



Declaration of Punta Cana

“On the promotion of citizen participation in the monitoring and control of sustainable development goals - 2030 Agenda”

The XXVI General Assembly of the Organization of Latin American and Caribbean Supreme Audit Institutions - OLACEFS -, gathered in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, states that:

Recognizing the scope of declaration A/69/700 of the United Nations General Assembly "*Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*", which aims to ensure sustainable development through action aimed at ending poverty and fighting inequality; ensuring a healthy life, knowledge and the inclusion of women and children; developing a strong, inclusive and transformative economy; protecting ecosystems for all societies; promoting safe and peaceful societies and strong institutions, and global partnership for sustainable development.

Whereas resolution A/69/209 of the United Nations General Assembly on "*promoting efficiency, accountability, effectiveness and transparency of public administration by strengthening Supreme Audit Institutions*" highlights our contribution towards effective and efficient public administration, and welcomes cooperation between the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions -INTOSAI- and the United Nations - UN.

Aware of the recognition of the XXI United Nations/INTOSAI Symposium of 2011 of the importance of developing "*effective practices of cooperation*" between SAIs and citizens to enhance and promote public accountability.

Taking into account that the recommendations arising from the XXI United Nations/INTOSAI Symposium of 2011 were adopted by the XXI OLACEFS General Assembly.

Recognizing and reaffirming the commitment of the XXIII OLACEFS General Assembly, through the Santiago Declaration of 2013 on "*governance, the fight against corruption and public confidence*", which states that "*OLACEFS shall promote the development of diverse forms of relationships and good practices of coordination and collaborative work with civil society, especially in facilitating their complaints, providing them with useful and accessible information based on open data, and their inclusion in the audit cycle, thus substantiating and complementing the Declaration of Cartagena de las Indias and the Declaration of Asunción, and ISSAIs 1, 10, 12, 20 and 21*".

Being mindful of the conclusions of the XXIII OLACEFS General Assembly which reiterated and redefined citizen participation in oversight as: "*The action promoted by SAIs through different available mechanisms, so that citizens can effectively engage, directly or through their organizations, to improve governance and the quality of institutional management.*"



Convinced that public participation in the monitoring and control of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals increase accountability and integrity in managing public administration, facilitate the generation of trust and improve the governance system for sustainable development through activities of civic monitoring, control, follow-up, assessment, criticism and sanctioning.

Highlighting the efforts of INTOSAI and its regional member organizations to incorporate monitoring and evaluation of Sustainable Development Goals into their strategic planning, within the context of the mandate of each SAI.

Understanding that the thematic agenda of this General Assembly makes a valuable contribution to building new roads that establish - jointly as SAIs, and together with this Declaration - new ways to promote the implementation of the 20130 Agenda.

Fostering, with this Declaration, closer relationships, interaction and partnerships between SAIs and citizens as a mechanism which, together with those traditionally used will enable each SAI to contribute decisively in assisting with the promotion of sustainable development goals through monitoring and evaluation, which in this way can deliver the policies provided in their states.

Agrees

To take, depending on scope, powers of the current constitutional and legal framework, available resources of the Supreme Audit Institutions in each country, the principles and commitments that we assert for the implementation, development and strengthening of citizen participation, as a determining requirement for legitimacy in the monitoring and control of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) that make up the United Nations 2030 Agenda, as set out hereinafter:

First. To promote citizen participation in monitoring and control of 2030 Agenda SDGs, with the aim of improving the quality of control of those programs and projects that substantiate the SDGs, as well as the public policies that guide them, incorporating into oversight activities mechanisms for citizen participation in the institutional control of governance. All with the aim of promoting understanding amongst citizens, and their real and effective participation regarding the scope and importance of the implementation and achievement of SDGs.

Second: To adopt the following principles so that each SAI can steer the fostering of citizen participation towards monitoring and control of 2030 Agenda SDGs:

- a. **Independence:** The Supreme Audit Institutions - SAIs - shall carry out their institutional control roles, promoting and implementing strategies, links and mechanisms for citizen participation, safeguarding their independence in terms of competencies and final decision-making.



- b. **Active citizen participation and mutual trust:** SAIs shall foster, in accordance with their external relations policies, the establishing of collaborative and auxiliary agreements in the exercise of SDG oversight to strengthen mutual trust with civil organizations, citizens' groups, other stakeholders and the general public, by clearly indicating the scope and limits of their participation.
- c. **Relevance:** SAIs shall recognize and determine the issues in which citizen participation can, in particular, contribute to the monitoring and control of SDGs, with special emphasis on issues relating to the improvement of life and living environments.
- d. **Universality and full integration:** in all action taken, in accordance with this declaration SAIs shall orient integration initiatives towards citizens and organized society, without any form of exclusion, in order to make effective the opportunities and conditions for participation.
- e. **Progressiveness, openness and closeness:** SAIs shall progress gradually with the promotion of citizen participation in order to generate, in a sustained manner, the willingness of citizens, civic organizations, and other interested parties to participate in the monitoring and control of SDGs. Similarly, they shall encourage officials to develop an institutional culture of commitment to the implementation of this Declaration, based on incorporating it into the processes that foster participation and by using techniques for facilitating simple and straightforward communication with citizens.
- f. **Proactivity, continuity and permanence:** SAI signatories of this Declaration will provide opportunities and mechanisms for sustained and permanent citizen participation, to generate credibility amongst citizens and provide real possibilities for monitoring and evaluation of the results obtained.
- g. **Involvement and Coordination:** SAIs shall, when appropriate, promote convergence and inclusion within their offices of the different control and auditing channels for proposals developed for citizen participation.

Third. For each SAI to possess, in accordance with its regulations and environment, the strategy and planning for applying the principles set out in this Declaration. To this end SAIs will identify their level within the maturity model and where they hope to be when monitoring compliance with the 2030 Agenda.

Fourth. To choose one of four levels within the maturity model. These are: 1) **Basic**, referring to a relationship with little interaction between the SAI and citizens, targeted essentially at recognizing the right of citizens, considered individually, to access information and their right of petition, as well as presenting complaints, without much subsequent involvement. 2) **Low**, characterized by greater interaction, supported by making available and promoting information systems and oversight products, etc. to citizens. 3) **Intermediate**, in which a direct relationship with citizens is manifested through training mechanisms, the use of tools or media for the different stages of the



audit process (from planning through implementation and follow-up). 4) **High**, where there is a partnership between the SAI and citizens, manifested through the contribution of the latter to the decision-making processes, notwithstanding the endpoint and independent of each SAI.

Fifth. To instruct the Technical Commission for Citizen Participation (CTPC) to coordinate and permanently monitor the provisions of this Declaration and the development achieved by OLACEFS member SAIs, and to report its progress annually to this assembly which will add to its tasks the views and collaboration of the other commissions and committees. The CTPC will define what is necessary to effectuate a working methodology for the performance of its duties.

Sixth. To promote, according to their powers and the legal framework, the development of laws and regulations to ensure the effective participation of civil society in the monitoring work of SAIs.

Seventh. The OLACEFS Assembly, the highest authority of the Organization, calls on the the authorities responsible from member countries to consider allocating sufficient resources to the Supreme Audit Institutions in the region so they can carry out effective control regarding compliance with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Eighth. OLACEFS members shall make a commitment so that in the framework of the activities developed by the Assembly, its committees, commissions and working groups, technical references are established, such as performance indicators, as well as best practices that guide the actions of member SAIs in matters of monitoring compliance with sustainable development goals, including cooperation with international organizations such as those that make up the United Nations System.

Ninth. Develop initiatives with other SAIs in the OLACEFS community that enable citizen participation in the monitoring and control of SDGs-2030 Agenda at regional level, the analysis of its impact and the participation of OLACEFS in international forums pertaining to these issues.

We sign this document convinced of the significance and value of that declared herein, in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, on the nineteenth (19th) day of October, two thousand sixteen (2016).

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