

Committee of Experts expresses concern about journalistic treatment of cases of violence against women in Chile

The Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism of the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) expresses its concern about the journalistic treatment that some media outlets in Chile have used to report on cases of women victims or survivors of violence and in cases of femicide. The concern is heightened by the high national reach of this particular media outlet.

On the one hand, the article *"The love scandal that has Boris Johnson on the ropes"* in reference to a possible case of violence against a woman by a Prime Ministerial candidate in the United Kingdom, published by the *La Segunda* newspaper on June 25, 2019, and on the other hand, the report *"How much do we know about the personality of Fernanda Maciel?"*, broadcasted by the National Television of Chile (TVN) at the end of June 2019, regarding the psychological profile of a woman victim of femicide, to name a few examples.

This Committee is emphatic in pointing out that nothing justifies violence against women and that media outlets that link these serious cases with love scandals, crimes of passion, infidelity or disseminate details of the victims' personal lives to justify their murders, do not contribute at all in the fight to eradicate the violence that so many women in Chile go through. On the contrary, this type of dissemination, with no gender focus, not only normalizes violence against them, but also distorts concepts, misinforms readers and viewers, confuses public opinion and increases tolerance, among citizens, towards violence against women.

Violence against women is a global pandemic that no country in the world has been able to eradicate. It is a complex cultural, social and political phenomenon that originates from many factors. Prevention requires profound cultural transformations and responsibility on the part of all the actors that make up a society. Within this scenario, the media is a key and relevant actor in the prevention of violence and discrimination against women and girls.

Article 8 of the Belém do Pará Convention (1994), an instrument signed and ratified by Chile, establishes that the States Party must adopt specific measures to modify the sociocultural patterns of conduct of men and women, including the design of formal programs and non-formal education. Furthermore, in both the Declaration of Pachuca (2014) and in the Third Hemispheric Report on the Implementation of the Belém do Pará Convention (2018), this Committee calls for the self-regulation of the media to dictate their internal guidelines for self-evaluation, in accordance with the obligations that correspond to them according to their own social responsibilities and existing national legislations.

For all the above, this Committee calls on all the media outlets in the country, especially *La Segunda* and *TVN*, to carry out all the necessary measures to publish content that includes a revision with a gender perspective that highlights gender biases that may arise. The media is a fundamental element in the construction of public opinion and, therefore, a relevant actor in the eradication of violence against women in Chile.

Finally, it should be noted that this Committee of Experts contacted the authorities of both media outlets, both to reject the journalistic treatment of these reports, and to offer technical advice.

The [Committee of Experts](#) is the technical body of the MESECVI responsible for the analysis and evaluation of the implementation process of the Belém do Pará Convention. It is composed of independent experts, appointed by each of the States Party among its nationals, who exercise their functions in their personal capacity.