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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 statements by Caribbean regional education authorities that reproduce discriminatory gender stereotypes

Washington, DC, September 22, 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 over public statements made by Caribbean regional education authorities that reproduce discriminatory gender stereotypes by portraying attributes such as “leadership” and “authority” as inherent and exclusive to men. The Committee warns that such messages, when conveyed by authorities and institutions responsible for the education of children and adolescents, reinforce concepts of women’s inferiority or subordination and undermine efforts to achieve substantive equality between women and men.

The Committee has learned, through statements issued by civil society organizations and media reports, of remarks made by a senior official of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) during the presentation of regional examination results, stating that “men are born leaders, and we have to respect that and help them to stay in that place.” The remarks were made in the context of data showing a decline in the participation of male students in secondary and post-secondary examinations across the Caribbean.

The CEVI recognizes the importance of addressing gender stereotypes that also affect the educational processes of boys and adolescent boys. However, it emphasizes that responses to these challenges must not reproduce prejudices about the roles, capacities, or attributes of women and men.

The Committee has repeatedly warned that gender stereotypes contribute to the reproduction of structural inequalities and create conditions in which discrimination and different forms of violence against women are normalized. Attributing leadership to men as an innate characteristic reinforces unequal power relations and conveys an exclusionary message to girls and women about their place in society.

In this regard, the CEVI recalls that Article 6(b) of the Belém do Pará Convention establishes that the right of every woman to be free from violence includes “the right of women to be valued and educated free of stereotyped patterns of behavior and social and cultural practices based on concepts of inferiority or subordination.” In accordance with this obligation, girls and adolescent girls have the right to educational environments free from discrimination and gender stereotypes.

Article 8(b) further establishes the obligation of States Parties to progressively adopt specific measures to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of women and men, through the development of formal and informal educational programs appropriate to every level of the educational process, in order to counteract prejudices, customs, and practices based on the premise of inferiority or superiority, or on stereotyped roles for women and men that legitimize or exacerbate violence against women. The obligation to advance this social and cultural transformation—including, for example, school-related, relational, and economic factors—has been extensively developed by the Committee, including through its call to eliminate gender stereotypes at all levels and in all areas of education.

The [Declaration of Pachuca](#), adopted by the Experts, underscored the central role of education in this transformation and called for educators to be encouraged to demonstrate the benefits of human rights education and gender equality for all, and to be provided with certified professional development tools consistent with human rights commitments. It also called for the incorporation of masculinities into educational curricula to guide the socialization of girls and boys, with an emphasis on prevention and on building healthy and respectful gender and power relations.

More recently, through the [Regional Declaration on the Eradication of Gender Stereotypes in Public Spaces Resulting in Symbolic and Political Gender-Based Violence Against Women](#), the Committee called for strategic collaboration with key actors, including universities and educational institutions, to prevent and eradicate symbolic violence and gender stereotypes in messages conveyed through formal and informal education.

The CEVI therefore calls upon the authorities of the Caribbean States Parties participating in the CXC, as well as educational authorities and institutions throughout the region, to ensure that educational policies, practices and messages are free from discriminatory gender stereotypes and contribute to transforming the social and cultural patterns that perpetuate discrimination and violence against women. The Committee further calls for the adoption of measures that promote masculinities based on greater equality and free from violence, while ensuring the right of girls and adolescent girls to an education free from gender stereotypes and discrimination.

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.