



Communique Committee of Experts

Committee of Experts expresses concern about the harassment suffered by Katty González, national deputy in Paraguay

Washington DC, April 29, 2021.- The [Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women "Convention of Belém do Pará"](#) (MESECVI) expresses its concern about the complaint issued by Katty González, National Deputy of Paraguay, related to the systematic harassment by a businessman for almost two years, materialized on social media in which images with sexist language have been published, putting her integrity at risk¹. This situation worsened with alleged threats and physical harassment to intimidate her and her family members, taking pictures of her home and following her with different vehicles.

According to the information received, the authorities have dismissed and archived the businessman's claims against the deputy, however, she has not received effective protection measures to stop the harassment against her or to protect her integrity.

The Committee of Experts recalls that, according to Article 2 of the [Convention of Belém do Pará](#), violence against women can take place in the community and be perpetrated by anyone, including acts perpetrated or tolerated by the State or its agents, wherever it occurs. Likewise, articles 3 and 4 establish that every woman has the right to a life free from violence, both in the public and private spheres; the right to have the inherent dignity of her person respected and her family protected; and the right to have equal access to public functions in her country and to participate in public affairs, including decision-making.

In the same way, in accordance with Article 3 of the [Inter-American Model Law on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women in Political Life](#), it is understood by violence against women in political life as “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 by women of their political rights”. Likewise, the Article 6, section e) of the Model Law establishes that one expression of this violence is any conduct, action or omission that, based on gender “threatens, frightens or intimidates, in any way, one or several women and/or their families with the effect or purpose of nullifying her political rights, including resignation of the position or function that they hold or exercise, or to which they postulate.”

¹ For example, an image was found that reads: “Undressing Katty González in her actions and interventions THE PLEASURE of doing the right thing”.

In this regard, the Committee notes that the sexist messages against the deputy that circulate on social media are based on her gender and that it undermines her public image. These messages have an impact on the full exercise of her political rights, and it has the effect of living in constant fear for her life and the lives of her family members.

Likewise, the Committee recognizes the efforts of the Paraguayan State to address these situations, highlighting the information received about the presentation of the "Bill to prevent, punish and eradicate political violence against women for gender reasons" coordinated by the Commission of Equity and Gender of the Paraguayan Senate. The Committee welcomes the fact that this bill contemplates the principles of the Convention of Belém do Pará, as well as the special consideration that has been given to the Model Law on Violence against Women in Political Life of the CEVI.

Therefore, the Committee requests the State of Paraguay to: a) Investigate the facts reported by the alleged victim; b) grant the necessary guarantees to stop the harassment to which the deputy and her family have been subjected; c) punish, where appropriate, the conduct that has violated the rights of the alleged victim; d) create an agreement with the media and with the different social media platforms to prevent and respond appropriately to cases involving gender-based violence against women; and e) report on the progress in this case.

The Committee of Experts is the technical body of the MESECVI responsible for the analysis and evaluation of the implementation process of the Belém do Pará Convention. It is composed of independent Experts, appointed by each State Party among its nationals, and serve in a personal capacity.