



OAS | MESECVI

FOLLOW-UP MECHANISM
BELÉM DO PARÁ CONVENTION (MESECVI)
Nineteenth Meeting of the Committee of Experts
November 11 and 12, 2022
Location: Buenos Aires, Argentina
Virtual platform: Zoom

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MESECVI/CEVI/doc.280/22
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MINUTE
NINETEENTH MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

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The Nineteenth meeting of the Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism of the Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Punish, and Eradicate Violence against Women (MESECVI) was held on November 11 and 12, 2022, in person at the Hotel NH, Julio 9 street, in Buenos Aires, Argentina and virtual through the Zoom virtual platform.

A total of twenty-one (21) Experts participated in the XIX meeting, in the modalities described below. The following experts attended in person: President Marcela Huaita, Expert from Peru; the Vice President, Gloria Camacho, Expert from Ecuador; Lourdes Montero, Expert from Bolivia; Sylvia Mesa; Expert from Costa Rica; Mónica Maureira, Expert from Chile; Lilian Giovana Lemus Pérez, Alternate Expert from Guatemala; Cona Husbands, Expert from Guyana; Teresa Incháustegui, Expert from Mexico, Pilar Callizo, Expert from Paraguay; Cristina Sánchez, Dominican Republic; Teresa Herrera, Uruguay. Leila Linhares, Expert from Brazil; Marcia Symphorien, Expert from Saint Lucia; Rinette Djokarto, Expert from Suriname; Sherna Alexander, Expert from Trinidad and Tobago; Natalia Brandler, Expert from Venezuela. Vice President Barbara Bailey, Expert from Jamaica; Susana Chiarotti, Expert from Argentina; Elaine Sands, Expert from Bahamas; Tania Camila Rosa, Expert from El Salvador and Miriam Roache, Expert from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines attended virtually via zoom link.

The meeting proceeded as follows:

On November 11, 2022 at 9:20 a.m. in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the inaugural session of the meeting began.

Once the quorum was verified, the President of the Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism of the Belém do Pará Convention (CEVI), Marcela Huaita, greeted the Experts and guests, welcoming them and thanking them for their participation, after which, she introduced and gave the floor to Nadine Gasman, President of INMUJERES of Mexico and President of the Conference of States Parties to the MESECVI (CEP).

The President of the CEP took advantage of the occasion to thank the CEVI and the Mechanism for the commitment they have demonstrated with the initiative to work on symbolic violence that was proposed by her presidency, as well as, the drive towards progress in comprehensive public policies for the elimination of violence against women throughout the Region.

Marcela Huaita then invited Alejandra Mora Mora, Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), to offer a few remarks. The Executive Secretary of the CIM recognized the work of the Committee of Experts and its Technical Secretariat, and stressed the importance of the joint work between the CEVI and the CIM. She also congratulated the Experts on the work they had done during the year and stressed the importance of Belém do Pará as an instrument capable of continuing to protect women from

new forms of violence. She made reference to the work of the Secretariat in the incorporation of the new automated system of indicators for the Fourth Round of Multilateral Evaluation, which should facilitate the collection of data and information, as well as, the process of bringing the Mechanism closer to the English-speaking Caribbean so that their voices can be better heard.

The President finally invited Silvina Montenegro, Director of Women and Gender Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the host country to offer remarks. The Director pointed out the importance of the Mechanism to Argentina, which has demonstrated this over time through its financial contributions and representation in the governing bodies of the MESECVI as authorities. The Director took the opportunity to thank the CEVI for the statement they had issued regarding the attack on the Vice President of their country, calling for an investigation and showing concern about this incident.

The President of the Committee of Experts took to the floor to summarize her vision of the efforts made in the last year, explicitly calling attention to the work on virtual violence, cyberviolence and cyberbullying, as well as, the issues of sexual violence, intersectionality and women with disabilities and violence. She also drew attention to the new manifestations of violence, showing how, as gender-based violence against women transforms, so does the CEVI. This transformation is supported by the ongoing commitment of the CEP and the CIM, and also by the fundamental integration of the civil society and women's organizations, since the States Parties need the work of the CEVI.

At 10:00 am, the President declared the meeting open and welcomed the experts from Chile, Uruguay and the Bahamas who joined this year and gave them the floor for their presentation.

At the end of this presentation, the official photograph of the meeting was taken.

Subsequently, the proposed agenda, document MESECVI/CEVI/doc.271/22, and the organization of work, document MESECVI/CEVI/doc.272/22, were approved.

The meeting continued with the presentation of the Activities Report of the Committee of Experts by the CEVI President, document MESECVI/CEVI/doc.273/22. The presentation began with a review of the achievements obtained in the year, from the holding of the Eighteenth Meeting of the MESECVI Committee of Experts (Dec 2021), with the CEVI President noting that at that meeting the Committee had expressed its concern about migratory flows in the region and the impact of violence on the lives of girls and women who are migrating. A request had also been made from that time, to deepen the study on the cases of forced disappearances faced by women and girls in the region. The report drew attention to the prevention of violence and the agreement to deepen the work and cooperation with the States Parties in this matter, which is reproduced in educational processes and in socialization, especially of boys and men, in addition to making an urgent appeal to the States Parties to the Convention to strengthen the budgets assigned to the response to combat violence against women and girls in the context of the COVID 19 pandemic. The President also informed the meeting of changes of Experts this past year.

Then, she reported on the progress in the different axes of the strategic plan of the MESECVI 2018-2023:

1. Strengthen the institutionality of the MESECVI;

- Automated System of Progress Indicators of the Convention with the objective of facilitating the response of the States Parties
- Training workshops on indicators and use of the automated system in which more than 280 civil servants and public officials from different government areas participated, thus covering 13 States Parties with training.
- Strengthening work with the Anglophone Caribbean

2. Contribute to strengthening the technical capacities of the States Parties to the MESECVI to implement the Belém do Pará Convention from an intersectional and women's human rights approach, throughout their life cycle with an emphasis on prevention and reparation;

- Inter-American Network of Gender Liaisons of the Judiciary of the States Parties to the Belém do Pará Convention (Meeting July 7 and 8, 2022)

3. Help the States Parties to find intersectoral responses to the problems of violence against women, and

- Platform of International and Regional Mechanisms on Violence against Women and their rights (EDVAW)
- 7 reports made within the framework of the CIM/MESECVI and UN Women alliance: Cyberviolence and cyberbullying against women and girls within the framework of the Belém do Pará Convention; ·Guide for the Application of the Inter-American Model Law to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate the violent death of women for reasons of gender; Femicide/Feminicide; Civil and Family Discriminatory Law in Latin America. Analysis of civil and family legislation in relation to the obligation to prevent, address, punish and repair violence against women for reasons of gender; Normative responses for compliance with the standards regarding Femicide/Feminicide. Challenges and good practices in criminal procedure legislation in the region; Legal advisory services for attention to gender violence in Mexico and Central America; Comprehensive reparation in cases of feminicide and femicide in Latin America: progress, challenges and recommendations; Follow-up on measures and budgets aimed at reducing violence against women within the framework of the COVID-19 pandemic and its budgets.
- With the support of Eurosocial, the following were carried out: Regional Study on Shelters for women victims of gender violence in Latin America; Focused Multicountry Study on Shelters for women victims of gender violence. The cases of Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Peru; Initial Thematic Report: violence against girls and women with disabilities; General Recommendation on violence against girls, adolescents and women with disabilities for reasons of gender;
- In collaboration with the Belisario Domínguez Institute of the Senate of the Republic of Mexico: Presentation of the Hemispheric Report on Child, Early and Forced Marriages and Unions in the States Parties to the Belém do Pará Convention; Study on "Symbolic violence, in the voice and life of women leaders";
- With the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Regional Program of the Spotlight Initiative for Latin America: Guide to Experiences and Good Practices in Strategic Litigation in Cases Related to the Defense of Women's Human Rights in Latin America; Regional diagnosis of the "availability and quality of data

on disappearances and trafficking in women"; Regional analysis of "Legislation and policies on organized crime and violence against women and girls and femicide/femicide. Adequacy of regulatory frameworks according to the Palermo Protocol";

- Project with UNFPA to strengthen the incidence of MESECVI in the Caribbean: The Caribbean perspective will be translated and incorporated into the Hemispheric Report on early and forced marriages and unions; The Caribbean perspective will be translated and incorporated into the Report on Gender Stereotypes in access to justice for women, adolescents and girls;
- Communications to the States Parties: 7 communications to authorities of the States Parties and organizations for the defense of women to express concern, request information or express their willingness to provide technical support to the States in question.

4. Raise awareness and sensitize society as a whole regarding violence against women:

- Dissemination: 7 press releases approved by the Committee of Experts; Launch of our official website: <https://belemdopara.org/>

The Experts took the floor to offer congratulations on the work carried out and the report was approved.

This was followed by the intervention of Daniela Urribarri, a consultant hired in collaboration with the Spotlight initiative, within the framework of the process actions and strengthening of the MESECVI. She presented her main findings and conclusions of this process, among which she highlighted as strengths the following: the broad representation with 32 States Parties, the autonomy of the CEVI, the importance and quality of the materials it generates, its link with CSOs and the high capacities of the TS. She then identified the following challenges and proposed some solutions: the capacity for the regularity of advocacy and sustainability, for which it was proposed that the Committee discuss the possibility of reorienting priorities; the need to ease the report production process; the importance of strengthening the role of the CEVI at the local and regional level; multiplying the channels of entry of the agenda in the countries; generating concrete commitments of progress of the EE with respect to the recommendations; the need to reorienting the efforts to search for funds, also within the OAS; strengthening the institutional framework of the CEVI and increasing the contributions of the CSO for the reports.

There was an open discussion in which the Experts expressed their concern about the anti-rights discourses and the need to strengthen the CEVI and the MESECVI to confront these discourses and not to cede ground. The Experts also expressed interest in strengthening coordination with civil society organizations and alliances with journalists, especially feminist networks, and in reinforcing the communication strategy to disseminate the Reports, Statements, and recommendations issued by the Committee. Regarding the search for funds, the meeting was reminded of the states' obligation to provide programmatic funds so that the Mechanism is not dependent on projects. It was suggested that an approach to other international organizations of the UN, the IDB or the CAF be initiated, as well as, privileging the alliances with some State agents, such as the judiciary with whom work has already been done. It was, therefore, agreed that the Secretariat be requested to follow up on the results of

this process of dialogue and consultation for strengthening and to have this serve as the beginning of the strategic planning process that must be approved in 2023 until 2028.

Next, the President opened the dialogue with civil society organizations with the same objective of hearing about the regional challenges in terms of violence against women and their proposals for strategic planning. Speakers were Milena Páramo, representative of CLADEM, Carmen Cecilia Martínez, representative of the Center for Reproductive Rights, Adilia de las Mercedes Hernández, representative of Asociación Mujeres de Guatemala, Ester Mancera, representative of the organization Sordas sin violencia, and Barara Jiménez, representative of Equality Now.

During the conversation, the need to strengthen the alliances of the CEVI with the CIM and the IACHR to confront the attacks of the anti-rights groups was noted. The discussion also noted the challenge of the false Parental Alienation Syndrome (PAS), which summons us to address the credibility of women, and the need to place the rights of victims at the center, in accordance with international standards. The civil society representatives also highlighted the importance of the CEVI's work, both for their own work, and in the development of standards. Two examples of those standards were the Recommendation on consent that was fundamental in the Brisa case (that will be resolved this week) and the Amicus Curiae that was invoked by the Court that requests the State to support the MESECVI in complying with the judgment in the Guzmán Albarracín vs. Ecuador case. Other issues that stood out were the advances in the work with intersectionality, such as women with disabilities and violence, or Afro and indigenous women and they requested that the Committee continue promoting standards in sexual and reproductive rights, their link with democracy, empowerment and finally its impact on the civil and political rights of women in the region.

The President expressed thanks for the interventions, stressing the bridges between the issues that the Committee works on and those presented by the representatives of the different organizations, and the importance of working on a common agenda. She also noted that coordination with CSOs broadens the voice of the CEVI and the impact of the documents it produces.

The next item on the agenda (Item 5) was the presentation of **the Regional Study on shelters for women victims of gender violence in Latin America MESECVI/CEVI/doc.274/22** and the **Multicountry Focused Study on Shelters for Women Victims of Gender Violence (Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Peru), MESECVI/CEVI/doc.275/22**, led by the expert from Argentina, Susana Chiarotti. Ms. Chiarotti explained the content and the process for carrying out the studies. Some of the Committee's Experts, such as President Marcela Huita, and the Expert from Brazil Leila Linhares, participated in these studies. The experts offered congratulations on the work and commented on the need to continue work on these matters, including issues of intersectionality. They also commented on the realities of the different experiences of the shelters in their countries, shared some good practices and the approach to the social problems that they try to overcome with the limited resources available. They agreed to approve the publication of the studies once comments and additional updates submitted within 20 calendar days of the meeting were incorporated into the documents.

At 2pm there was a break for lunch. At 3:30 pm, the Agenda was resumed at Item 6 with the presentation of the **Report on legislation on gender-based violence against women in the Anglophone Caribbean MESECVI/CEVI/doc.276/22**, by the Vice President of the Committee of Experts, Barbara Bailey, through the Zoom platform. Dr. Bailey presented the contents of this study that was completed in 2018 and highlighted the need to have the identification of this type of violence supported in sex- disaggregated crime data, hence making more visible the rates of cases of gender violence against women and girls in the subregion. It was also suggested that the study could serve as a tool to promote the use of the term “femicide”, as a way of recognizing and calling attention to the problem of violent deaths of women for reasons of gender, in the criminal codes of the Anglophone Caribbean States Parties. The experts offered congratulations on the work and highlighted the fact that it helped them to better understand, in particular, the operation of Common Law or Common Law with respect to civil law. They approved the publication of the study, once the Caribbean experts review the report and submit additional data on the legislation on family and sexual violence in each country within 30 calendar days of the meeting. The review suggestions and the additional data will be incorporated into the report before its publication.

The next item on the agenda was the presentation of the **Thematic Report: violence against girls and women with disabilities MESECVI/CEVI/doc.277/22** and, at the proposal of the President, it was agreed to present **the General Recommendation on violence against girls, adolescents and women with disabilities for reasons of gender MESECVI/CEVI/doc.278/22**, by Eva Villarreal, specialist from the MESECVI’s Technical Secretariat. Both documents were produced with the support of the EurosociAL+ Program of the European Union. The Specialist explained the background, the content and the methodology applied in undertaking the studies, as well as, some specificities identified for the recognition of this type of violence and the necessary adjustments required for access to justice for the affected women and girls. The experts offered congratulations on the work as a pioneering effort in the Region, and also praised the fact that it incorporates the voices of women with disabilities. They approved the publication of both documents.

At 5:04 p.m. the first day of work was finished.

12th of November

At 9:26 am, once the quorum was verified, the president began the second day of work, starting with the presentation of the **Follow-up to the Fourth Round of Multilateral Evaluation** by Luz Patricia Mejía, Technical Secretary of the MESECVI. The presentation provided information on the following important activities: the evaluation rounds; the workshops of the Automated System of Progress Indicators of the Convention with the objective of facilitating the response of the States Parties in thirteen (13) countries in which more than 280 officials and public officials from the different areas of government participated; the response of the Latin American States up to that moment in which 14 countries are in the process of uploading information; the extensions requested and granted; the attribution and approval of working subgroups to carry out national reports; and the program of hearings with the States. She also explained the strengthening of the work with the Anglophone Caribbean and the process that will take place in 2023 with a selected specific number of indicators that were agreed upon by the experts in previous meetings. She

also reported on the participation. process of civil society organizations in the preparation of shadow reports and in the form of hearings.

The President then opened the discussion during which the experts pointed out the importance of knowing the response situation of their country and requested more information on the sources to be used in the preparation of their Reports and the operation of the new process of the Automated System of Indicators. The Secretariat informed the meeting that a new training process will be opened for the use of the new automated System in the analysis of the Experts. They also discussed the need to always use official sources that can be completed with official reports from the OAS itself, the United Nations, and civil society. They raised the possibility of a new system in which the States can progressively provide information and also discussed the feasibility of preparing and publishing the reports in stages as the information is completed and received, so that the States could be measured according to their own four-year rounds, and by groups of countries. The Experts also agreed to modify the Regulations of the Committee of Experts to eliminate the mention of the word “simultaneously” from Art. 17 and requested the Secretariat to include it in the agreements.

The next item on the agenda was the presentation of the **Strategy for work with the Caribbean countries. Fourth Round of Evaluation**, by the Technical Secretariat of the MESECVI. This report explained the background and the deepened work strategy with the Caribbean countries for the Fourth Round of Evaluation, based on the outcomes of the three meetings held this year with the authorities of the MESECVI in the English-speaking Caribbean to identify the region's priorities. The agreement with UNDP for the system of indicators and the workshops to be held in the first quarter of the year with government agencies and civil society organizations, was explained. The Experts pointed out the need to continue working with the authorities, so that they can have all the information at their disposal to be able to undertake the Reports. The coordinated impulse with SA and CSOs that can facilitate the work was also articulated. The meeting participants offered congratulations for such synergy and approved this item.

The meeting agenda continued with the review of item 12 of the agenda, consisting of the review of work topics for the Fourth Evaluation Round related to: cyber violence; Afro-descendant women; parental alienation syndrome; Refugee migrant women from Venezuela. The Secretariat took the floor once again, to present the background of each topic and the possible development of different products of analysis and recommendations. The Experts had extensive discussion around this and agreed to continue working on promoting a new Model Law on online violence and harassment; continue deepening the theme of the SAP through a General Recommendation; undertake the study of the relationship between migrant women and violence, including situations of trafficking; and undertake a specialized study on the violence that affects Afro-descendant women in Latin America. The President also suggested forming working groups with the Experts who might be interested in supporting each of these axes.

At 2pm the meeting adjourned for lunch.

At 3.28pm the session resumed with the point that was pending regarding the **studies and alliances of the MESECVI**, which took place this year, under the oversight of Alejandra

Negrete, specialist of the Technical Secretariat. The specialist explained the different tools developed by the Secretariat in conjunction with other organizations, specifically: the Inter-American Network of Gender Liaisons of the Judiciary of the States party to the Belém do Pará Convention; seven (7) reports made within the framework of the CIM/MESECVI and UN Women alliance; with the support of Eurosocial two (2) studies on shelters for victims of gender violence in Latin America, in addition to the thematic report on violence against girls and women with disabilities; and the General Recommendation; with the Belisario Domínguez Institute of the Senate of the Republic of Mexico the presentation of the Hemispheric Report on Child, Early and Forced Marriages and Unions in the States Parties to the Convention of Belém do Pará and the Study on Symbolic Violence, in voice and in the lives of women leaders; with UNDP the Guide to Experiences and Good Practices in Strategic Litigation in Cases Related to the Defense of Women's Human Rights in Latin America; Regional diagnosis of the availability and quality of data on disappearances and trafficking in women, and a regional analysis of legislation and policies on organized crime and violence against women and girls and femicide/femicide. Adaptation of regulatory frameworks according to the Palermo Protocol; and announced with UNFPA the project to strengthen the incidence of the MESECVI in the Caribbean with the translation, incorporating the Caribbean perspective, into the Hemispheric Report on early and forced marriages and unions and the Report on Gender Stereotypes in access to justice for women and girls, as well as a study or Recommendation on Violence Against Afrodescendant Women in Latin America.

This presentation was followed by that of the communication specialist, Tatiana Bensa, who showed the **New website and communication strategy**. The Specialist reported on the results of the communication strategy and presented the new website that was launched on June 9. She also explained the possibilities of broadcasting the voice of the Experts in the social networks of the MESECVI, as a means of multiplying the scope of their work and recommendations, and bringing the Committee closer to the people, as well as, developing the priority objectives of the strategy.

The Experts thanked the Secretariat for the information, and recognized its work and that of the President, as well as, expressed their willingness to continue making efforts to generate alliances and give visibility to the work of the MESECVI through the web and its networks.

At 4pm they reviewed and approved the agreements, document MESECVI/CEVI/doc.279/22, which will be published on the MESECVI website.

Finally, the President went on to the agenda item, Other Issues, and there being no other considerations, the President of the Committee thanked the Committee of Experts and the Technical Secretariat for their work, and officially closed the Nineteenth Meeting of the Committee of Experts of the MESECVI.