



FOLLOW-UP MECHANISM  
BELÉM DO PARÁ CONVENTION (MESECVI)  
NINTH CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTY  
June 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
Santiago, Chile

OEA/Ser.L/II.7.10  
MESECVI-IX/CE/doc.151/24  
Original: Spanish

## **RAPPORTEURSHIP**

**Tuesday, June 11th, 2024**

The Ninth Conference of States Party to the Follow-up Mechanism to the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women "Belém do Pará Convention" (MESECVI), was held on June 11 and 12, 2024, in Santiago, Chile. Twenty-four countries participated: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Grenada, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

The President of the Conference of States Party and Minister of Women and Gender Equity of Chile, Ms. Antonia Orellana, highlighted the commemoration of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Belém do Pará Convention and 20<sup>th</sup> of the MESECVI, and the approval of the Comprehensive Law to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women in Chile. Luis Fidel Yáñez, Executive Secretary of ECLAC, emphasized the need to look comprehensively at violence against women and offered support to the Mechanism in the development and promotion of the Model Law to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women Facilitated by Technologies. This was followed by the intervention of Alejandra Mora Mora, Executive Secretary of CIM, who greeted the authorities and thanked the MESECVI Technical Secretariat team for preparing the Conference. Among other issues, she highlighted the importance of this space, which seeks to evaluate progress and also the challenges and obstacles in the implementation of the Convention, and celebrated the support of allied organizations that help to promote the standards emanating from the Convention. The Secretary emphasized the history of this extraordinary instrument, and the role of CIM in its adoption, the result of a collective and broad effort, and paid tribute to all the women who have participated.

María Noel Vaeza, Regional Director of UN Women, underlined the relevance of the instruments in the fight against gender-based violence, UN Women's commitment to the Convention and the Follow-up Mechanism, and the need to address the cultural and structural

challenges that persist in the region. Finally, the OAS Secretary General, Luis Almagro, intervened virtually to stress the relevance of the Belém do Pará Convention and urged States to strengthen institutions and laws to protect women.

After the opening ceremony, the Conference formally began at 10:51 am local time. The quorum of the session was verified according to the Rules of Procedure of the MESECVI Conference of States Parties, and the official photograph was taken.

During the first plenary session, documents related to the agenda (MESECVI-IX/CE/doc.145) and calendar of activities (MESECVI-IX/CE/doc.146) were approved, and the Authorities of Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic were elected as the Conference Rapporteurs.

Following the election of the Rapporteurship, the panels began. In the first one, regional experiences in the prevention, punishment, and eradication of violence against women were presented. Minister Antonia Orellana highlighted Chile's efforts in women's economic autonomy and the recently approved comprehensive law, which includes measures for the reparation of femicide victims, among others. Gloria Camacho, President of CEVI, highlighted progress in making new forms of violence visible and the importance of strengthening access to justice and the collection of statistical information. Anabel López Sánchez from INMUJERES, Mexico, pointed out the importance of incorporating gender parity in political decision-making and investing in the prevention of violence. The panel concluded with Ian Rampersad from Trinidad and Tobago, who highlighted the implementation of an accelerated legal strategy in the Caribbean for the implementation of the Convention and national laws.

The States reacted to the panel with progress and challenges in the implementation of the Belém do Pará Convention according to their experiences. The Dominican Republic reported on its Strategic Plan for a Life Free of Violence for Women, while Bolivia and Brazil highlighted their efforts in violence laws and the creation of women's shelters. Colombia emphasized the adoption of Resolution 1325 and its feminist foreign policy, and Costa Rica mentioned its National Policy and the Gender Route with violet points. Honduras shared its national violence plan, and Paraguay talked about its prevention policy led by the Ministry of Women. Peru underscored its state commitment to gender equality and specialized services to prevent violence. Suriname noted that it has made progress in adopting legislative and administrative measures, including information campaigns and legal reforms on human trafficking and domestic violence. Additionally, the impact of climate change on women and communities was highlighted as a crucial issue to address in the prevention, punishment, and eradication of violence against women. To finish the panel, Brisa Angulo from the Regional Articulation in Follow-up to the Belém do Pará Convention shared her testimony and emphasized the importance of the standards generated by the Convention and the General Recommendation on Consent from the MESECVI Committee of Experts in resolving her case before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

In Panel 2, regional articulations and the implementation of the Belém do Pará Convention 30 years after the Beijing Declaration were discussed. Ana Güezmes, Director of the Gender Affairs Division of ECLAC, presented virtually the articulation between the Convention and the Regional Gender Agenda, while Alejandra Mora highlighted the "Building Bridges" program. María Noel Vaeza from UN Women called for redoubling political efforts to

prioritize gender-based violence. Bárbara Jiménez from Equality Now emphasized the importance of including civil society in the formulation of the new MESECVI strategic plan.

During the dialogue between delegations, Bolivia emphasized the importance of eradicating poverty and reducing infant mortality, while Guatemala highlighted progress in institutional mechanisms to address violence against women. Honduras mentioned the signing of a memorandum of understanding with CIM and the conduct of a national time-use survey, and Uruguay emphasized the need for strong State policies to prevent setbacks in the gender agenda. Colombia supported the work of Caribbean women and called on States to declare a decade for rural women and girls.

At 1:30 pm, a lunch break was called, with the Authorities invited to return at 3:00 pm. The second plenary session of the agenda began with the start of Panel 3 dedicated to an Analysis of the Regional Context: Perspectives from Key Actors.

Undersecretary Gloria de la Fuente highlighted the importance of the Belém do Pará Convention and CEDAW, reaffirming Chile's commitment to women's rights and the 2030 Agenda. Undersecretary Luz Vidal thanked civil society organizations and presented policies for a life free of violence for women, highlighting the update of equality and violence plans. She highlighted the Gender Violence Law for coordination between various State ministries. The EU delegation emphasized its collaboration with MESECVI in preventing gender-based violence and strengthening laws and policies. Lourdes Martínez emphasized the importance of addressing violence against Afro-descendant women and proposed an intergenerational and interracial approach. She urged funding for national mechanisms and better communication with the Committee of Experts. The panel concluded with Fernanda Vanegas, who emphasized the importance of advances such as recognizing abortion as a health service. She stressed the need to strengthen MESECVI with adequate resources and partnerships between States and civil society organizations.

The debate was then opened. Jacquie Burgess from the NGOs Network of Trinidad and Tobago expressed agreement with most of the points discussed but voiced concern over the lack of civil society representation from the Caribbean in the institutions, stressing the need to ensure women's participation at all levels of decision-making. Colombia celebrated the space and highlighted its feminist foreign policy committed to protecting women's rights and promoting a participatory and intersectional gender agenda.

The delegation from the Bahamas congratulated the Convention and highlighted advances in protecting women, though noting the need for more resources. Ecuador celebrated the 30th anniversary of the CBP and the creation of MESECVI, highlighting its influence in implementing specific programs to prevent, punish, and eradicate violence against women in their State. Haiti noted that its State has demonstrated significant commitment to combating violence against women since ratifying the Belém do Pará Convention. With the creation of the Ministry of Women's Affairs in 1994, Haiti has worked on its implementation as an integral part of its legislation, marking significant milestones such as the July 6, 2007 decree that penalizes and criminalizes violence against women. Despite persistent challenges such as the economic crisis and public security crisis, including the instrumentalization of women's bodies in conflict situations, Haiti has made significant efforts in awareness and creating platforms to

address gender-based violence, including declaring violence against women a medical emergency in 2021 and establishing the national consultation table against violence towards women and girls in 2023.

Panama spoke about establishing mechanisms to address various situations without gender bias, with an emphasis on women's physical and political autonomy. Grenada and Antigua and Barbuda highlighted their efforts in laws and policies to close discrimination gaps and to support and assist women survivors of gender-based violence. The Authority of the Dominican Republic recognized the importance of uniting all authorities in the fight against violence and called for raising awareness among the media, health, and education personnel, with a call for international cooperation for funding. It mentioned a new UN resolution to commemorate the Day against the Elimination of Violence and announced a high-level meeting to define a joint strategy; likewise, Mexico emphasized the importance of including men and local governments in the prevention of violence.

The day continued with agenda item 3, focused on progress in drafting an Inter-American Model Law to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence. The MESECVI Technical Secretariat presented the progress of the Law, supported by UN Women and Italy, highlighting the need for a model law that recognizes the *continuum* of traditional violence. Following the presentation, Mayra Jiménez, Minister of Women of the Dominican Republic, began moderating the debate, emphasizing the importance of transforming the fight against technology-facilitated gender-based violence and the need for sensitized people in political positions.

Ms. Virginia Albert-Poyotte, Minister of Public Service, Labor, and Gender Affairs of Saint Lucia, highlighted the importance of leveraging new technologies to combat gender-based violence and the need to pass laws on the subject. She emphasized the importance of having sensitized people in political positions, involving men in the process, and training those who will implement the laws, especially on gender issues. The Vice President of CEVI, Sherna Alexander Benjamin, emphasized the need for a comprehensive law to eradicate violence facilitated by technologies, recognizing that the lack of laws increases the violence that disproportionately affects women. Marcela Hernández from the LAC Digital Defenders Network shared Mexico's experience with the Olympia Law, highlighting the need for legal reforms and better judicial understanding of the crime. Cecilia Ananías from the NGO Amaranta highlighted the severe consequences of digital violence on mental health and online participation, urging for more support and resources for organizations addressing this issue.

During the dialogue with Authorities, the representative from Italy reaffirmed her country's support for MESECVI to prevent gender-based violence facilitated by technologies, highlighting the cooperation between Europe and the OAS. The Alliance for Freedom of Expression emphasized that digital violence affects girls, young women, journalists, and activists, impacting their freedom of expression and mental health, and called for addressing this violence through policies and platforms. Peru reported that 5000 cases of digital harassment have been registered since 2019, leading to the implementation of Decree 1410 and the Law on Cybercrimes, in addition to developing a mobile application to protect people at risk. The Authority of Saint Kitts and Nevis addressed violence against women with a

national policy that includes environmental factors. They commented on improving data collection and training officials and police in ICT to create more effective responses.

At 6:21 pm, the President proceeded to close the first day of sessions and invited the participants to enjoy the cultural event offered by the Chilean government. The remarks from Brazil and Mexico were postponed to the top of the agenda for the second day of work. She thanked civil society, the Technical Secretariat, and all the authorities for their participation.

### **Wednesday, June 12th, 2024**

On Wednesday, June 12, at 9:20 am, the third plenary session of the second day of work of the MESECVI Conference of States Parties began. The President of the Conference, Minister Antonia Orellana, offered the floor to the delegations pending from the previous day, Brazil and Mexico. Both delegations decided not to speak at that time and reserved the possibility of requesting the floor later during the meeting.

The third plenary session, moderated by CEVI expert from Chile, Mónica Maureira, was dedicated to presenting the results of the work of the MESECVI Committee of Experts. The session began with the presentation of the main findings of the Subregional Report: Access to Justice, Truth, and Reparation for Women in Latin America by the President of CEVI and expert from Ecuador, Gloria Camacho.

The CEVI President thanked the Technical Secretariat for collecting the data and proceeded to present the new digital tool that will allow the States Parties to complete the Progress Indicators System for Measuring the Implementation of the Belém do Pará Convention in this Fourth Multilateral Evaluation Round. This tool will enable the evaluation of regulations and public policies in the region. As a result of the States' efforts to respond to these indicators, Ms. Camacho presented the main findings of the information reported by Latin American countries, which will be used to prepare a subregional report. She concluded her presentation by calling for accelerating the application of the Convention and strengthening CEVI to continue its autonomous work. She recalled that although the figures are not encouraging, the new digital platform will contribute to efforts to improve existing public policies and laws and will also serve as a tool for civil society to monitor the States' compliance with their obligations.

The third plenary session continued with the intervention of Teresa Incháustegui, Vice President of CEVI and Expert from Mexico, who presented CEVI's General Recommendation No. 5 on gender-based violence against Afro-descendant women. This recommendation was made with broad participation from civil society organizations, reflecting an intersectional approach that highlights how Afro-descendant and diaspora women are disproportionately affected by gender-based violence. The work was based on related international conventions, resulting in 52 recommendations distributed in 11 subtitles based on the articles of the Belém do Pará Convention.

Specifically, the Recommendation analyzes the situation of the rights of Afro-descendant girls and women in Latin America and the Caribbean, highlighting the multiple violences they suffer, including femicides, sexual abuse, and trafficking. It notes that these women face higher

levels of discrimination and limitations in access to education, employment, health, justice, and participation. It also mentions obstacles such as limited access to reporting mechanisms and discrimination in judicial systems. The document recommends expanding reporting networks, adopting protocols for judicial and administrative personnel, and creating norms and mechanisms to promote the rights of Afro-descendant women, with an intersectional approach. Additionally, it emphasizes the need to radically transform narratives and practices that perpetuate inequality and racism.

Lastly, to conclude the presentations of the third plenary session, the Sub-Regional Report on Legislative Advances to Prevent & Punish Violence against Women in the Caribbean was presented by Barbara Bailey, CEVI Expert from Jamaica, who participated virtually. During her intervention, Bailey highlighted that Caribbean women face various forms of violence, with sexual violence being the most prevalent, including high rates of rape, incest, and other sexual offenses. Domestic violence is significant but often underreported due to cultural norms that justify male domination. She also reminded that in the Caribbean, rape rates are alarmingly high, with countries like the Bahamas and Jamaica among the most affected. Although femicides are not commonly typified, they are frequent and associated with domestic violence and sexual assaults in public spaces.

On the other hand, the Expert emphasized that although the legislative framework in the Caribbean has advanced with the signing of international conventions and the enactment of national laws to protect women from gender-based violence, effective implementation faces challenges due to low State compliance, inadequate resources, and the lack of systematic data. First and second-generation laws have improved protection, but there are still significant challenges to ensuring de facto equality and effective protection of women's rights. Professor Bailey concluded her intervention by recalling that urgent actions are needed to enact specific legislation on femicides, improve data collection and State response to the Indicator System, address laws that criminalize consensual sexual relations between adults of the same sex, and enhance international cooperation in these efforts.

After the presentations of the Experts, the floor was opened for interventions from the authorities and civil society.

Rocío Muñoz from UNFPA Lacro highlighted the importance of MESECVI's Recommendation No. 5 and the need to disseminate it as a tool for political advocacy and the protection of the human rights of Afro-descendant women. Next, Christine Samarow from Guyana Civil Society spoke against violence and genocides in places like Palestine and Sudan, highlighting that one in two women in Guyana has experienced some form of violence. She stressed the need to implement the Convention locally and the active participation of civil society to promote a fairer society for women.

After these interventions, the President of the Conference called on the States Parties to appoint experts and their alternates and gave the floor to the authorities.

Antigua and Barbuda mentioned the national debate on marital rape and the need for access to justice for victims and rehabilitation for perpetrators. Mexico celebrated General Recommendation No. 5 and highlighted the constitutional reform recognizing Afro-Mexican



peoples, as well as the recent approval of a reform to prohibit forced marriage, with specific actions in the Guerrero Mountain region.

Paraguay thanked the experts for their recommendations and mentioned the 2020 amended domestic violence law, which includes electronic control devices for perpetrators, in addition to highlighting the recent publication of the social emergency law on violence. Saint Lucia recognized civil society as the driving force for change and highlighted the importance of domestic violence legislation that does not discriminate based on sexual orientation, suggesting a small working group of ministers to involve other Caribbean ministers.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines mentioned the need for legislative changes, institutional strengthening, and the importance of integrating men into the change process. Saint Kitts and Nevis reported legislative advances through the domestic violence law, which defines violence holistically since 2014, and the 2019 amendment on marital rape that emphasizes consent.

Bolivia constitutionally recognized the Afro-Bolivian people and enacted a law declaring the decade of the Afro-Bolivian people. Honduras mentioned that its government's budget incorporates the principle of intersectionality and that municipalities must prioritize the demands of indigenous and Afro-descendant women. Jamaica highlighted the inclusion of skills training measures, human rights, gender approach, and climate change. Finally, Trinidad and Tobago announced its 2020 domestic violence law, which expanded protection and strengthened the definition of psychological abuse, including electronic monitoring of perpetrators and an expanded definition of femicide in criminal law.

Next, the following agenda item considered the Draft Amendment to the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of States Party, presented by the President of the Conference (MESECVI-IX/CE/doc.147/24). The changes were mainly motivated by requests from the States and the COVID-19 pandemic. The main changes include updating voting protocols, strengthening standards of transparency and accountability, enhancing the role of national mechanisms and the Conference of States Parties, and implementing new deadlines and transparency in the submission of candidacies.

Costa Rica thanked the effort in drafting the text and the consultation process, highlighting the transparency of the mechanism. Peru valued the reform as an improvement in decision-making rules and procedures, in accordance with Article 12 of the MESECVI statute. The Dominican Republic supported the proposal, emphasizing the need for clarity to work effectively among so many States. Honduras praised the consultation process and emphasized the need to massively disseminate the Convention and MESECVI's work at the national and regional levels.

After the interventions from the States, the Minister, considering the States' interventions, approved the amendment to the MESECVI's Conference of States Party Rules of Procedure, highlighting the importance of transparent and well-structured procedures, thus inviting those present to a coffee break.

When the third plenary session resumed, the Strategic Plan of MESECVI 2024-2029 (MESECVI-IX/CE/doc.148/24.rev2) was considered. First, the Technical Secretary of

MESECVI, Luz Patricia Mejía, presented the document and explained that the 2024-2029 Plan, worked on by delegations, civil society, and CEVI experts, recognizes the progress in the implementation of the Belém do Pará Convention and underscores the diversity of needs among women and girls. Similarly, it addresses the continuum of violence and highlights issues such as sexual violence, trafficking, genital mutilation, child marriage, and the effects of violence on women's mental health. It also considers online violence and its relationship with ICT and Artificial Intelligence and includes the need for exchange with civil society and regional mechanisms, aligning with other agendas such as the 2030 Agenda and Escazú. Furthermore, it addresses violence exacerbated by firearms, the importance of involving men in the process, and addressing institutional violence.

The Plan presents a new proposal from the Presidency for subtitle 5, which refers to the non-regression of women's rights. This proposal was delivered in print for the delegations' consideration. Additionally, the need for the mechanism to work on strengthening the States' capacity in this regard was highlighted. Furthermore, strengthening the mechanism includes its presence in the English-speaking Caribbean, recognizing the particularities of each State and strengthening the participation of Caribbean experts in CEVI. It also seeks to ensure an adequate financial response from regional mechanisms and others. The plan has clear goals and objectives to work on strengthening MESECVI and ensuring women's right to live a life free of violence in the region.

Once the content was presented, the President of the Conference acknowledged the importance of the work and effort of the Technical Secretariat, the National Competent Authorities, the Committee of Experts, and civil society and opened the floor for interventions from the High Authorities.

Colombia requested adding the principle of progressiveness alongside non-regression. Costa Rica seconded Colombia's proposal and suggested a change in wording in the third paragraph. Peru agreed with Colombia and highlighted the formulation of the plan as a commitment to equality and the strengthening of the mechanism. It emphasized the importance of intercultural exchange and listening. The Dominican Republic thanked the Presidency teams and the Technical Secretariat and joined Peru's request to ensure compliance with the strategic plan. Finally, Expert Teresa Incháustegui suggested emphasizing regression in paragraph 4 and progressiveness in paragraph 5, which was accepted by Colombia, Costa Rica, and the Dominican Republic. The comments received were incorporated by the Technical Secretariat into the final text. Finally, the Strategic Plan was approved, celebrating the collaborative work and thanking all the States, the Technical Secretariat, and the experts.

The President then called for lunch and invited the Authorities to reconvene at 2:30 pm to begin the fourth plenary session.

Upon return, the President put item 9 of the agenda to consideration and proceeded to read the Draft Declaration on Acceleration Strategies for the Implementation of the Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women (MESECVI-IX/CE/doc.149/24.rev1). After the reading, the document was opened for debate. Honduras, Mexico, and Peru supported its approval. The Secretariat took note of the observations received from the delegations of the Bahamas, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Grenada, Jamaica,



Paraguay, and Saint Lucia. The President thanked the involved parties, and the document was approved with the suggested changes.

Next followed the proposal and definition of the host country for the Tenth Conference of States Parties (agenda item 10). The President recalled the offer from the Authority of Brazil to host at the seventh preparatory meeting of the IX CEP. She offered the floor to the delegation, who ratified their offer. Likewise, the Minister of the Dominican Republic took the floor to offer her State to host the XI Conference of States Parties. The present States approved both proposals by acclamation.

Finally, the President proceeded to read the agreements of the IX Conference, document MESECVI-IX/CE/doc.150/24. The President informed the room that reservations would be collected according to the approved language in the Declaration. The Authority of Jamaica thanked the inclusion of the topic related to climate change of great importance to the Caribbean. Mexico also requested to incorporate the use of firearms and organized crime. With no further comments, the agreements of the IX CEP were approved.