



Committee of Experts expresses concern for women and girls affected by the Hurricane in the Bahamas

The Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the [Belém do Pará Convention \(MESECVI\)](#) expresses its concern for the girls and women victims of Hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas, who could suffer additional consequences and risks when exposed to an emergency situation. As confirmed by various media outlets in the region, the natural disaster has left more than 60,000 people affected waiting for humanitarian aid.

The [National Weather Service](#) of the United States has listed this disaster as the second most powerful cyclone recorded in the Atlantic basin. In this context, it is important to remember that natural disasters affect women and girls differently and particularly in relation to men, since they could suffer other forms of harm, such as sexual violence or health emergencies, particularly reproductive health in the case of pregnant women. In this sense, gender inequalities increase the vulnerability of women and girls, limiting their access to the information and resources necessary to reduce the risks arising from this type of disaster.

Article 9 of the Belém do Pará Convention, an instrument signed and ratified by the Bahamas, states that the States Party must take special account of the situation of vulnerability to violence that women may suffer, in this case, affected by a natural disaster. Similarly, it establishes that in case of women who are subjected to violence, States will take special consideration of women who may be pregnant, disabled, minor or older, in an unfavorable socioeconomic situation, affected by armed conflicts or deprived of liberty.

For all the above, this Committee of Experts urges the Government of the Bahamas to take all necessary measures to respond to this emergency, taking into account the gender-specific characteristics and the special vulnerabilities that women and girls may be suffering. Similarly, the Government is urged to promote the participation and leadership of women in the disaster management process and in the subsequent reconstruction of the damage.

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