The Position Paper of

Canada



**I. General Statement**

Canada is privileged to participate in this year’s General Assembly of the Organization of American States. The Delegation of Canada appreciates the Organization of American States’ important role in the promotion of peace, safety, and democracy of this hemisphere. As a more recent signatory, Canada looks forward to upholding the principles of the Organization of American States in working with other member states to further spread democracy and increase safety in the hemisphere.

While Canada was previously under the British monarchy, today it is a successful democracy. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms forms the first part of the Constitution Act, the highest law in Canada. This bill accomplishes a number of important things including: limiting police powers, promoting women’s economic opportunities, recognition of the LGBT community, linguistic rights for French speaking people, strengthening of aboriginal rights, and judicial activism for all. Canada guarantees the freedom of religion, of thought, of expression, of the press, and of peaceful assembly; as well as legal rights such as the right to life, liberty and security. It also protects the rights of all Canadians from infringements by laws, policies or actions of governments, including authorities such as the police.[[1]](#endnote-1) Through their constitution, Canadian society demonstrates equality among its people and serves as an example for the world. The Delegation of Canada plans to bring all these principles and practices to the Organization of American States General Assembly.

One of the greatest strengths of Canadian culture is its diversity.  One out of five people in Canada are foreign born. As a nation of immigrants, the multicultural patchwork of our society allows the people of this great land a unique perspective on the world. The Canadian government has encouraged this multiculturalism since Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, with a policy of welcoming immigrants and emphasizing the social benefits of immigration.  This rich foundation has produced great works of modern culture in many forms, from film to music and visual art to the written word.  From the preservation of the culture of the First Peoples, the retention of a unique identity on the part of the Francophone Quebecois, to the free acceptance of the cultural identity of modern immigrants, our actions reflect the value we place on the ideals we espouse to the world.[[2]](#endnote-2)

Many of Canada’s major interactions with the world are economic. Canada has the tenth largest economy worldwide with significant international trading partners. Canada’s major exports include industrial machinery, aircraft, and motor vehicles and parts.[[3]](#endnote-3) Canada is committed to a global unity and cooperation among nations, which is promoted through respectable trade relationships and working together.

Canada’s healthcare system provides access to universal health care for all Canadian citizens in a low-cost effective program. Canada also provides the Universal Childcare Benefit program, which provides Canadian families with regular funds to help parents provide adequate care for their children under the age of eighteen.[[4]](#endnote-4)

Canada is committed to the health, safety, and high quality of life of all Canadian citizens, and to encouraging such commitment wherever possible in the world. The Delegation of Canada is excited to bring these ideas of equality to the General Assembly. Bearing in mind that only through collaboration can the Western hemisphere truly benefit, the Delegation of Canada is eager to discuss all problems and seeks to improve them in a way that will truly be beneficial in all aspects, short term as well as long term.

**II. Particular Statements**

**A. General Committee (GC)**

**Topic One: Strengthening and Improving the Reach of the Inter-American Convention against Racism**

The nation of Canada strongly believes in the use of education to combat racist ideology and behaviors. As Article 3 of the OAS Charter states, “The education of peoples should be directed toward justice, freedom, and peace.”[[5]](#endnote-5) Education is a powerful tool. Racism contradicts all of the values which the charter states that education ought to promote. As such, the Delegation of Canada proposes the use of an educational program based on equality for children, who are especially vulnerable to adopting misplaced racist beliefs. An educational program implemented in primary schools will help to educate children on the principles of the Inter-American Convention Against Racism and help to offset racially discriminatory behavior in children. By specifically educating young children on this issue, the Organization of American States can instill values of the equality of every human being before these children adopt alternative views. The program will offer an alternative to racist behaviors and reasons why racist ideology is wrong.

**Topic Two: Achieving More Equitable Inclusion and Participation in the OAS among All States of the Hemisphere**

The promotion of more equitable inclusion in the Organization of American States is an admirable goal which the Delegation of Canada strongly encourages. The achievement of more equitable participation can be encouraged through the encouragement of member states and cooperation among members creating an inviting environment for nations to properly conduct relations.

**B. Executive Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI)**

**Topic One: Promotion of the Rights of People in Vulnerable Situations**

Canada is committed to assisting those in vulnerable situations throughout member states of the Organization of American States. This is an important issue in Canada’s goal of promoting higher quality of life and safety for all people within the Organization of American States. The Delegation of Canada proposes working to improve healthcare effectiveness for indigenous peoples. Ensuring access to primary health care is widely accepted as key to improving health outcomes. In the case of Indigenous populations living with high rates of chronic disease, access to these services is even more crucial. Indigenous peoples are often prevented from accessing these types of services due to a range of barriers including the high cost of health care, experiences of discrimination and racism and poor communication with healthcare professionals. Evidence suggests that access to primary health care can be improved when services are tailored to the needs of, or owned and managed by Indigenous communities themselves.[[6]](#endnote-6) The Organization of American States should work with a program such as Doctors

without Borders to tailor services to the needs of indigenous peoples and promote safety, health, and security for these vulnerable people.

**Topic Two: Public Policies for Improving Workers’ and Employers’ Rights**

Canada is very committed to the improvement of workers’ and employers’ rights. When workers and employers’ rights are protected, it results in higher quality of life for all those involved. In Canada, there are many policies and laws for employers’ rights. One of the many laws is known as The Employment Equity Act, which is consider a federal law that requires federally regulated organizations and businesses to provide equal employment opportunities. This act is mainly for women, Aboriginal peoples (Indian, Inuit or Métis), people with disabilities, and members of visible minorities.[[7]](#endnote-7) There is the Canadian Human Rights Act which is a broad piece of legislation that prohibits discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity and other grounds.[[8]](#endnote-8) A way to improve workers’ and employers’ rights, besides the laws and act that Canada has, is to allow workers’ and employers to have an opinion.  This would help many companies and workplaces to understand what would be best for an improvement in the work field. There can be meetings with both employers and managers to a common understanding to improve rights. The Delegation of Canada would like to promote these values throughout the OAS member states, encouraging all workers and employers to gain better satisfaction in their work.

**C. Secretariat for Multidimensional Security (SMS)**

**Topic One: New Programs to Help Combat or Prevent Transnational Organized Crime**

Canada is very committed to the prevention of organized crime, particularly in OAS member states. Organized crime is a serious problem which the Organization of American States must act against in order to promote a higher quality of life for all people. Canada is in a unique position in the world where its defense is concerned.  Canada has only one significant shared border, and it is with a powerful and reliable ally.  This stability in Canadian security allows for this nation to lend its power to other nations when it is needed.  The ability to leverage our military and civilian assets to benefit regional partners such as OAS member states enables us to provide support and guidance where it is needed most, and work together with partners towards our mutual benefit. The Delegation of Canada believes that the establishment of a permanent joint intelligence sharing and enforcement framework our hemisphere will help reinforce existing partnerships and will lead to a safer, more stable American Hemisphere.  The utilization of this partnership to combat narco- and human trafficking organizations throughout the hemisphere would serve to reinforce national sovereignty, and bring crucial stability to the most affected nations within the Organization of American States.

**Topic Two: Strengthening and Increasing Hemispheric Agreements on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation**

Canada strongly supports the goal of the Organization of American States of creating a peaceful and secure hemisphere. The promotion of peace and security will improve the lives of all people within the Organization of American States. The country of Canada is committed to international treaties, such as the United Nations Biological Weapons Convention, that create a framework for international security and cooperation among the nations of the world.[[9]](#endnote-9) This framework has successfully helped to maintain peace in the hemisphere, but it must be constantly improved and updated. One new threat is arising in the form of gene-manipulating techniques, and the Delegation of Canada feels that it is necessary to address the issue in this committee. The Delegation of Canada suggests that the Organization of American States should be proactive in making sure that this new technology is only used to improve the lives of all the peoples of the Americas, and not to pose a threat. Therefore, the Delegation of Canada suggests the creation of a supervisory committee, along with a reporting mechanism, to oversee the research and usage of this technology and to ensure that none of these efforts pose a security risk to our hemisphere. The Delegation of Canada believes that this proposal is in the best interests of all member states and would be pleased to see all countries working towards a safe and equal hemisphere.

**D. Secretariat for Strengthening Democracy (SSD)**

**Topic One: Strengthening and Modernizing Management Mechanisms at the Municipal Level**

Canada supports the modernization and increased effectiveness of municipal leaders. The more effective leadership is on lower levels, such as cities and bureaucracy-level government, the more efficient local government can be in its work for the citizens of each area. The Delegation of Canada proposes the use of leadership training seminars for those already in office at the city level. Officials can learn how to implement modern methods in their management and increase the effectiveness of their position and municipal management as a whole. The Delegation of Canada also believes strongly in the role of education in modernization. A scholarship to encourage students of business, economics, and other majors related to municipal management to consider the work as a viable career.

**Topic Two: New Programs for the Inter-American Program on Education for Democratic Values and Practices**

The country of Canada strongly supports the Inter-American Program of Education for Democratic Values and Practices, which aims to provide better education and more practices on democracy for youth to ensure the continuance of democratic values.[[10]](#endnote-10) Education is the key to the future development of a nation. Education has a significant impact on the next generation, which will determine the future of a nation. The best way to educate on democratic values would be through the formulation of a program which would allow students to be active in their learning about democracy and citizenship in their country. Each country would be a part of a program which would allow secondary school students to learn through real world examples and discussion about their country’s practices and how democracy and social justice pertain to them as citizens, as well as the laws of the country which pertain to democracy and the values of citizenship. The OAS member states will maintain sovereignty in their curriculum focus, but the overall program would emphasize democracy and its function in each country’s individual government.

**E. Secretariat for Administration and Finance (SAF)**

**Topic One: Budgetary Statements**

As global leaders in promotion of social justice and equality, Canada is committed to providing funding to programs that push progressive and inclusive values on all fronts, promoting a higher quality of life for all people of the OAS member states. Canada is proud of its advancements on the social front as well as our investments in socialized healthcare and is willing to support actions that would lead to other countries committing resources to push

toward this goal. As the Canadian film industry has proven in recent years, the Canadian market is constantly expanding and open to all types of new business, especially when other conventional partners back away from outside investment. With this attitude, Canada can become a leader not just on social concerns, but economic ones as well.

        Canada believes that the top priority for all member states is the improvement of safety and security of citizens. When there is a safe and productive environment, overall quality of life is improved. When this happens, the entire hemisphere benefits. Safety and security of the hemisphere are top priorities in the resolutions brought forth by the Delegation of Canada. These resolutions are thoughtful in their economic efficiency, and will assist the OAS and all member

states in the conservation of resources through funding by pertinent non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

1. “Consolidated Federal Laws of Canada, Access to Information Act.” *Legislative Services Branch*, 20 Oct. 2017, laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-15.html. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. “Connect with your community!” *Canadian Immigrant Site*, canadianimmigrant.ca/guides/moving-to-canada/diversity-in-canada-an-overview. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. “Canadian Economy: Population, GDP, Inflation, Business, Trade, FDI, Corruption.” *Canadian Economy*, www.heritage.org/index/country/canada. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. “International Health Care System Profiles.” *Canada: International Health Care System Profiles*, international.commonwealthfund.org/countries/canada/. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. “Charter of the Organization of American States.” *OAS: Charter,* http://www.oas.org/en/sla/dil/inter\_american\_treaties\_A-41\_charter\_OAS.asp#Chapter\_III. [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. “Why is Canada ignoring the health of aboriginal peoples?” *The Globe and Mail*, 25 Mar. 2017, beta.theglobeandmail.com/globe-debate/why-is-canada-ignoring-the-health-of-aboriginal-peoples/article23856403/. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. “Consolidated federal laws of Canada, Employment Equity Act.” *Legislative Services Branch*, 20 Oct. 2017, laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/e-5.401/page-1.html. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. “Consolidated federal laws of Canada, Canadian Human Rights Act.” *Legislative Services Branch*, 20 Oct. 2017, laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/h-6/FullText.html. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. “The Biological Weapons Convention – UNODA.” *United Nations*, United Nations, www.un.org/disarmament/geneva/bwc/. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. “EDUCADEM.”*OAS: EDUCADEM*, portal.oas.org/Default.aspx?tabid=1227&language=en-US. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)