



International Oil Pollution  
Compensation Funds

<b>Agenda Item 1</b>	IOPC/MAR22/1/2/1	
<b>Date</b>	30 March 2022	
<b>Original</b>	English	
<b>1992 Fund Administrative Council</b>	92AC21/92AES26	●
<b>1992 Fund Executive Committee</b>	92EC78	●
<b>Supplementary Fund Assembly</b>	SAES10	●

## EXAMINATION OF CREDENTIALS

### REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

(As at 2:30 pm on 29 March 2022)

#### Note by the Credentials Committee

<b>Summary:</b>	The Credentials Committee has examined the credentials of delegations of 1992 Fund Member States, including States members of the 1992 Fund Executive Committee and Member States of the Supplementary Fund, and submits the following report.
<b>Action to be taken:</b>	<p><u>1992 Fund Administrative Council</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) take note of the report of the Credentials Committee; and</li> <li>(b) decide which of the two representatives should be accredited as the official representative of Venezuela at these particular sessions of the governing bodies of the IOPC Funds.</li> </ul> <p><u>1992 Fund Executive Committee and Supplementary Fund Assembly</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) take note of the report of the Credentials Committee; and</li> <li>(b) take note of the decision of the 1992 Fund Administrative Council in respect of which of the two representatives should be accredited as the official representative of Venezuela at these particular sessions of the governing bodies of the IOPC Funds.</li> </ul>

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with Rule 10 of the Rules of Procedure of the 1992 Fund Assembly and of the Supplementary Fund Assembly and Rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure of the 1992 Fund Executive Committee, the 1992 Fund Administrative Council, on behalf of the 1992 Fund Assembly, appointed a Credentials Committee consisting of the following five members and their representatives:

Nigeria (Mr Abdulmumuni Dirisu)  
Panama (Mr Rafael Lopez)  
Sweden (Mr Daniel Kjellgren)  
Thailand (Mr Watchara Chiemanukulkit)  
Turkey (Mr Mehmet Hanifi Güler)

- 1.2 The Credentials Committee met remotely at 2:30 pm on Tuesday, 29 March 2022 under the chairship of Mr Mehmet Hanifi Güler and prepared this report.
- 1.3 The Credentials Committee presents this report in accordance with Rule 10 of the Rules of Procedure of the 1992 Fund Assembly.

## **2 Examination of credentials**

- 2.1 The credentials of delegations of 63 Member States of the 1992 Fund, including States members of the 1992 Fund Executive Committee and of the Supplementary Fund, were examined.
- 2.2 The Credentials Committee based its deliberations on Rules 9 and 11 of the Rules of Procedure of the 1992 Fund Assembly and on the guidelines given in circular IOPC/2015/Circ.4.
- 2.3 Credentials received in respect of the following 63 Member States were found to be in order:

### **1992 Fund Executive Committee Members**

Ecuador	Jamaica	Morocco
France	Japan	Netherlands
Germany	Liberia	Philippines
India	Malaysia	Singapore
Italy	Marshall Islands	Spain

### **Other 1992 Fund Member States**

Algeria	Fiji	Palau
Antigua and Barbuda	Finland	Panama
Argentina	Georgia	Papua New Guinea
Australia	Greece	Poland
Bahamas	Guyana	Portugal
Belgium	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Republic of Korea
Bulgaria	Latvia	Russian Federation
Canada	Luxembourg	South Africa
China <sup>&lt;1&gt;</sup>	Madagascar	Sweden
Colombia	Malta	Thailand
Cook Islands	Mexico	Trinidad and Tobago
Croatia	Monaco	Turkey
Cyprus	New Zealand	United Arab Emirates
Denmark	Nicaragua	United Kingdom
Dominica	Nigeria	Vanuatu
Estonia	Norway	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

- 2.4 In the case of Dominica and Madagascar, the Credentials Committee noted that they had presented credentials but had not participated in the sessions.

<sup><1></sup>

The 1992 Fund Convention applies to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region only.

- 2.5 The following 1992 Fund Member States did not present credentials and did not participate at the March 2022 sessions of the governing bodies:

Albania	Guinea	Saint Lucia
Angola	Hungary	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Bahrain	Iceland	Samoa
Barbados	Ireland	Senegal
Belize	Israel	Serbia
Benin	Kenya	Seychelles
Brunei Darussalam	Kiribati	Sierra Leone
Cabo Verde	Lithuania	Slovakia
Cambodia	Maldives	Slovenia
Comoros	Mauritania	Sri Lanka
Congo (the)	Mauritius	Switzerland
Côte d'Ivoire	Mozambique	Syrian Arab Republic
Djibouti	Namibia	Tonga
Dominican Republic	Nauru	Tuvalu
Gabon	Niue	United Republic of Tanzania
Gambia (the)	Oman	Uruguay
Ghana	Qatar	
Grenada	Saint Kitts and Nevis	

- 2.6 In the case of Cameroon, Montenegro and Tunisia, the Credentials Committee noted that they had registered but credentials had not yet been submitted.
- 2.7 After having examined the letters of credentials of 62 Member States, the Credentials Committee examined the two letters of credentials of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (Venezuela).
- 2.8 In respect of the credentials of Venezuela, the Credentials Committee held a separate discussion as set out in section 3 below.

### **3 Credentials of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**

#### Considerations at previous sessions of the governing bodies

- 3.1 At the meetings of the governing bodies held in October 2019, December 2020, March 2021, and November 2021, the Credentials Committee received two letters of credentials for two separate delegations claiming to represent Venezuela: one signed by H.E. Mrs Rocío Maneiro and the other signed by President Juan Guaidó<sup><3></sup>. Given the complexity of the issue, the then Director invited Dr Rosalie Balkin AO, former Assistant Secretary-General and Director of Legal Affairs and External Relations Division of IMO, in her capacity as the 1992 Fund's legal adviser in matters of public international law, to provide assistance to the Credentials Committee during their deliberations. The then Director also sought the advice of Professor Dan Sarooshi Q.C. and Professor Antonios Tzanakopoulos, who provided legal opinions on this matter<sup><4></sup>.

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<3> H.E. Mrs Rocío Maneiro is the Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and other international organisations headquartered in London, appointed by President Nicolas Maduro; and President Juan Guaidó is the President of the National Assembly, and President (E) of Venezuela.

<4> Professor Dan Sarooshi Q.C. is the 1992 Fund's legal counsel in public international law and Professor Antonios Tzanakopoulos is an Associate Professor of Public International Law of the Faculty of Law in the University of Oxford.

- 3.2 In all four meetings, the Credentials Committee recommended to the 1992 Fund Assembly that the individuals listed in the credentials letters issued by Ambassador Maneiro should be accepted as the official representatives of Venezuela. The 1992 Fund Assembly accepted these recommendations, and the Assembly's decisions were noted by the 1992 Fund Executive Committee and Supplementary Fund Assembly (see documents IOPC/OCT19/1/2/1, IOPC/NOV20/1/2/1, IOPC/MAR21/1/2/1 and IOPC/NOV21/1/2/4).

*March 2022 sessions of the governing bodies*

- 3.3 At the March 2022 sessions of the governing bodies, the Director received letters of credentials from the same two delegations claiming to represent Venezuela. The Director requested Professor Antonios Tzanakopoulos to provide an updated legal opinion on this matter (attached at the Annex to this document).
- 3.4 As in the previous meetings, the Credentials Committee was unanimous in its view that it is not the function of the IOPC Funds to decide which is the legitimate government of Venezuela, since this is considered to be a political question to be decided in another forum, namely the political organs of the United Nations (UN) (i.e. the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council). The Credentials Committee considered that its role is simply to decide which of the two delegations should be accredited as the official representatives of Venezuela at each meeting of the Funds' governing bodies and make its recommendation to the 1992 Fund Administrative Council.
- 3.5 In considering this matter and the legal advice provided by Professor Tzanakopoulos on 17 March 2022, the Credentials Committee recommends once again that the *status quo* should continue. The Credentials Committee thus recommends that the letter of credentials of the current delegation of Venezuela issued by Ambassador Maneiro, appointed by President Maduro, should be accepted and that the named individuals therein be deemed the official representatives for the March 2022 meeting of the governing bodies. However, the Committee also notes that this position applies to this meeting only and could be susceptible to change in the coming months depending on future developments.

#### **4 Action to be taken**

##### **4.1 1992 Fund Administrative Council**

The 1992 Fund Administrative Council is invited to:

- (a) take note of the report of the Credentials Committee; and
- (b) decide which of the two representatives should be accredited as the official representative of Venezuela at these particular sessions of the governing bodies of the IOPC Funds.

##### **4.2 1992 Fund Executive Committee and Supplementary Fund Assembly**

The 1992 Fund Executive Committee and Supplementary Fund Assembly are invited to:

- (a) take note of the report of the Credentials Committee; and
- (b) take note of the decision of the 1992 Fund Administrative Council in respect of which of the two representatives should be accredited as the official representative of Venezuela at these particular sessions of the governing bodies of the IOPC Funds.

**LEGAL OPINION**

**submitted to the**

**International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds**

**concerning**

**the representation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela at the United Nations**

Professor Antonios Tzanakopoulos, Three Stone Chambers and the University of Oxford

17 March 2022

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds ('IOPC Funds') have received two sets of competing letters of credentials for representatives of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the IOPC Funds for the purpose of the sessions of the governing bodies on 29-30 March 2022. The IOPC Funds will have to decide which representative should be accredited as the official representative of the State at these sessions of the governing bodies.

2. I am asked to give an opinion on 'which delegation of the Republic of Venezuela has been recognised by the United Nations and by United Nations agencies in the last months', ie since late October 2021, when the IOPC Funds last solicited and obtained a legal opinion on these matters by me, having previously also obtained a number of opinions by me and, earlier, an opinion by Professor Dan Sarooshi, QC. As in my last three opinions on these matters, which are to a large extent reproduced here, parts II and III set out the practice of the United Nations ('UN'), its specialised agencies and conferences on credentials, and on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela specifically. Part IV discusses – and distinguishes – the practice in other international organisations. Part V discusses the issue from the perspective of the IOPC Funds and sets out my response to the question that has been posed to me.

3. For the purposes of preparing this Opinion, I have taken into account the 1992 Fund Assembly / 1992 Fund Executive Committee / Supplementary Fund Rules of Procedure, the United Nations General Assembly Rules of Procedure, and the practice of the UN and its specialised agencies and conferences, in particular as set out in the United Nations Juridical Yearbook, which contains opinions of the UN Office of Legal Affairs on matters of credentials. I have also considered the practice of other international organisations on these matters. I have finally drawn on my own previous opinions of 25 October 2021, 24 March 2021 and 25 November 2020, on the opinion of Professor Dan Sarooshi, QC of 6 October 2019, and on a range of primary and secondary legal sources. A full list of documents and authorities is set out in Appendix 1. My biographical information is set out in Appendix 2.

## II. UN PRACTICE REGARDING CREDENTIALS

4. The practice of the United Nations regarding credentials continues to be that which Professor Sarooshi set out eloquently in his opinion of 6 October 2019. In summary, each UN organ establishes its own Credentials Committee in order to approve the credentials of delegations. However, the General Assembly's ('GA') decisions on credentials, on the basis of the report of the GA Credentials Committee, are considered – in accordance with the UN Office of Legal Affairs ('OLA') – as providing 'authoritative guidance' to other UN organs, even though they are not binding.<sup>1</sup> In fact, this also applies, beyond UN organs, also to UN conferences. In an opinion to such a UN conference in 2011, the OLA recommended that, should a question of a State's participation be raised at the conference, '[the conference] recall that the General Assembly has accepted the State's credentials for the 65<sup>th</sup> session and that it is the practice of UN conferences to follow the guidance of the General Assembly on decisions relating to credentials'.<sup>2</sup>

5. That the same applies to specialised agencies of the UN follows from paragraph 3 of General Assembly Resolution 396 (V) regarding 'Recognition by the United Nations of the representation of a Member State'. In that resolution, the GA, '[c]onsidering that it is in the interest of the Organisation that there should be uniformity in the procedure applicable whenever more than one authority claims to be the government entitled to represent a Member State in the United Nations', and that 'in virtue of its composition, the General Assembly is the organ of the United Nations in which consideration can be best given to the views of all Member States', '[r]ecommends that the attitude adopted by the General Assembly [...] should be taken into account in other organs of the United Nations *and in the specialised agencies*'.<sup>3</sup>

6. The GA Credentials Committee, which is composed of nine members proposed by the President of the GA and appointed by the GA at the beginning of each session,<sup>4</sup> submits a report to the General Assembly, which then decides on credentials by means of a resolution,

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<sup>1</sup> See United Nations Juridical Yearbook 1985, 129 and cf Sarooshi Opinion of 6 October 2019, para 7.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Juridical Yearbook 2011, 495 para 6. For a reiteration of the OLA view referred to in the text in n 1 above, see *ibid* para 5.

<sup>3</sup> UN Doc A/RES/396(V) of 14 December 1950, para 3 (emphasis added).

<sup>4</sup> Rule 28 General Assembly Rules of Procedure.



based on the Committee's report. In practice, the GA usually merely adopts a resolution approving the report of the Credentials Committee.<sup>5</sup> Until the Committee has submitted its report and the GA has decided on the issue of credentials, State representatives are entitled to fully participate in the work of the Assembly, including by exercising the right to vote, even when an objection to their credentials has been raised—in the latter instance on a provisional basis.<sup>6</sup>

7. There are two instances in which the practice of the UN regarding representation and approval of credentials<sup>7</sup> becomes crucial for present purposes: (a) when there are more than one authorities issuing credentials of delegations of the same State, in which case the Credentials Committee and the GA must decide which set of credentials will be approved; and (b) when, even though there is only one authority issuing credentials of a delegation, the Credentials Committee and the GA decide to reject those credentials, and even not to allow the relevant representatives to participate in the work of the Assembly.

8. As to the former instance, Professor Sarooshi's opinion clearly sets out the legal position in paragraphs 9 and 10: 'it is clear that when the GA decides that certain representatives are the "only lawful representatives of a Member State" then "it follows automatically that the authorities accrediting those representatives constitute in the view of the General Assembly – again for its purposes – the only lawful Government of that Member State".'<sup>8</sup> Further, 'there is no settled legal criteria that has consistently been applied by the UN in making such determinations. There was a tendency in a number of earlier cases (eg Iraq in 1958 and China in 1971) to use what is referred to as the "principle of effectiveness" – ie, whichever an authority can be said to exercise "effective control" throughout the territory of the State and is "habitually obeyed by the bulk of the population",'<sup>9</sup> but in practice the Credentials Committee and the General Assembly have actually relied also on other considerations, including whether the relevant authority had come into power by constitutional means and the degree of international

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<sup>5</sup> See for example for the 74<sup>th</sup> session of the GA: UN Doc A/RES/74/179 of 18 December 2019; for the 75<sup>th</sup> session: UN Doc A/RES/75/19 of 7 December 2020; for the 76<sup>th</sup> session: UN Doc A/RES/76/15 of 6 December 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Rule 29 General Assembly Rules of Procedure. See also Sarooshi Opinion of 6 October 2019, para 8.

<sup>7</sup> The question whether representation of a State and approval of the credentials issued by the State's government are two sides of the same coin, whether the power to decide over one is implied in the power to decide over the other, etc, is interesting but not crucial for present purposes. For a discussion see Dan Ciobanu, 'Credentials of Delegations and Representation of Member States at the United Nations' (1976) 25 ICLQ 351.

<sup>8</sup> Referring to United Nations Juridical Yearbook 1972, 155 para 8.

<sup>9</sup> Referring to Memorandum on the Legal Aspects of the Problem of Representation in the United Nations, UN Doc S/1466 of 9 March 1950.

recognition it enjoyed.<sup>10</sup> In fact, while the principle of effectiveness had been included as an ‘objective’ criterion in the draft of what became General Assembly Resolution 396 (V), it was finally deleted, leaving only a reference to the purposes and principles of the UN and the circumstances of each case.<sup>11</sup> A leading commentator wrote, accordingly, that ‘in testing the representativeness of a government, the political organs of the United Nations, like individual governments in bilateral relations, render *an essentially political judgment*’.<sup>12</sup>

9. As to the latter instance, it is possible, and it has happened, eg with respect to South Africa from 1970 onwards and until normalisation with the fall of Apartheid in 1994, that the Credentials Committee and the GA reject the credentials of a delegation even in the absence of a competing claim by another authority to issue credentials for the State’s delegation.<sup>13</sup> This, however, appears to be extremely rare and is certainly not the issue with which the IOPC Funds are faced in the present instance. As such, a more detailed discussion is beyond the scope of the present Opinion.

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<sup>10</sup> See Sarooshi Opinion of 6 October 2019, para 10.

<sup>11</sup> UN Doc A/RES/396(V) of 14 December 1950, para 1.

<sup>12</sup> See Ciobanu, n 7, 370–371 (emphasis added).

<sup>13</sup> A similar situation arose in the League of Nations in 1936, when the League considered whether to approve the credentials issued by Selassie on behalf of Ethiopia, given questions as to the extent of effective control he exercised over the territory, and notwithstanding the fact that there was no competing authority claiming the power to issue such credentials.

### III. UN PRACTICE REGARDING THE REPRESENTATION OF VENEZUELA

10. In his opinion of 6 October 2019, Professor Sarooshi noted that ‘delegates from Maduro’s Government continue to represent Venezuela at the United Nations’.<sup>14</sup> In my previous opinions of 25 October 2021, 24 March 2021, and 25 November 2020, I confirmed that this was the case. I noted that there appeared to have been no submission of credentials of a delegation by the Guaidó authority, or at least none was noted in the report of the GA Credentials Committee, which held its single meeting for the 74<sup>th</sup> session of the GA on 10 December 2019.<sup>15</sup> As such, the Credentials Committee accepted the credentials of all representatives of the Member States as submitted, including those of the Maduro Government on behalf of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, in a resolution that was adopted without a vote.<sup>16</sup> The Committee did note that ‘[t]he representative of the United States of America dissociated from the adoption of the Committee’s resolution, solely with respect to the acceptance of the credentials submitted by the Maduro representative on behalf of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela’,<sup>17</sup> but it does not appear that the US raised a formal objection.

11. In any event, the Credentials Committee recommended to the General Assembly that it adopt a resolution merely approving the Credentials Committee’s report,<sup>18</sup> which the General Assembly duly adopted on 18 December 2019.<sup>19</sup> It appears from the Official Records of the 51<sup>st</sup> Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly that that resolution was also adopted without a vote,<sup>20</sup> even though some delegations then took the floor to express their position that the adoption of the report of the Credentials Committee did not signify a tacit recognition by the relevant States of the Maduro Government.<sup>21</sup> This is done out of an abundance of caution, and was done in that context also by some States with regard to States other than Venezuela. Other delegations also took the floor to express their support for the Maduro Government.<sup>22</sup>

12. As such, it was the Maduro Government that represented the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela during the 74<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2019. This was

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<sup>14</sup> See Sarooshi Opinion of 6 October 2019, para 12.

<sup>15</sup> See UN Doc A/74/572 of 4 December 2019 [sic], paras 5–6.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, paras 7–8.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, para 9.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, para 12.

<sup>19</sup> UN Doc A/RES/74/179.

<sup>20</sup> UN Doc A/74/PV.51 of 18 December 2019, 1.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, 1–2.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, 2–4.

also the case during the next (75<sup>th</sup>) session of the General Assembly in 2020(-21). In fact, Maduro himself addressed the 75<sup>th</sup> session of the GA (though virtually, due to restrictions imposed as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic) on behalf of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on 23 September 2020.<sup>23</sup> There was no submission of competing credentials on behalf of the Guaidó authority during this session. The Credentials Committee met on 23 November 2020 and made a recommendation to the GA that was almost identical to that of 2019, recommending adoption of a resolution merely approving the Credentials Committee's report.<sup>24</sup> The GA also adopted a decision that was similar to that of 2019 on 1 December 2020.<sup>25</sup> The resolution was adopted without a vote and again some delegations took the floor to indicate that the adoption of the report of the Credentials Committee did not signify a tacit recognition by the relevant States of the Maduro Government, while others also took the floor to express their support for the Maduro Government.<sup>26</sup>

13. During the 76<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly in 2021(-22), there were two instances in which competing credentials were submitted for representatives of States: neither, however, referred to Venezuela, but rather to Myanmar and Afghanistan. On those two sets of credentials the Credentials Committee opted to 'defer' its decision.<sup>27</sup> The credentials submitted by the Maduro Government, however, were once again the only credentials submitted for Venezuela to the Credentials Committee, which recommended their adoption to the General Assembly, with the usual dissociation by the US representative on the Committee.<sup>28</sup> The General Assembly, in turn, adopted the recommended resolution without a vote, as per its usual practice.<sup>29</sup>

14. It should be noted, finally, that even before the decisions of the GA based on the reports of the Credentials Committee in December 2019, November 2020, and December 2021, UN conferences had followed the guidance of the GA in accepting the credentials issued by the Maduro Government for the 73<sup>rd</sup> session in December 2018,<sup>30</sup> even though Guaidó declared

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<sup>23</sup> See <<https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/09/1073382>> and <[https://estatemnts.unmeetings.org/estatemnts/10.0010/20200923/aCaK5IQSX0PR/KAwodvEAAVpK\\_en.pdf](https://estatemnts.unmeetings.org/estatemnts/10.0010/20200923/aCaK5IQSX0PR/KAwodvEAAVpK_en.pdf)> (both accessed 22 November 2020).

<sup>24</sup> UN Doc A/RES/75/606 of 23 November 2020, paras 8, 13.

<sup>25</sup> UN Doc A/RES/75/19 of 7 December 2020.

<sup>26</sup> See UN Doc A/75/PV.33 of 1 December 2020, 17–18.

<sup>27</sup> See UN Doc A/76/550 of 1 December 2021, paras 7–9.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, paras 5, 10–12.

<sup>29</sup> UN/DOC/A/RES/76/15 of 6 December 2021.

<sup>30</sup> See UN Doc A/RES/73/193 of 17 December 2018, approving the report of the Credentials Committee in UN Doc A/73/600 of 28 November 2018.

himself interim President on 23 January 2019. The Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation convened in Buenos Aires on 20–22 March 2019, ie after the declaration by Guaidó, approved the report of the Credentials Committee established for that conference, and which had accepted the credentials submitted by the Maduro Government in a resolution adopted without a vote (though again with some ‘dissociations’).<sup>31</sup> Both Russia and China noted, in that connection, that the GA had accepted the credentials issued by the Maduro Government for the 73<sup>rd</sup> session of the GA,<sup>32</sup> implicitly pointing to the ‘authoritative guidance’ discussed above, in Part II of this Opinion.

15. What follows from this practice is that (a) the Maduro Government continues to represent and appoint representatives of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in the United Nations, its specialised agencies, and conferences; (b) the Maduro Government is likely to continue to do so given the ‘authoritative guidance’ already given by the General Assembly in 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2021; (c) it appears that the Guaidó authority has not sought to challenge this position through the submission of competing credentials, at least to my knowledge and at this time.

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<sup>31</sup> See UN Doc A/CONF.235/5 of 20 March 2019, paras 10–14.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, paras 15–16.

#### IV. PRACTICE IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

16. Beyond the UN system, discussed in Parts II and III of this Opinion, I am not aware of any global international organisation having switched its accreditation from representatives appointed by the Maduro Government to representatives appointed by the Guaidó authority. However, two regional organisations, namely the Inter-American Development Bank ('IDB') and the Organisation of American States ('OAS') did accept the appointment of representatives put forward by the Guaidó authority in 2019 and, in the case of OAS, also in 2020.

17. The IDB (and the Inter-American Investment Corporation) adopted resolution AG-1/19 and CII/AG-1/19, entitled 'Governor and Executive Director for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela' on 15 March 2019. In it, they 'take note that the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has designated Mr. Ricardo Hausmann as Governor of the Bank and the Corporation and that prior designations by the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to such position have been revoked.'<sup>33</sup> The Agreement establishing the Inter-American Development Bank simply provides in Article VIII(2)(a) that 'each member country of the Bank shall appoint a governor who shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing member.' The IDB does not set up a credentials committee, nor had it ever before faced a situation where two competing authorities were claiming the power to appoint Governors, according to the IDB's in-house counsel, writing in his personal capacity.<sup>34</sup> Given that '[a]ll the powers of the Bank shall be vested in the Board of Governors' according to the same provision noted above, the Board simply 'took note' of the designation by the Guaidó authority and of the revocation of any previous designations by the Maduro Government. There is no record of any vote, or of any relevant discussion in the Board. There appear to be no further relevant resolutions in 2020, 2021, or 2022.<sup>35</sup>

18. The OAS also does not provide for a credentials committee. Rather, under Rule 27 of the OAS General Assembly Rules of Procedure, the Secretary-General receives credentials (as per Rule 3) and submits a report to the General Assembly of the Organisation. The General Assembly resolved '[t]o accept the Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States, designated by the National Assembly of Venezuela, until new presidential elections are

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<sup>33</sup> Doc AG-1/19 and CII/AG-1/19 of 15 March 2019, para 1.

<sup>34</sup> Félix A Quintero Vollmer, 'International Law or International Politics? The Guaidó v Maduro Conundrum at the Inter-American Development Bank' (2019) 51 U Miami Inter-American LR 118, 138.

<sup>35</sup> See <<https://www.iadb.org/en/about-us/resolutions-adopted-board-governors>> (accessed 17 March 2022).

held and result in the appointment of a democratically-elected government’ on 28 June 2019,<sup>36</sup> following a Resolution of the Permanent Council with the same content on 9 April 2019.<sup>37</sup> The latter session did give rise to serious disagreements, with the Uruguayan delegation reportedly leaving the session in protest, and with eight other States voting against the decision, which was finally passed by 18 affirmative votes, there being also 6 abstentions.<sup>38</sup> A similar situation appears to continue in 2020, 2021, and 2022.<sup>39</sup>

19. The first thing to note regarding this practice is that the two organisations discussed above are organisations that, to quote the IDB in-house counsel, ‘share almost the same regional membership’.<sup>40</sup> The second thing to note is that the organisations that are closest to the structure and function of the IDB on a global level are the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which however have no Governors that have been appointed for Venezuela—the positions appear to be vacant.<sup>41</sup> This means that the Guaidó authority has either not sought, or not yet managed, to make similar appointments in these global international organisations. The organisation that is closest to the structure and function of the OAS on the global level is the United Nations, which – as discussed in Part III of this Opinion – has not switched its accreditation from the Maduro appointees to Guaidó appointees. The third and most important thing to note for present purposes is that the IOPC Funds are not particularly similar to either the IDB or the OAS. In particular, the IOPC Funds are global treaty bodies, established by treaties adopted under the auspices of the International Maritime Organisation, a UN specialised agency. Their global reference and clear – if not direct – relationship with the broader UN system would militate against aligning with practice that appears to be outlying and limited to organisations with reference to the Americas, and rather in favour of falling in with the practice of the United Nations, its specialised agencies, and its conferences. An overview of the relevant provisions regarding accreditation in the IOPC Funds, in Part V below, further confirms this

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<sup>36</sup> Doc AG/RES.2944 (XLIX-O/19) of 28 June 2019, para 1.

<sup>37</sup> Doc CP/RES.1124 (2217/19) of 10 April 2019, para 1.

<sup>38</sup> See Federica Paddeu and Alonso Gurmendi Dunkelberg, ‘Recognition of Governments: Legitimacy and Control Six Months after Guaidó’ [2019] *Opinio Juris* (18 July), available at: <<http://opiniojuris.org/2019/07/18/recognition-of-governments-legitimacy-and-control-six-months-after-guaido/>> (accessed 24 November 2020); see also Quintero Vollmer, n 31, 135.

<sup>39</sup> See Doc AG/RES.2963 (L-O/20) of 21 October 2020, para 11.

<sup>40</sup> Quintero Vollmer, n 31, 133.

<sup>41</sup> See <<https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/45fc8267f59fdf50a364f6538c2817e7-0330032021/original/Bank-Governors.pdf>> and <<https://www.imf.org/en/About/executive-board/members-quotas>> (both accessed 17 March 2022).

by demonstrating the close relationships of those provisions with the applicable provisions in the UN system.



## V. THE IOPC FUNDS

20. The Rules of Procedure of the 1992 Fund Assembly, the 1992 Fund Executive Committee, and the Fund Supplementary Assembly are very similar to those of the General Assembly of the UN regarding the establishment and operation of Credentials Committee(s). They provide for the establishment at each session of a Credentials Committee. The 1992 Fund Assembly Credentials Committee, composed of five members elected by the Assembly at the proposal of the Chair, examines the credentials of delegations of Member States and reports to the Assembly.<sup>42</sup> Even if an objection is made to the admission of a representative, the representative is allowed to sit provisionally with the same rights as other representatives until the Credentials Committee has reported and the Assembly has made its decision.<sup>43</sup>

21. The Rules of Procedure of the 1992 Fund Executive Committee and the Fund Supplementary Assembly are almost identical, except for providing for fewer (three) members of the relevant Credentials Committees.<sup>44</sup> However, when these two bodies are holding sessions in conjunction with the Assembly, then the 1992 Fund Assembly Credentials Committee is the one that undertakes to examine credentials for all bodies.<sup>45</sup>

22. In the present instance, the 1992 Fund Assembly Credentials Committee will examine thus credentials for the purpose of the meetings of the other bodies as well. It has received competing credentials by the Venezuelan Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Mrs Rocío Maneiro, who indicates that she is acting as authorised by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, as well as by Juan Guaidó as President of the National Assembly and Interim President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

23. Ambassador Maneiro continues to be the Ambassador accredited to the United Kingdom, where the Headquarters of the IOPC Funds are located, as required by Rule 9 of the 1992 Fund Assembly Rules of Procedure. This is clear from the London Diplomatic List available through the UK Government.<sup>46</sup> Juan Guaidó claims to be the interim Head of State. In the

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<sup>42</sup> Rule 10 1992 Fund Assembly Rules of Procedure.

<sup>43</sup> Rule 11 1992 Fund Assembly Rules of Procedure.

<sup>44</sup> Rules 9–10 1992 Fund Executive Committee Rules of Procedure; Rules 10–11 Supplementary Fund Rules of Procedure.

<sup>45</sup> See Doc 92FUND/A/ES.9/28 of March 2005, paras 24.5–24.7.

<sup>46</sup> See < [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1058277/london-diplomatic-list-March2022.odt](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1058277/london-diplomatic-list-March2022.odt) > (accessed 17 March 2022).

instance, then, the credentials submitted by Ambassador Maneiro clearly conform to Rule 9 of the 1992 Fund Assembly Rules of Procedure. On the other hand, for the credentials submitted by Mr Guaidó to conform to the same rule of the Rules of Procedure, the IOPC Funds would have to decide that Mr Guaidó is the Head of State of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. If the IOPC Funds were to follow UN practice in this respect, they would have to consider that, at the moment at least, this is not the case, and thus to accept the credentials submitted by Ambassador Maneiro and reject those submitted by Mr Guaidó.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'A' followed by a series of loops and a horizontal line extending to the right.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Table of Authorities**

#### **List of Documents**

Rules of Procedure of the United Nations General Assembly

United Nations General Assembly Resolution 396 (V) of 14 December 1950

United Nations General Assembly Resolution 73/193 of 17 December 2018

United Nations General Assembly Resolution 74/179 of 18 December 2019

United Nations General Assembly Resolution 75/19 of 1 December 2020

United Nations General Assembly Resolution 76/15 of 6 December 2021

Report of the Credentials Committee, UN Doc A/73/600 of 28 November 2018

Report of the Credentials Committee, UN Doc A/74/572 of 4 December 2019

Report of the Credentials Committee, UN Doc A /75/606 of 23 November 2020

Report of the Credentials Committee, UN Doc A/ 76/550 of 1 December 2021

51<sup>st</sup> Plenary Meeting Procès-Verbaux, UN Doc A/74/PV.51 of 18 December 2019

33<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Meeting Procès-Verbaux, UN Doc A/75/PV.33 of 1 December 2020

Report of the Credentials Committee [of the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation], UN Doc A/CONF.235/5 of 20 March 2019

[IDB] Resolution AG-1/19 and CII/AG-1/19 of 15 March 2019

[OAS] Doc AG/RES.2944 (XLIX-O/19) of 28 June 2019, para 1.

[OAS] Doc CP/RES.1124 (2217/19) of 10 April 2019, para

[OAS] Doc AG/RES.2963 (L-O/20) of 21 October 2020

[IOPC Funds] Doc 92FUND/A/ES.9/28 of March 2005

#### **List of Other Authorities**

Dan Ciobanu, ‘Credentials of Delegations and Representation of Member States at the United Nations’ (1976) 25 ICLQ 351

Federica Paddeu and Alonso Gurmendi Dunkelberg, ‘Recognition of Governments: Legitimacy and Control Six Months after Guaidó’ [2019] *Opinio Juris* (18 July), available at: <<http://opiniojuris.org/2019/07/18/recognition-of-governments-legitimacy-and-control-six-months-after-guaido/>>

Félix A Quintero Vollmer, 'International Law or International Politics? The Guaidó v Maduro Conundrum at the Inter-American Development Bank' (2019) 51 U Miami Inter-American LR 118

United Nations Juridical Yearbook 1972

United Nations Juridical Yearbook 1985

United Nations Juridical Yearbook 2011

## APPENDIX 2

### Biographical Information

Antonios Tzanakopoulos is Professor of Public International Law at the University of Oxford, a Fellow of St Anne's College, and door tenant at Three Stone Chambers in Lincoln's Inn. He is the Secretary-General of the International Law Association. Antonios advises States, international organisations, and other actors on matters of international law and has acted as counsel before the International Court of Justice and international arbitral tribunals. His publications include *Disobeying the Security Council – Countermeasures Against Wrongful Sanctions* (Oxford 2011), the leading treatise on reactions to illegal acts by international organisations.

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