



RULES OF THE Latin America and the Caribbean Geopolitical Group, GRULAC - IPU

**APPROVED BY ACCLAMATION AT THE SESSION OF GRULAC HELD
ON 15 OCTOBER 2011 IN BERN, SWITZERLAND, ON THE
OCCASION OF THE 125TH ASSEMBLY OF THE INTER-
PARLIAMENTARY UNION AND RELATED MEETINGS**

RULES OF THE LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN GEOPOLITICAL GROUP (GRULAC-IPU)

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CHAPTER I - DEFINITION AND OBJECTIVES.-

ARTICLE 1.- DEFINITION - GENERAL PRINCIPLES .-

1. The Latin American and the Caribbean Group (GRULAC) is the geopolitical group that brings together the national parliaments of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela, members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and those that join later. The category of Associate and Observer Regional Parliaments is recognized, with the same characteristics as those provided for in the Statutes and Rules of the IPU.

2. Members of the Group shall include both male and female parliamentarians in their delegations and shall strive to ensure equitable gender representation.

3. They shall also ensure that rotation and balance be maintained within the Group in the allocation of the corresponding positions within the Group and in the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

4. The official language of the Group is Spanish. Interpretation and translation into Portuguese, French, and English for delegations requiring it will be provided by each National Group.

ARTICLE 2.- OBJECTIVES .-

Its objectives are to strengthen, coordinate, and achieve a common position in the political action of Member Parliaments on matters addressed by the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

CHAPTER II - GRULAC MEMBERS. ACQUISITION, LOSS AND SUSPENSION OF MEMBERSHIP STATUS.

ARTICLE 3.- ACQUISITION, LOSS AND SUSPENSION OF MEMBER status.-

1. To acquire membership status or rejoin the Group, a written application must be submitted to the President of GRULAC and the requirements established on these Rules must be met. This application will be evaluated by the Governing Council of the IPU, which will decide on the membership.

2. Membership in GRULAC shall be suspended for failure to comply with the financial contributions required by each Parliament in accordance with the IPU Financial Regulations, provided that this situation is not regularized before the first Assembly held by the Organization in the year immediately following the close of the Organization's financial year.

3. Membership in GRULAC is lost for failure to pay financial contributions for three or more periods, in accordance with the IPU Financial Regulations.

CHAPTER III - OF THE BODIES OF THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN GROUP.-

ARTICLE 4.- GRULAC Bodies.-

The GRULAC bodies are: the Assembly, the Governing Council, the Presidency, the Bureau and the Secretariat.

SECTION I - OF THE ASSEMBLY.-

ARTICLE 5. MEETINGS AND convening.-

1. GRULAC will meet in Ordinary Assembly twice a year at the place and date set by the Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for its Assemblies, for which the presence of the majority of the members of the Group will be required.

2. A majority of the members of the Group will be required to adopt resolutions. Voting will be conducted by a show of hands. If any member of the Assembly so requests, voting will be conducted by roll call. In the case of the election of positions, the vote will be secret, and the results will be established by the Chair. Once the vote has begun, no one may interrupt it, except to request clarifications. Following the vote, the Chair may grant a brief opportunity to explain the reasons for the vote. No reasons for amendments or procedural motions will be allowed.

3. The GRULAC Assembly may meet in extraordinary session on a date and place other than those established above, upon the express request of one-third of the Group's members. A majority of the Group's members must be present to hold sessions and adopt resolutions.

ARTICLE 6. INTEGRATION.-

The Assembly will be composed of parliamentarians appointed as delegates by GRULAC Members, in accordance with the accreditation of their respective parliaments to the IPU.

ARTICLE 7. FUNCTIONS.-

Its main functions are:

1. To debate matters of general interest that are determined as topics for discussion by the IPU General Assembly, with the purpose of coordinating and adopting homogeneous or consensual political positions on them.

2. Examine the emergency items that will be addressed at the IPU General Assembly in order to ensure consensus on the matter. These items must be communicated to the GRULAC Secretariat so that they can be distributed and discussed in a timely manner.

3. Receive and, where appropriate, approve the report of the members appointed by GRULAC to the various bodies of the IPU.

4. Elect GRULAC members who will represent the Group to the different IPU bodies.

5. Establish the Agenda for the next Assembly.

6. Decide to include in the Agenda an urgent topic proposed by the President or any of the members of GRULAC, for which a minimum quorum of two-thirds of the members of the Group is required.

7. Approve the amendments of the Group Rules, for which a minimum quorum of two-thirds of the Group members is required.

ARTICLE 8. AGENDA .

Before the meetings of the Assembly and the Governing Council take place, the President, assisted by the Secretary, will prepare a Draft Agenda, which will be submitted to all members of the Group with no less than 15 days in advance, With respect to such meetings, members may propose additional items to be included in the Agenda, with their inclusion ultimately being decided by the Assembly, which must be decided by a simple majority.

ARTICLE 9. RIGHT TO VOTE. REQUIRED MAJORITIES .

Each delegation will be entitled to three votes, provided that its representation includes both men and women. Those composed of representatives of only one sex will be limited to two votes. The quorum required will be a majority of the votes cast.

ARTICLE 10. Procedural MOTIONS.-

1. The floor shall be given to the member of the Assembly who requests it to propose:
 - a. the postponement of the debate sine die;
 - b. the suspension of the debate;
 - c. the closing of the list of speakers;
 - d. the closure or suspension of the session and,
 - e. any other motion relating to the conduct of the session.
2. These procedural motions will take priority over the main question, the debate on which will be suspended while it is being considered.
3. The author of such a motion shall present it briefly, refraining from addressing the substance of the main issue.
4. Only the proponent and one opposing speaker shall speak in the debate on procedural motions; the Assembly shall then adopt a decision.

SECTION II.- OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL.-

ARTICLE 11. INTEGRATION and function.-

The GRUCLAC Governing Council will be composed of three representatives appointed by each GRULAC Member Parliament. Its main function will be to elect the GRULAC President and Vice Presidents.

ARTICLE 12. Quorum, voting METHODS.-

To hold a valid session, the Governing Council requires the presence of a majority of the Group's members duly accredited to this body. Voting will be conducted by a show of hands, but if any member of the Council so requests, voting will be conducted by roll call. In the case of the election of positions, the vote will be secret, and its results will be established by the Group's Secretariat. Once the vote has begun, no one may interrupt it except to request regulatory clarifications. After the vote, the President may grant a brief opportunity to present reasons for their vote to those members of the Governing Council who requested it. Reasons for voting on amendments or procedural motions will not be allowed.

ARTICLE 13 . PROCEDURAL MOTIONS .-

Procedural motions shall be governed by the provisions of Article 10 of these Rules.

SECTION III. OF THE PRESIDENCY OF GRULAC.-

ARTICLE 14. PRESIDENCY of GRULAC.-

The President, as well as a first and second Vice President, of GRULAC will be elected by the Governing Council from among its members, ensuring that the exercise of this responsibility is assumed alternately by GRULAC members. They will hold office for two years, unless their legislative term ends early. They will not be eligible for reelection.

ARTICLE 15. Submission of applications.-

1. Candidacies for the Presidency of GRULAC must be communicated in writing to the Group's Secretariat at least 10 days before the opening of the session at which the election is to be held.
2. The candidate who obtains the absolute majority of the votes cast will be elected to the Presidency of GRULAC.
3. If no candidate obtains an absolute majority in the first vote, a second vote will be held and, if necessary, other votes will be held among the candidates until one of them has obtained that majority.

ARTICLE 16. ELECTION .-

1. The election will take place during the second Assembly of the year. If, due to exceptional circumstances, the Assembly cannot meet, the Governing Council may, in any case, proceed with the election.
2. In case of temporary absence, his/her functions will be performed by the First Vice President and, where appropriate, by the second of the Bureau.

In the event of resignation, loss of parliamentary mandate, or death of the President or any Vice President, the First Vice President shall serve as President until the Governing Council elects a new President. The same provision shall apply if the membership of the GRULAC Member to which the President belongs is suspended.

ARTICLE 17.- The GRULAC Member to which the President belongs may designate another of its representatives to form part of the Governing Council in his or her place, with the right to vote.

ARTICLE 18.- FUNCTIONS AND POWERS .-

1.- The President directs the work of the Governing Council and represents the Group before the other Geopolitical Groups of the IPU.

- Opens, suspends and closes sessions.
- Ensures compliance with the Rules
- Give the floor
- Puts issues to a vote, announces the results of the votes and declares its meetings closed.

Their decisions are final and not subject to debate.

2.- It is the responsibility of the President, in consultation with the Governing Council, to decide all cases that are not provided for in these Rules or in the Statutes or Rules of the IPU.

SECTION IV. OF THE BUREAU.-

ARTICLE 19. INTEGRATION .-

The GRULAC Board of Directors will be made up of five members: the President of GRULAC, who will preside over it by his or her own right, the Vice Presidents, and the two representatives to the IPU Executive Committee.

The formation of the Board of Directors must ensure the necessary geographical and gender balance among the members of GRULAC.

ARTICLE 20. Ordinary and EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS.-

1. The Bureau will hold an ordinary meeting at least twice a year at the call of the President of GRULAC.

2. The President may call an extraordinary meeting when he or she deems it necessary or if requested by three of its members.

ARTICLE 21. PLACE AND DATE OF THE meetings.-

1. The Bureau shall set the place and date of its ordinary meetings.

2. The place and date of extraordinary meetings shall be set by the President, if possible, in agreement with the members of the Bureau.

CHAPTER IV - RESPONSIBILITIES AND SANCTIONS.-

ARTICLE 22.- RESPONSIBILITIES .-

1. Any nomination for a position in the IPU representing the Group, must be submitted in writing to the GRULAC Secretariat, along with the endorsement of the highest authority of the corresponding Parliament, thus ensuring its participation.

2. No country may hold more than three seats in the IPU, even if appointed by the IPU President. Two alternates shall constitute one seat.

ARTICLE 23.- SANCTIONS .-

A parliamentarian who holds a position and is absent for two consecutive meetings will lose the representation of his or her country in that responsibility.

The GRULAC Secretariat will officially communicate this decision to the respective Parliament.

SECTION V.- OF THE SECRETARIAT.-

ARTICLE 24. COMPOSITION. TERM OF OFFICE .

1. The GRULAC Secretariat will be composed of a Technical Secretary, who will be appointed by the Governing Council.

2. The Technical Secretary will serve for a four-year term and may be re-elected. The Bureau will establish the terms of his or her appointment.

ARTICLE 25. FUNCTIONS .-

The functions of the Secretary are:

- a) keep the records of GRULAC Members and strive to promote new applications for membership;

- b) support, stimulate and coordinate permanently the activities of the Group Members, as requested by the Presidency, and provide the necessary technical support;
- c) prepare the topics to be discussed during the inter-parliamentary meetings and distribute the necessary documents in a timely manner;
- d) execute the decisions of the Governing Council and the Assembly;
- e) prepare agenda proposals to be submitted to the Governing Council;
- f) gather and disseminate information relating to the structure and operation of representative institutions;
- g) maintain the Group's relations with other geopolitical groups members of the IPU and ensure participation of this in international conferences; and,
- h) maintain the archives of the Latin American and Caribbean Group.

CHAPTER V - AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES.-

ARTICLE 26.- Amendments TO THE RULES.-

1. Any proposed amendment to the Rules must be submitted in writing to the GRULAC Secretariat at least three months before the Assembly meets. The Secretariat will communicate the proposal to the Group's Members as soon as possible. The proposal will be automatically entered into the Assembly's Agenda.
2. Any proposed subamendment must be submitted in writing to the GRULAC Secretariat at least six weeks before the Assembly meeting. The Secretariat will communicate the proposal to the Group's Members as soon as possible.
3. After receiving the opinion of the Governing Council, approved by a majority vote, the Assembly will decide on the proposals by a two-thirds majority.

CHAPTER VI - GENERAL CLAUSE OF SUBSIDIARY APPLICATION.-

ARTICLE 27- In all matters not provided for on these Rules, the Statutes and Rules of the Inter-Parliamentary Union shall apply in a supplementary manner.