



Communique **Committee of Experts**

Committee of Experts of the MESECVI Welcomes International Decision Condemning Ecuador and Nicaragua for Violating the Rights of Girls Victims of Sexual Violence Forced into Motherhood

Washington, DC, February 14, 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" \(MESECVI\)](#) welcomes the decision issued by the United Nations Human Rights Committee on the cases of Norma, Susana, and Lucía¹—three girls who were forced to continue pregnancies resulting from sexual violence. The ruling condemns Ecuador and Nicaragua, the girls' home countries, for violating their fundamental rights by subjecting them to forced motherhood and denying them access to justice and reparation, which constitutes a violation of their right to live with dignity and an act amounting to torture.

The Committee of Experts (CEVI) has repeatedly expressed concern over the alarming rates of sexual violence against girls in the region and its impact on child pregnancy rates. The findings of MESECVI's Fourth Multilateral Evaluation Round confirm these concerns, with more than 480,000 cases of sexual violence against girls reported in Latin America between 2018 and 2022².

In this context, the CEVI underscores the significance of the UN Human Rights Committee's decision, which reaffirms States' obligations to protect girls' fundamental rights against sexual violence and ensure their access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, as well as, justice and reparation. This ruling strengthens regional and international standards for the protection of girls' and adolescents' rights.

Furthermore, the Committee acknowledges and commends the crucial role played by the "*They are Girls, Not Mothers*" movement, composed of civil society organizations from across the region. These organizations provided support in the cases of Norma, Susana, and Lucía, advocating for the recognition of their rights and their access to justice at the international level.

¹ See: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/01/ecuador-and-nicaragua-forced-pregnancy-and-motherhood-violated-rights-girl>

² See: https://belemdopara.org/cim_mesecvi/dataandstatistics/

As this Committee has previously stated in its [Declaration on Violence against Girls, Women, and Adolescents, and Their Sexual and Reproductive Rights](#), sexual violence against girls and adolescents has harmful consequences both for them and the whole society. It affects their physical and reproductive health, increases the risk of maternal and infant mortality, and leads to high-risk pregnancies and pregnancy-related issues, including unsafe abortions, premature births, and fetal distress, among other effects.

For these reasons, the Committee of Experts urges Ecuador and Nicaragua, as well as, all States Parties to the Belém do Pará Convention, to adopt urgent and effective measures against sexual violence and child and adolescent pregnancies, in line with CEVI's recommendations and the decision of the UN Human Rights Committee. These measures include, among others, strengthening prevention, care, and punishment of sexual violence against girls; ensuring safe, legal, and effective access to voluntary termination of pregnancy for girls who are victims of sexual violence; training healthcare professionals and justice system operators on comprehensive care for these cases; and implementing individual reparations to enable survivors to fully develop their life projects.

The Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention, through its Committee of Experts, makes itself available to provide any technical support that the States Parties to the Convention may require on this matter.

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.