

Visit of MESECVI to Colombia strengthens work with civil society organizations and national authorities to address violence against women

Bogotá, October 3, 2025 — The visit of the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) to Colombia, held between September 22 and 25, concluded with commitments from national authorities and civil society organizations to strengthen joint work and reinforce the technical assistance of the Mechanism in addressing violence against women. The meetings placed special emphasis on digital violence, the differentiated forms of violence faced by Afro-descendant women and monitoring the situation regarding the protection of women's rights.

On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Corporación Humanas, a MESECVI delegation—composed of CEVI Experts from Colombia, Adriana Benjumea, and from Chile, Mónica Maureira, together with the Technical Secretary, Luz Patricia Mejía, and specialists from the Technical Secretariat— participated in the international seminar marking the anniversary and developed an agenda of events and meetings in Bogotá to present the most recent reports of the Mechanism and to strengthen coordination with women's organizations, national authorities, international agencies, and academia.

The visit was carried out with the support of the ACTUEMOS program to end violence against women, an alliance between UN Women and the European Union, with the aim of fostering exchanges with organizations working for the protection of women's rights and strengthening their capacity for advocacy within the MESECVI.

In this framework, the Fourth Hemispheric Report on the implementation of the Belém do Pará Convention – Latin America Chapter, together with Colombia's Country Report, was presented at the offices of MAPP-OAS. More than twenty civil society organizations, representing diverse groups of women and regions of the country, took part in a dialogue that discussed the main findings of these reports and the CEVI's recommendations. The organizations identified priorities and actions to address the challenges of violence against women, while also exploring mechanisms to strengthen their participation and advocacy capacity within the MESECVI.

As part of the Mechanism's efforts to develop the Inter-American Model Law on Gender-based Digital Violence against Women, an intergenerational dialogue was held at Universidad Externado de Colombia, co-organized with its Department of Constitutional Law and the Inter-American Children's Institute of the OAS. The participatory methodology of this space allowed adolescents and young people to reflect on digital violence and share their proposals with national and international authorities, generating collective learning and reinforcing the need to incorporate their voices into prevention, care, and sanction policies. This exchange included the participation of Humberto Sierra, Director of the Department of

Constitutional Law at Universidad Externado; Cielo Rusinque, Superintendent of Industry and Commerce; Scott Campbell, Representative in Colombia of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; along with representatives of the State, cooperation agencies, and civil society.

Likewise, the General Recommendation No. 5 and the Thematic Report on Gender-Based Violence against Afro-descendant Women in Latin America were presented, with the participation of more than 30 representatives of Afro-descendant organizations and women leaders. The event, held at Universidad Externado with the support of UNFPA Colombia, provided an opportunity to reflect on the recommendations of these instruments and their implementation in the Colombian context. Through dialogue with Afro-descendant networks and organizations, UN agencies, and women leaders from different regions of the country, discussions focused on the specific forms of violence faced by Afro-descendant, Raizal, and Palenquera women, rooted in colonialism and structural racism, which have been historically reproduced and demand concrete actions to achieve the deep transformations required.

One of the key moments of the visit was the meeting with the Vice Minister for Women of Colombia and National Competent Authority before the Mechanism, Olga Lucía Fuentes, together with her team and that of the Technical Secretariat. This space made it possible to advance a dialogue aimed at strengthening joint work and Colombia's participation in the MESECVI, in order to promote collective efforts to guarantee women's right to a life free from violence. As a result, a common agenda was agreed to promote dialogue on the Inter-American Model Law on Gender-based Digital Violence against Women, the dissemination of the Thematic Report and General Recommendation No. 5 on violence against Afro-descendant women, and Colombia's active participation in the upcoming Conference of States Parties of the MESECVI.

In addition to these events, the delegation held bilateral meetings with the *Alianza Cinco Claves* and the coalition *Las Mujeres Abrazamos el Catatumbo*, which provided an opportunity to gather the concerns of organizations and women leaders regarding the challenges of transitional justice and the persistence of armed violence in that region, with its differentiated impacts on women's lives. These conversations reaffirmed the importance of MESECVI accompanying and making visible the efforts of local organizations in monitoring the Convention.