

MESECVI Delivers Final Report on the Situation of Women in the Catatumbo subregion and Strengthens State Work on Gender-Based Violence Indicators During Visit to Colombia

Bogotá, May 21, 2026 — As part of its technical assistance mandate to strengthen the protection of women’s human rights, the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) carried out a visit to Colombia from May 11 to 14, focused on monitoring the situation of women and girls in the Catatumbo subregion and strengthening institutional capacities for the measurement and reporting of information on gender-based violence against women.

The delegation was composed of the Vice Presidents of the Committee of Experts (CEVI), Mónica Maureira of Chile and Yildalina Tatem Brache of the Dominican Republic, accompanied by Adriana Benjumea, Colombia’s Expert before the CEVI, and the Technical Secretariat’s team. The visit was carried out with the support of Colombia’s Vice Ministry of Women and the ACT to end violence against women programme, a joint initiative by UN Women and the European Union.

Amid ongoing concern over violence and humanitarian crisis affecting the Catatumbo subregion, the delegation formally delivered the [report resulting from the technical assistance visit](#) conducted in February, which concluded that women and girls in the subregion face systematic human rights violations marked by multiple forms of sexual violence. The official presentation took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with the participation of more than 50 representatives from government institutions, the Ombudsperson’s Office, members of the civil society coalition *Las Mujeres Abrazamos el Catatumbo*, and international cooperation organizations.

Government authorities presented some of the actions undertaken to implement the preliminary recommendations issued by the CEVI, while civil society organizations, the Ombudsperson’s Office, and international organizations highlighted the continuing challenges on the ground and the critical situation faced by women in Catatumbo. The meeting also identified strategic actions to strengthen effective protection and assistance for women and girls in the territory.

During the visit, the delegation held meetings with institutional actors and international cooperation partners to advance actions with concrete impact in the subregion. In a meeting with Deputy Ombudsperson Paula Cristina Aponte Urdaneta, the Ombudsperson’s Office team, and gender focal points working in the territory, discussions focused on the challenges of strengthening the protection of women’s and girls’ rights in Catatumbo, while reaffirming the commitment to continue joint work.

In addition, during a meeting with members of the Gender Working Group of the International Cooperation Community in Colombia, currently chaired by the Embassy of Switzerland and hosted with the support of the OAS Mission to Support the Peace Process

in Colombia (MAPP/OAS), the delegation formally presented the report and discussed strategic recommendations in which international cooperation can play a key role in strengthening an effective response for women and girls in Catatumbo.

The agenda also included a meeting with authorities from the National Gender Commission of the Judiciary, including its President, Myriam Stella Gutiérrez Argüello; the President of the Superior Council of the Judiciary, Mary Lucero Novoa Moreno; and Magistrate Alfonso Cajiao Cabrera. The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange experiences on access to justice, judicial training, and the incorporation of a gender perspective into institutional responses.

As part of the work on indicators for measuring gender-based violence against women and monitoring the implementation of the Belém do Pará Convention, the delegation also held a technical cooperation meeting with the Vice Ministry of Women and the SALVIA team — the National System for the Registration, Assistance, Monitoring and Follow-up of Gender-Based Violence — created to strengthen the management and follow-up of cases received through the national helpline 155. The meeting was led by Clara Valdés, Director for the Prevention of and Response to Violence against Women and coordinator of the SALVIA programme, together with CEVI Vice Presidents Mónica Maureira and Yildalina Tatem Brache.

Through this technical exchange, participants worked on strengthening indicators to measure the impact of the SALVIA programme and to expand the territorial reach of institutional protection and response mechanisms, taking as a reference the MESECVI Progress Indicators System.

The visit concluded with a day-and-a-half workshop jointly organized with the Vice Ministry of Women. Facilitated by CEVI Vice President Mónica Maureira with the support of the Technical Secretariat, the workshop brought together more than 80 officials from State institutions, including representatives from several ministries, the Office of the Inspector General, the judiciary, the National Police and migration authorities, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF), National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), the National Protection Unit (UNP), among other institutions.

The workshop combined a review of the Convention's standards and the findings of [Colombia's Country Report](#) during the Fourth Multilateral Evaluation Round with practical exercises on indicator reporting in areas such as legislation, national plans, access to justice, diversity, statistics, and budget allocation. The exercise made it possible to identify persistent challenges in institutional coordination and information production, as well as advances and concrete opportunities to strengthen measurement systems and institutional responses to violence against women.

These activities also contributed to advancing Colombia's path toward MESECVI's Fifth Multilateral Evaluation Round by promoting State capacities for data collection, public policy monitoring, and institutional responses to violence against women, while reaffirming Colombia's commitment to the implementation of the Belém do Pará Convention.