



# General Assembly

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## Seventy-seventh session

### **Request for the inclusion of an item in the provisional agenda of the seventy-seventh session**

### **Observer status for the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization in the General Assembly**

### **Letter dated 12 July 2022 from the Permanent Representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I am pleased to write with reference to rule 13 (e) of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, which provides for the inclusion of items proposed by any Member of the United Nations.

I therefore have the honour to request the inclusion of an item entitled “Observer status for the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization in the General Assembly” in the agenda of the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly.

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum (annex I) and a draft resolution (annex II) are attached.

In that regard, having fulfilled all the necessary requirements, I should like to request that the present letter and its annexes be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) **Diego Pary Rodríguez**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of the Plurinational State of  
Bolivia to the United Nations



## Annex I

### Explanatory memorandum

#### I. Introduction

1. The Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization is an international organization established by the Protocol of amendment of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty,<sup>1</sup> which entered into force on 2 August 2002. That constitutive treaty was registered with the United Nations Secretariat on 8 November 2002, with registration number 19194. In accordance with article I thereof, the organization has corporate body status and is empowered to enter into agreements with States and other international organizations.

#### II. Relevant facts about the Amazon region

2. During the XIII Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, held in Tena, Ecuador, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the countries members of the organization reiterated the strategic importance of the Amazon basin as a territory of ecosystemic services and dimensions of world importance that shelters the greatest biodiversity in the world, representing 6 per cent of the surface of the planet and occupying 40 per cent of the territory of Latin America and the Caribbean. The Amazon basin contains approximately 25 per cent of all world species and 20 per cent of all fresh water that goes to the oceans, considerable natural resources, both renewable and non-renewable, and a water system that provides natural means of transportation, as well as an important source of energy.

3. The Amazon basin contains a complex system of vegetation, including the most extensive and preserved rainforest in the world.<sup>2</sup> It represents more than half of the tropical humid forest on the planet and is the largest tropical forest in the world. In addition, the Amazon region occupies an area of 7,413,827 km<sup>2</sup>, representing 54 per cent of the total area of the eight countries members of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization: Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

4. The Amazon region has more than 40 million inhabitants and 420 indigenous peoples, many with their own language. Its inhabitants constitute 11 per cent of the population of the eight Amazonian countries. However, human development indicators from the Amazonian region still lag behind national averages.<sup>3</sup>

5. The Amazon River is the largest in the world, at 6,992 km long. It has its source in the Andes of Peru, 5,597 metres above sea level, and its mouth in the Atlantic Ocean. The Amazon basin contributes approximately 20 per cent of the planet's fresh water that flows into the oceans (220,000 m<sup>3</sup> per second), more than the Missouri, Mississippi, Nile and Yangtze Rivers together, thereby directly influencing the main ocean currents, which are essential for regulating the global climate.

6. The Amazon forests sustain the greatest biodiversity (the Amazon is home to one out of every five mammal, fish, bird and tree species in the world). At the regional and global levels, tropical forests also have a major influence on carbon storage and climate, so they are also vital for the regional climate. The trees of the Amazon contain 90–140 billion tons of carbon, equivalent to approximately 9–14 decades of

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2199, No. 19194.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Environment Programme, *Global International Waters Assessment*, 2004.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Development Programme, "The Amazon and Agenda 2030", Panama City, 2016.

current annual global human-induced carbon emissions. Approximately eight trillion tons of water evaporate from the Amazon forest each year, with important influences on global atmospheric circulation.

7. This narrative cannot be ignored in a rapidly transforming world, where urgent action is needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

### III. Historical background

8. The Amazon Cooperation Treaty<sup>4</sup> was signed on 3 July 1978 by representatives of Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) with a view to beginning coordination and cooperation processes for the benefit of the Amazon region. Throughout its history, the Amazon Cooperation Treaty has fostered the development of mechanisms to consolidate and institutionalize the common vision for the Amazon region that motivates its member countries.

9. In 1998 the countries decided to take a further step in this joint process by establishing the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization and its permanent secretariat. As part of those efforts and challenges, the headquarters of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization were inaugurated in Brasilia on 13 December 2002.

### IV. Membership and structure

10. The members of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization are Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

11. The Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization has the Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of its eight member countries as its highest decision-making body, supported and assisted by the Amazon Cooperation Council and the Coordination Commission of the Amazon Cooperation Council. At the national level, the member countries have Permanent National Commissions charged with applying the provisions of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty in their respective territories and implementing the decisions adopted at the meetings of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Amazon Cooperation Council, irrespective of any other tasks assigned to them by each State (art. XXIII of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty). Chaired by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, these bodies bring together all the entities responsible for Amazonian cooperation and development in their respective territories.

12. Pursuant to article XXII of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, the organization's administrative organ is the permanent secretariat, which is headed by a secretary-general and is headquartered in Brazil. The Headquarters Agreement between Brazil and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization,<sup>5</sup> which entered into force in 2006, confirms the legal personality of the organization, details its capacity to perform legal acts and grants it privileges and immunities.

13. In November 2009, the Heads of State of the member countries issued a declaration on the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, giving a mandate to endow the organization with a new and modern role as a cooperation, exchange,

<sup>4</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1202, No. 19194.

<sup>5</sup> Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, *Legal basis of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, updated summary 2003–2012*, "Headquarters Agreement between the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization", pp. 23–32. Available at [http://otca.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/LEGAL\\_BASIS.pdf](http://otca.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/LEGAL_BASIS.pdf).

knowledge and joint visibility forum to face the new and complex international challenges that lay ahead. In that context, they instructed the Ministers for Foreign Affairs to prepare a new short-, mid- and long-term strategic agenda for the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, including regional actions to support national initiatives with a view to strengthening the cooperation process.

14. To accomplish this mandate, and after several regional and sectoral dialogues, the member countries agreed an Amazonian Strategic Cooperation Agenda, which incorporates a cross-cutting and multisectoral approach in all the programmes, projects and activities identified to respond to the concerns and requirements of the member countries and brings together the thematic areas of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, namely forests; water resources; management, monitoring and control of endangered wild fauna and flora species; protected areas; sustainable use of biodiversity and promotion of the bioeconomy; indigenous affairs; knowledge management and information sharing; regional health management; infrastructure and transport; commercial navigation; and tourism, in addition to emerging topics such as regional development, climate change and energy.

15. Thanks to the adjustment and revision mechanisms provided for its implementation, the Agenda is a guiding, flexible and adaptable tool capable of adequately reflecting all our common interests.

16. It is appropriate to mention here that the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization has observer status with the United Nations Forum on Forests.

## **V. Reasons for seeking observer status in the General Assembly**

17. The Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization brings together its member countries in coordinated cooperation processes for the benefit of the transboundary Amazon region.

18. Bearing in mind the recognition given in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to the importance of the participation of regional forums for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Amazonian countries, through the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization as a regional socioenvironmental bloc, are committed not only to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals but also to implementing other frameworks of relevance to the Amazon region, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Paris Agreement, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Minamata Convention on Mercury.

19. In partnership with United Nations specialized agencies, the organization has implemented several initiatives across the Amazon region. Being accredited to the United Nations General Assembly as an observer will strengthen synergies between the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization and the United Nations specialized agencies in order to complement efforts at the regional level to take concrete measures and engage in constructive debates on the Amazon region.

20. The request by the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization for observer status in the General Assembly is part of the historic endeavour of its member countries to undertake joint actions and efforts to promote the harmonious development of their respective Amazonian territories in such a way that these joint actions produce equitable and mutually beneficial results and achieve also the preservation of the environment, and the conservation and rational utilization of the natural resources of those territories. (art. I of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty).

21. The granting of observer status for the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization in the General Assembly will help to enhance its mobilization capacity for the achievement of the purposes of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, especially

through sharing with the international community the lessons learned from actions taken by the organization that can be replicated not only in the Amazon region, but also in other parts of the world.

## Annex II

### Draft resolution

#### **Observer status for the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization in the General Assembly**

*The General Assembly,*

*Wishing* to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization,

1. *Decides* to invite the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the action necessary to implement the present resolution.

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