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COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

MESECVI

Follow-Up Mechanism to the
Belém do Pará Convention

Committee of Experts of the MESECVI expresses concern over reports of intimidation and violence against Congresswoman Isabel Vera and her team in Colombia

Washington, DC, August 5, 2026. [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 concern regarding the complaint filed by Colombian Congresswoman Isabel Vera concerning the alleged attempted kidnapping of a member of her team, only days after she took office on July 20. In light of these allegations, the Committee makes a strong call on the competent authorities to investigate the reported incidents with due diligence and to adopt the necessary protection measures, in accordance with national regulations and the international obligations undertaken by the Colombian State.

The Committee of Experts (CEVI) has become aware of the complaint made public by Congresswoman Vera on July 23. According to her account, a member of her team was intercepted by five armed men shortly after driving her to her residence. During the incident, the men allegedly fired a shot next to the vehicle. Congresswoman Vera, who stated that she has received threats throughout her political career, expressed fear for her life and the safety of her team and called for the effective implementation of the protection measures granted in her favor.

Both the Committee of Experts and the Conference of States Party (CEP) of the MESECVI have warned, through various pronouncements, that violence against women in political life constitutes a violation of women's human rights and poses a serious threat to democracy. This recognition is grounded in the rights and obligations established under the Belém do Pará Convention, to which Colombia is a State Party.

As the first international treaty to recognize women's right to live free from violence, the Convention establishes, in Article 3, every woman's right to a life free from violence in both the public and private spheres. Article 5 further recognizes women's right to freely and fully exercise their political rights. In addition, Article 7(b) requires States Parties to act with due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish violence against women.

Regional recognition of violence against women in political life advanced in 2015 with the adoption of the [Declaration on Political Harassment and Violence against Women](#) by the Conference of States Party. In that Declaration, the States Party recognized that both political harassment and violence against women encompass any action, conduct or omission based on gender that has the purpose or result of undermining, annulling, impeding or restricting women's political rights. They also recognized that these forms of violence discourage

women's political participation and the continuation of their political careers, and that their eradication requires a comprehensive approach.

The Committee further developed these standards through the [Inter-American Model Law on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women in Political Life](#). The Model Law recognizes as acts of violence against women in political life, among other forms of conduct, threatening, frightening or intimidating, in any way, one or several women or their families with the effect or purpose to limit their political rights (Article 6(h)). It further provides that States must ensure urgent response mechanisms to protect those rights, including the exercise of public office (Article 9(e)), and act with due diligence to prevent, investigate, punish and provide reparation for such acts (Article 29).

At the national level, the Committee notes that Colombia adopted Law No. 2453 of 2025, establishing measures to prevent, address, reject and punish violence against women in politics and to ensure the effective exercise of their right to participate at all levels. Its effective implementation is essential to ensuring a timely institutional response, activating the appropriate protection mechanisms, and guaranteeing that women are able to exercise their political rights free from violence.

In light of the foregoing, the Committee of Experts strongly calls upon the Colombian State to promptly investigate the reported incidents with due diligence and a gender perspective, and to sanction those responsible. It also urges the immediate adoption of the necessary measures to protect the life, physical integrity, and safety of Congresswoman Isabel Vera and the members of her staff, ensuring that she can fully carry out the duties for which she was elected.

The CEVI further calls upon the Colombian authorities to reject all forms of violence against women in political and public life and to strengthen the implementation of domestic legislation and Inter-American standards in order to ensure that all women can participate fully in political life free from violence and discrimination, recognizing that this is an essential condition for democratic life.

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

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.