



## **Conclusions and Recommendations First Inter-American Meeting of Experts and Representatives of Electoral Bodies**

### **“MODERNIZATION AND USE OF ELECTORAL TECHNOLOGIES IN THE HEMISPHERE”**

#### **WHEREAS:**

Resolution GA/RES. 2337 (XXXVII-0/07) “Modernization and Use of Electoral Technologies in the Hemisphere”, by which the General Assembly of the Organization of American States welcomed the offer of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to celebrate the “Inter-American Meeting on Experts and Representatives of Electoral Bodies”.

As per the resolution of the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States OAS PC/931 (1634/08), in compliance with GA/RES 2337 (XXXVII-0/07) regarding the celebration of the Inter-American Meeting of Experts and Representatives of Electoral Organizations, in Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on 4 April 2008;

Likewise, the OAS General Assembly agreed that Experts and Representatives of Electoral Bodies should exchange experiences and best practices in countries of the hemisphere, among other things, on electoral identification systems, voter registration processes and automated electoral systems;

CONSIDERING that GA/RES 2337 of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States convened that the Conclusions of the Meeting of Experts and Representatives of Electoral Organizations be submitted to the consideration of the Fifth Inter-American Meeting of Electoral Authorities to be held in Quito, on 22-24 April 2008;

REAFFIRMING the fundamental importance of a sustained improvement of electoral processes which represents a significant support for the credibility and transparency of electoral processes and for the strengthening of democratic institutions;

CONSIDERING the different remarks made by Experts and Representatives of Electoral Organizations, who have emphasized the importance of promoting cooperation among Member States in matters of electoral technologies.

The Experts and Representatives of Electoral Bodies of the hemisphere agree:

1. Automation, supported by the relevant legal context, improves the quality of electoral processes and speeds the delivery of results in order to guarantee the trust and confidence of political actors and citizens, in general.
2. The automating process of electoral procedures, especially in all aspects related to vote casting, must be adapted to the specific social and political needs of each country or State. In countries or States where citizens trust the manual electoral process, technologies that may cause distrust should not be introduced.
3. By establishing appropriate conditions for its implementation and supporting adequate voter awareness campaigns, the automated voting systems can offer a user friendly environment for voters thus making electoral processes simpler, which fosters higher participation and quick delivery of results.
4. A secure and auditable automated election procedure in all of its stages (pre and post election) warrants trust and transparency in the electoral process, a condition which endorses the participation of all political actors and dissemination among citizens.
5. Ensuring the integrity of electoral processes can be achieved by installing main and secondary voting centers, security protocols, and encrypted data unidirectional transmission systems, reinforcing voter confidence and process transparency.
6. The application of information technologies to the Civil and Electoral Registry contributes to the organization, security, integrity and availability of information of all citizens.
7. Technological advancements in nomination systems facilitates the collection of the electoral offer from political actors, making it faster, more efficient and safer in comparison to manual systems, reducing margins of error in electoral data and offering citizens direct access to information on the electoral offer at hand.
8. Participants confirmed the levels of excellence, auditability and security of the Venezuelan technological electoral platform, factors which warrant its transparency.
9. Due note is made of the petition by the National Electoral Court of Bolivia of being able to present information on the current electoral situation in Bolivia, within the framework of the Fifth Inter-American Meeting of Election Officials.

As well as the petition of the said Organization for having the electoral bodies of member countries of the Quito Protocol and UNIORE to summon an extraordinary meeting for that same purpose.

10. The Ecuadorian Delegation expressed their satisfaction with the decision of having Quito as the host city for the celebration of the Fifth Inter-American Meeting of Election Officials, where all participants will be received with great hospitality. As a contribution to this preparatory event, the Delegation submitted two documents with information about the vote in the country and abroad.

We recommend:

1. Promoting horizontal cooperation for exchange of experiences in the areas of electoral technologies and related legislations among different countries of the hemisphere in order to achieve the aforementioned goals.
2. Recognizing the strong technological electoral capabilities in countries of the region and encourage countries making progress in the modernization and use of new technologies in their electoral systems.
3. Establishing, during the Fifth Inter-American Meeting of Election Officials, a flexible intergovernmental mechanism aimed at strengthening technological cooperation in matters of electoral systems.
4. Celebrating a new Meeting for Information Interchange on the subject in Caracas in 2009.