

## **Committee of Experts Calls on States Parties to Strengthen MESECVI as a Key Actor Against Violence Against Women.**

*Washington DC, December 1, 2023.* The XX Meeting of the Committee of Experts (CEVI) of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) concluded with a strong call to strengthen the work and capabilities of the MESECVI as a key player in regional and international efforts to eradicate violence against women.

The meeting, held on November 28 and 29 at the headquarters of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Washington DC, came on the eve of the 30th anniversary of the Convention that first recognized women's right to a life free from violence. In this regard, the Experts urged States Parties to fulfill their commitments towards the MESECVI to guarantee its role as the body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention and promoting the protection of women and girl's human rights in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Throughout the two days of work, the Experts delved into the worrying issues of the persistence of gender stereotypes that hinder women's access to justice, violence against Afro-descendant women, and progress in addressing technology-facilitated gender-based violence.

### **Two New General Recommendations and Development of a Model Law**

Two new General Recommendations were presented for the Committee's consideration. On one hand, the *General Recommendation on Afro-descendant women* examines the specific acts of violence affecting these women, stemming from the interconnection of factors such as structural discrimination, racism, and ethnic-racial and gender stereotypes. In this regard, the Experts put forward concrete proposals for addressing these acts of violence through legislation and public policies, and national action plans.

On the other hand, the content of a *General Recommendation on the use of gender stereotypes that compromise the integrity of justice systems* was discussed. This General Recommendation seeks to provide tools to justice operators and other stakeholders involved in ensuring that women victims and survivors of violence can access effective justice on equal terms.

The Experts also reaffirmed the urgency of advancing work on online or digital gender-based violence, a topic to which they agreed to give priority in their previous annual meeting in 2022. In this regard, the Committee confirmed its commitment to developing a Model Law to prevent, punish, and eradicate technology-facilitated violence against women, meant to serve as a guide for the region to adapt legal frameworks and implement public policies that offer greater protection to women.

#### **Fourth Multilateral Round of Evaluation**

Within the framework of the Fourth Multilateral Round of Evaluation, which monitors the progress of States Parties in implementing the Belém do Pará Convention, the Experts analyzed the information provided by a group of countries from Latin America.

During the working session, the national reports of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Paraguay, and Uruguay were addressed. The Experts examined the information provided in response to progress indicators with the aim of issuing specific recommendations to the States to continue advancing in the eradication of violence against women.

#### **Election of New Authorities**

At the end of the second day of the meeting, the Experts voted to renew the leadership of the Committee. The Expert from Ecuador, Gloria Camacho Zambrano, was elected President of the Committee of Experts. The Experts from Trinidad and Tobago, Sherna Alexander Benjamin, and Mexico, Teresa Incháustegui, were elected Vice Presidents.