



Communique Committee of Experts

Committee of Experts Expresses Concern Over the Situation of Three University Activists One Month After Their Detention in Nicaragua

Washington, D.C., October 2, 2023. The [Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women](#) "Belém do Pará Convention" (MESECVI) expresses its condemnation and concern regarding the conditions under which three young university activists have been detained and have remained incarcerated in Nicaragua for over a month. These detentions, carried out and executed in a violent manner, without consideration and guarantees of their fundamental rights as reported by the activists themselves and their relatives, represent a violation of the international obligations of the Nicaraguan State under the Belem do Para Convention.

According to information obtained by this Committee, Adela Espinoza Tercero, Joseling Mayela Campos, and Gabriela Morales were detained between August 19 and August 21, 2023, by State security forces under irregular conditions, without providing any information about the reasons for their detention or the location of the detention site. This situation persisted for several days, as reported by their family members and the student organizations to which they belong.

The Committee of Experts (CEVI) urgently calls for the protection of the rights of these three women, including the right to know the reason for their detention, and for their families to know where they are being held. This, in accordance with article 4 of the Belém do Pará Convention, which states that: "Every woman has the right to the recognition, enjoyment, exercise, and protection of all human rights and freedoms embodied in regional and international human rights instruments."

It is noted with concern that the reported incidents represent a form of kidnapping and forced disappearance against these three young women. In this regard, article 2 of the aforementioned Convention establishes that violence against women includes physical, sexual and psychological violence, whether perpetrated or condoned by the State or its agents, wherever it occurs, and includes, among other incidents, kidnapping.

In addition, the Committee of Experts, in its "General Recommendation No. 2 on Missing Women and Girls in the Hemisphere,"¹ recalls that the Inter-American Convention on the Forced

¹ "General Recommendation of the Committee of Experts of the MESECVI (No. 2): Missing women and girls in the hemisphere". Available on: <https://belemdopara.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/RecomendacionMujeresDesaparecidas-EN.pdf>

Disappearance of Persons defines forced disappearance as “the act of depriving a person or persons of his or their freedom, in whatever way, perpetrated by agents of the state or by persons or groups of persons acting with the authorization, support, or acquiescence of the state, followed by an absence of information or a refusal to acknowledge that deprivation of freedom or to give information on the whereabouts of that person.”

Although recent media reports indicate that the three young women have been accused of cybercrimes and are in a state penitentiary, this Committee notes that the lack of accurate information about their situation perpetuates the violence against them, in effect denying them the exercise of their right to live a life free from violence, among other protected fundamental rights.

In response to this, the Experts recall that in accordance with article 7 of the Belém do Pará Convention, an instrument signed and ratified by Nicaragua, States Parties "condemn all forms of violence against women and agree to [...] refrain from engaging in any act or practice of violence against women and to ensure that their authorities, officials, personnel, agents, and institutions act in conformity with this obligation.”

In light of the foregoing, the Committee of Experts emphatically calls upon the authorities of Nicaragua to guarantee the fundamental rights of the three detained activists, as well as, the rights of other women who have denounced the irregularity of their detentions by the government. The Committee of Experts also calls upon the authorities of Nicaragua to ensure transparent, fair, and effective legal procedures. Furthermore, the State is urged to exercise due diligence in preventing, addressing, investigating, and punishing acts of violence, including those carried out by States actors, as in the case of those mentioned above, in accordance with its international obligations.

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

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.