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CASE 15.172

REPORT ON FRIENDLY SETTLEMENT

GLORIA LARA AND CHILDREN
COLOMBIA

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CASE 15.172
FRIENDLY SETTLEMENT
GLORIA LARA AND CHILDREN
COLOMBIA¹
DECEMBER 10, 2025

I. SUMMARY AND RELEVANT PROCEEDINGS OF THE FRIENDLY SETTLEMENT PROCESS

1. On October 18, 2012, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (hereinafter "the Commission" or "IACHR") received a petition filed by Fernando Tribín Echeverry, which was subsequently joined by María Carolina Estepa Becerra² and Cesar Augusto Castillo Dussán,³ (hereinafter "the petitioners"), alleging the international responsibility of the Republic of Colombia (hereinafter "the State" or "the Colombian State" or "Colombia") for the violation of the human rights set forth in Articles 5 (humane treatment), 8 (judicial guarantees) and 25 (judicial protection), read in conjunction with articles 1(1) (obligation to respect rights) and 2 (obligation to adopt domestic legal effects) of the American Convention on Human Rights, (hereinafter "the Convention" or "the American Convention"), to the detriment of Gloria Lara de Echeverri, Héctor Manuel Echeverri Lara, Gloria Lucía Echeverri Lara and Luz María Echeverri Lara (hereinafter "alleged victims"), for the alleged impunity surrounding the kidnapping and murder of Gloria Lara de Echeverri, in 1982, following criminal proceedings that were delayed to the point that the statute of limitations expired, to the benefit of those accused of the crimes committed against her.

2. On December 19, 2022, the Commission issued Admissibility Report No. 373/22, in which it found the petition admissible and found it was competent to hear the claim presented by the petitioner regarding the alleged violation of the rights contained in articles 5 (humane treatment), 8 (judicial guarantees) and 25 (judicial protection) contained in the American Convention, read in conjunction with articles 1(1) and 2 of said instrument.

3. On May 25, 2023, the parties signed a memorandum of understanding to pursue a friendly settlement in which they agreed on timetable for advancing negotiations. On August 30, 2023, the Commission notified the parties of the formal start of the friendly settlement procedure, and over the following months, the parties held bilateral meetings to discuss the reparation measures to be included in the friendly settlement agreement (hereinafter "FSA" or "agreement"). This agreement was signed on December 12, 2023, in the city of Bogotá D.C.

4. On December 3, 2024, the parties signed an addendum, partially modifying the content of the FSA. Subsequently, on December 11, 2024, the parties submitted a joint report on the progress made in the compliance with the FSA and requested its approval by the IACHR.

5. In this friendly settlement report, pursuant to Article 49 of the Convention and Article 40.5 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission, a summary of the facts alleged by the petitioners is provided and the friendly settlement agreement, signed on December 12, 2023, by the petitioners and representatives of the Colombian State, is transcribed. Likewise, the agreement signed between the parties is approved, and the publication of this report in the IACHR Annual Report to the General Assembly of the Organization of American States is resolved.

¹ In accordance with Article 17(2)(a) of the Rules of Procedure of the IACHR, Commissioner Carlos Bernal Pulido, a Colombian national, did not participate in the discussion or decision on this case.

² On May 11, 2017, Fernando Tribín Echeverry submitted a letter in which he granted power of attorney to María Carolina Estepa Becerra to intervene in this matter.

³ On November 14, 2018, Fernando Tribín Echeverry forwarded the power of attorney granted to attorney Cesar Augusto Castillo Dussán to act in this case.

II. THE FACTS ALLEGED

6. The petitioners alleged the international responsibility of the Colombian State for the presumed impunity surrounding the kidnapping and subsequent murder of Ms. Gloria Lara de Echeverri, which occurred in 1982, as a result of a criminal proceeding whose delays would have led to the statute of limitations on criminal prosecution, thereby favoring the alleged perpetrators of the crimes committed against her.

7. According to the petitioners' account, Ms. Gloria Lara de Echeverri was a political activist and public official affiliated with the Liberal Party, having served as Colombia's ambassador to the United Nations, National Director of Communal Action and Indigenous Affairs, and Director of Community Integration and Development at the Ministry of Government. As background, they would have indicated that in 1970 an armed group known as the "People's Revolutionary Organization (ORP)" was formed, whose objective would have been to combat the bourgeois class, considered an enemy of the peasantry. This group would have resorted to kidnapping and extortion as means of financing and political pressure.

8. In relation to the events that would have led to Ms. Lara's death, the petitioners stated that on June 23, 1982, while serving as Director of Community Integration and Development at the Ministry of Government, she would have been intercepted and kidnapped by several armed individuals while traveling in her official vehicle. They affirmed that criminal investigating judges and the Judicial Police carried out various investigative procedures in an attempt to rescue her. Nevertheless, on November 28, 1982, her body would have been found covered with a blanket marked with the initials ORP.

9. From the information contained in the case file, it would appear that the criminal proceedings against the alleged perpetrators of the kidnapping and murder of Ms. Gloria Lara de Echeverri were marked by multiple procedural stages, including the initiation of investigations, the imposition and subsequent revocation of preventive detention measures, reopenings and temporary dismissals, as well as contradictory decisions among various judicial instances. Although in 1992 the National Tribunal would have issued convictions against several defendants, in 1998 the Supreme Court of Justice would have declared the termination of proceedings due to the expiration of the statute of limitations. Subsequently, in 2010, an attempt would have been made to reopen the case through a request for review, arguing that the acts constituted crimes against humanity; however, such request would have been dismissed in 2012, on the grounds that the elements of such crimes were not deemed to have been established, thereby consolidating a state of alleged impunity.

III. FRIENDLY SETTLEMENT

10. On December 12, 2023, in the city of Bogotá D.C., the parties signed a friendly settlement agreement. Its text reads as follows:

FRIENDLY SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT CASE 15.172 HÉCTOR MANUEL ECHEVERRI LARA ET AL.

On December 12, 2023, in the city of Bogotá D.C., Ana María Ordoñez Puentes, Director of International Legal Defense of the National Agency for the Legal Defense of the State, acting on behalf of and representing the Colombian State, hereinafter the "Colombian State"; and on the other hand, attorney María Carolina Estepa Becerra, representing the victims; jointly referred to as "the parties", who hereby sign this Friendly Settlement Agreement in Case No. 15.172. Héctor Manuel Echeverri Lara *et al.*, filed before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

PART ONE: DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Agreement, the following terms shall apply:

IACHR or Inter-American Commission: Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Moral damages: Harmful effects of the facts of the case that are not of an economic or financial nature, that result in pain, affliction, sadness, anguish, and anxiety felt by the victims.

Material damage: Involves the loss of, or detriment to, the income of the victims, the expenses incurred as a result of the events and the consequences of a pecuniary nature that have a causal nexus with the facts of the case.⁴

Non-material damage: Includes both the distress and suffering caused to the victims, the impairment of core values of the persons concerned, and changes of a non-pecuniary nature in the living conditions of the victims or their family.⁵

State or Colombian State: In accordance with Public International Law, it shall be understood as the signatory to the American Convention on Human Rights, hereinafter “American Convention” or “ACHR.”

Measures of satisfaction: Non-pecuniary measures that are intended to ensure the recovery of the victims from the harm caused to them.⁶

Parties: Colombian State, the representative, and the victim's family.

Acknowledgment of responsibility: Acceptance of the facts and the human rights violations attributed to the State.

Comprehensive reparations: All measures that objectively and symbolically restore the victim to the state prior to when the damage was committed.

The petitioner: Attorney María Carolina Estepa Becerra, acting as the representative of the victims in the international proceedings.

Friendly Settlement: Alternative dispute resolution mechanism, used for peaceful and consensual settlement before the Inter-American Commission.

Victims: The daughters and son of Gloria Lara—Héctor Manuel Echeverri Lara, Gloria Lucia Echeverri Lara and Luz María Echeverri Lara—included in this Agreement.

PART TWO: BACKGROUND

1. On October 18, 2012, a petition was filed before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (hereinafter IACHR) against the Colombian State (hereinafter the State or Colombia), for the violation of the rights enshrined in articles 5 (humane treatment), 8 (judicial guarantees) and 25 (judicial protection) of the American Convention on Human Rights (hereinafter the Convention), to the detriment of Gloria Lara de Echeverri for her kidnapping for five month and subsequent murder that took place between June 23 and November 28, 1982.

2. Regarding the background of the case, the initial petition stated that on June 23, 1982, Gloria Lara de Echeverri was kidnapped in Bogotá by several armed individuals while she was traveling to her home located in the north of the city. Subsequently, on November 28, 1982, her body was found in “the vicinity of the Bonanza neighborhood of the capital, covered with a black cloth with ‘ORP’ written on it in red.”⁷

3. As a result of these events, the 39th Criminal Court of First Instance launched a criminal investigation into the crimes of kidnapping and murder. The trial phase was conducted by the Public Order Judge of the Bogota Sectional Court who, in a ruling issued February 12, 1992, acquitted all the defendants. The judge considered that the defendants' confessions had been obtained through torture and, therefore, their unlawful origin required him to exclude them from the proceedings. The Prosecutor's Office appealed this decision.⁸

4. On August 20, 1992, the Public Order Court ruled on the appeal filed by the Prosecutor's Office and decided to sentence 12 individuals to 28 years in prison for their complicity in the crimes of kidnapping

⁴ I/A Court HR. *Case of the Serrano Cruz Sisters v. El Salvador*, (Merits, Reparations and Costs). Judgment of March 1, 2005, Series C No. 120, para. 150.

⁵ I/A Court HR. *Case of Caesar v. Trinidad and Tobago* (Merits, Reparations and Costs). Judgment of March 11, 2005. Series C No. 123, para. 125.

⁶ Some examples of such measures include public disclosure of the truth and acts of atonement.

⁷ Admissibility Report 373/22, para. 3.

⁸ Admissibility Report 373/22, para. 4

and murder of Ms. Lara.³ In the same decision, the Court sentenced four additional individuals to 12 years in prison for the crimes of aggravated kidnapping for extortion. According to the petitioner, the Court concluded that the alleged torture of the defendants did not take place.⁹

5. The judgment on the appeal was itself appealed by several of the convicted parties through an extraordinary cassation appeal, arguing that the criminal action was time-barred. On February 18, 1998, the Supreme Court of Justice ruled that the statute of limitations applied and ordered the termination of criminal proceedings with respect to all defendants.¹⁰

6. On May 12, 2010, the 7th Judicial Criminal Prosecutor II filed a motion for review against the order of the Supreme Court of Justice applying the statute of limitations. The Prosecutor argued that, in this case, the statute of limitations did not apply, since the kidnapping and murder of Gloria Lara was a crime against humanity.¹¹ However, on May 23, 2012, the Criminal Cassation Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice decided to dismiss the motion, finding that the conditions for declaring the crime a crime against humanity were not met.¹²

7. On August 22, 2018, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights notified the Colombian State of the initial petition, and the respective proceedings were initiated.

8. On December 19, 2022, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights issued Admissibility Report 373/22 on December 19, 2022, and declared the petition admissible for violation of the rights enshrined in articles 5 (humane treatment), 8 (judicial guarantees) and 25 (judicial protection), in accordance with articles 1(1) (obligation to respect rights) and 2 (obligation to adopt domestic legal effects) of the American Convention on Human Rights.

9. On February 6, 2023, the petitioner submitted the request to the National Agency for the Legal Defense of the Colombian State (hereinafter the Agency or ANDJE) for a meeting to open a dialogue on the possibility of a friendly settlement procedure. The petitioner also notified the Commission of this and expressed interest in its support.

10. On May 25, 2023, the Colombian State and the petitioners signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the Search for a Friendly Settlement, which was brought to the attention of the Inter-American Commission on May 26, 2023.

11. In the months that followed, progress was made in an inter-institutional dialogue to agree on the comprehensive reparation measures that were to be part of the Agreement. Meetings were held with the parties to analyze the measures of reparation to be included in the friendly settlement agreement to be signed.

PART THREE: BENEFICIARIES

The Colombian State recognizes the following persons, all of whom are Colombian citizens, as victims under this agreement:

Name	Relationship	Identification
Héctor Manuel Echeverri Lara	Son	[...]
Gloria Lucía Echeverri Lara	Daughter	[...]
Luz María Echeverri Lara	Daughter	[...]

Paragraph 1: The victims recognized in this Friendly Settlement Agreement shall benefit provided that they prove their blood relationship to direct victim Gloria Lara de Echeverri.

Paragraph 2: By signing this Friendly Settlement Agreement, the petitioners declare that the persons listed above are the relatives of Gloria Lara de Echeverri who have legal standing in these proceedings

⁹ Admissibility Report 373/22, para. 4

¹⁰ Admissibility Report 373/22, para. 4

¹¹ Admissibility Report 373/22, para. 4

¹² Admissibility Report 373/22, para. 4

and are interested in pursuing this process. Also, that they i) were alive at the time of the events, and ii) are alive at the time of signing of this document.¹³

In this regard, no other beneficiaries will be included after the signing of the Friendly Settlement Agreement.

PART FOUR: ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Colombian State acknowledges its international responsibility, by omission, for the violation of the right to judicial guarantees (Article 8(1)) and judicial protection (Article 25(1)) established in the American Convention on Human Rights, read in conjunction with the general obligation to guarantee (Article 1(1)) of the same instrument, to the detriment of the relatives of Gloria Lara de Echeverri, as a result of the lack of diligence in the investigation of the events that occurred, which prevented its clarification and the punishment of those responsible.

PART FIVE: MEASURES OF SATISFACTION

The parties agree that, within the framework of this Agreement, the following measures of satisfaction shall be carried out:

I. Act of Acknowledgment of Responsibility:

The Colombian State will hold a public Act of Acknowledgement of Responsibility, with the participation of the victims and their representative. The act will be held in person and will be carried out in accordance with the acknowledgment of responsibility set forth in this Agreement.

This measure will be carried out by the National Agency for the Legal Defense of the State, which will therefore conduct a process of consultation with the family members and the representative, in order to establish the details of the act.

II. Publication of the Article 49 Report:

The Colombian State shall publish the relevant sections of the friendly settlement report, once it has been approved by the Inter-American Commission, on the website of the National Agency for State Legal Defense for a period of six (6) months.

III. Training and Capacity Building Strategy for the Judicial Branch:

The Colombian State, through the Rodrigo Lara Bonilla Judicial School, is committed to designing and structuring a series of videoconferences using Microsoft Office 365 tools, via the Microsoft Teams platform. These will be hosted on the institutional YouTube channel, with the aim of achieving greater coverage and subsequent visits not only by judicial officials but also from all actors in the justice sector.¹⁴

IV. Incentive for the strengthening of Community Action Organizations in honor of the legacy of Gloria Lara de Echeverri:

The Colombian State, through the Ministry for Interior Affairs, commits to granting an incentive for strengthening of Community Action Organizations to honor the memory of Gloria Lara de Echeverri.

This incentive will consist of the Gloria Lara de Echeverri Award for Excellence, which will be granted annually to one or several Community Action Organizations.

The National Agency for the Legal Defense of the State (ANDJE) and the Ministry for Interior Affairs will socialize the terms and conditions of the award with the victims and their representative.

¹³ The foregoing, in accordance with the jurisprudence of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. See I/A Court HR. *Case of the Afro-descendant Communities displaced from the Cacarica River Basin (Operation Genesis) v. Colombia*. (Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations, and Costs). Judgment of November 20, 2013. Series C No. 270, para. 425.

¹⁴ Superior Council of the Judiciary, Rodrigo Lara Bonilla Judicial School, Official Letter No. EJ023-1065, July 28, 2023.

This measure will be implemented once the report defined in Article 49 of the American Convention on Human Rights has been issued by the IACHR.¹⁵

V. Short film exalting the life and work of Gloria Lara de Echeverri

The Colombian State, through the National Center for Historical Memory, will produce an audiovisual documentary on the life of Gloria Lara Perdomo de Echeverri, endorsed by and with the participation of her children. In this piece, her good name, her work for and with the community, her achievements, and her community initiatives will be vindicated. This documentary must clearly convey the perspective of the victims in the case.¹⁶

PART SIX: COMPENSATION MEASURES

The State shall enact Law 288 of 1996, with the purpose of repairing the non-material and material damages that may be proven in favor of the victims recognized in PART THREE of this Friendly Settlement Agreement. For these purposes, the criteria and amounts recognized by current national case law will be used.

In the event that any victim has been compensated through the contentious-administrative jurisdiction and/or has benefited from administrative reparations, the amounts awarded to them will be deducted from the monetary compensation granted in accordance with the procedure provided herein, in order to avoid double or excessive compensation.

Likewise, for the purposes of compensation for damages, applicable evidence will be that which is admissible in accordance with Colombian procedural rules.

PART SEVEN: APPROVAL AND MONITORING

The parties ask the Inter-American Commission to approve this Agreement and monitor its implementation.

PART EIGHT: CONFIDENTIALITY

The content of this Friendly Settlement Agreement is confidential and may not be published and/or disseminated by any means until it is approved by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights through the issuance of the report defined in Article 49 of the American Convention on Human Rights.

This Agreement having been read and the parties being aware of its scope and legal content, it is signed on the twelfth (12th) day December 2023.

ADDENDUM TO THE FRIENDLY SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT SIGNED ON DECEMBER 12, 2023 CASE 15.172 HÉCTOR MANUEL ECHEVERRI LARA ET AL.

On December 3, 2024, in the city of Bogotá D.C., **Yebrail Haddad Linero**, Director of International Legal Defense of the National Agency for the Legal Defense of the State, who, pursuant to Article 5 of Law 1444 of 2011 and Decree 4085 of 2011, as amended by Decrees 915 of 2017, 1698 of 2019, 2269 of 2019 and 1244 of 2021, acts on behalf of and representing the Colombian State, hereinafter the "State" or the "Colombian State"; and **María Carolina Estepa Becerra**, representing the victims, jointly referred to as "the Parties", hereby sign this Addendum to the Friendly Settlement Agreement in the Case No. 15.172. Héctor Manuel Echeverri Lara *et al.*, filed before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

¹⁵ Ministry for Interior Affairs. Official letter No. 2023-2-003303-058504 Id: 246906 dated 2023-12-06, with scope in electronic communication dated 2023-12-06.

¹⁶ National Center for Historical Memory. Official letter 202306222004857-1 Bogotá D.C., June 22, 2023.

The above, taking into account the following:

BACKGROUND

1. The Friendly Settlement Agreement in Case 15,172, Héctor Manuel Echeverri Lara *et al.*, was signed on December 12, 2023.¹⁷
2. The Act of Acknowledgment of International Responsibility agreed upon in the Friendly Settlement Agreement in Case 15.172, Héctor Manuel Echeverri Lara *et al.*, was held on May 22, 2024.
3. Following the Act of Acknowledgment of International Responsibility, Dr. María Carolina Estepa Becerra requested, on behalf of the victims, the modification of clause 5.4 (*Incentive for the strengthening of the Community Action Organizations to honor of the legacy of Gloria Lara de Echeverri*) on the grounds that the measure was aimed at the Community Action Organizations in the country in general, not specifically at the founders of the Gloria Lara neighborhood, thus responding to the reparative nature of the measures.
4. She also requested the modification of clause 5.5 (*Short film exalting the life and work of Gloria Lara de Echeverri*), since the children of Gloria Lara were not interested in making a new short film different from the one produced by Luz María Echeverri Lara. Therefore, the proposed modification focuses on the distribution of the documentary made by Luz María Echeverri Lara, in order to ensure the restorative impact of the measures.
5. In order to guarantee comprehensive reparation, that the agreed-upon measures objectively and symbolically restore the victims, the ongoing process of dialogue and consultation inherent to the friendly settlement mechanism, the National Agency for the Legal Defense of the State coordinated with the entities concerned to modify the aforementioned clauses.
6. As a result, several working groups were held, which resulted in the following:

MODIFICATION

1. Clauses 5.4 (Incentive for the strengthening of the Community Action Organizations to honor of the legacy of Gloria Lara de Echeverri) and 5.5 (Short film exalting the life and work of Gloria Lara de Echeverri) of the Friendly Settlement Agreement signed in Case 15.172. Héctor Manuel Echeverri Lara *et al.*, on December 12, 2023¹⁸ shall read as follows:

PART FIVE: MEASURES OF SATISFACTION

The parties agree that, within the framework of this Agreement, the following measures of satisfaction shall be carried out:

(...)

IV. Day of recognition of the founders of the "Gloria Lara" neighborhood, in honor of the legacy of Gloria Lara in social organization and community action councils in the country.

The Colombian State, through the Ministry for Interior Affairs, commits to the victims to carry out a day of recognition of the founders of the Gloria Lara neighborhood as part of the process to construct the memory of Gloria Lara (as an official of the Ministry of Government at the time of the events) in order to highlight her community work with the Community Action Councils. The event will include the actions indicated hereinafter and the details are to be agreed upon through meetings and agreements of understanding coordinated between the ANDJE and the representatives of the victims.

¹⁷ The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights noted an unintentional material error in the original text of the Addendum to the Friendly Settlement Agreement, which indicated the date of signature of the FSA as December 12, 2024. In order to correct this error and continue monitoring the implementation of the agreement, it has been corrected directly in this transcript, indicating the correct date of signature as December 12, 2023.

¹⁸ Ibidem.

I. DAY OF RECOGNITION OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE GLORIA LARA NEIGHBORHOOD IN HONOR OF THE LEGACY OF GLORIA LARA IN SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND COMMUNAL ACTION COUNCILS IN THE COUNTRY, AIMED AT THE RESIDENTS OF THE GLORIA LARA NEIGHBORHOOD (stages I and II) located in the Suba neighborhood, in Bogotá D.C. The purpose of this action is to develop the initiative, from the Ministry for Interior Affairs, to fulfill the entity's commitment to create spaces for strengthening communal action. The action will be implemented on a one-time basis. During this time, the following working agenda will be carried out:

- a. At the installation, there will be a symbolic recognition of the founders of the Gloria Lara neighborhood, through an oral presentation, during which the coordinators of the Ministry for Interior Affairs' communal action group will give a remembrance related to the history and process of self-construction through the leadership exercised by Gloria Lara during her community work.
- b. During the event, the video provided by the victims' representative will be shown. The Ministry for Interior Affairs will coordinate all logistical details for this screening.
- c. The Ministry for Interior Affairs will present its institutional offerings in communal matters.
- d. A commemorative plaque will be presented to the founders of the Gloria Lara neighborhood in honor of founder and social and political activist Gloria Lara, in tribute to her legacy. The plaque will be presented and/or installed in the location chosen by the victims of Case No. 15.172 Gloria Lara and children v. the Colombian State and/or their representative.

The Directorate of Democracy, Citizen Participation and Community Action will generate a preliminary list and will coordinate with the representative of the victims to set the agenda for the day of recognition.¹⁹

V. Designation of a space for Case No. 15.172 on the Micro-site of the National Agency for the Legal Defense of the State dedicated to Friendly Settlements and Compliance with Recommendations

The Colombian State, through the National Agency for the Legal Defense of the State, will publish Case No. 15.172, Gloria Lara and children v. Colombian State, on the micro-site for Friendly Settlements and Compliance with Recommendations. The following content,²⁰ which comprise the case file, will be posted within the virtual space provided for the case:

- a. The video of the act of acknowledgment of international responsibility of the Colombian State, held on May 22, 2024. The video is available on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nmf7Z0DcRok>
- b. The digital version of the book *GLORIA LARA "LA FLOR DE LA ESPERANZA"*, written by Luz María Echeverri Lara, daughter of Gloria Lara.
- c. The documentary directed by Luz María Echeverri Lara that exalts the life and work of Gloria Lara, vindicating her good name, community work, achievements, and initiatives in the process of self-construction of the Gloria Lara neighborhood.
- d. The video produced by the Ministry for Interior Affairs on the Day of Recognition of the Founders of the Gloria Lara Neighborhood (Stages I and II).
- e. Publication of the videos of the lecture series on the Gloria Lara case produced in conjunction with the Rodrigo Lara Bonilla Judicial School.
- f. Publication of the Article 49 report of the ACHR.

The other clauses not modified by this amendment remain the same in the friendly settlement agreement.

With the Addendum having been read and the parties understanding of its scope and legal content, it is signed on December 3, 2024.

¹⁹ Ministry for Interior Affairs, Official Letter 2024-2-003301-059682 Id: 443496 of November 13, 2024.

²⁰ The book, documentary, and video of the implementation of the measure by the Ministry for Interior Affairs will be delivered by the representatives of the victims to the National Agency of Legal Defense of the State with the necessary authorizations for publication.

IV. DETERMINATION OF COMPATIBILITY AND COMPLIANCE

11. The IACHR reiterates that in accordance with Articles 48(1)(f) and 49 of the American Convention, the purpose of this procedure is to “reach a friendly settlement of the matter based on respect for the human rights recognized in the Convention.” The acceptance to pursue this process expresses the good faith of the State to comply with the purposes and objectives of the Convention pursuant to the principle of *pacta sunt servanda*, by which States must comply with the obligations assumed in the treaties in good faith.²¹ It also wishes to highlight that the friendly settlement procedure set forth in the Convention allows for conclusion of individual cases in a non-contentious manner, and has proven, in cases involving a variety of countries, to provide an important vehicle for resolution that can be used by both parties.

12. The Inter-American Commission has closely followed the development of the friendly settlement reached in this case and values the efforts made by both parties during the negotiation to reach this friendly settlement, which is compatible with the objective and aims of the Convention.

13. The IACHR notes that the parties signed an addendum to the friendly settlement agreement on December 3, 2024. Based on the will of the parties, the IACHR declares it an integral part of the friendly settlement agreement originally signed by the parties with full legal effects insofar as it replaces the commitments set forth in clause 5.4 (*Incentive for the strengthening of the Community Action Organizations to honor of the legacy of Gloria Lara de Echeverri*) and 5.5 (*Short film exalting the life and work of Gloria Lara de Echeverri*) of the FSA.

14. Pursuant to the provisions in clause seven of the agreement signed between the parties whereby they requested the Commission to approve the friendly settlement agreement provided for under Article 49 of the American Convention, and in view of the joint request of the parties of December 11, 2024, to move forward in this regard, the Commission will now assess compliance with the commitments made herein.

15. The Inter-American Commission notes that clauses one (definitions), two (background), three (beneficiaries), four (acknowledgment of responsibility), seven (approval and monitoring) and eight (confidentiality) of the agreement are declaratory in nature and therefore do not require monitoring for compliance.

16. The Inter-American Commission values the declaratory clause four, in which the Colombian State acknowledges its international responsibility by omission, for the violation of the right to judicial guarantees and judicial protection established in articles 8 and 25 of the American Convention to the detriment of the family members of Gloria Lara de Echeverri, as a result of the lack of diligence in investigating the facts that took place, resulting in a failure to establish what happened and punish those responsible.

17. With respect to paragraph I (act of acknowledgment of international responsibility) of clause five (measures of satisfaction), as jointly reported by the parties, the event took place on May 22, 2024, at the District Planetarium in the city of Bogotá. The parties reported that, to his end, a process of ongoing consultation was conducted between the Colombian State and the petitioners, whereby all the logistical and symbolic aspects of the Act of Acknowledgment of Responsibility were agreed upon, including the date, time, agenda and venue.

18. In this regard, there were instances of direct dialogue with the representative of the victims and the active participation of family members, as well as inter-agency coordination between national and territorial entities, such as the Ministry of Justice and Law, the National Center of Historical Memory, and the District Institute of the Arts of Bogota (IDARTES), to make the District Planetarium available as the venue for the ceremony. The event was designed, based on the suggestions of the Echeverri Lara children, with an artistic and cultural focus intended to uphold the memory and legacy of Gloria Lara and generate a space for emotional connection with family and close friends.

²¹ Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, U.N. Doc A/CONF.39/27 (1969), Article 26: “**Pacta sunt servanda**” Every treaty in force is binding upon the parties to it and must be performed by them in good faith.

19. In this respect, the parties provided a simple copy of the invitations circulated for the event, photographs of its development and the agenda, according to which a photographic exhibition was held, consisting of 35 altarpieces selected by her children portraying significant moments in her public and family life. Afterwards, a documentary film produced by Luz María Echeverri Lara was screened, reconstructing her political and social legacy. These artistic expressions, which were part of the event's agenda, constitute symbolic reparation measures that not only dignify the victims, but also strengthen collective awareness on the importance of memory, justice and non-repetition of human rights violations like the ones that took place in this case.

20. In the joint report, the parties indicated that the Minister of Justice and Law participated in the event, offering official acknowledgement of responsibility and apologizing on behalf of the Colombian State. Also participating were the acting Director of the National Agency for the Legal Defense of the State, the representative of the victims, philosopher and writer Piedad Bonnett, and the family of Gloria Lara, as well as the IACHR Rapporteur for Colombia.

21. In his remarks, the Minister of Justice and Law stated the following:

[...]

"Gloria Lara was undoubtedly a woman ahead of her time. [...] a Colombian woman from the province of Huila, who stood out in national politics in the 70s and 80s of the last century. She was undoubtedly a pioneer of Colombian democracy, of politics, of women's rights. [...] At that time, it was more common for women's professional work to be fairly discreet and, in politics, very scarce, with very little female participation. [...]"

But that's not all. Her political life was characterized tremendously by her social commitment. She was the director and sponsor of community action councils, that basic social fabric that is tremendously useful for building a peaceful society, for forming a society that, from its grassroots foundations, builds civilization, builds progress for our country, builds peace. Well, without a doubt, Gloria Lara's work came at a very important moment back in the 70s and 80s, when she was a sponsor, companion, leader of those community action councils that exist today, which are, as I say, the fundamental basis of the community fabric of our society.

But in addition, this concern for indigenous issues, for the territories of indigenous peoples, which we hear in the documentary in the voice of one of her daughters, but which are her own words about the way she saw and promoted the assertion of the rights of indigenous peoples, was not at all common in the 70s and 80s. To say that we had a lot to learn from the cultures and wisdom of the indigenous peoples, ladies and gentlemen, was revolutionary 50 years ago. [...]"

After more than 40 years seeking justice, and without finding it, certainly faced with a Colombian State that has been indolent, negligent, guilty, apathetic, bureaucratic towards you, you turned to the Inter-American Human Rights Protection System, and that is where this friendly settlement agreement was reached, which has us gathered here today. All I can say to you is that I am enormously thankful for the magnanimity in accepting a friendly settlement after suffering so many years of ignominy. [...]"

[T]he murder of Gloria Lara [and] the subsequent impunity undoubtedly caused great pain to you, her family members present today. It was the State that failed you by not having diligently conducted judicial investigations, all of which ended in a disgraceful invocation of the statute of limitations. In view of this situation, the Colombian State, and particularly this government, in accordance with its commitment to the victims, acknowledges its international responsibility by omission, for the violation of the right to judicial guarantees and judicial protection established in the American Convention on Human Rights, read in conjunction with

the general obligation to guarantee, to the detriment of you, the family of Gloria Lara de Echeverri, as a result of the lack of diligence in investigating the facts that took place, which prevented their clarification and the punishment of those responsible.

Now, what good is the State's acknowledgment of responsibility in a case that has already been closed? What good is it in the face of the impunity that you so angrily and rightly and justly denounce? Really, the only thing we can do now—unless someone comes up with something better—is to honor her memory. It is, as Mrs. Piedad Bonnett said: As long as we remember her, she will remain alive. May this documentary be shown in as many media outlets as possible, may the book be widely read, may the government of which I am a part of, honor Gloria Lara as an example for society, and may it take into account that what happened in this case is a disgrace that cannot happen again.

But also, a ceremony of forgiveness, 40 years later, with everything subject to the statute of limitations, with no possibility of investigation, must carry the enormous message that you have given to the State and to society. You were able to forgive us. You were able to reach a settlement agreement with the Colombian State. How grateful I am for that, because it makes me feel more about being Colombian, more committed to my profession, more committed to democracy and to the government of which I am a part.

To conclude, of course, as a member of a government team, as a representative of the Colombian State, but as a citizen, as a legal professional, as a human being, I ask your forgiveness for everything that has happened."

22. For his part, the President of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and Rapporteur for Colombia stated as follows in his comments:

[...]

Almost 42 years after the painful kidnapping and murder of Gloria Lara de Echeverri, the Commission pauses at this transcendental moment, a moment that invites all of Colombia to look inward, to question, to feel, and to heal together. This is undoubtedly a first step toward a sincere request for forgiveness, accompanied by a humble acceptance of the shortcomings in the functioning of the democratic institutions of the State and of the impact of the events and the scars they left on the lives of the Lara family for generations. [...]

The Commission welcomes with gratitude today's public acknowledgement of international responsibility by the Colombian State for its failure to guarantee the rights enshrined in the American Convention on Human Rights to judicial guarantees and judicial protection to the detriment of the family of Gloria Lara de Echeverri, for its lack of diligence in investigating the events, resulting in a failure to establish what happened and punish those responsible. This acknowledgment of responsibility does not erase the past, but it offers a kind of balm for the still-open wounds of the Echeverri Lara family. [...]

Today the Commission recognizes the strength of character and the struggle of Gloria Lara's family, especially her children, who's tireless struggle has been a beacon of hope in the midst of darkness [...].

There is still much to be done; all the measures of the agreement have yet to be implemented, and in this regard, the Commission wishes to be present so that the State can swiftly and in a coordinated manner, achieve full compliance with this agreement. The Commission also reiterates its commitment to continue supporting the parties in this new phase of the process and until the implementation of the agreement [...].

23. The parties provided photographs of the event, as well as evidence that it was published on the YouTube channel²² created for this purpose, where the live broadcast of the event is available. In this regard, the parties indicated that the measure fully complied with its reparative effect for the victim and her representatives. Therefore, they requested that it be declared to have been fully complied with. Taking into account the information provided by the parties, the Commission concludes, and declares, that paragraph I (act of acknowledgment of responsibility) of clause five (satisfaction measures) of the signed FSA has been met with total compliance.

24. Additionally, with respect to paragraph II (publication of the Article 49 Report), III (training and capacity building strategy for the judicial branch), IV (day of recognition of the founders of the Gloria Lara neighborhood), V (designation of a space for case No. 15.172 on the ANDJE Micro-site) of clause five and clause six (compensation measures) of the friendly settlement agreement, and by virtue of the joint request of the parties to move forward on approval of the agreement prior to its implementation, the Commission observes that the measures must be complied with after the publication of this report, and therefore finds and declares them to be pending compliance. Therefore, the Commission consequently shall await updated information to be submitted by the parties within the framework of the friendly settlement follow-up process.

25. Therefore, the Commission finds, and declares, that paragraphs II (publication of the Article 49 Report), III (training and capacity building strategy for the judicial branch), IV (day of recognition of the founders of the Gloria Lara neighborhood), and V (designation of a space for case No. 15.172 on the ANDJE Micro-site) of clause five and clause six (compensation measures) of the friendly settlement agreement are pending compliance.

26. Lastly, the Commission notes that the parties did not include a clause in the agreement related to obtaining justice. In this regard, based on the information provided, the Commission views with concern that, as a result of the application of the statute of limitations in this case, the victim's relatives have not been guaranteed access to justice. While taking note of the scope of this agreement and the decision of the judicial branch, the Commission emphasizes that the State has an obligation to investigate and punish those responsible for this crime, which even extends to identifying mechanisms that make it possible to continue to fulfill this duty, including the eventual determination of the responsibilities of public officials who, through their actions or omissions, contributed to the statute of limitations being applied to the individuals initially prosecuted for the events that occurred.

27. Furthermore, the Commission reiterates that the remaining content of the friendly settlement agreement is declaratory in nature and therefore does not require supervision. Consequently, the Commission concludes that the friendly settlement agreement has been met with partial compliance. The Commission will continue to monitor implementation of the aforementioned clauses until they have been met with total compliance.

V. CONCLUSIONS

28. Based on the foregoing and in keeping with the procedure provided for in Articles 48(1)(f) and 49 of the American Convention, the Commission would like to reiterate its profound appreciation of the efforts made by the parties and its satisfaction that a friendly settlement has been arrived at in the present case on the basis of respect for human rights and consistent with the object and purpose of the American Convention.

29. Based on the reasons and conclusions contained in this report,

²² See: Gloria Lara Echeverri, YouTube, Acto de Reconocimiento de Responsabilidad del Estado en el Caso Gloria Lara e hijos. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@GloriaLaradeEcheverri1>

THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

DECIDES:

1. To approve the terms of the agreement signed by the parties on December 12, 2023, as well as the addendum to the FSA signed by the parties on December 3, 2024.
2. To declare that the addendum to the FSA dated December 3, 2024, is an integral part of the friendly settlement agreement.
3. To declare full compliance with paragraph I (act of acknowledgment of international responsibility) of clause 5 (satisfaction measures) of the friendly settlement agreement, pursuant to the analysis contained in this report.
4. To declare that compliance is still pending with respect to paragraphs II (publication of the Article 49 Report), III (training and capacity building strategy for the judicial branch), IV (day of recognition of the founders of the Gloria Lara neighborhood) and V (designation of a space for case No. 15.172 on the ANDJE Micro-site) of clause five and clause six (compensation measures) of the friendly settlement agreement, based on the analysis contained in this report.
5. To continue monitoring the commitments undertaken in paragraphs II (publication of the Article 49 Report), III (training and capacity building strategy for the judicial branch), IV (day of recognition of the founders of the Gloria Lara neighborhood) and V (designation of a space for case No. 15.172 on the ANDJE Micro-site) of clause five and clause six (compensation measures) of the friendly settlement agreement, pursuant to the analysis contained in this report. To that end, to remind the parties of their commitment to report regularly to the IACHR on their compliance.
6. To make this report public and to include it in its Annual Report to the General Assembly of the OAS.

Approved by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on the 10th day of the month of December, 2025. (Signed): José Luis Caballero Ochoa, President; Andrea Pochak, First Vice President; Edgar Stuardo Ralón Orellana, Second Vice President; Gloria Monique de Mees, and Roberta Clarke, Commissioners.