



Communique Committee of Experts

Committee of Experts of the MESECVI expresses concern over public discourses and legislative initiatives that promote the concept of false reports in cases of violence against women and child sexual abuse

Washington, DC, December 4, 2025. 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 deep concern regarding the increasing dissemination across the region of public discourses and legislative proposals that invoke an alleged high prevalence and widespread use of false reports in cases of violence against women and their children, particularly in contexts of domestic and sexual violence.

The Committee of Experts (CEVI) has become aware that legislative initiatives seeking to increase criminal penalties against women who report gender-based violence or child sexual abuse are being introduced in various States Party to the Belém do Pará Convention, even though this offense is already criminalized and punished under existing criminal codes. The CEVI is concerned that such initiatives, rather than strengthening State responses to violence, discourage legitimate demands for justice, protection and reparation made by women and their children—who are frequently the victims in these cases—while also fostering impunity and the repetition of such crimes, undermining their fundamental rights.

These initiatives are often accompanied by public discourses grounded in gender stereotypes, widely disseminated through the media, digital platforms and even academic spaces. However, the Committee of Experts notes the absence of concrete data and reliable studies to support the narrative of a high incidence of false reports.

The Committee further observes with alarm that the dissemination of these narratives converges with other notions used to delegitimize reports of violence against women and their children, such as the illegitimate use of the concept of the “parental alienation syndrome” or similar notions—practices already identified by the Committee as part of the

continuum of gender-based violence affecting women, which may give rise to State responsibility for institutional violence¹.

The Committee warns that these initiatives represent a setback in the protection of rights and in the effective implementation of the obligations established by the Belém do Pará Convention. Such narratives contribute to undermining the credibility of women and of their children who are victims of violence, generate new forms of revictimization, limit their effective access to justice, and even expose them to potential criminal proceedings.

In this regard, the Committee recalls that the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, Belém do Pará Convention, enshrines in article 4(f) the right of every woman to equal protection before the law and of the law; likewise, article 6 establishes that the right of every woman to a life free from violence includes, among others, the right to be free from all forms of discrimination.

It also reiterates that, under Article 7(a) and (e), States agree to refrain from any action or practice of violence against women, and to take all appropriate measures, including legislative measures, to amend or repeal existing laws and regulations or to modify legal or customary practices which sustain the persistence and tolerance of violence against women. Article 7(f) further requires States to establish fair and effective legal procedures for women subjected to violence.

In this regard, the Committee of Experts reiterates that the Convention obliges States to eliminate discriminatory norms, eradicate gender stereotypes and act with due diligence to guarantee women's effective access to justice. In line with the Convention, States Party must also refrain from adopting measures or discourses that undermine the credibility of victims or obstruct their ability to report violence, as doing so contravenes the commitments undertaken when ratifying this treaty.

Furthermore, in its [General Recommendation No. 6 on the use of stereotypes that compromise the integrity of justice systems](#), the Committee stresses the importance of ensuring that "States ensure that women's complaints and cases are treated with seriousness and promptly. The state must manifestly demonstrate respect for the complainants' integrity and dignity. [...] State agents should be careful that they do not mis-apply the law in such a way as to reinforce gender hierarchies."

For all these reasons, the Committee of Experts urges the States Parties to the Belém do Pará Convention to ensure that any legislative initiative or public policy fully adheres to international obligations and standards regarding the prevention, investigation and punishment of violence against women. The Committee also calls on States to strengthen

¹ The Committee of Experts of the MESECVI and the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls of the United Nations express their concern about the illegitimate use of the concept of parental alienation syndrome against women: <https://belemdopara.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Communique-Parental-Alienation.pdf>

institutional mechanisms for assistance and support, and to guarantee that women, girls and boys can report violence without fear of negative consequences.

Finally, the Committee of Experts calls on media outlets, academic institutions and justice operators to act responsibly and with a gender perspective, thereby contributing to the eradication of the stereotypes that perpetuate impunity and hinder the right of women and girls to access justice in cases of violence.

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.