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## **I. General information on the Republic of Paraguay**

### **A. General geographic characteristics**

1. The Republic of Paraguay is situated between meridians 54° 19' and 63° 38' west and between parallels 19° 18' and 27° 30' south. It borders Brazil to the north and east, Argentina to the south and west, and the Plurinational State of Bolivia to the north and west. It is 406,752 km<sup>2</sup> in area and has the following natural characteristics: a Mediterranean-type country, from which the sea can be reached via the River Paraguay, the River Parana and the River Plate (1,600 km) or overland via Puerto Paranagua in Brazil (1,200 km). It has no mountains, the highest elevations above sea level being no more than 800 metres.

2. Two natural regions, the western and the eastern, are divided by the River Paraguay. The western region, with 246,925 km<sup>2</sup>, also known as the Chaco, is semi-arid and constitutes an alluvial plain which is almost entirely flat. It is characterized by conditions of extreme humidity and dryness, and because of its impermeable subsoil the banks of long stretches of the River Paraguay and the River Pilcomayo are subject to flooding. The population of the Chaco represents 1.7 per cent of the country's total population, and population density is 0.2 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. Its principal economic activity is extensive livestock-farming, although mixed livestock and crop farms have developed in the Mennonite colonies in the central part of the region.

3. The eastern region, comprising part of the River Paraguay and River Parana basins, is 159,827 km<sup>2</sup> in area and represents 39 per cent of the country's total area. It is undulating and is inhabited by 98 per cent of the population, with a population density of 18.6 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>. Most of the country's economic activities are located in this region, the most important being livestock-farming and forestry.

4. Paraguay's resources in terms of soil, vegetation, rivers and fauna are of good quality.

### **B. Ethnic characteristics**

5. Paraguay is a multi-ethnic country, comprising the indigenous population and strongly influenced by Spanish culture; with the founding of Asunción in 1537, Paraguay's population nucleus was formed by Spaniards and Guaraní Indians. As a result of intensive miscegenation, the rudiments of a new nationality characterized by bilingualism and a blend of both cultures were formed.

### **C. Ethnic characteristics of the indigenous population**

6. A new national population census was conducted in 2002. According to the section on indigenous groups, Paraguay has an indigenous population of 87,099 persons belonging to five linguistic families, each composed of different ethnic groups with their own culture, classified as follows:

(a) Guaraní: Aché, Ava Guaraní, Mbya Guaraní, Paï Tavyretá, Guarayo, Tapieté or Guaraní Ñandeva;

(b) Maskoy language: Toba Maskoy, Lengua Enthlet Norte, Lengua Enthlet Sur, Sanapaná-Angaité, Guaná;

- (c) Matako-Mataguayo: Nivaklé, Maká, Manjui;
- (d) Zamuco: Ayoreo, Chamacoco Ybytosó, Chamacoco Tomaraho, Ishirt;
- (e) Toba-gaicurú: Toba-Qom.

Table 1  
**Indigenous population by linguistic family**

<i>Linguistic family</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>108 308</b>	<b>100</b>
Guaraní	63 045	58.2
Maskoy	22 286	20.6
Mataco-Mataguayo	17 034	15.7
Zamuco	3 885	3.6

Source: DGEEC, Survey of Indigenous Households 2008.

- 7. This rich cultural diversity is one of the country's principal characteristics.

#### **D. Demographic characteristics of the country and the population**

8. In the mid-twentieth century, the country had 1,328,452 inhabitants. According to the most recent national population and housing census, conducted in 2002, the number of inhabitants was 5,163,198, representing a fourfold rise in population during that period.

9. The growth rate for the period 1992–2002 was 2.2 per cent, less than the rate of 3.2 per cent for the previous decade. If the current rate is maintained, the country's population will double in approximately 30 years.

10. In 2008, Paraguay's population reached 6,164,082, with slightly more women than men. The traditionally rural nature of the Paraguayan population has changed: there is now greater concentration in urban areas and a larger number of women.

11. The following table shows the total population disaggregated by area of residence and department. Central is the most highly populated department, followed by Alto Paraná and the city of Asunción.

Table 2  
**Total population by area of residence and department**

<i>Department</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Area of residence</i>	
		<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>
<b>Total country</b>	<b>6 164 082</b>	<b>3 611 111</b>	<b>2 552 971</b>
Asunción	518 792	518 792	-
Concepción	201 077	72 226	128 851
San Pedro	352 978	61 863	291 115
Cordillera	289 852	96 537	193 315
Guairá	220 557	79 326	141 230

<i>Department</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Area of residence</i>	
		<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>
Caaguazú	<b>476 437</b>	150 563	325 874
Caazapá	<b>140 480</b>	28 864	111 615
Itapúa	<b>523 203</b>	160 348	362 855
Misiones	<b>119 485</b>	69 851	49 633
Paraguarí	<b>247 507</b>	44 414	203 093
Alto Paraná	<b>720 225</b>	477 753	242 472
Central	<b>1 929 918</b>	1 667 730	262 188
Ñeembucú	<b>80 066</b>	42 118	37 949
Amambay	<b>90 381</b>	79 465	10 917
Canindeyú	<b>165 067</b>	33 641	131 426
Pres. Hayes	<b>88 058</b>	27 620	60 438

*Source:* DGEEC, EPH 2008. PARINFO database.

*Note:* The departments of Boquerón and Alto Paraguay are not included.

12. The population under 15 years of age declined from 43.8 per cent in 1950 to 33.5 per cent in 2008; at the same time, the 65 and over age group continued to be limited in size while growing at a very slow but sustained rate: it rose from 3.7 per cent in 1950 to 6.1 per cent in 2008. The population aged between 15 and 64, which represents the largest population group and labour force, has also increased slightly albeit irregularly, increasing from 52.5 per cent in 1950 to 60.4 per cent in 2008.

### 1. Life expectancy at birth

13. Life expectancy at birth has increased over the years and is greater for women than for men. For the period 2010–2015, a life expectancy of more than 70 years has been estimated for both sexes. The table below presents the estimated demographic indicators for rural and urban areas, disaggregated by sex and by a five-year period.

Table 3

#### Estimated demographic indicators for life expectancy at birth for the period 2000–2030, by quinquennium

<i>Five-year period</i>	<i>Life expectancy at birth</i>		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
2000–2005	<b>70.76</b>	68.70	72.92
2005–2010	<b>71.76</b>	69.70	73.92
2010–2015	<b>72.76</b>	70.70	74.92
2015–2020	<b>73.66</b>	71.50	75.92
2020–2025	<b>74.46</b>	72.30	76.72
2025–2030	<b>75.26</b>	73.10	77.52

*Source:* STP/DGEEC. Paraguay: estimated population by sex and age group, disaggregated into urban and rural areas, 2000–2030.

14. The services and resources of the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare have improved. The number of facilities has grown constantly in recent years, reaching a total of 1,028 establishments in 2009. However, the number of inpatient facilities under the Ministry is variable: in 2009 there were fewer inpatient facilities than in 2004.

15. Between 2004 and 2009, the number of available beds provided by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare rose to 418. The number of cases of outpatient treatment per inhabitant also increased, and the annual number of hospital discharges per 1,000 inhabitants is nearly 30.

16. The number of assisted deliveries and surgical procedures has also increased. Deliveries carried out by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare rose from 59,801 in 2004 to 60,076 in 2009; surgical procedures increased from 22,285 in 2004 to 30,985 in 2009.

17. The percentage of PENTA, OPV and BCG-ID vaccination coverage for children under 1 year of age, and SPR coverage for children aged 1 year declined significantly from 2004 to 2009, according to official statistics provided by the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare.

Table 4

**Services, resources and coverage indicators for the period 2004–2009**

<i>Services, resources and coverage indicators</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2009</i>
<b>Total number of health facilities under the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare (MSB and BS)</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>943</b>	<b>967</b>	<b>967</b>	<b>1 028</b>
<b>Total number of inpatient facilities under the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>354</b>
Number of beds (MSB and BS)	4 228	4 459	4 434	4 453	4 603	4 656
Annual outpatient treatment (all types) per inhabitant (MSB and BS)	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.1
Annual number of hospital discharges per 1,000 inhabitants (MSP and BS)	26.8	28.3	29.4	29.4	30.3	29.9
Percentage of institutional births/total live births	81.2	84.2	86.5	88.8	92.8	90.3 (*)
<b>Total number of assisted deliveries (MSP and BS)</b>	<b>59 801</b>	<b>59 020</b>	<b>58 524</b>	<b>56 459</b>	<b>60 493</b>	<b>60 076</b>
<b>Total number of caesarean deliveries (MSP and BS)</b>	<b>16 830</b>	<b>16 975</b>	<b>17 349</b>	<b>161 816</b>	<b>18 876</b>	<b>19 879</b>
<b>Total number of surgical procedures (MSP and BS)</b>	<b>22 285</b>	<b>24 549</b>	<b>26 141</b>	<b>28 139</b>	<b>30 310</b>	<b>30 985</b>
Percentage of pregnant women treated before the fourth month/number of pregnant women awaiting treatment	23.3	21.4	22.8	18.2	31	29.9
PENTA vaccination coverage for children under 1 year of age (percentage)	89.6	87.7	84.7	78.8	75.5	72

<i>Services, resources and coverage indicators</i>	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
OPV3 vaccination coverage for children under 1 year of age (percentage)	89.7	86.9	84.9	78	75.5	7
BCG-ID vaccination coverage for children under 1 year of age (percentage)	93.9	87.7	85.3	78.2	76.2	73
SPR vaccination coverage for children aged 1 year (percentage)	90.8	87.8	86.1	80.1	77	71

*Source:* Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare. Biostatistics Division. Department for Health Surveillance. Expanded Programme on Immunization.

(\*) Provisional data.

## 2. Mortality

18. Maternal mortality represents the highest mortality rate up to 2008. With regard to illness-related mortality, circulatory system illness represents the highest rate, with 100 deaths per 100,000 persons, followed by tumour-related mortality, with 52 deaths per 100,000 persons. Mortality due to external causes accounts for 45 deaths per 100,000 persons. The table below presents the principal mortality rates for the period 2004–2008.

Table 5  
**Mortality rates for the period 2004–2008**

<i>Mortality rates</i>	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Overall mortality rate per 1,000 live births	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.7
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births	17	17.8	18	16.77	17.2
Neonatal mortality rate per 1,000 live births	10.7	11.7	12.3	11.3	11.7
Perinatal mortality rate per 1,000 live births	17.7	18.2	19.6	18.5	19.2
Maternal mortality rate per 1,000 live births	154	129	121.4	127.3	119.3
Mortality rate for 5-year-old children per 1,000 live births	21.5	21.8	21.7	19.9	20.4
Mortality rate for children aged 1 to 4, per 1,000 live births	79	73.4	64.3	51.1	53.7
Mortality rate for circulatory system illness per 100,000 persons	57.6	57.1	63.9	69.9	100.8
Tumour-related mortality rate per 100,000 persons	48	50.5	50.7	54.3	52.5
Mortality rate due to external causes per 100,000 persons	44.2	40.1	42.9	41.8	45.9
Mortality rate for transmissible diseases per 100,000 persons	17.6	32.7	29.7	30.3	28.2
Mortality rate for perinatal-period illnesses per 1,000 live births	8.9	9.6	10	18.5	18.5
Mortality rate for respiratory-system illness per 100,000 persons	26.5	22.5	21.4	23.1	19.2
Early neonatal (0 to 6 days) mortality rate per 1,000 live births	8.5	9.4	9.9	9.1	9.4
Late neonatal (7 to 27 days) mortality rate per 1,000 live births	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.3
Mortality rate for acute respiratory infection in 5-year-old children per 1,000 live births	20.4	16.2	14.7	12.1	11.6



<i>Mortality rates</i>	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Mortality rate for malignant tumours per 100,000 persons	48	50.5	50.7	50.7	51.7
Mortality rate for other causes per 100,000 persons	28.1	28.5	30.2	29.3	30.2
Percentage of deaths for unknown causes (R00–R99)	17.6	16.8	14.1	16	13.8

*Source:* Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare. Biostatistics Division.

19. Infant mortality declined significantly in the 10 years between 1996 and 2006. There is greater infant mortality in rural areas than in urban areas, and among male children than among female children. The highest rate of infant mortality occurs during the perinatal period, with 19 deaths per 1,000 live births. The table below charts the changes in Paraguay's infant mortality rate, disaggregated by area of residence and by sex.

Table 6  
**Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births**

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Area of residence</i>		<i>Sex</i>	
		<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
1996	<b>20.9</b>	17.7	19.3	23.6	18.1
1997	<b>19.7</b>	17.4	17.1	22.6	16.6
1998	<b>19.6</b>	13.8	25.0	21.9	17.3
1999	<b>19.4</b>	16.9	23.7	22.3	16.5
2000	<b>20.2</b>	21.7	17.6	22.8	17.5
2001	<b>19.7</b>	21.5	16.0	21.5	17.8
2002	<b>19.6</b>	20.6	17.7	21.6	17.6
2003	<b>19.4</b>	22.8	13.4	20.9	17.8
2004	<b>17.0</b>	18.0	14.9	18.5	15.0
2005	<b>17.8</b>	18.9	15.5	19.4	15.9
2006	<b>18.0</b>	19.4	15.1	19.9	15.7
2007	<b>16.7</b>	17.5	15.1	18.1	15.2

*Source:* MSPyBS/OPS\_2003. Paraguay. Mortality rates 2000. 1990–1995. MSPyBS\_Biostatistics. 1996–2006.

20. Maternal mortality has demonstrated an irregular pattern over the years, but has shown a steady decrease since 2002, with a total of 119 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births.

21. The table below, in which the data has been disaggregated by area of residence, demonstrates the significant gap between the number of maternal deaths occurring in rural and urban areas, where the maternal mortality rate is lower.

Table 7  
**Maternal mortality rate**

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Area of residence</i>	
		<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>
1990	<b>150.1</b>	-	-
1991	<b>165.8</b>	-	-

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Area of residence</i>	
		<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>
1992	<b>99.5</b>	-	-
1993	<b>123.1</b>	-	-
1994	<b>139.5</b>	-	-
1995	<b>130.7</b>	-	-
1996	<b>123.3</b>	86.4	168.1
1997	<b>101.8</b>	75	124.8
1998	<b>110.9</b>	62.2	185.6
1999	<b>114.4</b>	76.1	179.1
2000	<b>164</b>	147.5	193.4
2001	<b>159.7</b>	127.7	225.1
2002	<b>182.1</b>	169.6	206.4
2003	<b>174.1</b>	174.4	173.6
2004	<b>153.5</b>	98.1	263.8
2005	<b>128.5</b>	86.2	214.2
2006	<b>121.4</b>	119.4	125.6
2007	<b>127.3</b>	103.4	179.4
2008	<b>119.3</b>	-	-

*Source:* MSPyBS/OPS\_2003. Paraguay. Mortality rates 2000. 1990–1995. MSPyBS\_Biostatistics. 1996–2006.

22. The fertility rate has shown a slight but constant decrease from one five-year period to another. At present, the average rate is three children per fertile female with a median age of 28 years. This may be compared to the average 20 years ago of four children per female with a median age of nearly 29 years.

Table 8

**Fertility rate by female age group and global fertility rate (GFR) for the period 1990–2050**

<i>Period</i>	<i>Age group</i>							<i>GFR</i>	<i>Median age</i>
	<i>15 to 19</i>	<i>20 to 24</i>	<i>25 to 29</i>	<i>30 to 34</i>	<i>35 to 39</i>	<i>40 to 44</i>	<i>45 to 49</i>		
1990–1995	0.0924	0.2055	0.2030	0.1699	0.1211	0.0567	0.0133	4.31	28.92
1995–2000	0.0919	0.1869	0.1871	0.1536	0.1033	0.0439	0.0093	3.88	28.52
2000–2005	0.0823	0.1685	0.1684	0.1377	0.0921	0.0389	0.0081	3.48	28.49
2005–2010	0.0723	0.1537	0.1522	0.1216	0.0787	0.0318	0.0063	3.08	28.32
2010–2015	0.0643	0.1408	0.1384	0.1085	0.0685	0.0268	0.0050	2.76	28.19
2015–2020	0.0583	0.1304	0.1274	0.0984	0.0609	0.0232	0.0042	2.51	28.09
2020–2025	0.0538	0.1224	0.1190	0.0909	0.0554	0.0207	0.0036	2.33	28.02
2025–2030	0.0506	0.1165	0.1129	0.0856	0.0516	0.0190	0.0033	2.20	27.97
2030–2035	0.0484	0.1123	0.1085	0.0818	0.0490	0.0179	0.0030	2.10	27.93

Period	Age group							GFR	Median age
	15 to 19	20 to 24	25 to 29	30 to 34	35 to 39	40 to 44	45 to 49		
2035–2040	0.0468	0.1093	0.1054	0.0792	0.0472	0.0171	0.0029	2.04	27.91
2040–2045	0.0457	0.1072	0.1033	0.0774	0.0459	0.0166	0.0027	1.99	27.89
2045–2050	0.0450	0.1058	0.1019	0.0762	0.0451	0.0162	0.0027	1.96	27.88

Source: STP/DGEEC. Paraguay. National population estimates by sex and age, 2000–2050.

23. The country's overall average is 2.6 children per female.

Table 9

**Number of females aged 12 years and over by total of live births**

Urban-rural area and age of female	Total number of females aged 12 years and over	Live births	Average number of children per female
<b>Country total</b>	<b>1 808 647</b>	<b>4 623 790</b>	<b>2.6</b>
12 to 14	187 642	335	0.0
15 to 19	284 076	42 350	0.2
20 to 24	234 018	202 933	0.9
25 to 29	180 467	345 612	2.0
30 to 34	166 167	472 244	2.9
35 to 39	154 188	561 160	3.7
40 to 44	138 285	583 656	4.3
45 to 49	111 650	515 711	4.7
50 to 54	88 921	432 063	5.0
55 to 59	67 354	349 370	5.3
60 to 64	58 065	316 964	5.6
65 to 69	42 236	247 102	6.0
70 to 74	37 422	220 916	6.0
75 to 79	26 228	154 846	6.1
80 to 84	16 854	96 589	5.9
85 to 89	9 662	53 200	5.7
90 and over	5 412	28 739	5.6

Source: DGEEC. National population and housing census 2002.

## E. Socio-economic characteristics

24. In recent years Paraguay has had difficulty in sustaining a high level of economic growth. The year 2002 witnessed a severe economic recession, a banking crisis and a 34.7 per cent rise in poverty, which caused the gross domestic product (GDP) to drop to the minimum level. Despite climate conditions that affected agriculture in 2003, the GDP grew by 4 per cent in 2004. This strong economic performance brought stability to the country, which was reinforced by an increase in reserves, reimbursement of international debt and

major fiscal reform. Inflation, which had reached 20 per cent in 2003, fell to 5.5 per cent, and extreme poverty dropped to 26 per cent but remained high.<sup>1</sup>

25. The year 2006 once again had important consequences for the agricultural sector: commodity prices on the international market were higher and the country experienced good weather. As a result, the GDP grew by 4 per cent. Favourable conditions continued in 2007, which caused the GDP to rise by 6.8 per cent;<sup>2</sup> it then fell by 1 percentage point in 2008 and a further decline was predicted for 2009.

26. Despite the macroeconomic advances of the previous years, which hardly affected the population, a microeconomic analysis shows that in 2007 the poverty level reached 35.6 per cent and the severe inequalities in income distribution remained unchanged from 2005 to 2007, with a Gini coefficient of 0.508, demonstrating that economic growth had not given rise to a reduction in poverty.<sup>3</sup>

27. Poverty in Paraguay is concentrated in urban areas. Using data from the housing survey and taking the poverty line<sup>4</sup> as a reference, it is possible to estimate the country's total percentage of people living in poverty, which reached 18.9 per cent in 2008, and of people living in extreme poverty, which reached 19 per cent that same year.

Table 10

**Paraguay: total population by poverty level**

<i>Poverty level</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Total (percent)</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 164 082</b>	<b>100</b>
Extreme poverty	<b>1 169 297</b>	<b>19</b>
Non-extreme poverty	<b>1 169 166</b>	<b>19</b>
No poverty	<b>3 825 619</b>	<b>62.1</b>

*Source:* DGEEC. EPH 2008. PARINFO integrated database system.

28. A new data-analysis methodology demonstrates that poverty rates in the period under consideration were higher than the estimates made using the previous methodology. According to the new results, poverty in 2005 reached 41.3 per cent while in 2008 it amounted to 37.9 per cent. Urban poverty in 2005 reached 35.5 per cent and decreased to 30.2 percent in 2008. Rural poverty in 2005 stood at 44.2 per cent and rose to 48.8 per cent in 2008.

Table 11

**Percentage of population living in extreme poverty**

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
1997–1998	<b>18.8</b>	19.2	18.4	7.2	32.0
1999	<b>17.7</b>	18.3	17.2	5.9	31.4
2000–2001	<b>16.7</b>	17.5	15.9	6.7	28.2

<sup>1</sup> Fazio, María Victoria and Tornarolli, Leopoldo. "Monitoring the Socio-Economic Conditions in Paraguay" (draft), World Bank.

<sup>2</sup> CADEP, 2008. Informe Económico Fiscal. Asunción.

<sup>3</sup> UNPD, Human Development Report 2008.

<sup>4</sup> The poverty line is equal to the cost of the basic food basket; people who fall below the line are considered to be living in poverty; those whose income is lower than the cost of the basic food basket are considered to be living in extreme poverty.

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>
2002	<b>24.4</b>	25.1	23.6	13.1	39.2
2003	<b>21.2</b>	21.0	21.5	13.4	31.2
2004	<b>18.3</b>	17.7	18.9	12.2	26.2
2005	<b>16.5</b>	16.6	16.4	10.7	24.3
2006	<b>23.7</b>	23.2	24.3	14.9	35.9
2007	<b>23.2</b>	23.3	23.1	15.4	34.0
2008	<b>19.0</b>	18.8	19.3	10.6	30.9

*Source:* DGEEC. EPH 2008. PARINFO integrated database system.

29. Extreme poverty reached 16.5 per cent in 2005 and 19 per cent in 2008, or a total of 1,169,297 persons. During the same period, extreme poverty in urban areas rose from 16.6 per cent to 18.8 per cent and in rural areas, it increased from 16.4 per cent to 19.3 per cent.

Table 12

**Population living in extreme poverty**

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>
1997–1998	<b>939 459</b>	193 459	746 189
1999	<b>908 985</b>	160 981	748 004
2000–2001	<b>888 870</b>	191 738	697 133
2002	<b>1 336 138</b>	405 031	931 107
2003	<b>1 194 105</b>	424 290	769 815
2004	<b>1 034 907</b>	392 116	642 791
2005	<b>953 022</b>	357 591	595 431
2006	<b>1 403 277</b>	510 284	892 993
2007	<b>1 395 410</b>	539 813	855 597
2008	<b>1 165 384</b>	378 588	786 795

*Source:* DGEEC. EPH 1999, 2008–2008. EIH 1997–1998, 2000–2001. PARINFO integrated database system.

30. Paraguay has one of the most unequal distributions of wealth and income in Latin America. The most privileged 10 per cent of the population earns 39 per cent of the country's total income while the poorest 10 per cent earns only 0.7 per cent of it. The profound inequality in income distribution is such that in the medium- or long-term the gap between rich and poor will persist or grow even wider.<sup>5</sup>

31. According to the standing household survey (EPH) for 2008, the rate of employment participation (employed or unemployed persons in comparison with the total working-age population) is 61.9 per cent, or 2,996,853 individuals. This percentage is higher in rural areas (62 per cent) than in urban areas (61.8 per cent) and higher for males (75.9 per cent) than for females (48.3 per cent).

<sup>5</sup> Instituto Internacional de Gobernabilidad. Informe Socio-Económico: Realidades y Desafíos del Paraguay. In: Diagnóstico Institucional de la República de Paraguay. October 2001.

Table 13  
Participation rate

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>
1997–1998	<b>57.9</b>	60.6	54.4
1999	<b>57.3</b>	58.5	55.8
2000–2001	<b>60.5</b>	60.6	60.4
2002	<b>61.2</b>	60.5	62.0
2003	<b>59.8</b>	59.1	60.7
2004	<b>63.5</b>	62.5	64.9
2005	<b>61.8</b>	60.6	63.7
2006	<b>59.3</b>	57.9	61.4
2007	<b>60.8</b>	59.7	62.3
2008	<b>61.9</b>	61.8	62.0

*Source:* DGEEC. EPH 1999, 2002–2008. EIH 1997–1998, 2000–2001. PARINFO integrated database system.

32. Open unemployment affects 11.9 per cent of the population aged 15 to 24. In absolute terms, this means that approximately 86,812 young people were actively seeking employment during the survey period.

Table 14  
Open unemployment rate trends for 15 to 24-year-olds

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total</i>
1997–1998	<b>10.3</b>
1999	<b>11.9</b>
2000–2001	<b>13.8</b>
2002	<b>18.6</b>
2003	<b>15.1</b>
2004	<b>13.3</b>
2005	<b>12.0</b>
2006	<b>12.8</b>
2007	<b>12.0</b>
2008	<b>11.9</b>

*Source:* DGEEC. EPH 1999, 2002–2008. EIH 1997–1998, 2000–2001. PARINFO integrated database system.

33. A total of 26 per cent of employed persons are underemployed, a figure equivalent to just over 782,800 individuals, who work less than 30 hours a week, would like to work more and are available to do so; or who work 30 hours or more a week and earn less than the existing minimum wage.

34. Owing to the predominance of small- and medium-size businesses in the country's economy, approximately 62.4 per cent of Paraguayan workers are employed by companies with less than six employees.

35. Based principally on independent labour, the Paraguayan economy is composed predominantly of independent workers (33.4 per cent), followed by private sector employees and workers (34.2 per cent), unremunerated family workers (10.5 per cent) and employers (5.2 per cent). This means that just over 5 out of every 10 workers generate income through the direct sale of their products or services.

Table 15

**Employed population aged 10 years and over by sex and occupational category**

<i>Occupational category</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Sex</i>		<i>Total (per cent)</i>
		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 825 919</b>	<b>1 723 381</b>	<b>1 102 539</b>	<b>100</b>
Employee/worker (public sector)	<b>259 245</b>	134 687	124 558	<b>11.3</b>
Employee/worker (private sector)	<b>967 250</b>	733 825	233 425	<b>21.2</b>
Employer	<b>145 698</b>	118 744	26 954	<b>2.4</b>
Independent worker	<b>944 067</b>	538 082	405 985	<b>36.8</b>
Unremunerated family work	<b>297 595</b>	179 351	118 243	<b>10.7</b>
Domestic employee	<b>208 711</b>	17 596	191 116	<b>17.3</b>
Unreported	<b>3 355</b>	1 096	2 258	<b>0.2</b>

*Source:* DGEEC. EPH 2008. PARINFO integrated database system.

36. The primary or extractive sector accounts for 26.3 per cent of workers, the secondary sector (manufacturing, construction) for 18.3 per cent and the tertiary sector for 55.4 per cent. Approximately 71.7 per cent of employed women work in the tertiary sector while men work mainly in the tertiary and primary sectors (45 per cent and 31.1 per cent respectively).

37. There is a direct relationship between the lack of sources of employment and migration, which mainly affects young people, especially women, who feel they must go elsewhere in order to seek employment or enrol in advanced study programmes. Migratory movements have had a considerable impact on the population in recent years, and there has been an increase in emigration abroad.

38. Remittances have a significant impact on household income: in Paraguay, 10 per cent of households receive remittances from family members living abroad. In urban areas, that figure stands at 8.3 per cent of households and rises markedly, to 12.4 per cent, in rural areas where family members have no other choice than to take low-productivity jobs (independent worker, employer, unremunerated family worker) or work for companies with less than six employees.

Table 16

**Percentage of households receiving foreign remittances**

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>
2002	<b>2.9</b>	2.5	3.5
2003	<b>3.8</b>	3.3	4.5
2004	<b>4.6</b>	4.9	4.2
2005	<b>6.2</b>	5.5	7.3

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>
2006	<b>9.1</b>	8.1	10.5
2007	<b>11.2</b>	10.3	12.7
2008	<b>10.0</b>	8.3	12.4

*Source:* DGEEC. EPH 2008. PARINFO integrated database system.

39. Indigenous people are the country's poorest and most excluded group and have historically been the most marginalized in terms of development. The indigenous illiteracy rate is 38.9 per cent and exceeds 40 per cent in some ethnic groups; only 2.5 per cent of indigenous people have access to potable water.

40. Paraguay offers a healthy investment climate, characterized by a predictable economy and controlled levels of inflation (2.2 per cent in 2009). It is complying rigorously with the terms of a Stand-By Arrangement with the International Monetary Fund, which means that it can qualify for new loans from international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank.<sup>6</sup>

41. In 2008, inflation stood at around 7.5 per cent, which was higher than the 6 per cent observed in 2007, but still within the medium- and long-term inflation reference index of 5 per cent, with a +/- 2.5 per cent tolerance range, for the second year in a row. Furthermore, underlying inflation (an indicator which excludes volatile items from the food basket) amounted to less than 7.5 per cent in 2008, which was lower than the 7.7 per cent level attained in 2007, as well as being in line with the medium- and long-term inflation reference target. This result also confirmed the downward trend for that indicator beginning in the second half of 2008.<sup>7</sup>

42. The country's estimated economic growth for 2008, measured by the gross domestic product (GDP) at constant prices, was 5.8 per cent; with respect to the previous year's rate, growth is estimated at -3.8 per cent for 2009 and 6 per cent for 2010 (Central Bank of Paraguay).

43. Economic performance during that year, from the standpoint of supply, was boosted by good performance in the primary sector, particularly in the areas of agriculture and livestock-farming. Similarly, the industrial sector made an important recovery, sustained mainly by the strong performance of major manufacturing sectors, such as the meat industry; oil, beverages and tobacco production; the lumber industry; machines and equipment production; and paper production and printing.

44. Furthermore, the service sector was increasingly dynamic, with positive economic trends in the areas of trade, communication, transport and, in particular, finance, where the excellent performance of commercial banks was reflected in their high rates of growth.

45. From the standpoint of demand, economic expansion in 2008 was once again driven by a steady increase in foreign demand throughout most of the year, mainly for the principal export products including soy and soy derivatives, cereals, bovine meat and timber, and by a dynamic domestic demand, reflected in greater household consumption, public consumption and private gross fixed capital formation.

<sup>6</sup> Rediex information: Investment conditions in Paraguay.

<sup>7</sup> Preliminary economic report 2008. Central Bank of Paraguay.



46. Estimated growth for 2008 also implies greater GDP per capita, a variable that grew by 3.9 per cent. With this increase, the constant dollar value of GDP per capita, which amounts to US\$ 1,556, represents the highest level reached in 47 years.

47. External public debt declined for the sixth consecutive year, falling from 52.1 per cent of the GDP in 2002 to an estimated 16.4 per cent in 2008, for two reasons: a decrease in the debt balance (repayments higher than the amounts received) and an increase in the GDP due to a significant economic recovery.

48. From the beginning of 2008 and up to October of that year, Paraguayan currency increased in value in comparison with that of its principal trading partners, reaching an inter-annual rate of 17.1 per cent. In November, the inter-annual rate began to decline owing mainly to the currency's strength relative to the United States dollar and the Argentinean peso.

49. As an active member of the international community, the Republic of Paraguay belongs to the principal international organizations including the Organization of American States (OAS) and the United Nations.

## F. Cultural indicators

50. Education in Paraguay is divided into three stages: preschool, basic education (EEB) and intermediate education (EEM).

51. Basic education is compulsory; it encompasses grades 1 to 9 and is divided into three cycles of three years each. Since the 1994 education reform, pupils are required to complete grades 7 to 9 which, as part of secondary education under the previous system, were not compulsory. Education reform also led to modifications in the school programme: inclusion of new subject matter, updating of curricula, and new assessment methods. Intermediate education has now replaced secondary education and encompasses grades 1 to 3.

52. Rates of enrolment in the various education stages and cycles showed an inconsistent pattern during the period 2004–2008, demonstrating slight increases and decreases during the first three school years and then rising in subsequent years.

53. With regard to the first and second cycles, there is a barely discernable difference between enrolment figures disaggregated by area of residence. However, in the third cycle, there is a very large difference in the level of enrolment between rural and urban areas, with enrolment being twice as high in urban areas. Intermediate education shows a similar pattern.

Table 17

### Overall enrolment by education level and zone for the period 2004–2008

Year	Area of residence							
	Urban				Rural			
	Preschool	Basic education		Intermediate education	Preschool	Basic education		Intermediate education
		1st and 2nd cycles	3rd cycle			1st and 2nd cycles	3rd cycle	
2004	65 365	452 404	201 215	152 093	57 109	477 074	115 154	54 764
2005	64 207	457 770	202 501	152 167	57 152	474 658	116 596	56 258
2006	62 585	450 019	200 102	153 351	56 543	463 037	117 028	57 272
2007	67 924	478 026	209 316	162 791	51 112	414 987	105 610	52 506

Year	Area of residence							
	Urban				Rural			
	Basic education				Basic education			
	Preschool	1st and 2nd cycles	3rd cycle	Intermediate education	Preschool	1st and 2nd cycles	3rd cycle	Intermediate education
2008	70 990	469 938	213 321	167 200	52 162	401 323	105 531	55 179

Source: MEC, DGPE, SIEC 2004–2008.

## 1. Literacy rate

54. The country has a high literacy rate. In 2008, the literacy rate was 98.3 per cent for 15 to 24-year-olds.

Table 18

### Literacy among 15 to 24-year-olds, country level

Period	Total	
	Absolute	Percentage
1997–1998	880 439	97.3
1999	936 557	97.2
2000–2001	1 014 203	96.3
2002	1 064 712	98.0
2003	1 112 817	98.0
2004	1 151 147	98.6
2005	1 147 494	98.6
2006	1 204 930	98.4
2007	1 225 292	98.8
2008	1 199 493	98.3

Source: DGEEC. PARINFO integrated database system 2008.

55. By disaggregating the data by sex, it can be seen that women have a higher literacy rate than men, a reversal of the country's situation 10 years previously. This gain is due principally to the great expansion in educational opportunities, the development of channels of communication (roads, mass media, etc.) with urban centres and possibilities of migration. This has narrowed the gap between supply and demand in education for women generally.

Table 19

### Literacy among 15 to 24-year-olds, by sex

Period	Males		Females	
	Absolute	Percentage	Absolute	Percentage
1997–1998	436 346	97.5	444 092	97.1
1999	462 164	97.1	474 393	97.3
2000–2001	517 784	96.1	496 419	96.5
2002	524 973	98.5	539 739	97.6
2003	553 388	97.9	559 429	98.0

<i>Period</i>	<i>Males</i>		<i>Females</i>	
	<i>Absolute</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Absolute</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
2004	570 319	98.7	580 827	98.4
2005	581 116	98.4	566 379	98.7
2006	608 813	98.9	596 117	98.0
2007	612 258	98.8	613 033	98.8
2008	593 634	98.1	605 859	98.5

*Source:* DGEEC. PARINFO integrated database system 2008.

Table 20  
**Literacy among 15 to 24-year-olds, by area of residence**

<i>Period</i>	<i>Urban</i>		<i>Rural</i>	
	<i>Absolute</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Absolute</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1997–1998	521 604	98.8	358 835	95.1
1999	535 179	98.5	401 378	95.5
2000–2001	603 074	97.9	411 129	94.0
2002	646 683	98.7	418 029	96.9
2003	656 800	98.7	456 017	96.9
2004	679 863	99.0	471 283	98.0
2005	682 986	98.9	464 508	98.0
2006	735 916	98.7	469 014	98.0
2007	724 238	98.9	501 054	98.6
2008	732 487	99.0	467 006	97.3

*Source:* DGEEC. PARINFO integrated database system 2008.

56. According to data provided by the Department of Surveys, Statistics and Censuses, illiteracy is more widespread in rural areas, where it is nearly 2 per cent higher than in urban areas.

57. However, these statistics fail to show the real extent of illiteracy in Paraguay since they do not include so-called functional illiterates, i.e., early school-leavers who have forgotten or make no use of what knowledge they acquired.

58. With regard to the number of repeaters in each academic cycle, there is a higher percentage of repeaters during the first and second cycles of basic education. According to the most recent statistics provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture, that figure does not exceed 5 per cent of the total number of pupils enrolled.

Table 21  
**Percentage of repeaters by academic cycle, country level, for the period 2004–2008**

<i>Period</i>	<i>Total</i>		
	<i>Basic education</i>		<i>Intermediate education</i>
	<i>1st and 2nd cycles</i>	<i>3rd cycle</i>	
2004	<b>6.7</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>0.5</b>
2005	<b>5.1</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0.6</b>

	<i>Total</i>		
	<i>Basic education</i>		
	<i>1st and 2nd cycles</i>	<i>3rd cycle</i>	<i>Intermediate education</i>
2006	<b>4.9</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.4</b>
2007	<b>4.1</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0.6</b>
2008	<b>4.5</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0.6</b>

Source: MEC, DGPE, SIEC 2004–2008.

59. The number of overage pupils has been reduced to under 20 per cent, according to official data provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Nevertheless, the number remains high with regard to both basic education and intermediate education, giving rise to great concern, because repeaters and overage pupils often drop out of school.

Table 22

**Percentage of overage pupils by academic cycle, country level, for the period 2004–2008**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Basic education</i>			<i>Intermediate education</i>
	<i>Preschool</i>	<i>1st and 2nd cycles</i>	<i>3rd cycle</i>	
2004	1.2	22.9	27.1	25.0
2005	1.0	21.4	24.4	23.3
2006	1.0	20.1	22.2	21.1
2007	1.0	19.2	20.6	18.8
2008	0.8	18.5	19.2	17.4

Source: MEC, DGPE, SIEC 2004–2008.

60. The school dropout rate represents the number of pupils who enrol in school and then subsequently abandon their studies. The highest dropout rate occurs during the third cycle of basic education, followed by intermediate education. Nevertheless, in recent years, the dropout rate has declined significantly.

Table 23

**Percentage of dropouts by academic cycle, country level, for the period 2004–2008**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>		
	<i>Basic education</i>		
	<i>1st and 2nd cycles</i>	<i>3rd cycle</i>	<i>Intermediate education</i>
2004	<b>6.1</b>	<b>7.6</b>	<b>6.2</b>
2005	<b>6.2</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>6.7</b>
2006	<b>6.0</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>7.0</b>
2007	<b>4.1</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>4.8</b>
2008	<b>4.0</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>4.7</b>

Source: MEC, DGPE, SIEC 2004–2008.

61. According to data provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the retention rate amounts to 49 per cent for basic education and 76 per cent for intermediate education.

The completion rate for both levels is similar to the retention rate, i.e. 45 per cent for basic education and 69 per cent for intermediate education.

Table 24

**Percentage of retention and completion by basic and intermediate education cohort, country level**

<i>Level</i>	<i>Cohort</i>	<i>Retention rate</i>	<i>Completion rate</i>
Basic education	2000/08	49	45
Intermediate education	2006/08	75	69
Basic and intermediate education	1997/2008	31	29

*Source:* MEC, DGPE, SIEC.

## 2. Religion

62. The predominant religion in Paraguay is Roman Catholicism, with 3,892,603 believers, followed by the Evangelical or Protestant religion, with 239,573 believers, according to data provided by the Department of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses.

Table 25

**Population aged 10 and over, by age group and religion, country level, 2002**

<i>Urban-rural area, sex and religion (country level)</i>	<i>Age group</i>								
	<i>Total</i>	<i>10 to 11</i>	<i>12 to 14</i>	<i>15 to 19</i>	<i>20 to 29</i>	<i>30 to 39</i>	<i>40 to 49</i>	<i>50 to 59</i>	<i>60 years and over</i>
Both sexes	<b>3 892 603</b>	263 637	381 077	576 807	832 311	640 713	511 801	318 024	368 233
Catholic	<b>3 488 086</b>	234 939	341 754	516 103	742 140	569 750	458 642	287 446	337 312
Evangelical or Protestant	<b>239 573</b>	16 945	24 220	34 103	50 540	43 260	32 890	18 881	18 734
Other Christian	<b>44 275</b>	3 122	4 659	6 722	9 266	7 636	6 014	3 502	3 354
Jewish	<b>1 100</b>	32	51	103	181	167	193	141	232
Orthodox	<b>1 445</b>	57	84	146	235	213	219	200	291
Islam	<b>872</b>	38	36	46	243	316	120	48	25
Hindu	<b>151</b>	9	6	6	47	43	23	13	4
Spiritualism	<b>641</b>	28	39	75	117	119	92	79	92
Buddhism	<b>2 190</b>	61	99	155	282	328	395	360	510
Indigenous religion	<b>25 219</b>	2 367	3 075	4 190	5 976	3 839	2 800	1 564	1 408
Other religions	<b>7 511</b>	551	766	986	1,648	1,362	982	589	627
None	<b>44 334</b>	3 700	4 699	8 017	11 937	6 709	4 628	2 483	2 161
Unreported	<b>37 206</b>	1 788	1 589	6 155	9 699	6 971	4 803	2 718	3 483

*Source:* DGEEC, 2002.

### Freedom of religion, belief and ideology

63. Catholicism is no longer the official religion of the Republic. Nevertheless, article 62 of the Constitution recognizes the contribution Catholicism has made to shaping the nation's history and culture.

### 3. Maternal language

64. Paraguay has two official languages – Spanish and Guaraní. The latter is the mother tongue of most of the rural population and of the least well-off social classes in urban areas. These people learn Spanish later at school, since the education system is based predominantly on that language. However, depending on the level of education attained and on whether or not they live in a rural area, they may continue to speak only one language, preferring to use Guaraní in both formal and informal situations.

Table 26

#### Languages spoken, 2002

<i>Language</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5 163 198</b>
Guaraní/Castilian*	2 658 646
Guaraní only	1 260 199
Spanish only	374 076
Other languages	253 442
Minors aged 0 to 4	607 301
Non-speaking	8 582
Unreported	952

*Source:* National Population and Housing Census, 2002.

*Note:* Includes persons who speak Guaraní and Spanish, independently of other languages.

65. In the upper and middle strata of the urban population, both in the capital and in major provincial cities, the language learnt and used in the home is Spanish, just as in rural areas Guaraní is the mother tongue generally used.

Table 27

#### Principal household languages, 2002

<i>Language</i>	<i>Total number of persons</i>	<i>Total number of households</i>
Guaraní	3 142 934	653 600
Castilian	1 747 003	396 802
Other languages	232 535	56 572
Non-speaking	156	135
Unreported	354	188
<b>Total</b>	<b>5 122 982</b>	<b>1 107 297</b>

*Source:* DGEEC. National Population and Housing Census, 2002.

66. Article 76 of the Constitution guarantees tuition in the mother tongue and stipulates: "Teaching in the early stages of schooling shall be provided in the official language

constituting the mother tongue of the pupil. Instruction shall likewise be provided to enable the pupil to learn and use both official languages of the Republic.”

67. “In the case of ethnic minorities whose mother tongue is not Guaraní, one of the two official languages may be chosen.”

## **II. Constitutional, political and legal structure of the State**

### **A. History and political background**

68. From the start of the South American conquest, the Spanish made their way into the centre of the continent and to the banks of the Paraguay River. In 1537, they built a fort, named Nuestra Señora de la Asunción, that would become the mainstay and lifeline for further settlement in the River Plate region. It was the starting-point for virtually all the expeditions that went out to found what are now major cities in South America, and this explains why Asunción is considered the “Mother of Cities”.

69. The Spanish founded cities, built forts and spread Christianity and Spanish culture; they also established certain forms of limited “representative” government, known as “cabildos” or municipal governments, which were of great importance in the colony’s political and social life.

70. Members of the cabildos were appointed by the governors from among the most respected people in the community, such as notaries, merchants, ranchers and landowners.

71. However, “open cabildos” — true popular assemblies — were formed on more than one occasion to deal with matters of particular significance, one example being the Open Cabildo of Asunción, which supported the Revolution of the Comuneros led by the tribunes Antequero and Mómox.

72. It was not the viceroys, governors, judges, aldermen or high courts that prepared the colonies for self-government and still less for a political life with “popular representation”. That contribution was made by the cabildos, the communal or municipal governments.

73. The aspirations of Buenos Aires after 25 May 1810 to annex Paraguay as a province under the authority of its governing junta, the ineffectiveness of the Spanish Governor, Bernardo de Velazco, who had links with the Portuguese forces, and the courage displayed by Paraguayan troops in their victory over Argentine forces seeking to annex Paraguay led to the historic act of liberation on 14 and 15 May 1811 which gave birth to Paraguay as an independent State.

74. Following a period of political instability, the figure of José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia emerged. Rodríguez de Francia was a man of learning and leader of the independence movement, who with consummate skill took power, first as part of the triumvirate, then as provisional dictator and finally as dictator for life, between 1814 and 1840. During that period Paraguay closed its borders to contacts and influence from the outside.

75. The country and its inhabitants necessarily became self-reliant, reverting to what was essentially a barter system of trade subject to many limitations and strictly controlled by the dictator.

76. Culture and education in that period made little or no progress, since Rodríguez de Francia closed the schools and prevented the introduction of reading matter of any kind.

77. However, he kept the territory inherited from the colony intact through rigorous military control of its borders, preventing any external influence on Paraguay from destabilizing his regime, at a time of great political upheaval in neighbouring countries.

78. Thereafter, various governments succeeded one another until Don Carlos Antonio López, Paraguay's first constitutional President, took office in 1844. He modernized the country and opened it up to trade, promoted literature and the arts, and sent students abroad on scholarships, but left boundary disputes with Brazil and Argentina unresolved on his death in 1862.

79. Carlos Antonio López was succeeded by his son, Brigadier-General Francisco Solano López, who had acted earlier as a mediator in the Argentine civil war, preventing a blood bath with the Pact of San José de Flores in 1859. However, efforts to settle the boundary issues produced no agreement satisfactory to Paraguay, despite the legitimate arguments it put forward. The country lost favour and a Triple Alliance, initially kept secret, was formed between the armies of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay with the object of dispossessing Paraguay of extensive tracts of land.

80. As a result, Paraguay was invaded, sacked and pillaged, and thrown into extreme poverty; but under a provisional Government appointed by the occupation forces it was still able, through an arbitral award by United States President Rutherford B. Hayes, to retain the part of the Chaco (western region) claimed by Argentina – which, like Brazil, annexed large and rich territories.

81. Up to 1912 and later, from 1920 to 1924, Paraguay had a series of governments, most of them unstable. In 1932 the Chaco War broke out with Bolivia, which had designs on that particular part of the western region; there, in heroic fashion and almost without military supplies, the country rallied in the midst of war to win a resounding victory.

82. The political situation then produced a further succession of governments which, in terms of their duration, can only be described as unstable until General Alfredo Stroessner came to power in 1954. General Stroessner instituted a permanent state of siege and centralized power solely in the executive branch.

83. Institutions were corrupted and the machinery of State became yet another tool in the hands of the dictator, who used it essentially to manipulate the electorate and bring in an ostensibly democratic government, while manipulating the opposition and using its members as well as the governing party for his own ends. Anyone daring to oppose him on matters of principle or ideals was persecuted, arrested, tortured and even banished or exiled.

84. Personal rights and the most fundamental human rights were flouted by the dictator and his entire cabinet, on such a scale that even lower-level officials amassed fortunes and violated rights with complete impunity.

85. It was against this background that a coup d'état took place during the night of 2 to 3 February 1989, toppling the Stroessner regime and proclaiming the rule of law, respect for human rights, and freedom of thought and expression, which are now becoming an internationally acknowledged reality.

86. Following the coup d'état, the transition to democracy began in Paraguay. In the first democratic elections, General Andrés Rodríguez was elected president and during his tenure, in 1992, the National Constitution of 1970 was replaced by the current Constitution of the Republic of Paraguay, which was drawn up "By the Paraguayan people, through their lawful representatives meeting in a National Constituent Assembly, recognizing human dignity with the aim of ensuring freedom, equality and justice, reaffirming the principles of representative, participatory and pluralistic republican democracy, confirming national sovereignty and independence, and forming an integral part of the international community."



87. By virtue of its National Constitution, Paraguay is a social State subject to the rule of law and governed by a democratic and representative system consonant with modern doctrines that combines political democracy with elements of economic and social democracy.

88. Paraguay enjoyed relative political stability under the leadership of Andrés Rodríguez up to 1999.

89. The assassination in March 1999 of Dr. Luís María Argaña, Vice-President of the Republic, gave rise to a political crisis which ended when President Raúl Cubas Grau resigned, after less than one year in office. Juan Ángel González Macchi replaced President Cubas as head of the legislative branch and, in 2003, completed the mandate that had originally been held by Cubas and Argana.

90. The 2003 presidential elections, won by Nicanor Duarte Frutos, signalled a new period of political stability in Paraguay.

91. The elections held on 20 April 2008 ended the hegemony of the Asociación Nacional Republicana (ANR) or Colorado Party, which had governed the country for over 60 years. Political power was handed over to the Patriotic Alliance for Change, a political movement led by the former Bishop of San Pedro, Fernando Lugo, who was supported by the Authentic Radical Liberal Party or Liberal Party, the main opposition party and, historically, the country's second most important political party, as well as by political parties of lesser importance and the socialist left.

92. From 1989 to the present, Paraguay has made significant advances in human rights. It has now ratified all the human rights treaties in addition to a series of agreements, protocols, conventions and pacts, and has established a legal framework to ensure their effective implementation.

93. Promotion and dissemination of the international instruments ratified by Paraguay is carried out by the Human Rights Office, an official agency of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs which receives complaints, responds to questionnaires, produces reports, holds seminars, symposiums and meetings and disseminates through all media channels information on human rights activities.

94. Legal action has been brought against the majority of those responsible for human rights violations under the dictatorship. Moreover, in accordance with the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, victims of human rights violations during that period have received and continue to receive compensation.

## **B. System of government**

95. Paraguay is a republic, the president of which is chosen through democratic elections. In accordance with the principle of balance of powers, the legislative and judicial branches act as counterweights to the executive branch.

96. The democratic transition that began in Paraguay in 1989 led to the creation or reorganization of a series of politico-institutional structures and the approval of a new National Constitution, which guarantees full respect for human rights.

97. In its fundamental provisions, the Constitution establishes, in article 1, that: "The Republic of Paraguay shall always be free and independent. It constitutes a social State subject to the rule of law, which shall be unitary, indivisible and decentralized in the form established by this Constitution and by law. The Republic of Paraguay shall be governed as

a representative, participatory and pluralistic democracy, founded on the recognition of human dignity.”

98. Article 2 of the Constitution stipulates: “In the Republic of Paraguay sovereignty resides with the people, who shall exercise it in accordance with this Constitution.”

#### **1. Legislative branch**

99. As provided under title II (Structure and organization of the State), chapter 1 (legislative branch), article 182, legislative power is exercised by the Congress, composed of a Chamber of Senators and a Chamber of Deputies, with 45 and 80 members respectively. Members are elected in general elections, under a “closed list” system, and seats are allocated, according to the D’hont method, on the basis of the number of votes obtained by each party. The term of office for both senators and deputies is five years and they may be re-elected.

100. Both chambers meet annually in ordinary sessions, from 1 July of each year until 30 of June the following year, with a recess during the period 21 December to 1 March, the date on which the President of the Republic presents his report, pursuant to article 184 relating to sessions.

101. As further provided under article 184, the two chambers may convene extraordinary sessions or prolong their session by a decision approved by one quarter of the members of either house, by a resolution approved by two thirds of the Standing Congressional Committee, or by an executive decree. The president of the Congress, or of the Standing Committee, must convene such sessions within 48 hours.

102. Prolongation of sessions is carried out in the same manner. Extraordinary sessions are convened for the purpose of considering a set agenda and end when the agenda has been completed.

103. Each chamber designates its authorities and appoints its employees, in accordance with article 200 relating to the election of authorities.

104. Article 202 sets forth the duties and powers of Congress, which are to:

- (a) Ensure observance of the Constitution and the law;
- (b) Enact codes and laws, amend or waive them, in interpretation of the Constitution;
- (c) Determine the political division of the territory of the Republic, and the organization of the regions, departments and municipalities;
- (d) Legislate on taxation;
- (e) Approve the national budget each year;
- (f) Enact the electoral law;
- (g) Determine the legal system for the disposal and acquisition of governmental, departmental and municipal property;
- (h) Issue decisions and authorizations, and formulate declarations, in accordance with its powers;
- (i) Approve or reject treaties and other international agreements signed by the executive authority;
- (j) Approve or reject arrangements for loans;

- (k) Authorize, for specified periods, concessions to operate national or multinational public services or manage State property, and to extract and process solid, liquid or gaseous minerals;
- (l) Enact laws on the organization of the administration of the Republic, for the purpose of establishing decentralized bodies and administering public credit;
- (m) Issue emergency laws in the event of a disaster;
- (n) Receive the constitutional oath or promise of the President of the Republic, the Vice-President and other officials, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution;
- (o) Receive from the President of the Republic a report on the overall situation and administration of the country and on government plans;
- (p) Accept or reject the resignation of the President of the Republic or the Vice-President;
- (q) Issue the authorizations and make the appointments prescribed in the Constitution, and designate representatives of Congress in other State organs;
- (r) Issue amnesties;
- (s) Decide on any transfer of the capital of the Republic to another part of Paraguay, by a two-thirds majority of the members of each chamber;
- (t) Approve or reject, wholly or in part, and further to a report by the Comptroller General of the Republic, the particulars and evidence of public income and expenditure under the budget;
- (u) Issue regulations on river, maritime, air and space traffic; and
- (v) Any other duties and powers established in the Constitution.

105. As provided under section II (drafting and approval of laws), article 203 (origin and initiation of laws), a law may be proposed by a member of either chamber of Congress, by the executive branch, by popular initiative or by the Supreme Court of Justice, in the cases and under the terms set out in the Constitution and by law. The only exceptions with regard to the initiation of laws by one or the other chamber or by the executive branch are those expressly laid down in the Constitution. Each new bill must be accompanied by the appropriate justification.

106. As provided under article 204 (approval and promulgation of laws), once a bill has been approved by the chamber where it originated, it must be submitted immediately to the other chamber for consideration. Following approval by the other chamber, the bill is considered to have passed. If approved by the executive authority, the bill is promulgated as law and published within five days.

107. As provided under article 205 (automatic promulgation), any bill that has not been vetoed or returned by the executive branch to the originating chamber within six working days, if it contains less than 10 articles, or within 12 working days, if it contains more than 20 articles, will be considered to have been approved by the executive branch. In all such cases, the law will be promulgated automatically and its publication will be arranged.

108. The exclusive powers of the Chamber of Deputies are to: (a) initiate the consideration of bills pertaining to departmental and municipal legislation; (b) appoint or promote judges and public officials, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the law; (c) issue authorization for action by departmental and municipal government authorities; and (d) any other exclusive powers established in the Constitution, in accordance with article 222.

109. As set out in article 224, the exclusive powers of the Chamber of Senators are to:

- (a) Initiate the consideration of bills concerning the approval of international treaties and agreements;
- (b) Approve military and police promotions, as from the rank of Colonel in the army or the equivalent in the other branches and services, and as from the rank of Chief Commissioner in the police;
- (c) Authorize the appointment of ambassadors and ministers plenipotentiary abroad;
- (d) Appoint or nominate judges and public officials, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution;
- (e) Authorize the dispatch of Paraguayan military forces abroad, and the admission of foreign troops into Paraguay;
- (f) Approve the appointment of the Chairman and directors of the Central Bank of Paraguay;
- (g) Approve the appointment of Paraguayan directors of binational bodies; and
- (h) Any other exclusive powers established in the Constitution.

## 2. Executive branch

110. As provided under chapter II (executive branch), section I (President and Vice-President of the Republic), article 226, executive power is exercised by the President of the Republic. Article 228 stipulates that to serve as President or Vice-President, it is necessary to be a Paraguayan national by birth, have reached 35 years of age and enjoy full exercise of one's civil and political rights.

111. Article 227 establishes the office of Vice-President of the Republic. The Vice-President can immediately take over from, and exercise all the functions of, the President if the latter is unable to perform those functions or is temporarily absent or if the office of President falls vacant.

112. As provided under article 229, the President and Vice-President of the Republic each serve a five-year fixed term of office, beginning on 15 August following the elections. They may under no circumstances be re-elected. The Vice-President may, however, be elected President for the subsequent term, provided that he has ceased to serve in his post six months before the general election. No one having served as President for more than 12 months may be elected Vice-President.

113. The President and Vice-President of the Republic are to be elected together and directly by the people, by a simple majority of votes cast in a general election which must be held between 90 and 120 days before the end of the current constitutional term, pursuant to article 230 relating to presidential elections. The President and Vice-President take the oath of office before Congress, pledging to comply faithfully and patriotically with their constitutional duties. If on the appointed day, Congress fails to reach the quorum needed to hold a meeting, the ceremony will take place before the Supreme Court of Justice (art. 232).

114. As provided under article 238 of the Constitution, the duties and powers of the President of the Republic are to:

- (a) Represent the State and direct the general administration of the country;

- (b) Implement and enforce the Constitution and the laws;
- (c) Participate in the drafting of legislation, in accordance with the Constitution, and promulgate, have published, regulate and oversee the implementation of such legislation;
- (d) Veto wholly or in part laws passed by Congress, making what comments or objections he deems appropriate;
- (e) Issue decrees, which require the endorsement of the minister of the department concerned in order to become effective;
- (f) Appoint or remove ministers of the executive branch, the Attorney General of the Republic or public officials at his own discretion where their appointment to, and tenure in, such posts are not otherwise regulated by the Constitution or the law;
- (g) Direct the conduct of the Republic's external relations; in the event of external aggression, and subject to Congressional authorization, declare a national state of defence or conclude peace;
- (h) Negotiate and sign international treaties;
- (i) Receive the heads of diplomatic missions and consuls of foreign countries; appoint ambassadors, with the approval of the Senate;
- (j) Give an account to Congress, at the beginning of each annual session, of the activities of the executive branch, and also report on the state of the nation and plans for the future;
- (k) Act as Commander of the National Armed Forces, a function which may not be delegated; in accordance with the law, issue military regulations and direct, organize and station the armed forces; appoint or remove the commanders of the forces of law and order at his own discretion; take the necessary measures for the defence of the nation; assign ranks in all the services up to that of Lieutenant-Colonel or its equivalent at his own discretion, and assign higher ranks with the approval of the Senate;
- (l) Grant pardons or commute sentences imposed by the judges and courts of the Republic, in accordance with the law and with the advice of the Supreme Court of Justice;
- (m) Convene Congress in special sessions of either or both Chambers to deal solely with those matters put before them for their respective consideration;
- (n) Place before Congress draft legislation, which may be accompanied by a request for urgent consideration, within the terms laid down by the Constitution;
- (o) Direct the collection and investment of the revenues of the Republic, in accordance with the national budget and the law, and report annually to Congress on the execution of the budget;
- (p) Prepare the draft annual budget of the nation and present it for consideration by the Chambers;
- (q) Ensure the implementation of decisions of the authorities created by the Constitution; and
- (r) Exercise such other duties or powers as are specified by the Constitution.

115. As laid down in article 239, the duties and powers of the Vice-President of the Republic are to: (a) take over immediately from the President of the Republic in the cases provided for by the Constitution; (b) represent the President of the Republic, nationally or internationally, when so designated by the President and with all the latter's prerogatives;

and (c) participate in the deliberations of the Council of Ministers and coordinate relations between the executive and the legislative branches.

116. Section II of the Constitution concerns the ministers and the Council of Ministers of the executive branch. Section II, article 240, entrusts the management and conduct of public affairs to the ministers, whose number and functions are determined by law.

117. As provided under article 242 (duties and powers of the ministers), ministers are the administrative heads of their respective government departments, where, under the direction of the President of the Republic, they promote and execute policy relating to matters within their fields of competence. They bear joint and several responsibility for the acts of State they endorse. Each year they submit to the President of the Republic a written report on their activities, which is brought to the attention of Congress.

118. The Council of Ministers is convened by the President of the Republic to coordinate executive tasks, promote government policy and adopt collective decisions. The Council of Ministers deliberates on all matters of public interest raised by the President of the Republic for consideration by the Council, acting as an advisory body; discusses initiatives in the legislative field; and ensures that its decisions are published regularly.

### **3. Attorney General of the Republic**

119. The Office of the Attorney General of the Republic is established under section III, articles 244 to 246. It is headed by the Attorney General, who is appointed and removed by the President of the Republic.

120. The duties and powers of the Attorney General of the Republic are to: (a) represent and defend the patrimonial interests of the Republic in judicial or extrajudicial proceedings; (b) issue rulings in such cases and for such purposes as may be specified by the law; (c) provide legal advice to the public administration in the form laid down by law; and (d) exercise such other duties and powers as may be defined by the law.

### **4. Judicial branch**

121. As provided under chapter II (Judicial branch), section I (General provisions), article 247 (function and composition), the judiciary is the custodian of the Constitution and interprets and enforces it. Justice is administered by the judiciary, through the Supreme Court of Justice and the other courts, as established by the Constitution and by law.

122. The judicial branch has its own budget, pursuant to article 249. The national budget allocates to the judicial branch no less than 3 per cent of the central government's budget. The budget of the judicial branch is approved by Congress, and the Comptroller General controls all the judiciary's expenditures and investments.

123. As provided under article 250, Supreme Court justices take the oath of office before Congress. All other judges are sworn in before the Supreme Court of Justice. Members of the country's courts are appointed by the Supreme Court from a list of three candidates proposed by the Council of the Magistrature (art. 251).

124. As provided under article 252, judges may not be removed from their post, seat or rank during the term for which they have been appointed. They may not be transferred or promoted without their prior and express consent. Judges are appointed for a five-year term, beginning on the day of the appointment. Judges who have served two terms following the term for which they were appointed may not be removed from their post until reaching the age limit established for Supreme Court justices.

125. As provided under article 253, judges may only be tried and removed from office for crimes or misconduct as defined by law by a decision of a Judicial Indictment Board composed of two Supreme Court justices, two members of the Council of the Magistrature, and two senators and two deputies, who must be lawyers. The functioning of the Judicial Indictment Board is governed by law.

126. As laid down in article 256, court proceedings are oral and public, in the manner and to the extent established by law. All court rulings are based on the Constitution and the law and may be openly criticized. Proceedings regarding labour matters are comprehensive and based on the principles of immediacy, economy and concentration.

127. As provided under section II, article 258, the Supreme Court of Justice consists of nine members and is organized into chambers, one of which hears constitutional matters. Each year members of the Supreme Court elect one of the justices as president of the Court.

128. The conditions for membership on the Supreme Court of Justice are: Paraguayan nationality from birth, a minimum age of 35, a doctorate in law, proven good character, in addition to at least 10 years' experience as a lawyer, judge or university professor of law, jointly, separately or successively. Members of the Supreme Court may only be removed by impeachment. They remain in their post until the age of 65.

129. As laid down in article 259, the duties and powers of the Supreme Court of Justice are to:

(a) Oversee all bodies of the judiciary and decide on final instance on conflicts of jurisdiction, in accordance with the law;

(b) Issue its own rules of procedures, and submit an annual report to the executive branch and the legislative branch on its activity and on the status and needs of national justice;

(c) Hear and rule on general appeals specified by law;

(d) Hear and rule, on first instance, on habeas corpus, without prejudice to the jurisdiction of other courts;

(e) Hear and rule on unconstitutionality;

(f) Hear and rule on applications for judicial review, in the manner and to the extent established by law;

(g) Preventively suspend, on its own initiative or on a request made by the Judicial Indictment Board by an absolute majority of the members, any judge who has been indicted, until final adjudication of the case;

(h) Supervise custodial establishments;

(i) Rule on conflicts of jurisdiction between the executive branch and departmental authorities and between the latter and municipal authorities; and

(j) Any other powers established in the Constitution and the law.

130. As provided under article 260, the duties and powers of the Constitutional Chamber are to:

(a) Hear and resolve cases involving the unconstitutionality of the laws and of other normative instruments, declaring inapplicable each specific case of a legal provision that is contrary to the Constitution, through rulings that will only affect the case in question;

(b) Decide on the unconstitutionality of final or interlocutory decisions and to nullify those that are contrary to the Constitution;

(c) Petitions of unconstitutionality may be filed directly before the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice or as a procedural defence before any other court, in which case the relevant files will be submitted to the Supreme Court.

## **5. Council of the Magistrature**

131. Section III of the Constitution refers to another constitutional body, the Council of the Magistrature. As provided under article 262 (composition), the Council consists of:

(a) A member of the Supreme Court of Justice, appointed by the Court itself;

(b) A representative of the executive branch;

(c) A senator and a deputy, each appointed by the respective Chamber;

(d) Two practising lawyers, directly elected by their peers;

(e) A professor from the Faculty of Law of the National University, elected by his peers; and

(f) A professor, with not less than 20 years' experience, from the faculties of law of the private universities, elected by his peers.

132. As laid down in article 264, the duties and powers of the Council of the Magistrature are to:

(a) Draw up lists of three candidates for the Supreme Court of Justice, on the basis of suitability and merit, and forward the lists to the Chamber of Senators to appoint such persons, with the approval of the executive branch;

(b) Draw up for the Supreme Court of Justice, with the same selection criteria, lists of three candidates for posts in the lower courts and for the office of judge or procurator;

(c) Draw up its own rules of procedure; and

(d) Any other duties and powers established in the Constitution and the law.

## **6. Public Prosecutor's Office**

133. Section IV, article 266, establishes the Public Prosecutor's Office, which represents civil society in the courts and enjoys functional and administrative independence in discharging its duties and exercising its powers. The functions of the Office are exercised by the State Attorney General and the procurators as prescribed by law.

134. The duties and powers of the Public Prosecutor's Office are to:

(a) Ensure respect for constitutional rights and safeguards;

(b) Exercise the public right of action to defend the public and social heritage, the environment and other broad-ranging interests, as well as the rights of the indigenous peoples;

(c) Initiate criminal proceedings in cases where an application by the interested party is not required in order to bring or continue such proceedings, without prejudice to cases in which the judge or court proceeds automatically, as determined by law;

(d) Gather information from public officials for the proper discharge of its duties; and



(e) Any other duties and powers established by law, in accordance with article 268 of the Constitution.

135. The Attorney General is irremovable. He holds office for five years and may be re-elected. He is appointed by the executive branch, with the approval of the Senate, from a list of three candidates proposed by the Council of the Magistrature, as provided under article 269 of the Constitution.

## **7. Electoral courts system**

136. As provided under section V (electoral courts system), article 273, the convening, organizing, supervising and monitoring of acts and matters relating to general, department or municipal elections, and to the rights and qualifications of persons who are elected, fall exclusively within the jurisdiction of the electoral courts. Issues relating to any kind of referendum, and to elections and the functioning of political parties and movements, also fall within their jurisdiction.

137. As provided under article 274, the electoral courts system consists of the Higher Electoral Tribunal, the ordinary courts, the procurators' offices and any other bodies established by law, which specifies their organization and functions.

138. As provided under article 275, the Higher Electoral Tribunal consists of three members, who are elected and removed by the procedure established for members of the Supreme Court of Justice.

139. The conditions for membership on the Higher Electoral Tribunal are: Paraguayan nationality, a minimum age of 35, a doctorate in law, in addition to at least 10 years' experience as a lawyer, judge or university professor of law, jointly, separately or successively.

## **8. Office of the Ombudsman**

140. As provided under chapter IV (other State institutions), section I (Office of the Ombudsman), article 276, the Ombudsman is a parliamentary commissioner whose duties are to defend human rights, channel claims by citizens and protect community interests. The Ombudsman may under no circumstances exercise a judicial or executive function.

141. The Ombudsman is independent and may not be removed from office. He is appointed by a two-thirds majority of the Chamber of Deputies, from a list of three candidates proposed by the Senate, to a five-year term, corresponding to the congressional term. The Ombudsman may be re-elected and may also be removed from office for misconduct, by the impeachment procedure established under the Constitution.

142. As provided under article 279, the duties and powers of the Ombudsman are to:

(a) Receive and investigate charges, complaints and claims concerning human rights violations and such other acts as may be determined by this Constitution and the law;

(b) Request from the authorities, including the police and security forces at their various levels, information for the more effective performance of his duties, the said authorities having no right of objection. The Ombudsman may have access to the places where the above-mentioned acts are reported to have been perpetrated. He may also act on his own initiative;

(c) Publicly censure acts or conduct contrary to human rights;

(d) Report annually to the two Chambers of Congress on his activities;

(e) Draw up and issue reports on those aspects of human rights which, in his view, require prompt public attention, together with any other duties and powers established by law.

Table 28

**Constitutional organization of the executive branch**

<i>Function and body</i>	<i>Composition</i>
Executive branch	President and Vice-President  Ministries and Secretariats of State  President of the Republic Vice-President of the Republic Secretary-General of the Republic Ministry of Justice and Labour Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare Ministry of National Defence Ministry of the Interior Ministry of Industry and Trade Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock-farming Ministry of Housing Ministry of Education and Culture Ministry for Foreign Affairs Secretariat for Tourism Secretariat for the Environment Secretariat for Women Secretariat for Information and Communication National Antidrug Secretariat National Secretariat for Children and Adolescents Civil Service Secretariat Secretariat of Development for Repatriates and Refugees Secretariat for Social Action Secretariat for Culture National Secretariat for Athletics Technical Secretariat for Planning National Emergency Secretariat Vice-Ministry for Youth

*Source:* Ministry of Justice and Labour, 2010.

Table 29  
**Constitutional structure of the legislative branch**

<i>Function and body</i>	<i>Composition</i>			
Legislative branch	Chamber of Senators	President and Vice-President	President First Vice-President Second Vice-President	
		Parliamentary Secretariats	First Parliamentary Secretary Second Parliamentary Secretary Third Parliamentary Secretary	
		Secretariat	Secretary-General	
		Administration	Secretary	
		Drawer		
		Shorthand clerks		
		Standing Committees	Constitutional matters relating to national defence	
			Legislation, codification, justice and labour	
			Housing, budget and accounts	
			Foreign relations	
			Petitions, powers and rules	
			Culture, education and religion	
			Human rights	
Economy, Latin American development and economic integration				
Agrarian reform and rural welfare				
Public health, social security, prevention of and combat against drug trafficking				
Departmental, municipal, district and regional affairs				
Public works and communication				
Energy, national resources, population and ecology				
Style				

<i>Function and body</i>	<i>Composition</i>
Chamber of Deputies	<p>Equality, gender and social development</p> <p>Director of Administration and Finance</p> <p>Secretary-General for Administration</p> <p>Administrative Secretary</p> <p>Director-General for Communication</p> <p>Shorthand clerks</p> <p>First Vice-President</p> <p>Second Vice-President</p>
President	
Vice-President	
Parliamentary Secretariats	
Procedural Committees	<p>President</p> <p>First Vice-President</p> <p>Second Vice-President</p> <p>Constitutional matters</p> <p>Economic and financial affairs</p> <p>Legislation and codification</p> <p>Foreign affairs</p> <p>Justice, labour and social benefits</p> <p>Human rights</p> <p>Education, culture and religion</p> <p>Works, public services and communications</p>
Standing Consultative Committees	<p>Press and social communication</p> <p>Agriculture and livestock-farming</p> <p>National defence, security and public order</p> <p>Industry, trade and tourism</p> <p>Public health</p> <p>Municipal and departmental affairs</p> <p>Social development,</p>

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*Function and body*    *Composition*

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population and housing  
 Budget accounts and budget control  
 Petitions, powers, rules and drafting  
 Combat against drug trafficking and related and serious illegal acts  
 Science and technology  
 Energy and mining  
 Ecology, natural resources and environment  
 Rural welfare  
 Social and gender equality  
 Sports  
 Indigenous peoples

Special Committees

Bicameral  
 Committees

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*Source:* Ministry of Justice and Labour, 2010.

Table 30  
**Constitutional structure of the judicial branch**

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*Function and body*    *Composition*

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Judicial branch	Supreme Court of Justice	Constitutional Chamber	
		Criminal Chamber	
		Civil Chamber	
		Secretariat-General	
		Cabinet	Cabinet of Ministers Cabinet of the President
		Department of Administration and Finance	
		Office of Motor Vehicle Registration	
		Public Registry Office	
		Office of Human Resources	

*Function and body    Composition*

	Office of Computer Technology and Systems	
	Office of Planning and Development	Technical implementation units
	Department of Internal Auditing	
	International Centre for Legal Studies (CIEJ)	
	Legal library	
	Documentation centre and archives	
	Public relations and protocol	
	Communications Office	
	Civil statistics	
	Criminal statistics	
	General archives	
	Bank vault	
	Judicial deposits	
	Revenue Office	
	Constitutional guarantees	
Superintendancy Inspectorate	President First Vice-President Second Vice-President	
Supervisory Authority for Justice		Accounts Court, First and Second Chambers General Bankruptcy Receivers
	Penal reform bodies	Courts of Appeal, Capital and Interior
	Office of Criminal Conciliation	Criminal Sentencing Courts, Capital and Interior
	Office of Criminal Conciliation	Courts of First Instance, Capital and Interior

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*Function and body    Composition*

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Office of Civil, Labour and Other Mediation	Courts of First Instance, Children and Adolescents
Office of Implementation	Enforcement Courts, Capital and Interior
Psychiatric Services and Social Services	Higher Peace Courts, Capital Peace Courts, Capital and Interior Public Defender's Office, Capital and Interior
Judicial Secretariat I	
Judicial Secretariat II	
Judicial Secretariat III	

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*Source:* Ministry of Justice and Labour, 2010.

### **III. General framework for the protection and promotion of human rights**

143. During Paraguay's long years of dictatorship, decision-making became increasingly centralized, and poverty and the social, economic and cultural exclusion of broad sectors of the population worsened. As a result, the capacity of social and grass-roots organizations to demand their rights and have an impact on the country's public, political, economic and social life was seriously undermined. The State institutions inherited from the dictatorship were weak for all those reasons and unable to fulfil their duty to respect, protect and guarantee the human rights of all Paraguayan citizens without discrimination.

144. To deal with that situation, a National Constitutional Convention was convened. The Convention drew up the National Constitution of the Republic of Paraguay of 1992, a democratic charter guaranteeing human rights. The Constitution recognizes the fundamental rights inherent in the dignity of the human person, establishes a specific system of guarantees for the safeguarding and legal protection of those rights and enshrines the principle of separation of powers.

145. The human rights recognized in and guaranteed by the Constitution are compatible with treaties and other international instruments in that field which, under the Constitution, take precedence over domestic law.

#### **A. Acceptance of international human rights norms**

146. As provided under the Constitution, international treaties that have been duly entered into and approved by an Act of Congress, and whose instruments of ratification have been exchanged or deposited, are part of domestic law with the rank specified in article 137.

147. Furthermore, as stipulated in article 142, international human rights treaties may not be denounced other than by the procedures governing amendments to the Constitution.

148. In its international relations, the Republic of Paraguay accepts international law and respects the following principles:

- (a) National independence;
- (b) Self-determination of peoples;
- (c) Legal equality among States;
- (d) International solidarity and cooperation;
- (e) International protection of human rights;
- (f) Free navigation on international rivers;
- (g) Non-intervention;
- (h) Condemnation of any form of dictatorship, colonialism or imperialism.

149. The Republic of Paraguay renounces war, but upholds the principle of self-defence. This declaration is compatible with the rights and obligations of Paraguay as a Member of the United Nations and the Organization of American States, and as a party to integration treaties, as set out in article 144 of the Constitution.

150. As provided under article 145, the Republic of Paraguay, on an equal footing with other States, recognizes a supranational legal order which guarantees human rights, peace, justice, cooperation, and political, economic, social and cultural development. Decisions on this question may be adopted only by an absolute majority of each Chamber of Congress.

151. The Constitution recognizes rights, duties and guarantees relating to: life and the environment; freedom; equality; rights of the family; indigenous peoples; health; education and culture; work; economic rights and agrarian reform; political rights and duties; and constitutional rights and guarantees.

152. As provided under article 131, the constitutional guarantees set out in the chapter on that subject are governed by law and are intended to give effect to the rights enshrined in the Constitution.

153. As provided under article 132, the Supreme Court of Justice has the power to declare any legal provision or decision unconstitutional, in the manner and within the scope established in the Constitution and by law.

154. International human rights instruments signed by Paraguay are listed in the table below.

Table 31

**Status of international human rights instruments within the United Nations framework**

<i>United Nations framework</i>	<i>Adoption</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Act</i>	<i>Deposit</i>
1. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide	New York 9/12/1948	New York 11/12/1948	Act No. 1748 14/8/2001	(R) 3/10/2001
2. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	New York 21/12/1965	13/9/2000	Act No. 2128 7/7/2003	(R) 18/8/2003
3. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	New York 16/12/1966	-	Act No. 4/92 9/5/1992	(a) 10/6/1992



<i>United Nations framework</i>	<i>Adoption</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Act</i>	<i>Deposit</i>
(a) Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	New York 10/12/2008	6/10/2009		
4. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	New York 16/12/1966	-	Act No. 5/92 9/4/1992	(a) 10/6/1992
(a) Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	New York 16/12/1966	-	Act No. 400 26/8/1994	(a) 10/1/1995
(b) Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty	New York 15/12/1989	-	Act No. 2131 22/7/2003	(a) 18/8/2003
5. Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity	New York 26/9/1968		Act No. 3458 9/4/2008	(a) 23/9/2008
6. International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid	New York 30/11/1973	-	Act No. 2806 28/10/2005	(a) 2/12/2005
7. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	New York 18/12/1979	-	Act No. 1215 28/11/1986	(a) 6/4/1987
(a) Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	New York 6/10/1999	New York 28/12/1999	Act No. 1683 25/4/2001	(R) 14/5/2001
8. Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	New York 10/12/1984	New York 23/10/1989	Act No. 69/89 23/1/1990	(R) 12/3/1990
(a) Declarations recognizing the Competence of the Committee against Torture under articles 21 and 22 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	New York 10/12/1984	-	Act No. 1886 6/5/2002	29/5/2002
(b) Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	New York 18/12/2002	New York 22/9/2004	Act No. 2754 18/10/2005	(R) 2/12/2005
9. Convention on the Rights of the Child	New York 20/11/1989	New York 4/5/1990	Act No. 57 20/9/1990	(R) 25/9/1990
(a) Amendment to paragraph 2 of article 43 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child	New York 12/12/1995	-	Act No. 2292 7/11/2003	(a) 12/12/2003

<i>United Nations framework</i>	<i>Adoption</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Act</i>	<i>Deposit</i>
(b) Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict	New York	New York	Act No. 1897	(R)
Declaration on the minimum age for voluntary recruitment into the armed forces: 18 years	25/5/2000	13/9/2000	27/5/2002	27/9/2002
Declaration deposited on 22 March 2006				
(c) Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	New York	New York	Act No. 2134	(R)
	25/5/2000	13/9/2000	22/7/2003	18/8/2003
10. Agreement establishing the Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean	Madrid	Madrid	Act No. 370	(R)
	24/7/1992	24/7/1992	28/6/1994	1/12/1994
11. International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families	New York	13/10/2000	Act No. 3452	(R)
	18/12/1990		9/4/2008	23/9/2008
12. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	New York	30/3/2007	Act No. 3540	(R)
	13/12/2006		24/7/2008	3/9/2008
13. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	New York	30/3/2007	Act No. 3540	(R)
	13/12/2006		24/7/2008	3/9/2008
14. International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance	New York	6/2/2007	Communication No. 19 of 6 October 2008	

Source: Treaty Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Table 32

**Status of international human rights instruments within the framework of the Organization of American States**

<i>Organization of American States framework</i>	<i>Adoption</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Act</i>	<i>Deposit</i>
1. American Convention on Human Rights (Pact of San José)				
By Decree No. 16078 of 8 January 1993, Paraguay recognized the competence of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and deposited the declaration with the Secretary General of the Organization of American States on 26 December 1993	San José	San José	Act No. 01	(R)

<i>Organization of American States framework</i>	<i>Adoption</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Act</i>	<i>Deposit</i>
2. Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Protocol of San Salvador)	San Salvador 17/11/1988	San Salvador 26/8/1996	Act No. 1040 16/4/1997	(R) 3/6/1997
3. Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights to Abolish the Death Penalty	Asunción 8/6/1990	Guatemala 8/6/1999	Act No. 1557 6/6/2000	(R) 7/12/2000
4. Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance of Persons	Belem do Pará 9/6/1994	8/11/1995	Act No. 933 13/8/1996	(R) 26/11/1996
5. Inter-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture	Cartagena 9/12/1985	25/10/1989	Act No. 56 16/1/1990	(R) 9/3/1990
6. Inter-American Convention on the Granting of Civil Rights to Women	Bogotá 2/5/1948	Bogotá 2/5/1948	Act No. 104 25/8/1951	(R) 19/12/1951
7. <i>Idem</i>	Bogotá 2/5/1948	20/8/1951	Act No. 876 28/6/1963	(R) 5/8/1963
8. Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (Convention of Belem do Pará)	Belem do Pará 9/6/1994	Belem do Pará 17/10/1995	Act No. 605 21/6/1995	(R) 18/10/1995
9. Inter-American Convention on Support Obligations	Montevideo 15/7/1989	Montevideo 15/7/1989	Act No. 899 31/7/1996	20/5/1997
10. Inter-American Convention on the International Return of Children	Montevideo 15/7/1989	Montevideo 15/7/1989	Act No. 928 20/8/1996	(R) 8/10/1996
Central Authority: National Secretariat for Children and Adolescents, Decree No. 3230 of 6 September 2003				
11. Inter-American Convention on Conflict of Laws concerning the Adoption of Minors	La Paz 24/5/1984	7/8/1996	-	-
Rejected by Congress in Decision No. 185 of 20 December 1996 on the basis of objections to articles 8, 10 and 13.				
12. Inter-American Convention on International Traffic in Minors	Mexico City 18/3/1994	7/8/1996	Act No. 1062 16/6/1997	(R) 12/5/1998
13. Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities	Guatemala 7/6/1999	8/6/1999	Act No. 1925 19/6/1999	(R) 22/10/2002

*Source:* Treaty Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Table 33  
**Status of other international human rights instruments**

<i>Organization international human rights instruments</i>	<i>Adoption</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Act</i>	<i>Deposit</i>
1. The Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption	The Hague 29/5/1993	-	Act No. 900 31/7/1996	(a) 13/5/1998
2. Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction  Central Authority: National Secretariat for Children and Adolescents, Decree No. 3230 of 6 September 2003	The Hague 25/10/1980	-	Act No. 983 7/11/1996	(a) 13/5/1998
3. Convention on the Inter-American Indian Institute	Mexico City 29/10/1940	-	-	(a) 17/6/1941
4. Ibero-American Convention on Young People's Rights	Barajoz  11/10/2005	11/10/2005	Communicati on No. 243 of 10 September 2009	
5. Universal Declaration of Human Rights	Paris 10/12/1948	-	-	-
6. American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man	Bogotá 1948	-	-	-
7. Statute of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights	La Paz 10/1979			
8. Statute of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights	La Paz 10/1979			
9. Regulations of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights	8/4/1990			
10. Final act of the Special Commission of a diplomatic character (1999) – Protection of adults (Final act of the Hague Convention on the International Protection of Adults)	The Hague 2/10/1999			
11. Statutes of the Inter-American Children's Institute	Asunción 28/10/1982			
12. Joint declaration by the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Paraguay on technical cooperation in the promotion and protection of human rights in the Republic of Paraguay	Geneva 19/3/2003	-	-	-

*Source:* Treaty Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

## B. Framework for national promotion of human rights

155. In an effort to modernize the State, the Government issued Decree No. 1730 of March 2009 which provided for the reorganization of the Ministry of Justice and Labour and the establishment of a Vice-Ministry of Justice and Human Rights. The Vice-Ministry includes the Directorate-General for Human Rights which is responsible for coordinating, organizing, developing and implementing measures that will provide a permanent institutional framework for the promotion, protection and exercise of human rights, with the support of the authorities, other public officials, and non-governmental organizations.

156. Noteworthy in that connection is the creation of human rights divisions or units in the executive branch and within various ministries, secretariats and institutions.

157. The Human Rights Network of the Executive Branch was established by presidential Decree No. 2290 of 19 June 2009. The Vice-Ministry of Justice and Human Rights is responsible for coordinating and establishing linkages between policies, plans and programmes developed by the executive branch to improve mechanisms for the promotion, protection and exercise of human rights. The Vice-Ministry works to raise the profile of rights-based activities and undertakes other activities such as:

- (a) Developing a national human rights plan;
- (b) Preparing a general annual report, divided into thematic chapters, on human rights in Paraguay, based on specific reports by institutions in the Network;
- (c) Promoting a culture of respect for and enjoyment of human rights;
- (d) Ensuring that international human rights treaties and conventions are respected and applied and that measures taken by the State meet international standards;
- (e) Cooperating with international and regional human rights bodies on the drafting of reports;
- (f) Setting up a permanent human rights observatory;
- (g) Drafting and promoting of bills to bring legislation in line with the international instruments ratified by Paraguay;
- (h) Coordinating action with departmental and local authorities with a view to promoting respect for human rights.

158. The Government has been supporting efforts to disseminate the report of the Truth and Justice Commission (CVJ). Act No. 2225/03 established the Commission and defined its composition, consisting of representatives of the executive and legislative branches and of civil society. The Commission began its work in July 2004 and conducted a broad investigation which lasted nearly four years. Its final report was presented on 28 August 2008.

159. Decree No. 1875 of 23 April 2009 declared the final report to be of national interest. It authorized various State bodies and institutions to work with the Directorate-General for Truth, Justice and Reparation, a division of the Office of the Ombudsman, to implement the recommendations and reparation measures set out in the final report and disseminate the report nationally and internationally in order to preserve the country's historical memory and ensure that such human rights violations would never occur again in Paraguay.

160. The Executive Inter-Institutional Commission for Compliance with International Judgements (CICSI) was established by Decree No. 1595 of 26 February 2009. The Commission is responsible for implementing the measures needed to comply with international judgements issued by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and recommendations made by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

161. The Commission aims to remove any obstacles and ensure the adoption of effective criteria and action to secure compliance with the international judgements and the recommendations mentioned above. The CICSI is composed of public officials with decision-making authority and its work is overseen by the Procurator-General of the Republic.

162. The Supreme Court of Justice has a Human Rights Department whose task is to help incorporate a human rights perspective into the justice system.

163. This work is carried forward in conjunction with various governmental and non-governmental bodies, parallel to the development of a broad capacity for finding solutions to the immediate problems facing justice professionals daily, through the provision of multidisciplinary technical advice and a rigorous study and analysis of legal theory.

164. The human rights office, established in 2000 pursuant to Decision No. 759/2000, is a specialized technical administrative body of the Supreme Court of Justice and is known as the Human Rights Unit (UDH). Its functions are monitoring, information, investigation, analysis and dissemination. Relying on teamwork, the Unit coordinates project implementation and maintains a dynamic relationship with domestic and foreign institutions, thereby supporting the judicial branch and the activities of the Programme to Reinforce the Judiciary.

165. The Unit's mandate was broadened under Act No. 31/2002 (plenary session of the Supreme Court of Justice at which the UDH Strategic Plan 2002–2005 was approved) to include technical advice, coordination and training promotion.

166. In 2006, the Unit became the Human Rights Department (DDH). It took that opportunity to undertake a structural reorganization and harmonize its strategic lines of action with its aims and mission, according priority to the following thematic areas: children and adolescents, gender, indigenous affairs, and international cases examined by the Inter-American human rights system.

167. The Department's strategic lines of action include the following: design and promote programmes and intervention projects focused on the thematic areas; provide technical advice to justice professionals regarding human rights doctrine and its applicability to the administration of justice; and investigate and monitor allegations made against Paraguay in the framework of the international human rights protection system.

168. The Public Prosecutor's Office now has a Human Rights Department which provides technical support in human rights matters to all public prosecutors. The Office also has a Human Rights Prosecution Unit, established by a decision dated 22 August 2010.

169. In that connection, the Attorney General has proposed that special attention be paid to human rights offences, including torture, inflicting bodily injury while performing a public function, using force to obtain statements, hostage-taking, prosecution of innocent persons, genocide and war crimes, as set out in the decision mentioned above.

170. The Human Rights Prosecution Unit currently has three public prosecutors with national jurisdiction and has adopted an institutional protection policy, the principal aim of which is prevention of punishable human rights offences. The unit is part of the framework governing visits to the country's prisons and military institutions. Public prosecutors work 24-hour shifts.

171. The Public Prosecutor's Office also runs a Victims' Care Centre, where psychologists and social workers assist victims of punishable offences and their families, free of charge, in new facilities equipped for that purpose.

172. With regard to assistance to vulnerable groups, the Public Prosecutor's Office has an Office of Ethnic Rights, the principal aim of which is to provide specialized technical

investigative support to public prosecutors and to ensure effective compliance with constitutional provisions, particularly those concerning the special procedure for punishable offences relating to indigenous peoples.

173. With regard to international human rights matters, experts/rapporteurs, under the supervision of the Office of the Deputy Public Prosecutor for Human Rights, are responsible for preparing reports to be submitted to the various United Nations treaty bodies, under the universal system, and reports requested in relation to cases being examined under the Inter-American system, either by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights or the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

174. The Public Prosecutor's Office enjoys functional and administrative autonomy in establishing institutional policy in the field of human rights and ensures strict compliance with constitutional guarantees, in accordance with the powers invested in it by the Constitution.

175. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs also has a Human Rights Office, under the Directorate-General for Multilateral Policy. Pursuant to Decision No. 378/2003, the Office is mandated to:

(a) Comply with and implement foreign policy with regard to human rights, in accordance with its status as a division of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs;

(b) Coordinate the inter-institutional relationship between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and other State human rights institutions with a view to determining how Paraguay's foreign policy in the field of human rights and international humanitarian law should be launched, positioned and conducted;

(c) Organize Paraguay's participation in bilateral meetings and meetings of international bodies and mechanisms in the field of human rights and international humanitarian law; coordinate and follow up the work done by the Paraguayan delegation in such meetings;

(d) Receive, process and respond to any reports, requests, petitions or cases concerning allegations against the Republic of Paraguay that have been submitted to international human rights bodies, in coordination with the Office for Legal Affairs of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and other State human rights bodies;

(e) Organize and coordinate visits to Paraguay of special rapporteurs and other specialized mechanisms of the United Nations system and the Organization of American States, and provide escorts for them;

(f) Coordinate the examination and submission of government reports prepared in compliance with Paraguay's obligations under the international human rights treaties to which it is party;

(g) Promote and supervise an effective relationship between the Minister for Foreign Affairs and human rights organizations in civil society, in order to learn their views on Paraguay's foreign policy concerning human rights and on matters relating to communications, petitions, individual cases and requests that have been brought to the attention of international bodies;

(h) Propose to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, through the appropriate channels, that it sign, ratify or accede to already existing international human rights instruments and encourage the Government of Paraguay to participate in negotiations on new instruments and to monitor their implementation nationally.

176. The following chiefs of department also report to the Human Rights Office of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs: chief of the department for petitions and cases; chief of the

department for follow-up to implementation of recommendations, judgements and agreements; chief of the department for reports to treaty bodies and political matters; and chief of the department of international human rights bodies, in accordance with Decision No. 1288/2006.

177. By Decision No. 1538 of 7 December 2009, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs made the subject of human rights a requirement for anyone wishing to be selected for the diplomatic and consular corps, and made teaching of the subject compulsory at Paraguay's diplomatic and consular academy "José Falcón".

178. In accordance with Decision No. 768/2001 of the Chamber of Deputies, the Ombudsman was appointed in October 2001. He began his work in a somewhat unfavourable climate of severe budget constraints, which meant that he did not set up his team until 2 January 2002. He nevertheless proceeded to make a series of decisions of an organizational nature, which will be implemented as the Office expands and gets more resources.

179. Act No. 631 "Structure of the Office of the Ombudsman" was promulgated in 1995 and Act No. 838/96, which provides compensation to victims of human rights violations during the dictatorship of 1954 to 1989, was promulgated in 1996. However, despite those legislative initiatives, the Ombudsman was not appointed until nine years after the Constitution had entered into force.

180. The Office of the Ombudsman does not have the financial resources it needs to fulfil its mission completely since it is unable to serve the entire country. Nevertheless, it endeavours to investigate situations and ensure that justice is done. To that end, specific functions and structures have been established, agreements have been signed and efforts have been made to increase the Office's visibility.

181. The Office's principle aim is to alleviate the desperation and discontent of those whose rights have been violated and to seek, by all the means available to it, to comply with what is provided under the Constitution and by law with regard to demands for justice.

182. The portion of the general State budget allocated to rights compliance has been reduced and now supports only those social rights established by national policy, such as social action and promotion, housing and community services, culture and education, health and labour relations. The following table presents Ministry of Housing data on budget implementation by the Administration for the period 2005–2009.

Table 34

**Budget implementation by the Administration for the period 2005–2009**

In millions of guaraníes

<i>Description</i>	<i>Implementation 2005</i>	<i>Implementation 2006</i>	<i>Implementation 2007</i>	<i>Implementation 2008</i>	<i>Implementation 2009</i>
Social action and promotion	64	472	614	612	1 241
Housing and community services	0	41	57	174	140
Education and culture	1 813	2 134	2 426	2 866	3 280
Health	666	865	1 039	1 044	1 616
Labour relation	5	5	6	7	6
Other expenditures	6 676	6 987	7 268	7 285	9 034
<b>Total</b>	<b>9 224</b>	<b>1 504</b>	<b>1 411</b>	<b>11 987</b>	<b>15 317</b>

*Source:* Accounting system (SICO).



#### **IV. Preparation of reports at the national level**

183. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs is responsible for overseeing the national process of reporting to international treaty monitoring bodies, in accordance with Organic Act No. 1635/200, articles 2, 3 and 4, paragraphs (b) and (c) of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

184. Within this legal framework, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with other government departments, has begun the process of drawing up the human rights reports to be submitted by Paraguay. To that end it has brought together all the institutions dealing with human rights and has set up working groups to prepare the reports.

185. Each working group appoints a chairperson who is responsible for guiding the process, to which all the participating institutions contribute, of compiling, systematizing and organizing the information and drawing up of draft report. Observations and comments are then analysed for the purpose of preparing the final report for submission.

186. The executive branch Human Rights Network, which has been participating in the process, considers that priority should be granted to creation of a system for monitoring and following up respect for and implementation of the commitments made under international human rights treaties and the recommendations made by international protection systems. In that framework, the Human Rights Network has organized education and training workshops on report preparation.

##### **A. Other information relevant to human rights and follow-up to international conferences**

187. In January 2010, Paraguay submitted its third periodic report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

188. In April 2010, Paraguay submitted its sixth periodic report on application of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, following its presentation to civil society by the Secretariat for Women at a public event held at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

#### **V. Information on non-discrimination and equality measures**

189. The executive branch, through the Civil Service Secretariat, has issued guidelines for inclusive and non-discriminatory practices within the civil service. The aim is to make the civil service a partner in the process of transforming the State culture of exclusion into one of inclusion. The executive branch also promulgated Decision No. 942/09 which laid down the basic framework for non-discriminatory and inclusive policies within the civil service and established regulations for the Directorate-General of Equality and Inclusion Policies, a department of the Civil Service Secretariat, established by Decision No. 2226/09.

190. Work has been carried out in conjunction with civil society organizations to develop a plan for providing disabled persons with access to and development opportunities within the civil service, in compliance with Acts No. 2479/2004 and 3585/2008.

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