



## Communique **Committee of Experts**

### **Committee of Experts Rejects the Closure of Institutions and Policies for the Protection of Women in Argentina**

Washington, DC, August 22, 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" \(MESECVI\)](#) expresses its deep concern and opposition to the decisions taken at the highest level of the Argentine State that significantly affect the capacity of institutions, mechanisms and policies aimed at protecting women from gender-based violence. Thirty years after the adoption of the Convention of Belém do Pará, the Experts of this Committee regret this serious setback and call upon the Argentine government to return to the path of compliance with its national and international obligations and the commitments that the State has made to guarantee the fundamental rights of women.

Over the past two decades and throughout the successive rounds of multilateral evaluations by MESECVI to assess progress in implementing the Belém do Pará Convention, the Committee of Experts has commended the Argentine State, on various occasions, for the measures adopted to ensure the protection of women's human rights. Notable among these are the adoption of Law 26.485 and the Micaela Law, the strengthening of its National Women's Advancement Mechanism with the creation of the Ministry of Women, Genders, and Diversity, and the existence of protection mechanisms such as the 144 hotline.

However, in the current context, the Experts note that measures have been taken, such as the elimination of pre-existing structures, which undermine the State's capacity to protect women and girls from gender-based violence. These actions contravene Argentina's own national regulations and its international commitments, such as the Belém do Pará Convention and the Beijing Platform for Action.

The Committee of Experts draws attention to the fact that, like other international human rights norms, the Belém do Pará Convention, to which Argentina is a State Party, enshrines the principle of progressivity in its Article 8. This principle requires States to progressively adopt measures against gender-based violence, ensuring that there is no regression in already acquired rights.

The Committee is also concerned about the lack of clarity regarding the prevention, assistance, and access to justice programs that will remain in place, as well as the body responsible for their oversight. This issue has been raised by Argentine civil society organizations in a context of increasing numbers of gender-related killings of women, as reported by the National Femicide Registry<sup>1</sup>.

Moreover, following on the closure of the Subsecretariat for the Protection against Gender Violence, the Committee of Experts regrets the disappearance of the National Women's Advancement Mechanism. This unprecedented setback contradicts the provisions of Law 26.485 on Comprehensive Protection to Prevent, Punish, and Eradicate Violence against Women, which mandates the existence of a competent body responsible for designing public policies. It also goes against the commitments made through the Beijing Platform for Action, which recommends creating or strengthening national mechanisms based on a strong political commitment at the highest possible levels of government.

Considering the above, the Committee of Experts urges the Argentine State authorities to ensure the effective progressivity of women's human rights through the strengthening of institutions, regulatory frameworks, and public policies aimed at protecting them from gender-based violence. This Committee highlights the fact that ensuring a life free of violence for women is a fundamental condition for living in democracy and for the development of societies in our region.

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

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*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.*

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://www.csjn.gov.ar/novedades/detalle/8323>