

CHAPTER III

ACTIVITIES OF THE RAPORTEURS' OFFICES, THEMATIC AND COUNTRY REPORTS AND PROMOTION

A. Activities of the Rapporteurs Offices

1. Rapporteurship on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

1. The Rapporteurship on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is led by Commissioner Rose-Marie Belle Antoine.

2. During this year, the Rapporteurship was engaged in the preparation and publication of a group of reports on priority themes related to the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples, thanks to support from the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) and Denmark.

3. The Rapporteurship participated and organized the following activities throughout 2014:

- On February 19, 2014, the Executive Secretary participated in the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples held in New York City, with a presentation on the Inter-American System of Human Rights and Indigenous Peoples.

- During the 150th session, the Rapporteurship held a general meeting on March 26, 2014 with a variety of organizations working to advance protection for indigenous peoples. It also organized meetings with the organizations Interamerican Association for Environmental Defense (AIDA), the Indian Law Resource Center, and the Forest Peoples Programmes.

- On July 29, 2014, the Commission made public its report on *Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact in the Americas: Recommendations for the full respect of their human rights*. This report presents a general analysis of issues affecting indigenous peoples in voluntary isolation and initial contact, compiles the principal sources of law in the inter-American system of human rights that are relevant for their protection, identifies the principal threats to the full enjoyment of their human rights, and presents a series of recommendations to the Member States of the Organization of American States.

- On November 8, 2014, the Rapporteurships on Indigenous Peoples and Women organized a regional meeting in Washington, DC on the situation of indigenous women, which was attended by approximately 16 experts on the human rights situation of indigenous women from Argentina, Belize, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and the United States. This meeting is part of the information-collection process related to a report on the human rights situation of indigenous women in the Americas, addressing a series of themes relevant to the exercise of their civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights and their right to live free of violence and discrimination, among others. This report is being prepared jointly by both Rapporteurships. The attendees identified principles and priority situations that should be included in different sections of the regional report and discussed serious issues that affect indigenous women in the region such as forms of violence and discrimination.

- Commissioner Rose-Marie Belle Antoine, as Rapporteur for Chile and for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, visited Chile from November 24–26, 2014. The primary objective of her visit was to

obtain information on the general human rights situation in the country. In her capacity as Rapporteur for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, she also thoroughly examined the situation of human rights of indigenous peoples in Chile, particularly in the context of development and investment projects and concessions for the extraction of natural resources. To this end, she traveled to the cities of Santiago and Temuco. This visit is part of the activities undertaken by the Rapporteurship to collect information which will be incorporated in a regional report focused on the impact of development, investment projects, and extractive concessions that concern natural resources on the human rights of indigenous peoples and afro-descendent communities.

4. During her visit, Commissioner Antoine met with several state officials, including President Michelle Bachelet. During her meeting with President Michelle Bachelet, Commissioner Antoine discussed several human rights violations which occur in the context of extraction, development, and investment projects in the region, and invited the President to discuss this as a priority issue with OAS Member States to find satisfactory solutions.

5. The State, together with the Commission, also organized a seminar on international standards having to do with discrimination in light of the inter-American human rights system. The Seminar was attended by a significant number of public officials and civil society organizations. The Commission also met with representatives of numerous organizations that work on behalf of the rights of indigenous peoples—among them the Mapuche—and with representatives of civil society who work in the areas of human rights, women’s rights, matters related to LGBTI individuals, and the situation of unions.

6. Upon conclusion of its visit, the Commission assessed the efforts made by the State and President Michelle Bachelet’s administration in order to prepare an agenda with a complete set of measures designed to improve the human rights situation in Chile. Among these, the Commission acknowledged the government’s notion of a “new deal” with Chile’s indigenous peoples and the State’s commitment to create a ministry and a council devoted exclusively to the situation of indigenous peoples, as well as other measures to advance human rights in the country. Several State authorities also informed of the future reform of the current Counter-Terrorism Act to prevent its application to cases of social protests involving the Mapuche people and other groups. The Commission hopes that this reform is undertaken in consonance with the applicable international legal standards.

7. The Commission did, however, note its concern over information it received with respect to the lack of constitutional recognition for the indigenous peoples of Chile as well as the existence of major barriers in the process of granting property titles for ancestral lands. Despite the fact that the State of Chile ratified ILO Convention 169, information was received regarding the existence of significant obstacles with respect to the content and exercise of the right to consultation in matters that affect the territories, means of subsistence, and sustainability of Chile’s indigenous peoples. The Commission was informed that there had been no free, prior, and informed consultation of indigenous peoples with regard to a number of development and extraction projects, nor were they consulted on the impact of these initiatives on their access to water and natural resources such as seeds.

8. The Commission emphasized how important it is for the State, as it implements its new agenda, to consider the rights of indigenous peoples to self-determination, the principles of equality and non-discrimination, and their unique ties to their lands, their territories, and natural resources. In this respect, the Commission urged the State to establish an institutional mechanism for consultation with indigenous peoples that bears in mind the different dimensions of this right under international law. The Commission also reiterated the fact that any comprehensive strategy on the part of the State to address the rights of indigenous peoples should include their constitutional recognition, a multicultural perspective in the development of laws and public policies, measures to ensure they do not suffer discrimination, steps to hasten the process to restore their ancestral lands to them, prevention of the excessive use of force by the police during social protests by indigenous peoples, and to a culturally pertinent access to education.

- On December 21, 2014, the Commission also published a report on indigenous women who have disappeared and been murdered in British Columbia, Canada, which resulted from a joint visit by the Indigenous Peoples and Women's Rapporteurships conducted in August 2013.

9. The Rapporteurship is also drafting a report on the situation of indigenous peoples in Guatemala, with emphasis on the discrimination and exclusion of indigenous peoples, as well as on the situation regarding their lands, territories, and natural resources, and the right to consultation and prior, free, and informed consent. Preparation of this report was preceded by a working visit to Guatemala by the Rapporteurship on Indigenous Peoples during the period August 21-30, 2013.

2. Rapporteur on the Rights of Women

10. The Rapporteurship on the Rights of Women is led by Commissioner and President Tracy Robinson.

11. The Rapporteurship focused on implementing two regional initiatives in 2014, which were made possible by the support of Denmark and ASDI. The Rapporteurship is in the process of drafting a thematic report on the human rights situation of indigenous women in the Americas, which will address a number of issues linked to the exercise of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and to their right to live violence and discrimination-free lives, among other rights. This initiative is being implemented in conjunction with the Office of the Rapporteur for Indigenous Peoples. The report will examine the different provisions of international law pertaining to the rights of indigenous women; priority matters and issues needing to be addressed by States; and recommendations to guide States' efforts to respect and ensure indigenous women's human rights. In December, the Rapporteurship also circulated a questionnaire to both State and non-State actors in order to gather information to be examined in the report.

12. The Rapporteurship has also been implementing a regional initiative aimed at examining the principal challenges that women face in reaching complete, reliable and timely access to the information managed by the State in terms of violence and discrimination. The initiative will include the publication of a report focused on the Americas, identifying obstacles, best practices, and a series of recommendations to States on how to improve compliance with existing human rights standards on access to information. In the framework of this project, the Rapporteurship circulated a questionnaire destined to collect information from both State and non-State actors during March of 2014.

13. Additionally, the Rapporteurship conducted and took part in several events commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Convention of Belém do Pará.

14. The Rapporteurship participated and undertook the following activities during 2014:

- On June 2, 2014 in Asunción, Paraguay, the Rapporteur participated as a speaker at an event titled "Contributions to the Selection Process for Members of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission and Court" organized by CEJIL and the International Coalition of Human Rights Organizations in the Americas.

- On August 15, 2014, the specialist who supports the work of the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Women participated in a public discussion about the challenges women human rights defenders face doing their work in the Mesoamerican region. This event was organized by the organizations CEJIL, Centro de Derechos Humanos Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez, JASS, the Mesoamerican Initiative of Women Human Rights Defenders, the International Service for Human Rights, the Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition, UN Women, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and received support from the Government of Norway.

- On August 19, 2014, the Rapporteur Tracy Robinson participated as a main speaker at the event "Violence against Women in Mexico: Challenges and Areas Pending to Implement the Relevant International Obligations." This event took place in Mexico and was organized by the organizations CEJIL,

Centro de Derechos Humanos Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez, JASS, CEDEHM (Centro de Derechos Humanos de la Montaña) and the Human Rights Program of the Universidad de México.

- On August 29, 2014, the Rapporteur and her team participated in a webinar in Washington, D.C. with civil society organizations that work to advance women's rights in the Americas on the challenges and gains in implementing the provisions of the Convention of Belém do Pará. The event included the participation of the following organizations: CEJIL, Center for Reproductive Rights, Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights (CLADEM), Amnesty International, IPAS, JASS, PROMSEX, PROMDSR, Colectiva Mujer y Salud of the Dominican Republic, Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network, Sisma Mujer, and the Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights.

- As part of its initiative on access to information, the Rapporteur also travelled to Colombia for a visit from September 29, to October 3, 2014, and traveled to the cities of Cali, Bogota and Cartagena. The Rapporteurship met with more than 50 women and civil society organizations. The IACHR delegation also organized one academic and one public event in Cali, in order to make the legal precedents of the Inter-American system known with regard to women's rights and access to information.

15. At the meetings, the Rapporteurship heard a significant number of accounts on barriers faced by women in Colombia, in particular, Afro-descendant women, to obtaining basic information from the State, which is necessary in order to exercise their human rights. It verified that a legal and public policy framework was indeed in place in order to address the problems of violence and discrimination. However, it also came to the attention of the Rapporteurship that there still was a long way to go for that framework to be put into practice in the area of access to information. Victims, their family members and the organizations representing them face great obstacles in obtaining information on how the judicial system processes cases of violence, the functioning of the justice system in general, how to assert one's basic rights and what protection mechanisms are available under the law. The delegation also learned about gaps in the State's system for gathering statistics on the subject of violence against women, the lack of inter-institutional coordination in gathering such information within the structure of government and the need for this data to be disaggregated by race, ethnic group, age, disability, and other factors. These barriers are particularly serious in the case of women with disabilities, HIV and those living in rural areas.

16. Additionally, during the visit to Colombia the Rapporteur received troubling information about the pernicious effect of the armed conflict on the safety, lives and territory of Afro-descendant women and the use of physical, psychological and sexual violence perpetrated during the armed conflict by different actors, in particular, the use of rape to silence the work of women leaders and human rights defenders, cloaking most of these crimes in impunity. In the press release issued at the end of the visit, the Rapporteurship reiterated that access to information is fundamental to the exercise of all women's human rights, including the right to lead a life free from violence and discrimination and the right to the truth, justice and reparation.

- On October 10, 2014, the Rapporteur also participated in a seminar in Geneva on discrimination against women in family and cultural life organized by United Nations Working Group on the Discrimination against Women in Law and Practice.

- On October 27, 2014, the Rapporteurship organized a joint event with the Inter-American Commission of Women to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Convention of Belém do Pará focusing on the topic of reparation with a gender perspective. The keynote speakers at this event were Mrs. Rashida Manjoo, United Nations Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its causes and consequences; Commissioner, President and Rapporteur on the Rights of Women, Tracy Robinson; Carmen Moreno of the CIM Executive Secretariat; and Luz Piedad Caicedo, Coordinator of Research, *Corporación Humanas*, Colombia.

- On October 28, 2014, the United Nations Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Commissioner, President, and Rapporteur on the Rights of Women Tracy Robinson also held a private meeting with twenty representatives of civil society organizations to discuss their views on priority topics

pertaining to the rights of women in the Americas. In particular, the participants discussed gaps in international human rights law as it pertains to violence against women and priorities with regard to international and regional treaties addressing this issue.

- As a result of the joint effort in writing this report, on November 8, 2014, the Rapporteurships on Women and Indigenous Peoples hosted a regional meeting focused on the situation of indigenous women, which was attended by approximately 16 experts from Argentina, Belize, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, United States, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama. The participants identified priority principles and situations, which need to be incorporated into the different sections of the regional report, and discussed serious problems affecting indigenous women in the region, such as different forms of violence and discrimination.

- On December 2, 2014, the specialist supporting the work of the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Women participated in the Round Table Discussion: *Violence against women and sexual and reproductive rights in the Americas; Progress and persistent challenges*, jointly hosted by the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), the Permanent Observer Mission of France to the OAS and the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), in Washington DC. The specialist gave a presentation titled: "Sexual and Reproductive Rights in the Americas: A Hemispheric View." The event was attended by Ambassador Jean-Claude Nola, Permanent Observer of France to the OAS; Carmen Moreno, CIM Executive Secretary; Marissa Billowitz, Associate Director of Programs, International Planned Parenthood Federation/Western Hemisphere (IPPF/WHR); Diana Gonzalez Perrett, Expert of Uruguay, Committee of Experts of the Mechanism to Follow Up on Implementation of the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women "Convention of Belém do Pará" (MECECVI); Alessandra Guedes, Regional Advisor, Family Violence, PAHO/WHO; Paul Ávila, Advisor for Latin America and the Caribbean, Center for Reproductive Rights; Vlado Mirosevic Verdugo, Deputy of the Chamber of Deputies of Chile; Dinys Luciano, Director, Development Connections; and Tazeen Hasan, Legal Specialist, Gender Unit, World Bank.

- On December 21, 2014, the Commission approved a report on indigenous women who have been disappeared and murdered in British Columbia, Canada. This report is the result of a joint visit in August 2013 of the Rapporteurships on the Rights of Women and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

17. The Rapporteurship is also preparing an updated version of the publication – *Legal Standards related to Gender Equality and Women's rights in the Inter-American Human Rights System: Development and Application* (2011).

18. In the course of 2014, the IACHR also issued several press releases highlighting concerns and priority issues linked to the subject matter and implementation of the Convention of Belém do Pará:

- On March 8, 2014, International Women's Day, the IACHR voiced its concerns over the protection of women's rights in the Americas, which it expresses on a daily basis in all of its work and in carrying out its regional initiatives. It noted that 20 years after the Convention of Belém do Pará came into force, current problems reflect the need for States to improve at developing procedures and displaying due diligence in order to adequately respond to violence and discrimination against women.
- On June 9, 2014, the IACHR issued a press release on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the adoption of the Convention of Belém do Pará. In this release, the IACHR recognized the significant impact of this instrument in developing standards of gender equality in the Inter-American human rights system, highlighting several decisions and recommendations on paradigmatic issues affecting women in the Americas. The IACHR also noted that even though the Convention of Belém do Pará has called for and supported the adoption of nationwide legislation, public policies, programs and practices in several countries of the

Americas, there is still a long way to go to reach full compliance with the Commission's and Court's decisions and for women's rights in the hemisphere to be totally protected.

- On November 25, 2014, the IACHR called attention to the fact that violence and many forms of discrimination are still faced by women in the region and noted that it is essential for the reparations ordered in cases of violence to have a transformational effect in order to move forward towards effectively ensuring the right of all women to lead lives free of violence and discrimination.

3. Rapporteur on the Rights of Migrants

19. The Rapporteurship is headed by Commissioner Felipe González.

20. On February 10, 2014, an attorney from the Rapporteurship gave a presentation on the functions and powers of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights for the promotion and protection of human rights, at the "Meeting of Organizations of Defenders of Human Rights of Migrants: Towards the Construction of Collective Protection Strategies", organized by the Ministry Organization Projects (PCS - its acronym in English), the Casa del Migrante in Saltillo [Frontera con Justicia AC], the Albergue de La 72, Derechos Humanos Integrales en Acción A.C., la Acción Articulada Noreste from the initiative Frontera Norte de México, and the Scalabrinianas: Mission for Migrants and Refugees.

21. The "Regional meeting on Migration, Human Rights, and Public Policies" that took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina from June 9 to June 13, 2014. This event was organized by the Center for Justice and Human Rights at the National University of Lanús (CDHUNLa) in conjunction with the Center for Legal and Social Studies (CELS) and the Refugees and Migrants Support Commission (CAREF), with participants representing social organizations, unions, academia, international organizations, and governments in the region, who shared information on the human rights situation of migrants and experiences associated with the development of migration policies using a human rights approach in the Americas. In the context of this meeting, on June 9, 2014 staff from the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants gave a presentation on the mechanisms for protecting and promoting the human rights of migrants and others in the context of human movements, in the Cultural Room at the Library of the National Congress of the Republic of Argentina.

22. On June 10-11, 2014, MERCOSUR's Institute for Public Policy on Human Rights (IPPDH) and the Coordinating Committee of Southern Cone Trade Union Confederations (CCSCS) organized a "Dialogue on Regional Integration, Migration Policies, and Human Rights" in the National Senate in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In the context of this event, Rapporteurship staff gave a presentation on progress made and challenges faced in protecting the rights of migrants in the Americas and prospects and analysis in the light of the protection mechanisms of the Inter-American System of Human Rights (IASHR).

23. On June 13, 2014, an attorney for the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants gave a presentation on major advances and challenges in the area of protecting the human rights of migrants and others in the context of human movements in the Americas at a meeting organized by the Center for Legal and Social Studies (CELS), with the participation of civil society organizations and legal clinics from various countries in the Americas.

24. Staff of the Rapporteurship participated in the regional preparatory meeting for the Caribbean on refugees, stateless persons, and mixed migration, called by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on June 25, 2014, in Washington, D.C., United States of America. That meeting was organized in anticipation of the meeting the UNHCR organized in the Cayman Islands on September 10 and 11, 2014, for the purpose of addressing the situation of protection of refugees, stateless persons, and mixed migratory flows in the Caribbean region. The aim of this meeting was to contribute to the process of drawing up a regional declaration to be presented in December 2014 in Brasília, Brazil, in the framework of the 30th anniversary of the Declaration of Cartagena on Refugees, but placing emphasis on the

particular context of the Caribbean, as well as drawing up a plan of action for the Caribbean on refugees, asylum seekers, and stateless persons.

25. The Rapporteur, Felipe González Morales, was in Mexico City on August 18 and in Saltillo, Coahuila on August 19, 2014, presenting the report “Human Rights of Migrants and Other Persons in the Context of Human Mobility in Mexico.” First thing in the morning on August 18, 2014, the Rapporteur and staff from the Rapporteurship held a meeting at the Ministry of Interior with Ambassador Juan Manuel Gómez Robledo, Deputy Minister for Multilateral Matters and Human Rights; Mercedes Guillén, Deputy Minister for Population, Migration, and Religious Matters; Lía Limón, Deputy Minister for Legal Affairs and Human Rights; Ardelio Vargas Fosado, Commissioner of the National Migration Institute; as well as other staff members of the above-mentioned agencies. Subsequently, a press conference was held at Casa Lamm at which the Rapporteur presented the main findings and recommendations of the report to a crowded gathering of journalists from Mexican and international media, members of civil society organizations, and persons from other international organizations. In the afternoon, the Rapporteur met with Rubén Moreira Valdez, Governor of Coahuila and Luis Efrén Ríos Vega, Director of the Law School at the Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila. The presentation of the report in Mexico City was possible thanks to the support of the Central America and Mexico Migration Alliance (CAMMINA).

26. On August 19, 2014, the report was presented at the auditorium of the Law School of the Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila with the presence of migrants, political and civil authorities of the state of Coahuila, members of the Casa del Migrante of Saltillo, members of academia, and students. Finally, the Rapporteur made a visit to the Casa del Migrante of Saltillo, where he held a meeting with migrants as well as with Bishop Raúl Vera; Father Pedro Pantoja; and Alberto Xicoténcatl, the director of Casa del Migrante of Saltillo; and with members and human rights defenders who work at the Casa del Migrante. The presentation of the report in Saltillo, Coahuila, was done thanks to support from the Central America and Mexico Migration Alliance. (CAMMINA).

27. In the context of the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, Commissioner Felipe González made a presentation on the standards developed by the IACHR on statelessness and nationality on the context of the First Global Forum on Statelessness, organized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the University of Tilburg September 15 to 17, 2014, in the Hague, Netherlands.

28. On September 29, the Executive Secretary of the IACHR, Emilio Álvarez-Icaza, traveled to Mexico City to participate as a presenter in the opening session of the work of the “Forum on Human Mobility and Equal Treatment in Mexico City: Challenges, Experiences, and Good Practices,” which was organized by the Council to Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination in Mexico City.

29. From September 29 to October 2, 2014, a delegation of the IACHR conducted a visit for the purpose of monitoring the human rights situation of unaccompanied children and families that have crossed the southern border of the United States of America, in particular with respect to their apprehension, migratory detention, and immigration proceedings, as well as deportations and removals. The delegation was composed of Commissioner Felipe González Morales, Rapporteur for the Rights of Migrants and country rapporteur for the United States; Commissioner Rosa María Ortiz, Rapporteur on the Rights of the Child; two attorneys from the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants and one attorney from the Rapporteurship on the Rights of the Child. During the visit, the delegation visited Hidalgo, McAllen, Harlingen, Karnes City, and San Antonio. The IACHR held meetings with State authorities, civil society organizations, victims of human rights violations, and the consuls of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras in the area.

30. On October 29, 2014, in the framework of the 153rd Period of Sessions of the IACHR, the Rapporteur held his third meeting with civil society organizations of the Americas. The meeting served as a forum to discuss the main challenges to the human rights of migrants and their families, asylum seekers, refugees, stateless persons, trafficked persons, IDPs and other vulnerable groups in the context of human mobility.

31. Staff of the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants and from the Rapporteurship on the Rights of the Child gave a presentation on November 12, 2014 on the visit the IACHR conducted to the southern border of the United States to a group of journalists from the Americas. The presentation was part of a course organized by the Press and Communications Office of the IACHR.

32. On November 18, 2014, the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants participated in the launch event for the UNCHR's global campaign to end statelessness. The event took place in Washington, D.C., United States of America.

33. On 19 and 20 November 2014, the Red DH Migrantes held its second international forum in Guatemala City to address the crisis and humanitarian emergency in Central America and Mexico, as well as strategize on the network's internal mechanisms and responses to the challenges in the region. During the forum, an attorney of the Rapporteurship provided a presentation about the work that has been done by the Inter-American Commission to respond to the humanitarian crisis faced by migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the United States of America, Mexico and Central America. The forum was attended by migrants, civil society organizations from Central America and Mexico, representatives of the Commission for Human Rights of the Federal District of Mexico, the Human Rights Ombudsman of Guatemala, the Human Rights Ombudsman of El Salvador, the Commission on Human Rights of Honduras, and the State Commission on Human Rights of Tlaxcala, Mexico.

4. Rapporteurship on the Rights of the Child

34. The Rapporteurship on the Rights of the Child is led by Commissioner Rosa María Ortiz.

35. On March 13, 2014 the Rapporteurship gave a presentation to the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva on the right of access to justice for children and adolescents in the context of the inter-American system of human rights, progress made and challenges faced. This presentation is part of the Annual Day of Discussion that the Human Rights Council dedicates to childhood.

36. The Rapporteurship on the Rights of the Child with the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty visited New York, United States, on April 7-10. The purpose of this visit was to obtain information on the situation of persons under the age of 18 who are indicted, tried, convicted, and imprisoned as and with adults, and the conditions under which youths are held in prisons and penitentiaries. The delegation met with federal, state, and municipal authorities and visited the Robert N. Davoren Complex (RNDC) on Rikers Island in New York City, where they had the opportunity to interview adolescents freely and in private. The visit also included meetings with civil society organizations as well as with some youths who were deprived of liberty. Upon the conclusion of the visit, a press release regarding it was published on the IACHR website.

37. During the period May 5-9, 2014, the Rapporteurship participated in the annual meeting of the Latin America and the Caribbean Chapter of the Global Movement for Children (MMI-LAC), in Panama. The MMI-LAC is made up of UNICEF and the principal international, national, and regional NGOs active in the promotion and defense of children's rights in the hemisphere. In addition, the Rapporteurship held coordinating meetings with the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Violence against Children, and the Inter-American Children's Institute (IIN) of the OAS.

38. On May 16, 17, and 18, the Rapporteurship participated in an International Conference on Child-Friendly Justice organized by Stockholm University, with the participation of representatives from the regional and universal human rights systems, experts and academics versed on the subject. The Rapporteurship gave a presentation on children's access to justice in the IASHR. On May 16, the Rapporteurship held meetings with the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Swedish International

Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and participated in a seminar on the IASHR and children's rights with Swedish civil society organizations.

39. On May 28-29, the Rapporteur traveled to Santiago, Chile. Among the main objectives for the visit was to share experiences on the functioning of the Systems for the Promotion and Protection of Children's Rights in the region as well as to hold a meeting with the director of the National Children's Council, Mrs. Estela Ortiz, and her team. This council, an initiative of President Bachelet, aims to create a System for the Promotion and Protection of Children's Rights. The Rapporteurship also visited one the current Offices for the Protection of Children's Rights.

40. On June 10, the Rapporteurship participated in a Seminar on Early Childhood held in Asuncion, Paraguay, and organized by the National Secretariat for Children and Adolescents.

41. On June 27 and 28, the Rapporteur was invited by the Government of Jamaica and the Office of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Violence against Children to take part in the Cross-Regional Meeting for Advancing the Protection of Children from Violence in Kingston, Jamaica, with the participation of delegations from all regions of the world.

42. From September 1 to 5 the Rapporteurship made a visit to Uruguay with the objective of expressing this Rapporteurship's position contrary to the proposed initiative to reduce the age at which one can be charged with a crime, from 18 years to 16 years, to be approved by constitutional plebiscite, as well as to follow up on the situation of adolescents deprived of liberty. The Rapporteur was received by the President of the Republic, José Mujica Cordano; the Vice President of the Republic and President of the legislature; the President of the Judicial Branch; the President of the House of Representatives; the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the President of the Directing Council of the National Institution for Human Rights (INDDHH); the Secretary for Human Rights of the Presidency of the Republic; the Committee on Human Rights of the legislature; the Chief Prosecutor (Fiscal de Corte) and Attorney General of the Nation; as well as the authorities of the INAU and of the SIRPA (System of Adolescent Criminal Liability). The Rapporteur also held meetings with UNICEF; with some family members of adolescent offenders who are deprived of liberty; and with the National Coalition of civil society organizations and other NGOs. The Rapporteurship visited Colonia Berro, the SER Detention Center, and the Ituzaingo Detention Center of the System of Adolescent Criminal Liability (SIRPA); in addition also visited the TRIBAL Intake Center and the La Posada Residential Home for mental health treatment. During the visit, the Rapporteurship observed that the concerns regarding the functioning of the juvenile justice system and the conditions in which adolescents are deprived of their liberty remain. The Rapporteurship received information on major gains recorded in developing the state institutional structure devoted to the protection of human rights, such as the installation of the National Institution for Human Rights and the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsperson (Defensoría del Pueblo), as well as the National Mechanism against Torture, and the creation of the Secretariat for Human Rights, under the Presidency of the Republic.

43. From September 29 to October 2, 2014, the Rapporteurship on the Rights of the Child along with the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants made a visit to the southern border region of the United States of America with Mexico, in the state of Texas, for the purpose of monitoring the human rights situation of unaccompanied children and families who have crossed the border, with respect to their apprehension, migratory detention, migratory procedures, as well as deportations and removals. The visit was organized in view of the considerable increase in the number of families with children, and unaccompanied children, reaching the United States in the last fiscal year, particularly those coming from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico. During the visit, the delegation of the IACHR visited Hidalgo, McAllen, Harlingen, Karnes City, and San Antonio. The IACHR held meetings with state authorities, civil society organizations, victims of human rights violations, and the consulates of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Nonetheless, the delegation was not able to carry out its full agenda due to the decision of the Border Patrol and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE) to refuse to allow free and full access to the McAllen Station of the Border Patrol and to the Central Processing Center of the Rio Grande Valley. The visit concluded with a press conference on October 2, and the issuance of a press release.

44. From October 20 to 22, the Rapporteurship conducted a visit to Colorado, United States. The purpose of the trip was to obtain information about children under 18 years of age, who are subjected to the norms of the adult criminal justice system, as well as the conditions of youths housed in detention and prison facilities. During the visit, the delegation was received by state officials in Denver, Colorado, including the Public Defender of the State of Colorado, the Deputy Legal Counsel to the Governor, the Executive Director of the Colorado District Attorneys' Council, and with officials and staff members of the Division of Youth Corrections. The delegation visited the facilities of the Youth Services System of Pueblo and Golden. In addition, during the visit meetings were also held with civil society organizations, as well as with family members of incarcerated youths, who were serving prison sentences after being convicted in the adult criminal justice system.

45. The Rapporteurship visited Mexico from October 6 to 14, mainly for the purpose of monitoring the human rights of children and adolescents in Mexico, at the federal level and in five states of the federation, with particular emphasis on the situation of children in institutions, migrant children, violence against children and the functioning of the System of Promotion and Protection of Children's Rights. During the visit, the delegation visited the Federal District, the city of Cuernavaca in Morelos, the city of Oaxaca, Oaxaca, the city of Saltillo in Coahuila and the cities of Nuevo Laredo, Reynosa and Ciudad Victoria in the state of Tamaulipas. The Rapporteurship met with senior officials of the three branches of government in said states and district, as well as with more than once hundred civil society organizations, human rights commissions and victims of human rights violations and their families. The Rapporteurship also visited the Specialized Facility for Adolescents under Custodial Measures in Morelos, the Migratory Station of Saltillo, International Bridge No 1 of Nuevo Laredo; the Migratory Station of Nuevo Laredo; the care Module of the Comprehensive Development System (hereinafter DIF, for its Spanish acronym) for unaccompanied migrant children; the Care for Minors Border Facility of Nuevo Laredo (CAMEF); the Migratory Station of Reynosa; the care Module of the DIF and the Care for Minors Border Facility of this same city; the Hidalgo bridge; and the Center for Adoptions and Casa orphanage of the DIF Tamaulipas. At the end of the visit, the Rapporteur issued a press release.

46. On November 6, the Rapporteur took part in a meeting of the OAS Committee on Migratory Issues in Washington DC highlighting her observations on the major challenges to the protection of the rights of migrant children in the Americas, in addition to recalling the human rights standards applicable thereto, including recent Advisory Opinion 21/14 of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on the "Rights and guarantees of children in the context of migration and/or in need of international protection."

47. On November 6, the Rapporteurship participated in a meeting of the Committee on Hemispheric Security of the OAS in Washington DC, giving a presentation on the situation of the violence faced by children and adolescents in the region, particularly in contexts of insecurity and actions of organized crime.

48. From November 18 to 20, the Rapporteurship attended the Meeting of High-Level Human Rights Authorities of Mercosur and the meeting of senior officials in charge of children in Mercosur Countries (NIÑ@SUR) in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Rapporteurship also took part in a daylong event commemorating the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in the Senate of the Republic, where the Rapporteur gave a talk on International and Regional Standards for the functioning of Systems of Promotion and Protection of Children's Rights. The Rapporteurship also held a meeting with approximately 30 juvenile court prosecuting attorneys where the issue of Systems of Promotion and Protection of Children's Rights was addressed.

49. From December 8 to 12, the Rapporteurship participated in the 21st Pan-American Child and Adolescent Congress of the IIN OAS in Brasilia, Brazil, the theme of which was "Children and adolescents: building peaceful environments.", and delivered a keynote address on the Violence Present in Juvenile Justice Systems in the Americas while urging States to effectively implement systems of restorative justice, in addition to redoubling their prevention efforts. Similarly, the Rapporteurship gave a presentation on how

lowering the age of criminal responsibility for children and adolescents is incompatible with international human rights standards, in the context of an event sponsored by CONANDA in conjunction with the Secretariat of Human Rights of the Office of the Presidency. The Rapporteurship also took part in the Second Pan-American Children's Forum and the Second Forum of Civil Society Organizations.

50. The Rapporteurship has presented the report "The Right of Boys and Girls to a Family. Alternative Care. Ending institutionalization in the Americas." during the course of the 153rd IACHR session in the city of Washington DC, United States; in Mexico DF, Mexico, with the support of the Mexican Senate and UNICEF; in Asuncion, Paraguay, in the context of two training seminar convened by the National Secretariat for Children and Adolescents, the Supreme Court, and UNICEF, and by the National Coalition for the Rights of Children (CDIA); in Santiago de Chile, Chile, in the seminar on "Public Policies on Caring for Children and Adolescents in the Region and Implementation of the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children"; in Montevideo, Uruguay, with the Support of the National Coalition for the Rights of Children (Comite de los Derechos del Niño); and in Brasilia, Brasil, as part of the Consultation with Experts on Violence and Care convened by the Government of Brazil, in coordination with the Global Movement for Children, the Office of the Special Representative of the United Nation's General-Secretary on Violence against Children and several NGOs.

51. The Rapporteurship has continued working on drawing up the regional thematic report on the context of insecurity, violence, and the presence of armed criminal organizations, and the effects of these phenomena on the rights of the child.

52. The Rapporteurship has signed a cooperation agreement with the NGO World Vision, for the period 2015-2017, with the aim of analyzing the functioning of the National Systems of Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child on the continent.

5. Rapporteurship on Human Rights Defenders

53. The Rapporteurship on Human Rights Defenders is under the leadership of Commissioner José de Jesús Orozco Henríquez.

54. On December 5, 2013, the Commission approved the report "Guarantees for the Independence of Justice Operators: Towards Strengthening Access to Justice and the Rule of Law in the Americas." The report was prepared with the specific objective of identifying the obligations that States parties have assumed to guarantee access to justice through the guarantees they must offer to justice operators to ensure the latter are able to act independently, enhancing system-wide observance of the standards of international law and identifying some continuing obstacles in the States of the hemisphere.

55. In 2014, the Rapporteurship on Human Rights Defenders continued to disseminate the aforementioned report:

- On February 5, 2014, the report was presented at the Supreme Court of Costa Rica, in San Jose, Costa Rica. Besides Commissioner Orozco and staff of the Executive Secretariat, this presentation was also attended by Hina Jilani, Former Special Representative of the Secretary General on Human Rights Defenders, Humberto Sierra Porto, President of the Inter-American Court on Human Rights; José Thompson J., Executive Director of the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights; Fernando Cruz Castro, Justice of the Constitutional Chamber of Costa Rica; Marvin Carvajal Perez, Director of the Judicial School of Costa Rica; Ana Marcia Aguiluz, Director of CEJIL Mesoamerica, and Adriana Chavarria Orocú, President of the Costa Rican Judiciary Association.
- On February 6, 2014, the report was presented by the Rapporteurship in Guatemala City, Guatemala. Jesus Orozco, President of the IACHR; Ramón Cadena Rámila, Regional Director

of the International Commission of Jurists; Pablo Xitumul Peace, Judge of Court of Criminal Sentencing, Ivan Velazquez, Commissioner of the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala; Ana Marcia Aguiluz, Director of CEJIL Mesoamerica, and Jorge Alberto Santos Contreras from Convergence for Human Rights in Guatemala, were present.

- On May 8, 2014, the Rapporteurship presented the above-mentioned report within the framework of an event organized by the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation, in Mexico City. In addition to the Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, participants included Juan Silva Meza, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Nation and the Federal Judiciary Council; magistrate Armando Maitret Hernández, Executive Secretary of the Mexican Association of Justice Providers; Mario Alberto Torres, Director of the Federal Public Defense Institute; and Ximena Medellín Urquiaga, Research Professor at the Center for Economic Research and Education.
- On August 21, 2014, the Rapporteurship presented the report in the “International Congress: 20 years of autonomy of the Public Ministry of the Nation,” in tribute to Stella Maris Martínez, which was held at the Law School of the Universidad de Buenos Aires, in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- On December 11, 2014, in the context of the Second International Training Course on Human Rights: Access to the Human Rights Protection System, which was held in Medellín, Colombia, the Rapporteur introduced the report on *Guarantees for the Independence of Justice Operators: Towards Strengthening Access to Justice and Rule of Law in the Americas*.

56. Likewise, the Commission continued to receive troubling information about stigmatizing public statements against human rights defenders in several countries of the region and of criminal proceedings to which they are allegedly subjected to keep them from doing their job and to delegitimize their causes. Accordingly, the Commission urged the States of the region to give high priority and pay full attention to the problem of criminalization of defenders and decided to engage, through the Rapporteurship, in a process for the preparation of a report on the “Misuse of criminal law to criminalize human rights defenders in the Americas.” In this context, on August 1, 2014, the IACHR published a questionnaire for States and civil society in order to gather relevant information on the matter. The questionnaire was posted on the IACHR web page.

57. On this issue, Rapporteur participated in the international seminar “For the right to defend rights: The criminalization of human rights defenders in Central America,” held in the city of Madrid, Spain, on September 22 and 23, 2014, which was organized by the Asociación de Investigación y Especialización sobre Temas Iberoamericanos in coordination with the Comisión de Derechos Humanos Hispano Guatemalteca, Peace Brigades International (PBI), and the Copenhagen Initiative for Central America and Mexico, with the support of the Human Rights Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, in the context of the 10th anniversary of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders.

58. Additionally, at the 153rd session, discussions were held with experts and human rights defenders and a thematic hearing was convened ex officio by the IACHR on the *misuse of criminal law to criminalize human rights defenders*.¹ As part of the 153 Period of Sessions of the IACHR, the Rapporteur held a working meeting with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Michel Forst, in which they reiterated their commitment to continue strengthening cooperation between the universal human rights system and the Inter American system to better protect human rights defenders through joint actions. In addition, at the working meeting both Rapporteurs expressed concerns over the persistence of killings, threats, harassment and criminalization of human rights defenders in various

¹ Ex Officio Hearing conducted on Friday October 31, 2014. To hear the audio, visit: <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/multimedia/sesiones/153/default.asp>

countries in the region as well as the lack of adoption of effective measures by States for defenders who are at grave risk. They also highlighted the existence of reprisals against defenders who denounce human rights violations before the Inter-American and United Nations systems².

59. In addition, Rapporteur José de Jesús Orozco contributed with an article for the International Service for Human Rights, emphasizing the Rapporteurship's mandate, the challenges and obstacles faced in the inter-American system as well as the progress made. He also contributed with Protection International's Focus Report on the protection mechanisms for defenders, referring to progress made and obstacles faced by the hemisphere's States in the hemisphere to implement a global policy on the protection of human rights defenders.

60. On November 12 and 13, 2014, Staff of the Rapporteurship took part in a meeting of the International Organization of La Francophonie, aimed at sharing information on mandates and exchanging information on available instruments for the protection of human rights defenders in different regional protection systems. The inter-mechanism meeting was attended by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights Defenders, representatives of the African Commission, the Human Rights Commissioner of the Council of Europe, the focal point of OSCE/ODHIR, the European Union, as well as the FIDH and the OMCT.

61. Additionally, on December 3, 2014, a staff of the Rapporteurship participated in a forum of experts on the Right to Food and Human Rights Defenders in Guatemala in the context of the "International Fact-Finding Mission on the right to food and assaults on human rights defenders in Guatemala." The event took place in Guatemala city, Guatemala and involved members of the organizations APRODEV, CIDSE, CIFCA, FIAN, La vía campesina and REI UTRA in which they discussed violations on the right to food in several communities of Guatemala as a consequence of the implementation of extractive industries, as well as the continuation of criminalization of defenders of land and the environment.

62. In this same vein, throughout 2014, the Rapporteurship received information on the situation of defenders in the region. Worrying situations include: i) murders, threats and harassment of human rights defenders; ii) improper use of criminal law to criminalize human rights defense; iii) situations that could affect guarantees for the independence for justice operators; iv) situations of violence in the context of social protests; and v) failure to adopt effective measures of protection for seriously at-risk defenders by States. Accordingly, the IACHR issued twelve press releases on these topics³ and submitted eighteen requests for information to States under Article 18 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure and Article 41 of the Convention with regard to defenders' rights.

6. Rapporteurship on the Rights of Persons Deprived of their Liberty

63. The Rapporteurship is led by Commissioner James L. Cavallaro who carried out a series of activities in Mexico in March 2014 to promote the Report on the Use of Pretrial Detention in the Americas,

² IACHR, [127/14 - UN and IACHR Rapporteurs Call on States to Protect Human Rights Defenders](#), Washington, D.C., October 31, 2014.

³ Press Release No. 3/14 IACHR Urges State of Guatemala to Investigate and Clarify the Circumstances Surrounding the Death of Human Rights Defender and Indigenous Leader, January 20, 2014; Press Release No. 10/14 IACHR Presents Report in Costa Rica and Guatemala on Guarantees for the Independence of Justice Operators in the Americas, February 5, 2014; Press Release No. 41/14 IACHR Urges Guatemala to Ensure Transparency and Meet Minimum Standards in the Appointment of Justice Operators, April 21, 2014; Press Release No. 52/14 IACHR Condemns Murder of Senior Counsel of Trinidad and Tobago, May 9, 2014; Press Release No. 54/14 IACHR Expresses Concern over Attacks on Migrants and Human Rights Defenders by States Agents in Mexico, May 12, 2014; Press Release No. 62/14 IACHR Condemns Killing of Human Rights Defender in Honduras, May 28, 2014; Press Release No. 94/14 IACHR Expresses Concern over Threats against and Arrests of Campesino Leaders in Bajo Aguán, Honduras, August 29, 2014; Press Release No. 101/14 IACHR Condemns Murder of Human Rights Defender in Honduras, September 17, 2014; Press Release No. 103/14 IACHR Expresses Deep Concern over Threats against Human Rights Defenders Working for Peace in Colombia, September 18, 2014; Press Release No. 108/14 IACHR Reiterates its Concern about the Process to Select and Appoint Judges to Guatemala's Appeals Court and Supreme Court, September 27, 2014; Press Release No. 127/14 UN and IACHR Rapporteurs Call on States to Protect Human Rights Defenders, October 31, 2014; Press Release No. 139/14 IACHR Condemns Murder of Justice Operators in Honduras, November 24, 2014.

approved by the Commission on December 30, 2013. The activities included meetings with civil society organizations and other relevant actors and a formal presentation of the report in the Senate of the Republic. These events were jointly organized by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and Open Society/Justice Initiative.

64. The Rapporteur officially launched the report on the use of pretrial detention in the Americas within the framework of the 150th regular session of the Inter-American Commission in Washington, D.C. Participating panelists included IACHR Chairman, Tracy Robinson; the Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty, James Cavallaro; Ambassador Jorge Hevia, Permanent Observer of Spain to the OAS; Nataly Ponce, Coordinator of the Regional Network of Pretrial Justice in Latin America; and Robert Varenik, Program Director of the Open Society/Justice Initiative. The Executive Secretary participated as the moderator of the panel.

65. In this report, the IACHR analyzes the general situation regarding the use of preventive detention in the region, identifies common challenges, and reaffirms the principal international standards in this area, while advancing the development of other standards. Essentially, the IACHR reiterates that preventive detention should be used on an exceptional basis and only for the purpose of protecting the purposes of the process. In addition, a series of recommendations are made to the States intended to serve as guidance helping them to comply with international obligations in this area.

66. In May, the Rapporteur gave a formal presentation of the Report in Lima, Peru. The presentation was sponsored by the Due Process of Law Foundation (DPLF), the Center for the Development of Justice and Citizen Security (CERJUSC), the Legal Defense Institute (IDL), and the Open Society/Justice Initiative. Also participating were Ombudsman Eduardo Vega and Chief Prosecutor for Criminal Matters Pablo Sánchez, as well as representatives from civil society. The Rapporteur for the Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty took the opportunity during his stay in Peru to meet with public authorities and other actors and to carry out other activities proper to his mandate.

67. During his May 26-29, 2014 promotional visit to Peru, the Rapporteur held meetings with officials from Peru's public authorities, particularly senior officials in charge of the prison and justice sector. In addition, on May 27, 28, and 29 he visited the Ancon II Prison, the Chorrillo Women's Prison, and the Lurigancho Prison. At Ancon II, a maximum security facility, he visited the wings for foreigners and nationals convicted for drug trafficking, as well as the wing for women convicted for the crime of terrorism and accused of being part of Shining Path leadership. At the Chorrillos Women's Prison, he visited various wings for women convicted of common crimes, as well as the prison's handicraft workshops and kitchen. He also visited the annex where some foreign women are housed, as well as women convicted of terrorism. Finally, he visited the Lurigancho Prison where men convicted of common crimes are held. At that prison he visited various wings, as well as the prison health center.

68. The Rapporteurship made a working visit to Paraguay on August 25 to 29, 2014. The objective of the visit was to verify the general situation of the Paraguayan prison system, to identify its main shortcomings, and to make recommendations to the State. The authorities and officials of the State with whom the delegation met during its visit were the Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, Federico González; the Minister of Justice, Sheila Abed; the Vice Minister of Justice, Carla Bacigalupo; the Deputy Prosecutor for the Unit Specialized in Human Rights of the Public Ministry, Teresa Aguirre; the Minister of Public Defense, Noyme Yore, and public defenders from various regions of the country; the members of the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture (MNP); the technical team of the Minister in charge of the Bureau of Human Rights of the Supreme Court of Justice, Alicia Pucheta de Correa; the President of the National Commission for the Study of the Reform of the Criminal Justice System and Prison System of the National Congress, Senator Enrique Bacchetta; and member of the Committee on Human Rights of the Senate and Chamber of Deputies. The delegation also met with the Coordinator of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Paraguay and with several civil society organizations devoted to monitoring the situation of persons deprived of liberty, such as the Coordinadora de Derechos Humanos de Paraguay (CODEHUPY), Servicio Paz y Justicia - Paraguay (SERPAJ Py), Instituto de Estudios Comparados en

Ciencias Penales y Sociales (INECIP), Coordinadora por los Derechos de la Infancia y la Adolescencia (CDIA), Asociación Panambi (Asociación de Travestis, Transexuales y Transgéneros), Fundación VENCER, and Articulación por Curuguaty. It also had a chance to meet with family members of persons deprived of liberty.

69. During the visit, the Rapporteurship visited the National Penitentiary of Tacumbú, the Buen Pastor National Women's Penitentiary, the Integral Education Center for Adolescents of Itauguá, and the "Padre Juan Antonio de la Vega" Regional Penitentiary of Emboscada. Finally, promotion activities included the following: On August 25 the Report on the Use of Pretrial Detention in the Americas was presented at an event that included the participation of the Minister of Justice and key representatives of the judicial branch, civil society organizations, and the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture. In addition, on August 27 a training workshop was held for state officials on inter-American standards regarding the rights of persons deprived of liberty, and in particular the guarantees and principles on the use of pretrial detention. The visit concluded with a press conference.

70. On September 5, 2014, the Rapporteur presented the Report on the Use of Pretrial Detention in the Americas in São Paulo, Brazil, at an event organized by Global Justice that was held at the Law School of the Universidade de São Paulo. During his stay in that city, the Rapporteur held a technical meeting on the issues of pretrial detention and conditions of detention with representatives of civil society, social organizations, and social movements.

71. From September 17 to 19, 2014, the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty made a monitoring visit to Mexico that constitutes the first part of a two-part visit, the second part of which will take place in early 2015. In the course of this first visit the Rapporteur met with: the person heading up the Technical Secretariat for the Implementation of the Criminal Justice Reform, María de los Ángeles Fromow; the Attorney General of the Republic, Jesús Murillo Karam; member of the Federal Judicial Council Judge José Guadalupe Tafoya Hernández; the Commissioner of the Deconcentrated Administrative Organ for Prevention and Social Readaptation, Juan Ignacio Hernández Mora; the Minister of Interior, Héctor Serrato Cortés; the Deputy Minister of Interior, Juan José García Ochoa; the Deputy Minister for the Prison System, Antonio Hazael Ruiz; and the Deputy Minister for Human Rights, Lía Limón. In addition there were meetings with the then-President of the Commission on Human Rights, Raúl Plascencia Villanueva; the person heading up the Office of the Third Inspector, which is entrusted with the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture, Guillermo Andrés Aguirre Aguilar; and the President of the Commission on Human Rights of the Federal District, Perla Gómez Gallardo, and the Second Inspector, Monserrat Rizo Rodríguez. The delegation also met with a group of experts on persons deprived of liberty and with several civil society organizations devoted to monitoring the situation of the prison system in Mexico.

72. On September 25, 2014, staff of the Executive Secretariat of the IACHR participated in the seminar "Public defense and monitoring human rights in centers for deprivation of liberty," held in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina. This event was organized by the program EUROSOCIAL II, with the cooperation of the Inter-American Association of Public Defenders (AIDEF) and the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsperson of Argentina. The topics covered in the presentation were focused on (i) the mechanisms for coordination between the IACHR and international and national organizations with a view to increasing the impact and efficacy of the monitoring work in centers for deprivation of liberty; and (ii) the functioning of the IACHR's system of petitions and cases, with special emphasis on the developments in the case-law related to the rights of persons deprived of liberty.

73. Staff from the Executive Secretariat participated in the Regional Forum of the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT) on the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OP-CAT), held in Panama City September 30 to October 2, 2014. This activity included the participation of representatives of the States parties to the OP-CAT (14 to date), of all the national and local mechanisms for prevention of the region, and of other national, regional, and international actors who work on the prevention of torture with the objective of strengthening the role of mechanisms of prevention; increasing cooperation among all the actors around the common challenges facing the region; and promoting progress in the application of the Optional Protocol in Latin America. By participating in this important event, the Inter-American Commission

ratifies its commitment to firmly support the process of ratification of the OP-CAT and the implementation of the national prevention mechanisms established therein as an important measure for preventing torture in the region.

74. From November 5 to 7, 2014, Staff from the Executive Secretariat participated in the Seminar on Pretrial Detention: situation in Latin-American and Bolivia. This seminar was organized by the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner on Human Rights, and took place in La Paz, Santa Cruz and Cochabamba. The Representative of the High Commissioner of Human Rights of the UN, Denis Racicot; the President of the Supreme Court of Justice, Jorge Von Borries; the President of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Department of Santa Cruz, Misael Salguero; the President of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Department of Cochabamba, Nuria Gonzales; and an important number of judges, prosecutors, attorneys and representatives of civil society participated in this event.

75. In the context of an academic visit by a research team from Stanford Law School, the Rapporteur visited the Lurigancho prison outside Lima for several days in November. The Rapporteur also had the opportunity to meet with authorities at the detention center, as well as with National Prisons Director José Luis Pérez Guadalupe.

76. On November 11, 2014 Staff from the Executive Secretariat participated via Skype in the Seminar – Workshop “International Law on Persons Deprived of Liberty and New Models in the Fight against Crime and Drugs, which took place in Cochabamba, Bolivia, from December 11th to 12th, 2014.

77. The Rapporteurship conducted monitoring activities in the context of the in loco visit conducted in Honduras by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights from December 1st to 5th, 2013. In the course of the visit, the Rapporteurship visited the National Penitentiary of San Pedro Sula, the National Penitentiary of Comayagua, the National Penitentiary “Marco Aurelio Soto”, the detention facilities at the 1st and 3rd Battalion of Infantry, the detention facility at “Los Cobras” headquarters, the Center for Juveniles Offenders Renaciendo, and the New Penitentiary of San Pedro Sula, currently under construction; attended to meeting with high level authorities in charge of the penitentiary administration and received relevant information from other stakeholder. The preliminary observations of the Rapporteurship are included in the annex of the [Press Release No. 146/14 – IACHR Wraps Up Onsite Visit to Honduras](#).

7. Rapporteurship on the Rights of Persons of African Descent and against Racial Discrimination

78. Commissioner Rose Marie Antoine is in charge of the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Afro-Descendants and against Racial Discrimination.

79. During this year, a major area of focus has been completing some of the groundwork for the upcoming thematic report on the intersection of race and the criminal justice system in the USA.

80. In this regard, during the 150th session, the Rapporteurship participated in a hearing on implications of “Stand Your Ground” (“SYG”) laws in the USA, which extend immunity to prosecution or civil suits to persons who use deadly force in self-defense beyond the home, without imposing a duty to retreat. According to information received these laws negatively and disproportionately affect African-Americans, and other racial and ethnic minorities.

81. During the 150th session, the Rapporteurship had the opportunity to meet a delegation from Colombia headed by Afro-Colombian Congressman Heriberto Arrechea. The Rapporteurship received information that in March 2014, two non-Afro-Colombians were elected to two seats reserved for Afro-Colombians in the lower Chamber of the Colombian legislature. The Rapporteur subsequently discussed this matter in a meeting with the Ambassador of Colombia to the OAS, H.E. Andres Gonzalez Diaz. During the 153rd session, the Rapporteur had a further meeting with another delegation of Afro-Colombians to receive updated information on the situation. The matter continues to be monitored closely by the Rapporteurship.

82. On May 14, 2014, the Rapporteurship hosted the third lecture in its series – Transforming the Invisible into the Visible. The event took place at the Salon Guerrero (OAS Main Building). The speaker was Professor Tanya Hernandez of Fordham University Law School. The title of Prof. Hernandez’s lecture was Racial Innocence in the Americas: a U.S. - Latin American Comparison. The Rapporteur chaired the event, while Ambassador Bocchit Edmond, Interim Permanent Representative of Haiti to the OAS offered the opening remarks. Closing remarks were given by Assistant Executive Secretary of the IACHR, Elizabeth Abi-Mershed.

83. The Rapporteurship continued to hold a number of important hearings and meetings during 2014, in pursuance of the Report on criminal justice and race, in order to gather relevant information.

84. During the 151st regular period of sessions, the Rapporteur met with the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law (LCCRUL) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). With respect to the former, on July 21, 2014, the Rapporteur met with a delegation headed by Barbara Arnwine (President). With respect to the latter, the Rapporteur met with Dr. Niaz Kasravi, Director of NAACP’s Criminal Justice Department on July 15, 2014. Arising out of these meetings, both organizations have committed to collaborating with the Rapporteurship on the thematic report. These organizations have also committed to increasing its engagement with the IACHR more generally, in terms of some of its protection mechanisms, such as the petition system. Other individuals and organizations (such as the US Human Rights Network) have also signaled a willingness to contribute to the proposed thematic report. Generally, the Rapporteurship is in the process of identifying the requisite resources for the report, and has so far procured a commitment from the Cyrus R. Vance Center for International Justice and the Inter-American Affairs Committee (Vance Center) to provide some research resources (pro bono) mainly by way of questionnaires.

85. In August 2014, the Rapporteurship issued a press release regarding the deaths of two unarmed African-American men, Eric Garner and Michael Brown over separate incidents that led to the deaths of unarmed African-Americans Eric Garner and Michael Brown, at the hands of the police in New York City, New York, and Ferguson, Missouri, respectively.

86. During the 153rd session, an *ex proprio motu* hearing was convened to receive information on Racism in the United States justice system. Participating in the hearing were relevant civil society actors (such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), NAACP and the American Bar Association (ABA), as well the government of the United States. During the hearing, information was received on various themes, including racial profiling, disproportionate incarceration of African-Americans, felony disenfranchisement (loss of right to vote as a result of felony conviction), and abuses of minorities by police officers, resulting in injury or death.

87. In conjunction with the African Canadian Legal Clinic (ACLC) and Osgoode Hall Law School, the Rapporteurship organized a forum, on “The Experiences of African Descendants in Canada”. This forum took place in Toronto, Canada, on September 6, 2014. It was the second in a Forum initiated in 2013 to interrogate the situation of human rights of persons of African descent in Canada, in particular relating to equality, non-discrimination and economic, social and cultural rights. This was as part of the general thrust of the Rapporteurship to give focus to the issue of the situation of persons of African descent in North America and the enduring theme of the invisibility of these rights. The Rapporteur attended and addressed the forum, and used the opportunity to promote the IACHR as a mechanism for addressing issues of systemic racial discrimination suffered by Afro-Canadians. The forum featured a number of speakers and presenters on a range of topics involving the human rights of afro-descendants in Canada, including unemployment and housing, migrant workers, education, child welfare, the experiences of the Somali community, health, policing and criminal justice, and topics of the national agenda.

88. On September 18, 2014, the Rapporteur attended the First Meeting of the Working Groups of the XVIII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) to participate in a workshop themed

Social Dialogue For Formalization. More specifically, the Rapporteur participated on a panel addressing the theme of Equity, Eradication of Discrimination and Social Inequality. This theme called for a discussion (inter alia) on initiatives taken by Ministries of Labor in the region to prevent and eliminate all forms of elimination, harassment in the workplace, violence and wage gaps, paying special attention to the indigenous and Afro-descendants and to all groups in situations of vulnerability.

89. On November 5, 2014, the Rapporteur had a working meeting with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, Mutuma Ruteere, and his team with a view to continuing collaboration between the IACHR and the UN on the issue of rights of persons of African Descent and against discrimination and in particular, to promote collaborative activities during the International Decade for People of African Descent.

90. Following the onsite visit of the IACHR to Colombia in December 2012, the Rapporteurship has been interested in following up with a capacity-building seminar in Colombia for the benefit of Afro-Colombian lawyers and human rights defenders. The idea is a two-day seminar that would introduce/train participants in key elements of the Inter American Human Rights System, with a view to promoting greater use of it by Afro-Colombians. A preliminary concept paper has already been done, and initial contacts are now being made with Afro-descendant organizations/communities. The training seminar was originally programmed for December 2014, but, for logistical reasons, has now been put off (tentatively) until March/April 2015.

91. In November 2013, the Rapporteurship, in conjunction with the Labour Law and Development Research Laboratory, Faculty of Law at McGill University, held a Special Forum on Race, Discrimination and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in North America. The forum took place at McGill University, Montreal, Canada. The forum featured a number of speakers and presenters on a range of topics including race and the criminal justice system, discrimination against indigenous peoples in North America, race and discrimination in matters of health, housing and education, race discrimination in the workplace, and race and religious accommodation in the workplace. A compendium of all of the presentations has now been completed and uploaded to the IACHR website as an online publication (December 2014).

92. The Rapporteurship will be collaborating with Rapporteurship on the Rights of Child in gathering data for an upcoming thematic report on juveniles incarcerated in the US criminal justice system. The Rapporteurship will be particularly focused on the extent to which structural racism plays a role in influencing or determining incarceration rates for juveniles of colour.

93. The Rapporteurship is also collaborating with the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples with regard to an upcoming regional report focused on the impact of development, investment projects, and extractive concessions that concern natural resources on the human rights of indigenous peoples and afro-descendent communities.

8. Rapporteurship on the Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Persons

94. Commissioner and President, Tracy Robinson, is in charge of the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Persons.

95. During 2014, the Rapporteurship continued carrying out its duties along its four lines of work. In this regard, it continued drafting a regional report on the situation of violence and the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) persons, to be published in 2015; it processed several petitions and cases; it provided technical advice to OAS Member States; and it monitored the human rights situation of LGBTI persons in the region and gave visibility to their human rights violations. The following is a summary of the activities and tasks undertaken by the IACHR in the promotion and protection of the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex persons, which were made possible thanks to the support received in 2014 from the Government of the United States, The Netherlands and Arcus Foundation.

96. On January 29, 2014, the then- Unit on the Rights of LGBTI Persons met with a group of LGBTI leaders and activists at the Commission's headquarters. The LGBTI activists and defenders were members of the "International Visitor Leadership Program" organized by the US State Department.

97. On February 1, 2014, the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex persons took office under the leadership of Commissioner Tracy Robinson. The Rapporteurship substitutes the LGBTI Unit, which had been created in November 2011.⁴ On February 27, 2014, the IACHR issued a press release expressing concern over violence against defenders of LGBTI persons in various countries in the region.⁵

98. On March 12, 2014, the Rapporteur Tracy Robinson participated as a speaker at an event organized by the World Bank titled "The Economic Cost of Homophobia: How LGBT Exclusion Impacts Development."⁶

99. On April 22, 2014, the Rapporteurship organized a private roundtable discussion on gender and sexuality between ambassadors to the OAS and Professor Rhoda Reddock, who is Vice-Rector of the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Trinidad (St. Augustine Campus), and a gender expert who was also the seventh woman to receive the CARICOM Triennial Award for Women. Representatives from 18 OAS Member States participated in the event. The program also featured a video put together by the Rapporteurship using clips from hearings held on the rights of LGBTI persons.

100. To commemorate the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO-T), on May 17, 2014 the IACHR issued a press release jointly with United Nations experts, namely Frank La Rue, Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression; Maina Kiai, Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association; Anand Grover, Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; and Margaret Sekaggya, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders. Also subscribing to the joint statement were Reine Alapini-Gansou, member of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) and its Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders in Africa, and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, Dunja Mijatovic.⁷

101. On May 20, 2014, the IACHR issued a press release welcoming developments in the OAS member states to promote and protect the rights of LGBTI persons, highlighting government measures and reforms adopted in several areas.⁸

102. In June 2014, the Rapporteur and the attorney who works with the Rapporteurship attended the 44th OAS General Assembly held in Paraguay, in the context of which they held various meetings with civil society organizations to discuss subjects of interest to the Rapporteurship. On June 1, 2014, the Rapporteurship gave a presentation on the work of the Rapporteurship and on the general rights situation of

⁴ IACHR, Press Release No. 15/14, "IACHR Rapporteurship on the Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex (LGBTI) persons becomes fully operational and first Rapporteur duly designated", February 19, 2014, available at: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2014/015.asp.

⁵ IACHR, Press Release No. 23/14, "IACHR Expresses Concern about Attacks against LGBTI Persons and other Forms of Violence and Restrictions against LGBTI Organizations in the Americas", February 27, 2014, available at: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2014/023.asp.

⁶ World Bank, "The Economic Cost of Homophobia," March 2014, available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/events/2014/02/26/the-economic-cost-of-homophobia-how-lgbt-exclusion-impacts-development>.

⁷ IACHR, Press Release No. 57/14, "May, 17 - International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO-T)", May 15, 2014, available at: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2014/057.asp.

⁸ IACHR, Press Release No. 60/14, "The IACHR Welcomes Recent Developments in OAS Member States to Protect and Promote the Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Persons (LGBTI)", May 20, 2014, available at: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2014/060.asp.

LGBTI persons in the region at a meeting held in Paraguay organized by the Coalition of LGBTTTI Organizations. On June 3, 2014, also in Paraguay, the Rapporteur gave a presentation within the context of the panel “Dialogue on the Human Rights of LGBTI Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean.” The Rapporteur on the Rights of the Child, Commissioner Rosa María Ortiz, and local and international activists also took part in this panel.

103. On June 11, 2014, at IACHR headquarters, the Rapporteurship met with a group of LGBTI leaders and activists from Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Belize, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, participants in the “International Visitor Leadership Program”, organized by the U.S. Department of State.

104. On July 23, 2014, the organization Global Rights hosted a forum entitled “The work of the IACHR in advancing the Rights of LGBTI people in the Americas,” in which the Rapporteur was the keynote speaker.

105. On August 13 and 14, 2014, the Rapporteurship participated in a training on the inter-American human rights system entitled “Increasing Caribbean Advocacy through UPR/OAS,” organized by United and Strong and CariFLAGS, and aimed at activists and defenders of the human rights of LGBT persons from CARICOM countries.

106. On August 18, 2014, the Rapporteur participated in the Presentation of the Protocol of Action for those who impart Justice in Cases that Involve Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity, of the Supreme Court of Mexico, along with the President of the Mexican Supreme Court, Chief Justice Juan N. Silva Meza.⁹ During the previous months, the Rapporteurship had provided technical advice to the SCJN in the drafting of this protocol.

107. The Rapporteurship participated in the closing panel of a regional conference held in Lima from September 4 to 6, 2014, on political participation of LGBT persons, organized by PROMSEX, *Corporación Caribe Afirmativo*, and the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, entitled the “First Meeting of LGBTI Political Leadership of Latin America and the Caribbean.”

108. Chair Tracy Robinson was in Colombia, where she visited the cities of Cali, Bogotá, and Cartagena, from September 29 to October 3, 2014 in her capacity as Rapporteur on the Rights of Women and Rapporteur on the Rights of LGBTI persons.¹⁰ In the context of this visit the IACHR Chair held several meetings with activists and defenders on the rights of LGBT¹¹ persons throughout Colombia. On Tuesday, September 30, the President and the attorney who works in the Rapporteurship met with LGBT organizations and activists in Bogotá, and on October 2 and 3 held meetings with LGBT activists and defenders in Cartagena. In all, the delegation met with more than 60 LGBT persons, defenders, and activists from the departments of Amazonas, Antioquia, Atlántico, Bolívar, Cauca, Cesar, Córdoba, La Guajira, Magdalena, Nariño, Putumayo, Quindío, Risaralda, Sucre, and Valle del Cauca, and from the city of Bogotá. In addition, on October 2, 2014, Tracy Robinson participated in a public panel discussion in Cartagena on the human rights of LGBTI persons along with state representatives from the Victims Unit and from the National Center for Historical Memory. Finally, the attorney who supports the Rapporteurship offered a half-day course on the inter-American human rights system in Cartagena on October 4, 2014.

109. On October 27, 2014, the Rapporteur participated in a panel organized by the O’Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law, Georgetown University Law Center, and Women’s Link

⁹ See IACHR, Press Release No. 95/14, “IACHR Congratulates Mexican Supreme Court for Adoption of Protocol Involving Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity,” August 29, 2014, available at: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2014/095.asp.

¹⁰ IACHR, Press Release “IACHR Chair Concludes Visit to Colombia” October 10, 2014, available at http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2014/118.asp.

¹¹ During the visit the delegation did not receive specific information on the human rights of intersex persons.

Worldwide. The panel centered on the launching of the publication “Conscientious Objection and Abortion: A Global Perspective on the Colombian Experience”. The Rapporteur’s presentation made reference to the impact of this debate on the recognition of the rights of LGBTI persons.

110. On November 10, 2014, the Rapporteurship participated remotely, from the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C., in a discussion on the rights of LGBT persons, which was convened by the organization *Fundación Mujeres en Igualdad* (Women in Equality Foundation) of Argentina.

111. On November 12, 2014, the IACHR took part, through its Rapporteurship, in the opening of an art exhibit entitled “What We Have Within,” in association with the OAS Art Museum of the Americas (AMA).

112. On November 12, 13, and 14, 2014, the Rapporteurship attended a donor conference on LGBT issues, organized by the US Department of State and USAID. In the context of that conference, the attorney took part on November 14 in a high-level panel discussion on multilateral agencies and efforts to protect the rights of LGBT persons worldwide.

113. On November 14, the Rapporteurship gave the closing presentation at the *Primeiro Seminário Internacional de Diversidade Sexual: Direitos e Cidadania* (first international seminar on sexual diversity, rights, and citizenship), held in the State of Paraíba, Brazil. Also on that date, the Rapporteurship took part in a seminar on the inter-American human rights system aimed at journalists from the Americas.

114. On the occasion of the Transgender Day of Remembrance, marked each year on November 20 by civil society organizations and United Nations agencies, the IACHR issued a statement of concern over the situation of trans persons’ human rights in the Americas.¹²

115. On December 10, 2014, the Rapporteurship gave a presentation at a regional meeting convened by the Pan American Health Organization to address the causes of unequal access to, and use of, health services by LGBT persons.

116. On December 17, 2014, the IACHR launched a multi-day campaign on various social media concerning violence against LGBTI persons, including graphics and three videos, with a compilation of clips from IACHR hearings on the human rights situation of LGBTI persons¹³. The campaign began with a press release¹⁴ and an annex¹⁵ describing the top findings of the Registry of Violence against LGBT persons¹⁶. The Registry of Violence against LGBT persons is the result of daily monitoring of various sources on acts of violence against LGBT persons between January 2013 and March 2014. According to reports received by the IACHR, during this fifteen-month period, at least 594 persons who either were, or were perceived as, LGBT were murdered and at least 176 experienced serious non-lethal attacks, allegedly related to their sexual orientation or their gender identity or expression, in 25 OAS member States.

¹² IACHR, Press Release No. 138/14, “On Transgender Day of Remembrance, the IACHR Expresses Concern about the Situation of Trans Persons in the Americas,” November 21, 2014, available at: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2014/138.asp.

¹³ These videos (with Spanish, English and Portuguese subtitles) are available at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/ComisionIDH>.

¹⁴ IACHR, Press Release No. 153/14, “IACHR Expresses Concern over Pervasiveness of Violence against LGBTI Persons and Lack of Data Collection by OAS Member States,” December 17, 2014, available at: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2014/153.asp.

¹⁵ IACHR, Annex/Press Release No. 153A, “An Overview of Violence against LGBTI Persons in the Americas: A Registry Documenting Acts of Violence between January 1, 2013, and March 31, 2014,” December 17, 2014, available in PDF format: <http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/lgtbi/docs/Annex-Registry-Violence-LGBTI.pdf>.

¹⁶ IACHR, Registry of Violence, of murders and other acts of severe violence against LGBT persons (January 2013 to March 2014), available (in Spanish only) at: <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/lgtbi/docs/Registro-Violencia-LGBTI.xlsx>.

117. Finally, during this year, the IACHR has sent four letters requesting information from four states concerning the human rights situation of LGBTI persons, pursuant to the powers conferred in Article 41 of the American Convention. On July 8, 2014, the IACHR requested information from Paraguay on the status of the investigation into the case of a young lesbian woman who was found killed in circumstances that have not been clarified and in an alleged context of family violence by her family related to her sexual orientation. On July 9, 2014, the IACHR requested information on the situation of a woman defender of the rights of LGBT persons who was being threatened in Piauí, Brazil. On September 24, 2014, the IACHR requested information from the State of Colombia about alleged situations of police abuse against trans women in the cities of Cali, Cartagena, and Barranquilla. On September 26, 2014, the IACHR requested information from the State of Peru on the exclusion of LGBT persons from the National Human Rights Plan (2014-2016).

9. Unit on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

118. The Unit on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ESCR) is led by Commissioner Paulo Vannuchi.

119. In recent decades, the Commission has been working on the topic of economic, social and cultural rights in a cross-cutting way through its various mechanisms. In this context, during the process of strengthening the Inter-American System, both OAS Member States and other actors of the system, have expressed their interest in seeing greater attention being placed on the issue of ESCR. As a result of this process, the Commission created specialized institutional units. Indeed, during the 146th Regular Session, held from October 29 to November 16, 2012, the Commission, in line with its commitment to strengthening its work on economic, social and cultural rights, and in response to suggestions from States and civil society, decided to create a unit on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR Unit). Subsequently, on April 3, 2014 the Commission decided to initiate a process for the establishment of a Special Rapporteur on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Special Rapporteurship on ESCR). To this end, the Commission opened a special fund to raise financial resources to enable the creation of this Special Rapporteurship, inviting OAS Member States to make voluntary contributions to achieve this objective.

120. The ESCR unit has continued to focus its attention on respect for and guarantees on economic, social, and cultural rights in the region through its various mechanisms, particularly with respect to historically discriminated groups focusing its efforts on the fight against extreme poverty and hunger by ensuring the right to adequate food. It has also continued to move ahead with the process of regional consultations on ESCR in various countries in the region. The purpose of these consultations is to generate inputs that allow the ESCR Unit to perform a regional diagnosis on priority substantive aspects of ESCR. It is also expected that these inputs may be used by the future Special Rapporteurship to design a strategic work plan.

121. It is important to note that throughout the 153 regular period of sessions held in October 2014, the ESCR Unit adopted a Work Plan for the period of between 1 November 2014 and 31 December 2015. Key areas in the plan include the search for a Special Rapporteur for the ESCR Unit, as well as continuation of regional consultations on ESCR and activities related to the system of petitions and individual cases. The plan also includes the production of a report on poverty and human rights as well as mainstreaming, training, and promotion on ESCR. It should be emphasized that the ESCR Unit included the subject of business and human rights in its work plan for the first time. Also, the plan includes building bridges and avenues for collaboration with international organizations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB).

122. In May 2013, an initial Regional Consultation was held in Argentina with experts, civil society, social movements and trade union representatives. In this regard, it should be noted that the ESCR Unit has been striving to achieve greater involvement and participation of trade unions in the IACHR's work. A second ESCR Consultation was held in April 2014 in Colombia, focusing on civil society and trade unions, particularly in the Andean region. A third ESCR Consultation was held in Mexico on August 16, 2014, with broad participation on the part of Mexican civil society, trade unions and social movements, to continue gathering inputs for the IACHR regarding priority thematic areas related to the situation of economic, social, and cultural rights. On December 9, 2014, a fourth ESCR Consultation was held in Brasilia, Brazil for the same purpose and in view of the future creation of a Special Rapporteurship for ESCR. Participants included a large number of representatives from Brazilian civil society and social movements, as well as government and trade union representatives. That consultation was held in collaboration with the Brazilian government. These consultations offer the IACHR a valuable opportunity for discussing, addressing, and compiling inputs on the ESCR situation in the region. The IACHR will continue to carry out this process of consultations and it is expected that one consultation will be held in North America and another in the Caribbean, in addition to a consultation aimed at OAS Members States.

123. In addition, the ESCR unit organized the "Second Inter-American Conference on Human Rights and Best Practices in Economic, Social and Cultural Rights," which was held on June 1, 2014, in Asuncion, Paraguay in the context of the 44th Regular Session of the OAS General Assembly. The conference, in which the Secretary General of the Organization of American States (OAS), Jose Miguel Insulza, participated provided an opportunity for dialogue regarding social, economic, and cultural rights, coordinated by Commissioner Paulo Vannuchi, between the IACHR and representatives from civil society, social movements, and the States in attendance. The dialogue focused on best practices implemented by the OAS Member States in the area of ESCR and various perspectives regarding public policies directed at ensuring the gradual achievement of social inclusion of groups historically subjected to discrimination.

124. On the same occasion and exercising its advisory functions, the IACHR, in conjunction with the working group for analysis of the national reports indicated in the Protocol of San Salvador (to which the IACHR is a party), also provided an opportunity for training and dialogue among the States and civil society regarding the follow-up mechanism of the protocol. The group relied on the participation of four of the experts from the working group, enabling civil society and States to obtain detailed knowledge of the mechanism established under Article 19 of the Protocol of San Salvador, in view of the closeness of the deadlines for submission of the reports corresponding to the first group of rights (right to health, education, and social security) in June 2014 and the second group of rights (labor and trade union rights, right to food, environment, and cultural rights) in June 2016.

125. The aforementioned Inter-American Conference had a significant impact due to the dialogue generated on the subject among the State representatives and representatives of at least 30 civil society organizations from different countries in the region in attendance.

126. Regarding hearings held during 2014, a series of hearings on the ESCR situation in the region were held during the 150th regular session of the IACHR in March 2014. These hearings included: Human Rights Situation of Workers in the Meatpacking and Poultry Industry in the United States; Human Rights and Evictions in Paraguay; Maternal Health and Reports of Obstetric Violence in Mexico; Human Rights Situation of Haitian Migrant Workers and their Families in the Dominican Republic; and Human Rights Situation and Labor Conflicts in Venezuela. During this period, emerging themes were also addressed, such as the impact of extractive industries on human rights, particularly in relation to certain groups such as Afro-descendants, indigenous peoples, and peasants. In addition, a series of thematic hearings on ESCR were held during the 153rd regular session of the IACHR, including: the Right to Food and Seed Regulation in the Americas; Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights of Women in Honduras; and Reports of Destruction of the Biocultural Heritage Due to the Construction of Mega Projects of Development in Mexico. It should be noted that during the period of sessions, the IACHR also convened a thematic hearing on the "Situation of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights in the Americas," with the participation of a series of civil society organizations in the Americas. The purpose of the hearing was to provide input regarding the ESCR situation in the region.

127. It should be noted that in the context of holding the XXV RAADDHH (Meeting of High Level Human Rights Authorities of Mercosur), on November 21, 2014 Commissioner Vannuchi gave a presentation on the ESCR Unit of the IACHR, emphasizing the priority objective of establishing a Special Rapporteurship on ESCR within the IACHR. In addition, on that occasion, Commissioner Vannuchi participated in the thematic seminar on “Foreign Debt and Human Rights,” which was organized by the RAADDHH and took place on Wednesday, November 19, 2014.

128. At the international level, it should be noted that the ESCR Unit presented its work at the Third Forum on Business and Human Rights held December 1-3, 2014 in Geneva, under the direction of the United Nations Working Group on Business and Human Rights. About 2,000 representatives from States, businesses, civil society, and international organizations met to discuss how to address the impacts of business on human rights.

129. At the regional level, the ESCR unit also participated in the first consultation on the National Action Plan of the United States on Business and Human Rights that took place on December 15 in New York City.

B. Thematic and country reports

130. During 2014, the Inter-American Commission approved the following reports:

- Right to the Truth in the Americas
- Considerations related to the ratification of the American Convention and other inter-American human rights treaties
- Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in British Columbia, Canada
- Report of the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression

C. Promotional activities

131. From January 23 to 25, the Executive Secretary participated in a conference held at Wilton Park, England, with the theme of cooperation and coordination between regional and international human rights mechanisms.

132. On February 17, the Executive Secretary attended the Seminar: Leadership for Change, organized by the CIVITAS Association and Porticus Latin America, in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

133. In March, the Assistant Executive Secretary gave a lecture on the work of the Commission for US Government representatives in the Foreign Service Institute of the US State Department.

134. On March 23, the Executive Secretary participated as a commentator during the presentation of the report titled “Take Back the Streets: Policing Social Protest and Use of Force in the Americas,” which took place in Washington, D.C. and was organized by the International Network of Civil Liberties Organizations (INCLC).

135. In addition, on April 24, he was a speaker at the “Third Plenary Session on Human Economic and Social Rights” at the 11th Hemispheric Forum with Civil Society and Social Actors: “Development with Social Inclusion,” which was organized by the Department of International Affairs of the OAS Secretariat for External Relations, with support from the governments of Canada, Chile, and the United States as well as the Summits of the Americas Secretariat.

136. From May 3 to May 8, the Executive Secretary traveled to the Republic of Argentina where he participated as a presenter on the subject of “Legislation in the Area of Policies on the Use of Force in the Region” during the “Regional Meeting of Experts on Security and the Use of Force” organized by the Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS).

137. In addition, on June 12 he was part of the discussion panel on “The Current Debate on the Strengthening of the Inter-American System” at the American University Washington College of Law.

138. On June 24 the Executive Secretary participated as a speaker on the panel of experts on Challenges Implementing and Evaluating the National Program for Equality and Non-Discrimination (2014-2018), with the topic “Experiences in carrying out Human Rights Programs in Latin America,” which was held in Mexico and was organized by the National Council to Prevent Discrimination (CONAPRED).

139. In July 2014, several specialists from the Executive Secretariat spoke at the Fourth Course on the Inter-American Human Rights Protection System, which was held at the IACHR’s headquarters and aimed at government officials.

140. On August 6 the Executive Secretary was in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where he participated as a presenter at the ARPEL Workshop: Corporations and Human Rights. That same day he participated virtually as a speaker at the Interdisciplinary Seminar on Human Rights – Rosario 2014,” held in Argentina, with a presentation on “Challenges of the Inter-American Human Rights System,” an event organized by the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (IIDH).

141. In August, several specialists from the IACHR’s Executive Secretariat spoke at the Second Dr. Héctor Fix Zamudio Training Course in the Human Rights System, which was organized by the UNAM’s Institute for Legal Research in Mexico City, Mexico, during the Commission’s 152nd special session.

142. On August 28, 2014, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights published the report “Truth, Justice, and Reparation: Fourth Report on the Human Rights Situation in Colombia.” That same day, Commissioner José de Jesús Orozco presented the report in Bogotá, Colombia.

143. On September 5 and 6, along with the Instituto de Defensa Legal and the Law School and Human Rights Center at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador, a specialist from the Executive Secretariat participated in a roundtable discussion on “the importance of the international systems for the protection of human rights in Ecuador” and in a workshop on “journalism and human rights, standards of the inter-American system.”

144. On September 11, the High-level Meeting: Emerging Challenges to Social Protection was held in Baltimore, Maryland, organized by the Inter-American Conference on Social Security in collaboration with the US Administration, in which the Executive Secretary participated as a speaker on the topic of “Trends, challenges, and policy responses in pensions and employment.”

145. The Executive Secretary attended the workshop Strengthening the strategy of the trade union movement of the Americas in the use of the mechanisms of the inter-American human rights system, in which I participated as a speaker on the topic “Workings of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights,” held in San José, Costa Rica, September 19, and organized by the American Regional Organization, International Trade Union Confederation.

146. On September 25 and 26, 2014, an officer from the Executive Secretariat attended the seminar “Public Defense and Monitoring Human Rights at Detention Centers,” held in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The seminar was sponsored by the EUROsociAL Programme for Social Cohesion in Latin America and was organized for members of the Inter-American Association of Public Defense Offices (AIDEF).

147. On September 26, 2014, Commissioner Rose-Marie Belle Antoine participated in the first meeting held between the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the United Nations and the regional human rights mechanisms, which was held in Geneva, Switzerland. The purpose of that meeting was to have an exchange of information among the representatives of the respective mechanisms on the following points: (a) procedural and substantive developments with respect to the promotion and protection of human rights; (b) involvement of the organizations that work on this issue in the activities of the respective mechanisms; (c) substantive issues related to the topic; (d) situation of groups in a particular situation of vulnerability, such as women and children with disabilities, and (e) steps to take in advancing the promotion and protection of the rights of persons living with disabilities.

148. On September 29 the Executive Secretary travelled to Mexico to participate as a speaker in the presentation and opening session of the Forum on Human Mobility and Equal Treatment in Mexico City: Challenges, Experiences, and Good Practices, to speak about the report “Human Rights of Migrants and Other Persons in the Context of Human Mobility in Mexico – 2013,” an event organized by the Council to Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination in Mexico City (COPRED).

149. From October 1 to 3, 2014, personnel from the Executive Secretariat of the IACHR attended the Pro Bono & Access to Justice, Strategic Litigation, and Public-interest Legal Clinics International Congress. Held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, the Congress was organized by the Pro Bono Foundation of the Dominican Republic and the Dominican Constitutional Law Institute, with support from the Cyrus R. Vance Center for International Justice and the Pro Bono Chile Foundation. Specifically, the IACHR’s participation was on the topic “Human Rights and Their Enforceability,” and it focused on analyzing the impact that the IACHR has had on the exercise and enjoyment of the human rights of persons with disabilities through its different mechanisms.

150. On October 5, 2014, a member of the Executive Secretariat’s staff attended the “First Regional On-line Training Course on Legal Capacity and Access to Justice,” which was organized by the Technical Secretariat of the Committee to Follow-up on the Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities. This training event was aimed at public officials and civil society organizations.

151. In conjunction with the George Washington University Law School (GWU), the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) conducted the second annual CARICOM Training Programme in the Inter-American Human Rights System. The training programme took place on October 20-21, 2014.

152. On October 29, 2014, an officer from the Executive Secretariat attended a dialogue on the promotion and protection of the freedoms of association and peaceful assembly in the Americas organized by the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law.

153. On December 3 and 4, an officer of the Executive Secretariat visited Lima, Peru, to attend the First Meeting on the Legal Capacity of People with Disabilities. That event was organized by the National Council for the Integration of People with Disabilities (CONADIS). This training event was aimed at public officials and civil society organizations.