

**Committee of Experts of MESECVI and IACHR Rapporteur on the Rights of Women condemn attack on Human Rights Defender in Argentina and express concern about guarantees of protection for women.**

*Washington, DC, April 10, 2024.* [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) and the [Rapporteur on the Rights of Women](#) of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (IACHR) condemn the attack against a member of the Argentine organization H.I.J.O.S (Sons and Daughters for Identity and Justice Against Oblivion and Silence). Additionally, they express concern about breaches of guarantees of protection for women's rights against violence and discrimination.

The young woman, a Human Rights Defender, was attacked in her home by two armed individuals who, in previous days, had been making inquiries about her in the area. The attackers said they had been paid to kill her but, instead, sexually abused her and left the slogan "VLLC" (Spanish for "Viva la Libertad Carajo" or "Long Live Freedom, Damn It") painted on the wall, a slogan frequently used by the President of the Nation.

We note the proliferation of discourses, including those emanating from state authorities, that undermine women's human rights. This, coupled with the elimination or downgrading of gender institutions or mechanisms, such as the Ministry of Women, Genders, and Diversity, sends a disparaging message that may drive such attacks.

The Committee of Experts and the Rapporteur also deplore that this incident occurred days before March 24, the Day of Memory for Truth and Justice, a national date that commemorates human rights, where organizations throughout the country demonstrate with the slogan: Memory, Truth, Justice.

Argentina has an extensive legal framework to protect women's rights and adheres to various international commitments in this regard. The country has ratified the Belém do Pará Convention, which places an obligation on States to implement policies aimed at preventing, punishing, and eradicating all forms of violence against women (Article 7) and to act with due diligence to prevent, investigate, and punish violence against women. Likewise, the Convention has a clear mandate for States Parties: "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 response to these mandates, the State must guarantee an adequate investigation of incidents, institution of protection measures, reparation for the victim, and punishment for those responsible. Likewise, it must strengthen public policies aimed at preventing violence and attending to women and girls who are victims of violence, as well as guaranteeing that no official makes statements which undermines the guarantee of human rights, particularly the right of women to live a life free of violence.

In light of the above, the Committee of Experts and the Rapporteur on the Rights of Women urge ongoing investigations to be conducted swiftly and thoroughly, identifying the perpetrators and sanctioning them appropriately according to the highest standards of human rights. The Experts and the Rapporteur have learned of the actions initiated by the Argentine authorities to investigate and assist the victim. Similarly, it is considered important that the entire institutional spectrum is unequivocal in condemning the incident in question.

The MESECVI, through its Committee of Experts, and the IACHR, through the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Women, express their full willingness to provide technical assistance to the Argentine state in this or any other matter related to the prevention, care, investigation, and punishment of violence against women, adolescents, and girls on the grounds of gender.