and Sanitation Services in the face of COVID.
10. Protection of Migrants in the Subregion of Mexico and Central America against COVID.
11. Senior Citizens and COVID. Urgent recommendations.
12. Potential Negative Effects of Indebtedness to finance measures against the pandemic.

And the following ones about:

1. Precarious work, especially the case of digital platform distributors.
2. The case of countries facing drought and the problems that this poses to COVID.
3. Household work and special cases such as Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Canada.

The secretary indicated there was a third platform which was a communication network, the Inter-American Welfare Network, made up of 337 researchers, specialists or social security officials in more than 20 countries, highlighting Mexico, Argentina, Ecuador, Cuba, the United States, Costa Rica, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic. In terms of member profiles, more than 90 percent had postgraduate studies; 31 percent were women, and 59 percent are teachers or researchers.

The following reflection spaces were also carried out:

In 2019,

- The Presentation of the Conceptual Proposal for the Analysis of Social Security.
- The Presentation made by the Mexican Institute of Social Security of its service to the Open Population called IMSS Bienestar as a good practice to universalize access to health.
- The Presentation on the Reversal of Privatizations of Pension Systems and the Reconstruction of Public Systems in Eastern Europe and Latin America.
- The Presentation of the Experience of the Public Policy of Social Security in Ecuador.
- The Presentation of the Cartographic Platform.
- The presentation of Pension Systems at the Crossroads.
- The Sustainability Challenges in Latin America in 2019.

In 2020,

- The Profitability of Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies with the example of the Safe Hospital Program by IMSS.
- Digital Hospitals.
- Technological Convergence
- The Reversal of Privatizations of Pension Systems.
- The Right to Health of Senior Citizens and People with Disabilities and the Challenges that the pandemic poses before them.
- The Introductory Course on Health Systems and Health Sovereignty.
- The Presentation of workers in critical sectors in the COVID context.
- The Presentation of the Report on Social Security and Welfare in the Americas
- The Presentation of Unemployment Insurance in the Latin American and Caribbean Region, and,
- The Social Security Presentation for Art and Culture Workers.



There was a substantive session within the framework of the Ordinary General Assembly, a Virtual Social Security Week entitled "Social Security is a Human Right, not a Labor Right."

- Disaster Risk Response Plans, Central American Experiences with COVID.
- Socio-Environmental Shock Protection Responses to COVID.
- Disaster Protocols.
- Hospital Management of the Pandemic.
- Social Security at Maritime Labor.
- The National Meeting of the Network of Women for Autonomy and Welfare.
- A Post COVID Sports and Welfare Table.
- The Presentation of the first issue of Bienestar Journal.
- Forum to a National Agreement in the face of the Pandemic and the Crisis.
- The Successful Experiences Journeys in the Region.
- The Regional Forum of System of Pensions.
- The Senior Citizen Day Commemoration.
- Mental Health Journeys, and
- Workshops of the Network of Women for Autonomy and Welfare, among others:
  - All Violence Is Political
  - Digital Security Strategies for Activist Women
  - Feminisms Popular Feminism and Regional Currents
  - Sexual and Reproductive Rights of our Women in our Contexts.
  - How we have faced the pandemic from Feminist Activism
  - Building Autonomy from Feminist Activism
  - What violence we face and how we act from feminism.

He indicated that, in the area of international representation of the Conference, he participated in the following forums:

- Vision Zero of Safety at Work
- Bilateral Meeting with the Department of Social Protection of the International Labor Organization.
- Meeting of the House of Mexico in Spain on the Future of Pensions.
- The Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Countries on Sustainable Development.
- Congress on Occupational Risk Prevention in Latin America, and
- The World Forum on Social Security.

In addition, he mentioned that a Framework Collaboration Agreement with the Ibero-American Social Security Organization had been concluded in 2020.

He also participated, he noted, in the Global Forum on Migration and Development, as well as in the Conversation on Pension Systems in Latin America, a forum organized by CISS, CLACSO and UNAM. As well as with the International Social Security Association, with the lecture: "Forging the Future of Social Security. Support for Human Capital in the digital age", and in the Conversation of International Organizations in the framework of the implementation of the Ordinary Assembly of the SISCA, as well as in the International Seminar: "The Fight for Social Security in Latin America and the Caribbean".

Bilateral working meetings were also held with member countries, particularly in Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Barbados, Paraguay, Panama, Cuba, and Peru. Meetings from which either collaborations or deliverables arose.

Regarding Assistance and Accompaniment, the first thing that was done was to generate a model that would allow to contribute with something more or something different from what other agencies that also provide technical assistance and accompaniment do. International agencies should, he said, be complementary and not rivals in this work. And some progress had been made in this by implementing some assistance with the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Guatemala.

Institutional linkage was given in 2019 and 2020 with the following agreements:

- National Council for the Assessment of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL) from Mexico
- SOCIEUX+ from the European Union
- Pan-American Health Organization
- Ecuadorian Institute of Social Security
- Guatemalan Social Security Institute
- National Institute of Statistics and Geography
- Ibero-American Social Security Organization
- Latin American and Caribbean Economic System
- Latin American Council of Social Sciences
- Universidad Estatal a Distancia de Costa Rica

There was also constant communication and dialogue with the following agencies:

- Global Forum on Migration and Development

- The Global Partnership for Universal Social Protection to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (USP2030)
- Central American Integration System (SICA)
- Latin American Council of Social Sciences
- Latin American and Caribbean Economic System
- Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
- Pan-American Health Organization
- International Association of Social Security
- Ibero-American Social Security Organization
- Council of Social Security Institutions of Central America and the Dominican Republic
- United Nations Economic and Social Council
- United Nations Development Program, and
- ECLAC.

The statutory meetings mandated by the Statute were also held. 14 of them in the Ordinary General Assembly; 2 Extraordinary Statutory Meetings; 20 Meetings of the American Social Security Commissions; 5 face-to-face in 2019 and 15 virtual in 2020; as well as 13 meetings of Subregions, 6 face-to-face in 2019 and 8 virtual in 2020.

Prizes were given to the following Public Policy experiences:

- ISSSTE's Comprehensive Care Strategy to Address the COVID Epidemic.
- Law 7756 of benefits for those responsible for terminally ill patients and seriously ill minors, of the Costa Rican Social Security Institute.
- The design and construction of the low-cost laryngoscope video. A practice implemented by the Biomedical Engineering Division of the UMAE of the Hospital of Pediatrics of the XXI Century of the Mexican Institute of Social Security.
- The Healthy Aging Program of Gerontological Modules of the Institute of Security and Social Services of State Workers (ISSSTE).
- The strategy to promote access to medicines for patients with chronic pathologies in the face of the emergency by COVID, the Costa Rican Social Security Institute and
- My Digital Pension, from the Mexican Institute of Social Security.

From the issuance of these awards, he noted, it was expected that more and more members of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security would postulate their policy experiences, evaluated with total seriousness by internal and external members of the Conference.

A Hundred Working Days Report was also held in April 2019, one in September 2019 to the General Assembly, one to the Permanent Committee in 2020, and a Presentation of Work Progress in August 2020.

He later mentioned the projects that would be carried out as deliverables in the Planning for 2021.

1. Technical assistance and accompaniment, with the Honduran Institute of Social Security.
2. Assistance and Accompaniment with the Guatemalan Institute of Social Security.
3. Permanent Seminar on Welfare in the Americas
4. Workshops for Strengthening Research Skills and Competencies.
5. A Social Security Forum for Art and Culture Workers that recovers the experiences of special regimes and other forms of incorporation.
6. The Systematization of Public Policy of Uruguay's National Integrated Care System.
7. Parental Leaves in Chile.
8. Labor Organization in the Americas, particularly on social economy schemes with an emphasis on experiences of cooperativism.
9. Dual Social Security Systems throughout the region.
10. Aging Project in the Americas.
11. Approved System of Social Security Indicators.
12. Social Security Cartographic Platform.
13. CISS Disaster Protocol for Social Security institutions.
14. Care Jobs.
15. Reform processes for Pension Systems in America.
16. Rescue and refinancing of Pension Insurance in America, their social and economic costs.
17. Recognition and economic and social impact of high accident rate due to work activities.
18. Project of the Social Security and Welfare Report in the Americas to be published in 2022.
19. Theory of Happiness.
20. Dignity, Order and Social Security in Cities Project.
21. Happiness Indicators.
22. Sport Welfare and Social Security Project.
23. Reconstruction of the history of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security.
24. Financial Sustainability Research Project.
25. Importance of Tax Reform for Social Security in America.
26. Research Project on the Political Economy of the Pharmaceutical Industry.

27. Maternity, Care and Social Security Project.
28. Gender Violence, Safety, Social Security and Welfare.
29. Sectors traditionally excluded from Social Security.
30. Mental Health Systems and History of Depression.

The Secretary-General stated that much had to be done by the Conference in the future, but by 2019 and 2020, a greater number of original production work had been carried out than the previous 10 years.

The Chairman thanked the Secretary's participation and put forward the following resolution for the Committee to consider. It was unanimously approved by the Committee:

**Resolution No 5:** The Permanent Committee, based on Articles 16, paragraphs g) and l) of the Conference Statutes, approves the 2020 Activity Report, and the Work Program of the General Secretariat for the year 2021.

### **Financial Report of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security and Proposed Budget 2021.**

To continue with this item on the agenda, the Chairman invited Jorge Emilio Esparza Rodríguez, Executive Director of Administration and Finance of the Conference, to speak.

Jorge Esparza began by stating that, under the re-founding of the Conference, the administration of the Secretary-General had been governed by fundamental and mainstream principles such as full respect for labor rights, rationalization of spending and the reduction of superfluous expenditures, transparency, and as evidenced by this exercise, accountability, saving redirected to substantive activities and a strategic budget exercise.

Said administration had eliminated outsourcing at the Conference, made 100 percent of the budget exercise transparent, reduced overpricing in acquisitions and services in a manner, and regularized the CISS administrative exercise.

Regarding the financial and human capital issue, he pointed out that the operational personnel of cleaning, surveillance and, in general, workers dedicated to the services of the Conference were assigned to the payroll, which also implied an improvement in wages and working conditions with benefits higher than those of the law.

Accounts payable, which were generated by duplication of records, poor accounting applications, and, in general, due to incorrect administrative management from previous years, were debugged and canceled. Membership accounts receivable was also purged

by canceling inactive members' balances, applying the due collection to the correct member and recognizing non-applied collection due to lack of the corresponding support.

Communication with CISS regarding the collection of academic activities had a favorable impact on the recognition of collection and generation of receipts, without ceasing to apply said income due to lack of support or communication.

The adequate execution of the programmed budget resulted in a correct planning of the flow that allowed to invest efficiently, thus obtaining better returns in the short, medium and long term. In sum, the short and medium term investments had represented a profit for the Conference of more than 400 thousand dollars.

Despite being in this contingency and having most of the workforce doing home office, the payments of the obligations contracted by the CISS both to suppliers and to the personnel themselves were not affected. They were always fulfilled in a timely manner.

Through the guideline inaugurated by this administration regarding daily expenses, these had to be verified. If there was a remaining amount of what was issued to the Commission, it had to be reimbursed. Due to the 30 percent decrease in the amount of each fiscal year and the preference given to economy class flights, the CISS saved a bit more than 75 thousand dollars. Contrary to the uses and customs in this and other international organizations, even the secretary general himself reimbursed the remainder of his travel expenses.

It was possible to solve each of the observations derived from the Financial Statements' negative opinion for the 2018 financial year, implementing controls, carrying out debugging in the accounting, and generally improving processes.

Previously, most of the services provided to the Conference did not have a legal basis. But all the contracts provided by external providers were already formalized, which generated a relationship framed by absolute legality and transparency.

Regarding acquisitions, spending controls were established by implementing a release strategy consisting of staggered authorizations to acquire goods or services. First, the request was signed by the person in charge of each requesting area, the relevance of said area was evaluated. request and was subsequently authorized by me. Once this process was concluded, the purchase was executed.

The comparison of services provided by external providers to the Conference in the past three-year period against the two years of the administration detected overpricing of around 30 percent on average. In some cases, these surcharges exceeded 70 percent.

To correct this situation, an attempt was made to quote products and services with more than one supplier. Moreover, the fact that the services had been promised before 2019, causing an impact on the current administration, were terminated or, where appropriate, modified for the Conference's benefit.

The administration's expenditure on supplies and stationery showed a saving of 73 percent over the previous three-year period. Through the aforementioned staggered authorizations, what was acquired for this concept was controlled. The cost of Permanent Committee events, for example, held in the current Secretariat, on average, had represented a decrease in spending of around 78 percent compared to the previous administration. As an austerity measure, most of the flights made in the period of 2019 were executed in economy class.

A Comprehensive Maintenance Program for Major Equipment of the Conference, electrical substation, emergency plant and hydraulic system was carried out. Each piece of equipment had a backup policy that guaranteed support 365 days a year, in addition to having preventive and constant service.

For the visual improvement of the Facilities, the facade of the entire Conference was repaired and painted. The closed television circuit was damaged. As it was not approved, it depended on two independent monitoring centers, which made it ineffective and did not guarantee the safety of the facilities. In this regard, general maintenance was carried out, the entire system was integrated into one and the number of cameras was expanded, the recording time capacity increased and all the wiring was replaced.

One of the main operational deficiencies was the Internet service, unstable due to the lack of planning when installed. In this sense, the modernization of said infrastructure was carried out. The wiring was replaced, distribution points were added, the nodes were expanded, software was established to manage the network flow and information protection. Finally, the homologation of the entire network was carried out.

Also, furniture was refurbished. It was rescued from an external warehouse for rent that cost about \$ 5,500 annually. Said resources were relocated for rehabilitation and were already part of the furniture that makes up the Conference.

He also pointed out the development of an initiative to reform the Mexican Pension System. The substantive work of the Research areas and Cabinet Headquarters was accompanied through the Legal Counsel and based on the work of public policy design carried out by the aforementioned areas, as well as with the participation of experts in the field, a pension reform initiative was drawn up consisting of the creation of three new laws.

A proposal was made for the comprehensive reform of the internal regulations of the CISS itself, which was approved by the Permanent Committee, managing to modernize the structure of the Conference, redesigning its internal processes, as well as redistributing functions and competencies. As well as the issuance of guidelines for the use and control of corporate cards; guidelines for authorization and allocation of tickets and travel expenses for CISS personnel; guidelines for the management and control of the revolving fund; guidelines for the use and issuance of identification badges; guidelines for social service providers; and, professional practices. Moreover, there was the preparation of a Manual on Copyright.

He also mentioned the development of a Legal Reform to guarantee access to Social Security for Domestic Workers. The Executive Directorate participated in the realization of a reform proposal that would guarantee access to Social Security for Domestic Workers in Mexico, with the participation of experts in the field, which implied an in-depth study of national legislation, together with a study of Comparative Law, as well as a detailed analysis of the establishment of the legal systems to be reformed.

The Legal Department undertook the task of carrying out a comparative analysis between international organizations and agencies of the Mexican Government, in order to prepare a proposal for a Remuneration Policy that includes all salary levels of the Conference avoiding discretion, giving legal certainty to workers and institution, taking into consideration the salary scale of the host country.

Taking advantage of the issue of legal advances, the director took the opportunity to report on the last four guidelines issued by the General Secretariat: a Manual of Copyright Procedures, the Scholarship Guidelines, the Loan Guidelines, and the Delivery-Reception Act Procedure Guidelines.

To conclude, the director reported on the Closure Projection for 2020, stressing that the pandemic had invariably had a financial impact on the Conference. Therefore, resources were reallocated to various activities, in such a way as not to have a negative impact on budgetary discipline. Regarding this reallocation of resources, he stressed that it was prioritized to solve the consequences inherent to the present contingency, that is, the impossibility of being present or generating events in which people could be present. Thus, he said, more than 10 audiovisuals were in preparation, which in the December and January period would be published by the Conference. Likewise, the production of a documentary that would also be published in the first months of the year to come.

The Chairman thanked Jorge Esparza for his participation and submitted the following resolution to the Committee for consideration. It was unanimously approved:



**Resolution No 6:** Under the provisions of Articles 16, subparagraphs k) and l) of the Conference's Statute, the Permanent Committee approves the financial report of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security and the Draft Budget of the Conference for the year 2021.

**Presentation and, where appropriate, approval of the Balance and Income and Expense Account of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security.**

The Chairman gave the floor to Jorge Esparza again in order for him to address the next item on the agenda.

Jorge Esparza began by noting that in the Financial Balance Comparison with figures as of December 31, 2019 and 2018, the following stood out:

1. There was a generalized increase in the values reported in 2019 compared to 2018, derived mainly from the pending payment obligations concerning the property's unresolved leasing. Also, derived from the effect of the exchange rate fluctuation of the peso versus the dollar. This had resulted in a depreciation effect of the Mexican peso. Since the CISS operations were carried out mainly in Mexican pesos, the 2019 fluctuation had a depreciation effect that translated into an exchange loss for practical purposes.
2. A 15 percent decrease in liquidity in relation to the availability to cover immediate commitments, that is, for every dollar of debt shown on the Balance Sheet, in 2018 there was a liquidity factor of 1.62 while for 2019 the factor dropped to 1.39.
3. The accounts receivable that the Conference had at the close of the Fiscal Year 2018 for fees had to be adjusted, which implied the recognition of unapplied collection and its eventual elimination of accounts receivable, which resulted in a decrease equivalent to 38 percent of the accumulated balance in 2019 compared to the end of 2018.
4. Regarding the warehouse, this had to be corrected, given that the initial load of information in the Accounting System was duplicated in the previous administration, of course. In addition to the daily exercise of material resources, this correction implied a decrease in the final balance equivalent to 52 percent of the value of the warehouse compared to 2018.
5. In 2019, an item called "Other Assets" was opened, given the installation of new infrastructure for Internet and telecommunications services necessary for the daily operation of the Conference.
6. External financing increased by 16 percent. In 2019 the factor of said financing was .67, while for 2018 it was .58. The foregoing had been generated by the increase in the income liability of the headquarters property, as well as by the provision of

- major repairs carried out in 2020 and the recognition of labor obligations generated in 2019 and paid at the beginning of 2020.
7. The vendor balance shows an 87 percent decline following the cleansing of accounts payable and eliminating duplicate purchase orders, incorrect records, and non-existent vendors, which meant a bubble of nonexistent obligations for the Conference.
  8. As for the Income and Expense Account 2019, the following is appreciated. The result of the exercise, that is, income fewer expenses, was a surplus of 66 thousand 873 dollars, a lower amount by less than 152 thousand 162 dollars compared to what was authorized for this exercise by the Permanent Committee, which was 219 thousand 35 dollars.

Among the main reasons for this, it was highlighted that there was a shortfall in income from uncollected fees, in accordance with the plan presented. Likewise, no CIESS courses and projects were carried out by Reginald Thomas at that time, which projected income of more than 390 thousand dollars for 2019 and of which only 52 thousand 977 dollars were obtained.

Finally, in accordance with the re-founding of the Conference, events outside the institutional life of the CISS, from which it was expected to obtain income, such as recordings of series, commercials, or private parties, were discarded as a source of income.

The improvement in flow planning had a positive effect on financial products, that is, on the returns generated by term investments. In 2019, said income exceeded the budget by 21 percent, which meant an amount of 222 thousand 352 dollars, that is, 58 percent more compared to what was obtained for the same concept during 2018.

The refounding allowed saving 634,104 dollars in personnel, generated mainly by the decrease in the salaries of the General-Secretary, the CIESS Directorate, and management positions and the restructuring of the General Secretariat and CIESS staff. It is worth mentioning that later said savings were reallocated to strengthen the academic staff by hiring a large number of researchers and eliminating outsourcing by assigning all operating personnel to the Conference payroll and allowing the execution of the major repairs mentioned above.

Regarding the expenses for governing bodies' meetings, we saved 32 percent of what was budgeted, derived mainly from the search for better prices with suppliers and anticipation in planning events. Said savings were channeled to the substantive expense mentioned in the previous section.

Regarding the expenses for meetings away from headquarters, the re-foundation of the CISS allowed obtaining a saving of 27 percent of the budget, derived from the implementation of the reimbursement of non-executed travel expenses and the reduction to 70 percent of the authorized scales. For 2019, the concept of travel expenses decreased 58 percent compared to what was disbursed in 2018, meaning a saving of more than 50 thousand dollars.

Regarding the Administrative Expenses item, the deficit presented derived from the major repairs provisioned for \$ 446,702. In conclusion, the total expenses executed in 2019 were 5 million 414 thousand 817 dollars, which meant saving 625 thousand 780 dollars than what was authorized in the budget.

After that, the director presented the Budget Project for 2021 that had been prepared with financial projections for 2021 based on the Triennial Budget Project approved by the General Assembly in September 2019 and considering the inflationary projections and other economic indicators that could have an impact on the budget.

Regarding Income, its general programming was maintained with a moderate increase of 10 percent, derived from the fees and events that were planned to take place, which would allow to complement the income planned to substantive tasks of the Conference.

Regarding the Expenses Chapter, he highlighted that the personnel item was equivalent to 58 percent of the total expenditure, the same proportion of 2020, once the payroll for the development of research and products of the Conference was strengthened, in addition to the elimination of outsourcing.

As for the CIESS, in the heading of other activities, expenditures for projects approved by the Assembly, impacting the result of the year 2021 and being absorbed by 29 percent by the heading of Priority Expenses.

The Chapter on Substantive Functions included the so-called Statutory Activities that comprised the governing bodies of the Conference other than this General Secretariat and CIESS and the priority activities where the main operating costs for the substantive operation of both the Secretariat and the CIESS were located of CIESS.

For 2021, the cost for the adjustments to the library was included for an amount of 700 thousand dollars, which amounts to 40 percent of the total allocated for administrative expenses.

The Budget Project contemplates a final surplus of 386,195 dollars that allowed to maintain the financial balance expected for said year. Said surplus is projected due to, he

said, the indiscipline in the commitment of the payment of fees by the members, forcing to consider a margin of maneuver to be able to cover the expenses that the Conference requires to carry out its activities during the time it would not receive payment of the fees. The surplus was also increased by the COVID-19 pandemic. An inflation rate of 3.82 percent and an exchange rate of 22.62 pesos were also considered, in accordance with the expectations of Banco de México on the main macroeconomic indicators.

The Chairman pointed out that this intervention corresponded to the previous point on the agenda, which would not be incorporated in Resolution number 7, but in number 6, for which he asked the secretary to take the vote again on the previous resolution in case there was some reconsideration. None of the members changed their vote, so the unanimous approval of resolution number 6 was maintained.

After that, the Chairman put resolution number 7 for the consideration of the Committee, in the following terms, which the members of the aforementioned body unanimously approved:

**Resolution No 7:** Under the provisions of Article 16, subsection k) of the Conference Statutes, the Permanent Committee approves the balance and account of income and expenses of the Conference.

### **Annual Report of the Comptroller's Office and Annual Report of the Internal Audit Program.**

To address the next item on the agenda, the Chairman gave the floor to Eduard del Villar Liranzo, Comptroller of the CISS.

The Comptroller indicated that, under Articles 23, 24 and 25 of Title 11 of the Conference Statutes, it was the responsibility of the Comptroller, among other things, to exercise vigilance and supervision so that the financial and budgetary management of the CISS, as well as present annual reports to the Permanent Committee and biannual to the General Assembly; Furthermore, the Statute stated that the Comptroller, together with the General Secretariat, should select and contract the External Audit Firm that annually audited the operations of the CISS.

Together, they had also worked on an Internal Audit process to permanently monitor and control all the CISS operations and ensure that the External Audit observations were complied with.

In this sense, as part of the External Audit of the 2019 period, the final opinion of the Audit was favorable, highlighting that the Financial Statements presented reasonably in all

material aspects the financial situation of the Conference as of December 31, 2019 and 2018, as well as its results and cash flows corresponding to the years ended on that date, in accordance with international financial reporting standards, issued by the International Accounting Standards Board.

The firm highlighted that contrary to the difficulties in supplying the information presented for review for the 2018 period, the reports and integrations delivered of the 2019 information were received with full transparency and complying with the delivery times despite the fact that the audit process was ran during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Comptroller highlighted that part of the things we share is that the audit had to be done despite COVID-19 and this was agreed with the auditing firm. And despite the fact that a lot of home office work was done, all the information required by the auditing firm was supplied. Several videoconferences were held to review all the work that the Audit Firm was carrying out in an operational manner. In this sense, regarding the financial execution of the 2019 period, according to the audited Financial Statements as of December 31, 2019, the Auditing Firm emphasized the correction of the exceptions that gave rise to the negative opinion of the previous year and, therefore, the aspects the main factors that gave rise to the negative opinion of the previous year were corrected.

The administration took actions to clarify and correct the accounting and implemented controls that resulted in a positive opinion for the 2019 financial year. Taking actions to resolve the observations identified in the 2018 report. In this sense, the accounts receivable that were not very in order were cleaned up; The valuation of the input warehouse was corrected, and the physical inventory of the Conference assets was carried out with which the auditors could validate the value of said assets in the accounting. The accounts payable balance was cleaned up showing the actual payment obligations of the Conference.

The increase in the level of external indebtedness was mainly due to the liability for the use of the headquarters unit and the liability for major repairs finally executed in 2020. Concerning the cash flow from closing with \$ 1,750,802 in 2018 to \$ 3 million 248,380 in 2019, a substantial increase of 86 percent was shown, largely explained by the reserves for the use of the headquarters property, that is, of the facilities that belong to the IMSS, of the CISS headquarters, to the reserve for major repairs and to the returns generated by the term investments made during the year that were used in a significant way.

Other points that impacted the cash result at the end of the year were because the administration implemented internal controls to reduce superfluous spending, such as the guidelines for the use of credit cards, the per diem policy, the elimination of outsourcing of personnel—surveillance, cleaning, gardening and food service for employees. Controls

on administrative expenses showed a decrease compared to 2018 of between 62 and 75 percent. The strengthening of the payroll with research personnel allowed savings in the payment of external consultancies.

The Comptroller said that there were still things to improve, but enormous steps had obviously been taken in the development and strengthening of the institution, compared to previous years.

Regarding 2020, it was important to highlight that the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted the execution of projects and the activities of the Conference as a whole, which was reflected in the income and expenses of the organization. In the preliminary comparative report of income and expenses for the first semester of 2020, the budget items were at an execution level of 79 percent for income and 44 percent for expenses, compared to what was planned for that year.

Regarding income, a positive element was the fact that the membership fees had been received at 88 percent of what was budgeted, having had the impact of the exchange rate on the collection of the IMSS fee; On the contrary, CIESS projects and courses that projected to enter the sum of 411 thousand 757 dollars, only 4 percent had been received.

Regarding the financial products item, yields had been generated totalizing 124 percent compared to what was projected, showing good practice with the use of financial resources.

With regard to expenditures, reductions and increases in spending were noted with respect to the initial budget, derived mainly from the change in the work modality. Some of the items that showed execution below the budget at the end of August 2020 were, among others, the expenses of meetings away from headquarters, academic activities, CISS events at headquarters, stationery, gasoline, gas, cafeteria expenses and dining room, tolls and parking, didactic material, minor equipment, among others, due to the fact that the work modality for employees from home and the limitation of the use of the facilities for academic activities and any other activity that implies physical presence of each participant.

Faced with this already prominent situation from May to June, he recommended that an adjustment be made to the budget so that an adequate response could be made to the new situation. Obviously, not only did the dynamics of the CISS change, but the whole world did. The budget was thought of in another reality, that is why this recommendation was made so that an adequate use of the funds be made.

As a result of the previously mentioned, there was an increase in the necessary items in working at the Conference nowadays, such as communication and computing resources, dedicated Internet link, equipment rental, communication resources, translations, and interpretations, among other needs.

Regarding financial results, the administration showed its commitment to transparency in the management of Conference resources and its commitment to institutional strengthening, evidenced in the neat management of Conference resources and the implementation of internal controls that ensured the best use and allocation of funds.

The Comptroller recommended officializing the good practices of the administration so they can last over time as part of the assets of the organizational processes of the Conference since there is a risk that another General Secretariat could come in the future and would operate differently. Thus, he stressed it was pertinent that all the guidelines developed were to be approved by the Permanent Committee or by the General Assembly to last over time and that these good practices were of continuous and sustainable use by the institution.

Finally, the Comptroller's Office informed the Permanent Committee it was working to make the best use of Conference resources and have a better flow scheduling focused on obtaining the best benefits from the correct management of the resources, as well as efficiently scheduling each of the items that constitute the budget.

The Chairman thanked the Comptroller for his intervention and submitted the following resolution for the consideration of the Committee. It was unanimously approved by its members:

**Resolution No. 8:** Based on article 16, paragraph I) of the Conference Statutes, the Permanent Committee approves the Report rendered by the Comptroller about the exercise of the financial resources of the Conference and the Annual Report of the Internal Audit Program.

### **External Audit Report.**

The Chairman again gave the floor to the Comptroller for him to present the external audit report. The Comptroller stated that the report he had just submitted contained the observations of the Audit Firm, so he would only read part of the Executive Summary. He also said that the Firm was Crowe, which carried the audit out last year, too.

Thus, the Comptroller read the Summary:

*"We have audited the Financial Statements of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security comprising the financial statements as of December 31, 2019 and 2018. The statements of activities and cash flow corresponding to the years ended on those dates, as well as the explanatory notes to the Financial Statements that include a summary of the most significant accounting policies. In our opinion, the Attached Financial Statements present reasonably in all material aspects the financial situation of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security as of December 31, 2019, and 2018, as well as its results and cash flows, corresponding to the years ended in those dates, under the International Financial Reporting Standards, IFRS, issued by the International Accounting Standards Board".*

As an emphasis paragraph, the auditors pointed out that:

*"Due to the observations derived from the previous year, the current management of the entity during the course of the 2019 financial year carried out various activities aimed at analyzing and debugging various debit and creditor balances, as well as increasing the deterioration of financial assets, which caused these effects to be recognized in the income for this year".*

As stated in the Audit Report, the Comptroller pointed out, all the issues of supplier purging, accounts receivable that corresponded to arrears of Conference members who had not paid, pending issues such as the issue of the Audit of the Fixed Assets Inventory, among other issues that were pointed out by last year's Audit, were exceeded.

The Chairman thanked the Comptroller's participation again and put forward the following resolution for the Committee to consider. It was unanimously approved by the Committee:

**Resolution No 9:** The Permanent Committee becomes aware of the External Audit Report, under article 16, paragraph I) of the Statute of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security.

**Acknowledgment of the document presented by the Secretary-General of the Conference.**

To clear this point on the Agenda, the Chairman gave the floor to Gibrán Ramírez Reyes, Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General indicated that his irrevocable resignation from office was presented at the Committee session, which had already been communicated to the CISS Chairman, Zoé Robledo.



Said resignation, the Secretary pointed out, would be effective on December 31, 2020, stating that he presented it one month in advance to allow space for an orderly transition, with all the provisions of the case and with a delivery-receipt certificate that would contribute to giving to the Conference the seriousness it deserves.

Among the reasons he indicated led him to present his resignation was dedicating himself to continue in the work of organizing and promoting the Fourth Transformation, and also protecting the institution since, he pointed out, the electoral life in which he had already been involved, especially when it is dirty, stains without regard for the honorability of people and becomes oblivious to all scruples. He mentioned that in his previous electoral efforts, not only was the Conference attacked, but there were also accusations that unfairly touched members of the membership and governing bodies.

He expressed that CISS was called to be more important in new multilateralism, in the post-COVID period. This was demonstrated by the joint work he did with ECLAC in promoting disaster risk policies and in general the space that has been generated in dialogue with other multilateral agencies and organizations.

The Secretary thanked the Mexican Social Security Institute, Germán Martínez and Zoé Robledo, as well as the entire membership and, in particular, the members of the Permanent Committee.

After that, the Secretary received thanks for his work from the president of the Committee, as well as from the Comptroller, José Bernardo Pineda, Hernán Bernasconi, Timothy Hodge, Betzabé Vásquez, and Héctor Santana Suárez.

The Chairman submitted the following resolution for the consideration of the Committee, which was approved unanimously by the said collegiate body:

**Resolution No 10:** Under the provisions of Articles 16, paragraph I) of the Conference's Statute, the Permanent Committee becomes aware of the resignation of Dr. Gibrán Ramírez Reyes as Secretary-General of the Conference.

## General Affairs

### Membership and Disenrollment Requests Report

The Chairman gave the floor to Mónica Nuño, Executive Director of Liaison and Cooperation for her to present the corresponding report.

Mónica Nuño pointed out that, following Article 35 of the General Assembly Rules that establishes that members of the CISS may disenroll from it, she informed the Committee that on September 29, a communication was received from the incumbent institution of Peru, EsSalud, informing of its decision to disenroll from CISS, both for economic reasons and for some other evaluations or considerations of benefits received from the Conference.

It should be noted, she indicated, that EsSalud was an institution that had been present since the origins of the founding of CISS and reported that the General Secretariat had sought an approach for reconsideration. Unfortunately, after several unsuccessful attempts it had not been possible to do it.

The Chairman thanked Mónica Nuño for her participation and submitted the following resolution to the Committee for consideration. It was unanimously approved:

**Resolution No 11:** The Permanent Committee, based on Articles 6, 16, subsection h), of the Conference Statute, and 35 and 36 of the General Assembly Rules, becomes aware of the disaffiliation of the Social Health Insurance of Peru, EsSalud, without prejudice to what the General Assembly determines at the time.

### **Report on the possible suspension of rights to certain members.**

Once again, the Chairman gave the floor to the Director of Liaison and Cooperation, who pointed out that on the matter related to the suspension of members, it was a usual practice for international organizations to have mechanisms to suspend rights aimed at counteracting non-compliance with some of the financial obligations on the part of members.

In this sense, in the corresponding period, all the cases of potential suspension of members were based on article 17 subparagraph a) of the Financial Regulations. That is, they were members who owed two or more years of fees. The suspension in the Conference implied a temporary disqualification to exercise the rights that correspond to the respective member, so it covered their right to vote or participate in the Conference and enjoy benefits from CISS.

The Director explained that among the debtors, 11 full members, 10 associate members, a particular situation, 4 adherent members, and 2 linked members were identified.

It was also pointed out that it was possible to mention that the debt of holders amounted to more than 237 thousand dollars, of associates more than 278 thousand dollars, of adherents around 81 thousand. Of affiliates, it is just over 24 thousand dollars. So the total

amount is over \$621,000. From the General Secretariat, approaching members had been attempted to understand their situation and raise awareness.

Many members had expressed that, although they wanted to continue within the Conference, the pandemic had seriously affected their institution's economic situation, which had required them to prioritize resources and prevented them from fully complying with their financial obligations to the Conference.

The General Secretariat, aware of these economic difficulties, considered that it was desirable to issue a resolution that would facilitate the members' compliance in the face of this lack of regulations, thus avoiding its suspension on this occasion.

The Chairman submitted the following resolution to members:

**Resolution No 12:** The Permanent Committee, following articles 16, paragraph l) of the Conference Statute, and 18 of the Financial Regulations, decides not to suspend the rights that as members of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security concern the institutions that are in the hypothesis contained in Article 17, paragraph a) of the Financial Regulations, and instructs the General Secretariat to grant facilities in the payment of their corresponding membership fees to those institutions that claim to be going through a complicated financial situation caused by the pandemic, this without prejudice to what the General Assembly determines, at the time, and without forgetting that it is the obligation of the members to timely cover their annual fee, following article 48, paragraph o) of the Statute and other applicable provisions.

Timothy Hodge requested clarification as to whether the motion consisted of suspending members in default or not. The Chairman pointed out that what was being proposed was that those members who justified the non-coverage of their fees as a result of the economic difficulties derived from the pandemic were not suspended this time, being sensitive to the situation that the entire region is going through, without defect to remember that it is an obligation of all members to pay the fees.

Once the resolution was voted on, it was unanimously adopted by the Standing Committee.

Once the entire agenda had been addressed, and since there was no other matter to be discussed, at 3:08 p.m. on November 26, 2020, the Chairman closed the Ordinary Meeting of the Permanent Committee of the Inter-American Conference on Social Security, in accordance with article 17 of the Statute of the Conference .-----