

## **Digital Violence, Climate Emergency, and Women's Effective Participation: Authorities from Latin America and the Caribbean Agree on Key Actions during MESECVI Meeting in Fortaleza**

*Fortaleza, December 17, 2025.* In a regional context marked by urgent challenges to women's rights, Ministers for Women, high-level government authorities, members of the Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI), and civil society organizations convened in Fortaleza, Brazil, for a regional meeting that concluded with the adoption of key agreements to strengthen responses to gender-based digital violence, violence exacerbated by the climate change, and to advance towards the full and effective participation of women in Latin America and the Caribbean.

From December 9 to 12, Fortaleza hosted the XXII Meeting of the Committee of Experts (CEVI), the X Conference of States Party (CEP), and the Civil Society Forum, reaffirming MESECVI's role as a political and technical forum for the defense of women's rights.

Chaired by Brazil, through the Minister of Women, Márcia Lopes, the event gathered authorities and CEVI Experts from 22 States Party<sup>1</sup> and featured the participation of the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), Albert Ramdin; OAS Assistant Secretary General, Laura Gil; Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), Alejandra Mora Mora; and MESECVI Technical Secretary, Luz Patricia Mejía Guerrero.

Over one hundred representatives from women's and civil society organizations joined the space, including young women, Indigenous and Afro-descendant women, women with disabilities, women living with HIV, domestic workers, and trans women, among other key actors in the regional feminist movement. The meeting also welcomed representatives from international organizations and cooperation agencies, including UN Women, UNFPA, and CAF – Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean. The event was supported by the ACT to end violence against women programme, a joint initiative by UN Women and the European Union.

One of the key milestones of the four-day event was the adoption of the [Inter-American Model Law to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Gender-Based Digital Violence against Women](#), a pioneering regional instrument addressing the various forms of technology-facilitated gender-based violence that disproportionately affect women, adolescents, and girls.

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<sup>1</sup> Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay.

The Model Law was adopted by the Committee of Experts following over two years of collective work and regional consultations. During the same meeting, CEVI appointed a new board: Miriam Roache of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was elected President, becoming the first Expert from the Caribbean to assume this role. Mónica Maureira (Chile) and Yildalina Tatem Brache (Dominican Republic) were elected as Vice Presidents. The Committee also agreed to advance key regional priorities such as economic violence in domestic contexts and a forthcoming General Recommendation on violence against Indigenous women.

The inauguration of the X Conference of States Party, led by Minister Márcia Lopes and OAS Secretary General Albert Ramdin, included a heartfelt tribute to five CEVI Experts who have served the Mechanism for twenty years: Leila Linhares Barsted (Brazil), Susana Chiarotti (Argentina), Barbara Bailey (Jamaica), Hilda Morales (Guatemala), and Miriam Roache (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines).

The ceremony also featured a public act of apology by the Brazilian State, along with the Judiciary and the Public Prosecutor's Office of the State of Ceará, addressed to Maria da Penha, acknowledging its responsibility for the omissions and injustices committed in her case, in line with the recommendations of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). The act marked a historic moment of reparation and recognition—not only of the violence she endured but also of the transformative impact of her fight for women's rights.

During two days of sessions, the X Conference of States Party of MESECVI addressed pressing challenges and persistent violence against women in the region through high-level panels with active civil society engagement. The presentation of the Model Law on Digital Violence launched a dialogue among national authorities on its implementation and the need to strengthen state responses through a comprehensive approach. States Party reaffirmed their commitment to incorporate the instrument into national legal frameworks, policies, and programmes, and to promote gender-responsive digital governance, including clear duties and responsibilities for online platforms and intermediaries.

Other key issues discussed included gender-based disinformation and political violence, violence exacerbated by the climate crisis, and the protection of women human rights and environmental defenders, especially those in situations of heightened vulnerability and in contexts marked by backlash narratives. The importance of data to support public policies was also emphasized, with the presentation of the Fourth Hemispheric Report.

At the conclusion of the Conference, national authorities adopted the Declaration on Democracy, Climate Emergency, Digital Environments, and Emerging Forms of Violence against Women. The document highlights the urgency of addressing violence worsened by the climate crisis and digital environments, and of ensuring women's equal participation in all decision-making spaces, free from violence and discrimination.

In alignment with COP 30 and the Gender Action Plan, the Declaration articulates these regional priorities with the obligations set out in the Belém do Pará Convention. It also recognizes the vital role of women human rights, environmental, and land defenders; and stresses the need to incorporate intersectional, intercultural, and gender approaches in all

public policies, strengthen care systems, eliminate gender stereotypes, promote climate justice, and ensure effective legal frameworks to tackle digital violence and guide the ethical development of technology.

In parallel with the official meetings, the event featured a packed agenda of side events that reaffirmed MESECVI's role as a key space for exchange and advocacy. The Civil Society Organizations Forum, organized by the Belém do Pará Regional Articulation together with women's organizations from the region, established itself as a space for political training, leadership, and coordination, accompanied by parallel events on digital misogyny, access to justice, participation of adolescents and young women, and the presentation of General Recommendation No. 5 on violence against women of African descent, organized by UNFPA, MESECVI, and the Brazilian Ministry of Women.

The meeting in Fortaleza reaffirmed the regional commitment to strengthening MESECVI as a strategic platform to address new and evolving forms of violence against women. In a context of threatened gains, the adoption of the Model Law on Digital Violence, the Conference Declaration, and the robust engagement of civil society underscored the urgency of protecting hard-won rights and continuing the push toward a more just, safe, and equal region for all women and girls.