



Communique Committee of Experts

Committee of Experts expresses deep concern over the increase in attacks against women in politics in Brazil

Washington, DC, February 24th, 2023. The [Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women "Belém do Pará Convention"](#) (MESECVI) expresses its deep concern over the increase in attacks against women elected for public office in the political arena in Brazil. These manifestations of violence include sexist and misogynist insults, sexual abuse, removing the women from their positions, threats made against their lives, and even femicide.

The Committee of Experts has learned of several cases, reported in the media and denounced by high-level State authorities, in which councilwomen have been victims of systematic attacks aimed at undermining their participation in political life.

In particular, the Committee is concerned about the acts of violence suffered by five women councilors in the state of Santa Catarina, after they denounced alleged Nazi salutes and anti-democratic behavior during a demonstration against the results of the presidential elections. In addition to receiving insults and threats, several of them were subjected to dismissal proceedings, as is the case of councilor Maria Tereza Capra, whose mandate was revoked on February 4, for an alleged violation of parliamentary decorum.

These actions show a worrying pattern of political violence against women that weakens democracy and violates international human rights treaties and instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the American Convention on Human Rights.

In the same way, these actions go against the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women "Belém do Pará Convention", which in article 5 establishes that: "Every woman is entitled to the free and full exercise of her civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, and may rely on the full protection of those rights as embodied in regional and international instruments on human rights". As such, the States Parties recognize that violence against women prevents and nullifies the exercise of these rights.

Faced with this escalation of aggressions, the Committee of Experts recalls that Article 3 of [the Inter-American Model Law on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women in Political Life](#) defines violence against women in political life as "any action, conduct or omission, carried out directly or through third parties that, based on gender, causes harm or

suffering to a woman or to various women, which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of their political rights.”

The acts of violence referenced in Article 6 of the same instrument include: unwanted sexual proposals, touching, approaching, or invitations that influence the environment where political and public activity takes place; threatening or intimidating one or several women with the effect or purpose of nullifying her political rights, including the resignation of the position or function that they hold or exercise; defaming, slandering, insulting or using any expression or action that discredits women in the exercise of their political responsibilities, based on gender stereotypes, with the purpose or result of undermining their public image and/or limiting her. political rights.

In view of the foregoing, the Committee requests that the State of Brazil in the first place, takes the necessary actions to protect the women victims of these acts of violence and to repair the damage caused. The Committee also recommends that appropriate measures be taken to identify and prevent violence against women in the political sphere, punishing these aggressions in a commendable manner.

The Follow-up Mechanism of the Belém do Pará Convention, through its Committee of Experts, makes itself available to the Brazilian State for any technical support it may require in this matter.

As of the date of publication of this communique, the Committee of Experts received information from the Ministry of Women indicating its public condemnation of the aforementioned events and its deep concern regarding the increase in the manifestations of violence against women in political life, as well as its intention to take appropriate measures to maintain the presence of women in the political arena and promote their full political participation, without discrimination.

The [Committee of Experts](#) is the technical body of the MESECVI, responsible for the analysis and evaluation of the implementation process of the Convention of Belém do Pará. It is made up of independent Experts, appointed by each of the States Parties from among their nationals, who perform their duties in a personal capacity.