



**PARLIAMENTARY CONFEDERATION OF THE AMERICAS  
11TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
Québec City, Canada  
September 6-9, 2011**

**Committee on Health and Social Protection  
2011-2012 COMMITTEE WORK PLAN**

**Committee Responsibilities**

The Committee on Health and Social Protection examines issues relating to health, social protection measures and anti-poverty policies.

**Historical Summary**

Ixtapan, November 2002

- First meeting of the Committee.
- Presentation of a discussion paper examining the means at the disposal of parliamentarians to improve access to health services in the Americas.
- General recommendation on health and social development.

Caracas, November 2003

- Adoption of a recommendation based on three principal issues: *the protection of access to health care and medication; the follow up on trade negotiations from a health perspective; the preservation of the capacity to legislate on issues of public health.*

Foz d'Iguaçu, May 2005

- Discussions on public health in the context of international trade negotiations and adoption of a resolution on the issue.

Quito, June 2006

- Discussions on sexual and reproductive health and adoption of a resolution on the subject.

Mexico City and Toluca, September 2008

- Further discussions on sexual and reproductive health, this time in particular in relation to HIV/AIDS.

Salta, September 2009

- Adoption of a resolution on (A)H1N1 influenza.

Mar del Plata, November 2011

- Beginning of discussions on child mortality.
- Adoption of a preliminary resolution on the issue.

## **Work Plan**

In view of the content of the most recent meetings, the amendments made to the *By-laws of the Permanent Thematic Working Committees of COPA* during the 9th General Assembly of COPA, the *Plan of the President (2010-1012)* as well as the *2010-2011 Work Plan*, the adoption of a work plan centered on three main areas is proposed: the revitalization of the Committee and the study of two other related themes.

### **1. Revitalization of the Committee**

The following measures are proposed to revitalize the work of the Committee:

- adopt this work plan at the next meeting of the Committee (to be held in Québec City, Canada, September 8, 2011);
- encourage participation and establish a list of permanent committee members;
- appoint a rapporteur for each theme the Committee wishes to study;
- ensure follow up of resolutions and in-depth and sequential examination of themes;
- organize Committee meeting between the next two general assemblies; the Committee will meet to pursue discussions on child mortality in Cuba on October 27-28, 2011;
- establish partnerships with other regional and international organizations interested in discussing similar issues.

### **2. Themes for study**

#### **a) Resumption of discussions and drafting of a position on child mortality**

The Committee will hold a working meeting in Havana, Cuba, next October 27 and 28. Discussions on child mortality will be finalized at that time.

#### **b) Resumption of discussions on water, health and poverty**

Given the significance of this important issue, parliamentarians must commit to a detailed and in-depth analysis. COPA's president therefore proposes that discussions continue in 2011-2012. The meeting in Québec City will allow parliamentarians to become more familiar with the issues and begin discussions. The appointment of a rapporteur will make it possible to hold more in-depth discussions and target possible actions to discuss at future Committee working meetings.

#### **c) Chronic diseases**

More and more people are suffering and dying from chronic diseases such as diabetes, different types of cancer, arthritis, as well as chronic cardiovascular and respiratory illnesses. In 2005, an estimated 35 million people died from chronic diseases.<sup>1</sup> This is twice the number of deaths from all infectious diseases (HIV, malaria, tuberculosis) combined. While deaths from infectious diseases and nutritional deficiencies declining, deaths due to chronic diseases are projected to

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<sup>1</sup> Pan American Health Organization, Regional Strategy and Plan of Action on an Integrated Approach to the Prevention and Control of Chronic Diseases, Washington, D.C., PAHO, 2007, p.3.

increase by 17% by 2015.<sup>2</sup> Although some factors such as age, gender and genetics cannot be changed, a number of behavioural risk factors such as smoking, alcohol abuse, physical inactivity and unhealthy diet can be modified. In Canada, for example, approximately four out of every five Canadians have at least one chronic disease risk factor that can be modified. Societal, economic, and physical conditions influence and shape behaviour and indirectly affect other biological factors.<sup>3</sup> Recognizing these common risk factors and conditions is the basis for adopting an integrated approach to dealing with chronic diseases. The societal costs associated with chronic diseases are staggering. The total annual cost associated with diabetes was estimated at \$65 billion US for the Latin America and Caribbean region in 2000 and continues to increase.<sup>4</sup> Several actions can be taken national governments to prevent such diseases and therefore COPA should be concerned with this growing problem.

### 3. Agenda

The Committee secretariat proposes the following agenda:

#### a. 11th General Assembly

**Place:** Québec City

**Date:** September 8, 2011

- Content:**
- i) Adoption of the Committee Work Plan (2011-2012)
  - ii) Lecture on **Water, health and poverty**
  - iii) Appointment of a rapporteur for *water, health and poverty* theme
  - iv) Establishment of a list of permanent committee members

#### b. Committee Meeting

**Place:** Cuba

**Date:** October 27-28, 2011

- Content:**
- i) Workshops, roundtables and discussions on **maternal health, child mortality and tuberculosis**, and drafting of Committee position on child mortality and maternal health
  - ii) Preparation for Committee meeting to be held during COPA's 12th General Assembly

#### c. 12th General Assembly

**Place:** To be determined

**Date:** To be determined

- Content:**
- i) Lecture on **chronic diseases**
  - ii) Appointment of a rapporteur for *chronic diseases* theme
  - iii) Tabling of report on *water, health and poverty*
  - iv) Selecting a Committee work theme for COPA's 13th General Assembly.

#### d. Committee Meeting

**Place:** To be determined

**Date:** To be determined

- Content:**
- i) Workshops, roundtables, discussions on **chronic diseases**

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.3.

<sup>3</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada, [http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cd-mc/risk\\_factors-facteurs\\_risque-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/cd-mc/risk_factors-facteurs_risque-eng.php), consulted July 7, 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Pan American Health Organization, op. cit., p.1.