

Committee of Experts of the MESECVI strengthens its regional agenda: sexual, economic and digital violence and arms control

Lima, October 29, 2026. From October 19 to 23, the Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) of the Organization of American States (OAS) carried out a program of work in Lima that culminated in the adoption of a new general recommendation on economic and patrimonial violence against women and agreements to launch the Fifth Multilateral Evaluation Round. Throughout their work, the Experts paid particular attention to emerging and persistent forms of violence against women, including sexual violence, digital violence and violence exacerbated by the use of small arms and light weapons.

These decisions were adopted at the Twenty-Third Meeting of the Committee of Experts (CEVI), which brought together Committee members from 21 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The week also included follow-up meetings on the situation of Indigenous girls and adolescents who have experienced sexual violence in the province of Condorcanqui, as well as a seminar with regional specialists on the circulation and use of firearms and their relationship to violence against women.

The week's activities were made possible through support from and collaboration with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC), German Development Cooperation, implemented by GIZ, International Justice Mission (IJM), the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) and UN Women Peru.

Condorcanqui: from assessment to follow-up on recommendations

Follow-up on the situation of Awajún and Wampis Indigenous girls and adolescents who have experienced sexual violence in Condorcanqui, Peru, was a cross-cutting priority throughout the week. One month after the technical visit, the delegation that conducted it presented its report to the Peruvian authorities and discussed the measures implemented since the visit, priorities and the interinstitutional coordination needed to advance implementation of its recommendations.

Participants included Supreme Court Justice Elvia Barrios Alvarado; Vice Minister for Women Erika Valdivieso; Vice Minister for Intercultural Affairs Elizabeth Zea; and representatives of several ministries, the judiciary, the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Ombudsperson's Office. Representing the Mechanism were Committee Vice Presidents Mónica Maureira and Yildalina Tatem Brache; the Expert from Panama, Jennifer Delgado Urueta; and Technical Secretary Luz Patricia Mejía Guerrero, accompanied by the Expert from Peru, Ana María Mendieta, and the OAS Representative in Peru, Miguel Ángel Trinidad. Contributions from this dialogue will be incorporated into the final report before its release.

Discussions continued with representatives of international cooperation agencies, embassies and the United Nations system to identify capacities, synergies and opportunities to implement the recommendations. The Experts also heard firsthand accounts from women leaders and human rights defenders from the Awajún Wampis Umukai Yawi Women's Council (COMUAWUY) during a breakfast meeting organized by the civil society organization DEMUS.

The Committee also addressed the issue during a panel at its Twenty-Third Meeting, with contributions from representatives of CHIRAPAQ–ECMIA, GIZ, IJM Peru and UN Women Peru. These exchanges contribute to the development of a general recommendation on gender-based violence against Indigenous women.

Firearms and violence against women: a shared agenda

The program in Lima included the technical seminar and regional dialogue “Small Arms Control and the Prevention of Violence against Women,” held jointly with UNLIREC and with support from the Government of Canada. The event brought together Committee members and regional specialists to examine the relationship between the proliferation and misuse of firearms and violence against women and girls, and the need to connect arms control policies with measures to prevent and respond to violence.

The discussions also addressed the need to strengthen information on the differential impacts of firearms. The Committee therefore agreed to continue this work and incorporate indicators on the presence, availability and use of firearms and their impact on violence against women into the Fifth Evaluation Round.

New challenges and the Mechanism's sustainability

The week concluded with the Twenty-Third Meeting of the Committee of Experts, CEVI's annual meeting to address the regional situation and agree on priorities and mandates for its work. The panel “Current and Emerging Challenges in Preventing and Responding to Violence against Women” brought together Committee President Miriam Roache and representatives of UNLIREC, DEMUS and the MESECVI Technical Secretariat to examine challenges to guaranteeing women's rights, the impact of firearms, legal retaliation and digital violence, including violence involving artificial intelligence.

A key outcome was the adoption of *General Recommendation No. 7 on Economic and Patrimonial Violence against Women in Family Relationships and States' Due Diligence Obligations*. Discussions on the text examined how the control, deprivation or arbitrary withholding of property and resources can undermine women's autonomy and life plans, prolong their dependency and make it harder to leave violent relationships.

Regarding evaluation, the Committee approved the reports on Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Lucia, as well as the plan to conclude the Fourth Evaluation Round, including the remaining reports and the Caribbean chapter of the Fourth Hemispheric Report. It also agreed to launch the Fifth Round, which will incorporate indicators on digital violence and violence involving firearms, among other issues.

The Committee also agreed to strengthen civil society participation and continue its work on digital violence by promoting the standards established in the Inter-American Model Law and their effective implementation. It expressed concern over attacks, threats and reprisals against women human rights defenders and urged States to strengthen their protection.

At the close of the meeting, the Committee reaffirmed that sustaining these efforts requires stable and sufficient resources for MESECVI to fulfill its mandate. Ensuring the sustainability of the Mechanism and its Technical Secretariat is essential to supporting States, strengthening regional cooperation and advancing the protection of the right of women and girls to live free from violence.