



## Communique Committee of Experts

### **The Committee of Experts expresses its concern over political violence against Pamela Alejandra Aguirre, representative of the Andean Parliament**

Washington, DC, June 23 2020.- On May 21st, the Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the [Belém do Pará Convention \(MESECVI\)](#) received a complaint referring to various acts of violence and political discrimination against Pamela Alejandra Aguirre Zambonino, representative of the Andean Parliament. In this regard, the Committee of Experts notes that if the facts indicated in the complaint were proven, various manifestations of political violence would take shape in accordance with the provisions of the [Inter-American Model Law on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women in Political Life](#).

The acts mentioned in the complaint are: a) an attempt to use the parliamentarian's high-risk pregnancy so that her alternate representative would take office; b) the denial of her rights to breastfeeding and maternity leave, due to them not being contemplated in the Andean Parliament's General Regulations, which would have forced her to travel to Bogotá to the ordinary plenary sessions 15 days after giving birth while interrupting breastfeeding her child; c) the generation of misogynistic attacks on social networks accusing her of abandoning her newborn child; and d) the denial of equal conditions in front of other parliamentarians by the National Office of the National Parliamentary Representation of Ecuador.

In this regard, in accordance to the Inter-American Model Law on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women in Political Life:

- a) The parliamentarian would have been discriminated against, in the application of her political rights, because of being pregnant and postpartum;
- b) The parliamentarian's rights would have been restricted due to the application of internal legal systems that violate current human rights regulations by not granting her a maternity leave and breastfeeding accommodations;
- c) Expressions that denigrated the parliamentarian in the exercise of her political functions, based on gender stereotypes, would have been generated on social networks, with the objective or result of undermining her public image and her political rights; and
- d) The use of resources inherent to the parliamentarian's political position would have been limited, preventing the exercise of her job under conditions of equality.

In this sense, the Committee of Experts requests the Andean Parliament to: a) carry a serious, effective and impartial investigation, under a reasonable period, into the events denounced, so that

those responsible are appropriately punished and reparations are granted to the alleged victim; b) check the Andean Parliament's General Rules to ensure the recognition of women's rights during pregnancy, childbirth, puerperium, and breastfeeding, in accordance to the World Health Organization and the International Labour Organization parameters; c) review the General Regulations of the Andean Parliament to include the necessary provisions to ensure the right of women to a life free of violence in political life; and d) validate the parliamentarian's rights under conditions of equality regarding other parliamentarians.

Likewise, the Committee of Experts requests the Member States of the Andean Parliament to take the necessary measures to help comply with the aforementioned measures and ensure respect and guarantee of the rights of women to equality and to a life free of violence in political life.

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*The Committee of Experts is the technical body of the MESECVI that is responsible for the analysis and evaluation of the implementation process of the Belém do Pará Convention. It is made up of independent Experts, designated by each of the Member States among their nationals, who carry out their functions at a personal capacity.*