



## Communique Committee of Experts

### **Committee of Experts of the MESECVI expresses concern about the possible closure of the judicial entity responsible for strengthening access to justice for women victims of violence in Guatemala.**

Washington, DC, February 28, 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 concern over reports that the Unit for Control, Monitoring and Evaluation of courts and tribunals specializing in the crimes of femicide and violence against women in Guatemala is being closed. This Unit serves as a companion body to the jurisdictional bodies and provides technical and administrative support with the purpose of ensuring that women victims of violence have access to justice with due diligence.

This Committee acknowledges the efforts made by the Guatemalan State since the enactment of the Second-Generation Law against Femicide and other forms of Violence against Women (2008). This law led to the establishment of structures aimed at ensuring access to justice for women victims of violence. Such is the case of the aforementioned Control Unit, created as it was to strengthen and monitor other instances of the justice system, as well as, to provide quality care to victims of violence against women.

For this reason, the Committee of Experts (CEVI) expresses its concern over the probable decision by the judicial authorities of Guatemala to close the Unit for Control, Monitoring and Evaluation. This closure would represent a backward step in the development of mechanisms to ensure compliance with the Law against Femicide and Other Forms of Violence against Women and international standards on women's human rights.

The CEVI emphasizes that access to justice is a central element in efforts to prevent, punish, and eradicate violence against women. Adopting the necessary measures to guarantee access to effective justice with a gender perspective is an obligation of the States under the Belém do Pará Convention and other instruments of international human rights.

In this regard, the Committee draws attention to the fact that, according to Article 7 of the mentioned treaty, States Parties undertake to: "f. establish fair and effective legal procedures for women who have been subjected to violence which include, among others, protective measures, a timely hearing and effective access to such procedures; g. establish the necessary legal and administrative mechanisms to ensure that women subjected to violence have effective access to restitution, reparations or other just and effective remedies."

Finally, the CEVI recalls that the [Inter-American Model Law on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of the Gender-Based Killing of Women, femicide/feminicide](#), establishes as a guiding principle the due diligence of the State in the process of prevention, investigation, protection, punishment, and reparation.

In light of all the above, this Committee calls on the authorities of Guatemala, especially those of the Judiciary, to guarantee the continuity of the services provided by the aforementioned Unit. Likewise, it is recommended that Guatemala continues strengthening the capacities of the judicial system organs to provide due attention, justice, and reparation to women victims of gender-based violence and their families, all in accordance with the international standards and obligations of the State.

The Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention, through its Committee of Experts, makes itself available to the authorities of Guatemala 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.*