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CICAD EXPERT GROUPS:
PROPOSED OPERATING GUIDELINES AND
APPROACHES TO FINANCING

Revised by the Executive Secretariat of CICAD
in accordance with the observations made by member states at the
twenty-fourth regular session of the Commission

CICAD EXPERT GROUPS: PROPOSED OPERATING GUIDELINES AND APPROACHES TO FINANCING

NOTE BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

At its twenty-fourth regular session, held in Tegucigalpa, Honduras in 1998, the Commission considered a paper prepared by the Executive Secretariat proposing some common guidelines under which all CICAD Expert Groups would henceforth function. After discussion, the Commission asked the Secretariat to redraft the paper, incorporating the views expressed by the member states. The present document responds to that request. It is divided in two parts: the first concerns the operations and procedures of Expert Groups, and the second addresses the question of financing.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last nine years, the Commission has created five Expert Groups to address from a technical point of view specific issues related to different drug control topics. The first Expert Group, on Precursor Chemical Control, was constituted in 1989, to draw up Model Regulations in conformance with Article 12 of the 1988 Vienna Convention. The Expert Group on Money Laundering Control was formed in 1990, with a mandate to draw up Model Regulations to control money laundering, also within the framework of the Vienna Convention. Both of these Groups produced Model Regulations, which were approved by the Commission and recommended to member states by the OAS General Assembly for adoption into national law. The impact has been significant: for example, provisions of the Model Regulations on Money Laundering have been adopted by more than twenty countries, and legislation is pending in several more.

In 1996, new Expert Groups were formed on Arms Control and Demand Reduction and finally, in 1997, the Commission constituted an Expert Group on Alternative Development. Again, these Expert Groups have been productive: for example, the Expert Group on Arms Control produced the implementing regulations for the Inter-American Convention on the Control of Firearms, simultaneously with the approval of the Convention, the first time this has been achieved. All of the Expert Groups provide in-depth technical and scientific input to the Commission's consideration of highly complex questions.

The organization and procedures of these Expert Groups have grown through custom and practice, and are not uniform. While the existence of Expert Groups was formally provided for in Article 22 of the amended CICAD Regulations (adopted in 1996),^{1]} the

^{1]} Article 22

The expert groups of CICAD referred to in these Regulations are advisory bodies of the Commission and their functions and mandates are established, amended and ended by the Commission. Such expert groups, however, shall determine their internal operation and manner of

details of their operations and financing have not been established. The proposed guidelines below draw on, inter alia, the mandate for the Expert Group on Demand Reduction approved by the Commission at its twentieth regular session (Buenos Aires, Argentina, October 1996), the practices followed by the various Expert Groups, the Statute and Regulations of the Commission, the General Standards to Govern the Operations of the General Secretariat of the OAS, and pertinent resolutions of the OAS General Assembly, including resolutions on the Regular Fund budget, and the availability of funds.

I. PROPOSED OPERATING GUIDELINES FOR CICAD EXPERT GROUPS

1. An Expert Group shall meet when mandated by the Commission to undertake a specific task, but not more than once a year and only once the Commission has determined, in consultation with the Executive Secretariat, that sufficient funds are available (see below, paragraph II.4).
2. An Expert Group shall be made up of Government representatives, duly authorized. Such representatives may, at the option of each Government, be serving government officials or not. The representatives shall have recognized subject-matter competence. The representatives may change, depending on the particular issue with which the Expert Group in question is to deal. However, continuity of representation at successive meetings of a Group on the same topic is strongly encouraged.
3. Expert Groups are open to all member states wishing to send an expert.
4. Expert Groups shall, at the close of each meeting, make a report to the Commission, which shall include concrete recommendations on the subject at hand, for discussion and possible adoption by the Commission, which shall then decide on the course of action it will adopt.
5. At an appropriate regular session, the Commission shall elect the countries that will chair each of its Expert Groups, taking into account any recommendations that the Expert Group itself may have. The Chairmanship of an Expert Group shall be for one year.
6. The Expert Groups may meet in any member state, at the invitation of the government of that country; if no offer is forthcoming from a member state, the meeting shall be held at the headquarters of the Organization in Washington, DC.

carrying on business provided these are consistent with the CICAD Statute, these Regulations and the Rules of Procedure of the Permanent Council of the Organization.

The expert groups and their members shall be responsible for the expenses they incur for their meetings unless other funds are available for this purpose.

II. FINANCING OF CICAD EXPERT GROUPS

The OAS Regular Fund budget for CICAD does not currently provide funding for CICAD Expert Groups.² In the past, meetings of CICAD Expert Groups have generally been financed out of contributions to CICAD's Specific Fund, and/or by financial and in-kind contributions by member states. However, since donors are not eager to finance meetings, funding is frequently not available when a meeting of an Expert Group is needed. This has caused the Secretariat either to delay holding a meeting, or to take the costs out of funding intended for other projects. Neither solution is satisfactory.

In its debate on this matter at its twenty-fourth regular session, the Commission made it clear that as an expression of hemispheric solidarity, it wished all member states, regardless of capacity to pay, to have the opportunity both to host a meeting of a CICAD Expert Group, and to send an expert to the meetings. At the same time, it is recognized that not all member states will wish to or be in a position to send an expert to all of the meetings of all of CICAD's Expert Groups.

For the purposes of budget estimates in this paper, the Secretariat has assumed an average of twenty member state participants in each meeting of a CICAD Expert Group, along with four Secretariat staff, four interpreters and two translators.

Meeting costs are of several kinds (see below). Some can be met through the installed capacity of the OAS General Secretariat, or of a member government (Ministry personnel assigned to the meeting, equipment and office supplies borrowed from government offices, etc.). Other items, such as travel and interpreters, require payment for goods and services. Funds are needed to cover:

- Ø Language services (simultaneous interpretation and documents translation). These fees are standard
- Ø Secretarial and typing services
- Ø Photocopying, paper, materials and office supplies
- Ø Travel, per diem and terminal expenses for participants, speakers, consultants (and Secretariat staff if the meeting is held away from headquarters).
- Ø Room attendants
- Ø Equipment rental (such as interpretation equipment, copying machines, a sound system, computers) if the meeting is held in a location not so equipped.
- Ø Local transportation between the hotel and the site of the meeting (if necessary).
- Ø One or two meeting rooms and office space for the Secretariat.

VENUE OF THE MEETINGS

Generally speaking, the cost of a meeting held at OAS headquarters is lower than the cost of a meeting held away from headquarters. A meeting in Washington makes use

² In the 1998 program-budget of the Organization, the General Assembly approved US\$29,300 for a meeting of the CICAD Expert Group on Demand Reduction. That funding was discontinued in 1999.

of the Organization's installed capacity, such as meeting rooms, interpretation equipment, computers, and CICAD/OAS staff. Thus, outlays are for travel and per diem of participants and speakers, interpreters' and translators' fees, and minor items like coffee. The average cost of such a four-day meeting, assuming twenty international participants paid for out of CICAD funds, is estimated at US\$63,000. Thus, the average cost of holding one meeting per year of each of CICAD's five Expert Groups would be approximately US\$315,000.

If no participant travel or accommodation were paid for out of CICAD funds, the basic cost of a meeting in Washington would be approximately US\$15,000.

On the other hand, a meeting held in a member state may make use of the government's installed capacity, such as meeting rooms, computers, and staff, but it is sometimes necessary to rent interpretation equipment and a sound system, as well as photocopying machines, computers and printers. Travel and per diem of participants, speakers, and Executive Secretariat staff, interpreters' and translators' fees, and minor items like coffee must also be paid for. The average cost of such a meeting, assuming twenty international participants, is estimated at US\$72,000.

If no international participants are paid for from CICAD funds, the average budget would be approximately US\$26,000.

A member state hosting an Expert Group meeting agrees to assume some of these costs and provide personnel and equipment as set out in an Agreement to be signed with the General Secretariat of the OAS prior to each meeting. Such agreements are negotiated for each Expert Group meeting. A checklist of the basic requirements for any Expert Group meeting is attached, along with a model agreement, as an example.

The Executive Secretariat proposes a combination of approaches to paying for these goods and services:

1. That member states and donors make financial contributions to a special account in CICAD's Specific Fund, entitled "Meetings of CICAD Expert Groups". This account would be used to finance all or part of the cost of Expert Group meetings, whenever the Commission so decides; and
2. That the Commission urge the OAS General Assembly to approve financing for CICAD Expert Groups out of the Regular Fund budget. This would require strong support from the member states in the Organization's policy-making bodies; and
3. That, insofar as possible, each member state assume all or part of the cost of sending its own experts to the meetings of CICAD Expert Groups. However, a member state could apply to the Executive Secretariat for funds to offset all or part of the cost of its expert's travel and accommodations; and

4. That before approving the convocation of an Expert Group, the Commission must be assured by the Executive Secretariat that adequate financing arrangements are in place.

The draft financial rules proposed above attempt to recognize the financial and budgetary realities faced by member states and by the Executive Secretariat of CICAD in organizing these meetings that are vital to the technical work of the Commission.