

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

A. Activities of the Rapporteurs Offices¹

1. Office of the Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

1. In 1990, the Office of the Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was created, with the aim of focusing attention on those indigenous peoples of the Americas who were especially exposed to human rights violations due to their situation of vulnerability, and to strengthen, promote, and systematize the work of the Inter-American Commission itself in that area. Commissioner Dinah Shelton has served as Rapporteur since the beginning of 2010.

2. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights conducted a working visit to the Republic of Suriname from January 23 to 25, 2013, to examine the situation of the rights of women and indigenous peoples in that country. The delegation was composed of Commissioner Dinah Shelton, Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; Commissioner Tracy Robinson, First Vice-President of the Commission and Rapporteur on the Rights of Women; and staff of the Executive Secretariat. During the visit, the delegation held meetings with the highest authorities of the Suriname State and representatives of civil society organizations that work to protect the rights of indigenous peoples. Several members of the delegation also traveled to the district of Brokopondo and the village of Brownsweg to visit a Maroon community composed of 8,000 people.

3. On April 8 and 9 the coordinator of the Rapporteurship took part in a meeting organized by the Council of Aboriginal Organizations of Jujuy (COAJ), in cooperation with Autochthonous Women of Quebec, as part of the project "Ethnic and gender discrimination in the Americas: the case of indigenous women." It was attended by representatives of the COAJ, Lawyers for Justice and Human Rights (AJDH), Service of the Mixe Nation (SER), the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC), Autochthonous Women of Quebec, and others. On April 7 the coordinator taught a class on the inter-American system in Jujuy for indigenous leaders and indigenous university students.

4. On May 6, 2013, there was a workshop in Washington DC of experts on Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact, as part of the preparation of the thematic report on their situation. There were four experts on the subject from Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, and Paraguay, and it was moderated by Rapporteur Shelton.

5. Between May 9 and 13 an attorney of the Rapporteurship took part in the visit to Argentina to follow up on recommendations made by the IACHR in its report on the merits of the case of the Indigenous Communities Members of the Lhaka Honhat (Our Land) Association, approved on January 26, 2012. During the visit, the delegation traveled to Salta to meet with local officials; to the city of Santa Victoria del Este, where it met with leaders of the Lhaka Honhat Association and chiefs of the indigenous communities; and finally, to Buenos Aires to meet with national government officials. The

¹ The activities of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression are included in volume II of this annual report.

parties used the visit as an opportunity for dialogue that had not yet taken place, and to encourage compliance by the Argentine State with the recommendations.

6. On May 22 there was an informal dialogue of Rapporteur Dinah Shelton and indigenous women from several countries of the Hemisphere as part of the preparation of a regional thematic report on the situation of indigenous women in the Americas. The Rapporteur had an opportunity to share information with indigenous women from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Uruguay.

7. In August 6-9, 2013, the Commission conducted a working visit to Canada to examine the disappearance and murder of indigenous women in British Columbia, Canada. The delegation was headed by Commissioner Dinah Shelton, Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and by Commissioner Tracy Robinson, First Vice President and Rapporteur on the Rights of Women. The visit began in Ottawa and continued on to British Columbia, specifically Vancouver and Prince George. During the visit, the delegation received information and statements from the relatives of disappeared and murdered indigenous women and girls. In Ottawa, the delegation met with federal government authorities and with civil society representatives and organizations, including indigenous organizations and leaders. In British Columbia, the delegation met with provincial government authorities, representatives from the legislature, and civil society representatives and organizations, including indigenous organizations and leaders.

8. On August 19 and 20, 2013, the Office of the Rapporteur organized a “Meeting of Indigenous Women Experts from Central America and Mexico” in Guatemala City. The event, attended by 15 indigenous women from Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and Mexico, was part of the consultation and information-gathering process that the IACHR is carrying out to prepare a regional report on the situation of indigenous women in the Americas. The purpose of the report is to analyze the multiple forms of discrimination and violence that affect indigenous women in the exercise of their rights.

9. A training workshop was held in Guatemala City, on August 20, on the theme of the “Dialogue on the Rights of Indigenous Women in the Inter-American System.” Those attending heard from the indigenous women invited to the meeting of experts as well as human rights specialists from the Executive Secretariat of the IACHR, who spoke about the various protection mechanisms offered by the inter-American human rights system, particularly where indigenous women are concerned.

10. The Office of the Rapporteur made a working visit to Guatemala from August 21-30, 2013. The purpose of the visit was to gather information on the situation of indigenous peoples in Guatemala, with particular emphasis on discrimination and the exclusion of indigenous peoples, as well as the status of their lands, territories, and natural resources, and the right to prior, free, and informed consultation. The delegation was headed by the Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Commissioner Dinah Shelton. The delegation met with State authorities; indigenous organizations, authorities, leaders, and communities; human rights defenders, civil society organizations, and academics. The delegation visited Guatemala City; Cobán; the Polochic Valley; Nebaj; Huehuetenango; Totonicapán; San Marcos and Chichicastenango. The information obtained during the visit will be one source of input for the preparation of a report on the human rights situation of indigenous peoples in Guatemala.

11. On September 17, 2013, a specialist from the Executive Secretariat participated in the course entitled "Rights of Indigenous Peoples," held from September 16-20, 2013 at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. The course was funded by the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the Human Rights Center at the University of Pretoria, and the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. As part of the course, the IACHR attorney taught a class on "The rights of indigenous peoples in the Inter-American human rights system." There were over 40 participants in the course, some of whom were members of indigenous peoples, especially from English-speaking African countries, with work-related connections to the States, nongovernmental organizations and national human rights commissions.

12. On September 23, 2013, a specialist from the Executive Secretariat took part in a meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, organized by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, which was attended by members of the African Commission, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, civil society organizations, and representatives of the Kenyan State. Its purpose was to discuss the status of the implementation of a final report on the merits issued by the African Commission, which found that the Kenyan State had violated the rights of the members of the Endorois indigenous people protected under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. The meeting was held under the auspices of the IWGIA, the German Cooperation Agency, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Endorois Welfare Council.

13. An "International Forum on Indigenous Women's Rights" was held in Lima, Peru, on October 22, 2013. Commissioner Tracy Robinson attended the event in her capacity as Rapporteur on the Rights of Women as part of a panel of national and international experts. The event centered on the situation of indigenous women and international standards for protection of their rights.

14. A "Meeting of South American Women Indigenous Experts" was held in Lima, Peru, on November 21 and 22, 2013, with the participation of indigenous women's leaders from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Uruguay, Venezuela, Suriname, Paraguay and Peru. The participants discussed the situation of indigenous women in the region with Commissioner Tracy Robinson. The information that came out of the discussion will go into the above-mentioned regional report on indigenous women under preparation by the IACHR.

2. Office of the Rapporteur on the Rights of Women

15. Since the inception of the Office of the Rapporteur in 1994, it has played a vital role in the Commission's work to protect women's rights through the publication of thematic studies, assistance in the development of new jurisprudence in this area within the individual case system, and support for the investigation of a range of issues that affect women's rights in specific countries of the region, through on-site visits and country reports. One of the fundamental principles that informs and is constantly reflected in this work is the need to include a gender perspective in public-policy planning and implementation as well as decision-making in all member States. Commissioner Tracy Robinson has been the Rapporteur since January 2011.

16. The Office of the Rapporteur on the Rights of Women carried out a number of activities this year in partnership with the Office of the Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in order to gather material for a comprehensive report on the situation of indigenous women in the Americas.

17. , In that context, the Rapporteur on the Rights of Women participated in a working visit to Suriname, from January 23 to 25, 2013, to examine the status of the rights of women and indigenous peoples. The delegation was comprised of Commissioner Dinah Shelton, Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; Commissioner Tracy Robinson, First Vice-Chair and Rapporteur on the Rights of Women; and staff members from the Executive Secretariat.

18. During the visit, the delegation met with the senior-most authorities of Suriname and with representatives of civil society organizations devoted to protecting the rights of indigenous peoples, women, and LGBTI persons in that country. Several delegation members also traveled to the Brokopondo district and the village of Brownsweg to visit a Maroon village of 8,000 persons. The delegation participated in a workshop on the Inter-American Human Rights System, together with some 50 government officials, and in an academic event at Anton de Kom University, with law professors and students.

19. Also, during a visit to Honduras from May 14 to 27, 2013, at the invitation of the Latin American and Caribbean Network for Democracy (REDLAD), Rapporteur Tracy Robinson met with civil society organizations working to protect women's rights and with indigenous women from various parts of the country. The Rapporteur also made two presentations on challenges to the protection of women's rights in the region. She also spoke with the Special Prosecutor for Women and a representative of the National Women's Institute.

20. The Rapporteurs on the Rights of Women and the Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples made a working visit to Canada between August 6 and 9, 2013 to examine, *in situ*, information related to the disappearance and murder of indigenous women in British Columbia. The delegation was comprised of Commissioner Dinah Shelton, Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; Commissioner Tracy Robinson, First Vice-chair and Rapporteur on the Rights of Women, and officers of the Executive Secretariat. The visit began in Ottawa, where the delegation met with authorities of the Federal Government and with organizations and civil society representatives, including organizations, and male and female indigenous leaders. The delegation then traveled to Vancouver and to Prince George in British Columbia, where it met with authorities of the Provincial Government, with representatives of the Legislative Branch, and with civil society organizations and representatives, including organizations, authorities, and male and female indigenous leaders. During their visit, the delegation obtained information and testimony from the next of kin of indigenous girls and women who had disappeared and who had been murdered.

21. The Rapporteur on the Rights of Women and the Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples also organized a number of meetings with indigenous women in the course of the year in order to gather information for the report on the subject of indigenous women. On August 19 and 20 this year, they organized a workshop on the multiple forms of discrimination that affect indigenous women in the exercise of their rights in Central America. The event was attended by IACHR staff from the Office of the Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples and 15 experts on indigenous women's rights from Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Panama, Costa Rica, and Mexico. On October 23, 2013, both rapporteurships helped to organize a meeting in Washington, D.C., on human rights violations that affect indigenous women. Attending the meeting were 10 experts from different countries in the Americas as well as staff of the IACHR Executive Secretariat. Finally, a "Meeting of South American Women Indigenous Experts" was held in Lima, Peru, on November 21 and 22, with the participation of indigenous women's leaders from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Uruguay,

Venezuela, Suriname, Paraguay and Peru. The participants discussed the overall situation of indigenous women in the region with Commissioner Tracy Robinson, including the different forms of violence and discrimination that they endure, specific contexts in which those violations occur, and barriers to education, healthcare, and access to and control of economic resources, among other topics.

22. As regards promotion activities, in June 2013, staff from the Office of the Rapporteur took part in a seminar held in Paraíba, Brazil, on Ensuring Consistency with Treaties (*Control de Convencionalidad*) and Case-Law of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in order to give a talk on the case-law of the Inter-American Court in relation to gender and reparations. The seminar was organized by the Inter-American Court in conjunction with the Amnesty Committee and the Ministry of Justice of Brazil. The organizers invited government officials, federal and state judges, government attorneys, prosecutors, and a number of civil society organizations. The Rapporteur also took part in a seminar held on October 25, 2013, under the auspices of the United Nations special rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, on the problem of violence against women and the state's obligations in tackling this serious human rights problem.

3. Office of the Rapporteur on the Rights of Migrants

23. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights established the Office of the Special Rapporteur on Migrant Workers and Their Families (hereinafter "Office of the Special Rapporteur") at its ninety-second special session, held from April 29 to May 3, 1996. The creation of the Office of the Special Rapporteur reflected the interest of the OAS member States to give special attention to a group recognized for its extreme vulnerability, a fact that left it particularly exposed to human rights violations. Subsequently, at its 144th session, held on March 30, 2012, the IACHR amended the mandate of the Office of the Special Rapporteur in response to the multiple challenges posed by human mobility in the region. The new mandate focuses on the observance and guarantee of the rights of migrants and their families, asylum seekers, refugees, stateless persons, victims of human trafficking, internally displaced persons and other vulnerable groups within the context of human mobility. Based on this change to the Rapporteurship's mandate, its name changed to 'Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants.' Commissioner Felipe González has been the Rapporteur since January 2008.

24. On January 30, 2013, as part of the process of evaluating the Inter-American Program for the Promotion and Protection of the Human Rights of Migrants, Including Migrant Workers and Their Families, the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants made a presentation to the Informal Group of the Committee on Migratory Affairs in Washington, DC, on the main challenges regarding the human rights of migrants in the region, and also presented a report on its activities in the framework of the program, as well as its evaluation thereof.

25. In the context of the 147th period of sessions of the IACHR, on March 13, 2013, a meeting was held of the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants with civil society organizations and academics from several countries of the Americas. The meeting was led by Commissioner Felipe González, Rapporteur on the Rights of Migrants; its purpose was to discuss the main challenges in respect of the human rights of migrants and their families, asylum seekers, refugees, stateless persons, victims of human trafficking, internally displaced persons, as well as other groups of persons who are vulnerable in the context of human mobility. The meeting was held at the headquarters of the IACHR and included the participation of academics and representatives of more than 20 civil society

organizations from Argentina, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and the United States.

26. On April 9 and 10, 2013, the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants, in conjunction with the Center for Human Rights of the Universidad Diego Portales, the Embassy of France in Chile, and the French Regional Delegation for Cooperation with the Southern Cone and Brazil, organized the “International Conference on Migrants and Human Rights: International Standards and Practices,” held at the Auditorium of the School of Law of the Universidad Diego Portales in Santiago, Chile. The purpose of this international conference was to identify the challenges posed by migratory movements in the Southern Cone countries, in particular in Chile. The interdisciplinary debate (jurists, sociologists, political scientists, members of civil society organizations, etc.) was articulated along different main lines – entry and remaining in the country, access to human rights, the struggle against discrimination and the integration of migrants, asylum-seekers, and refugees – based on an analysis of the legislative texts and public policies implemented in Chile, in other Southern Cone countries, and in France to ensure access to rights for migrants, asylum-seekers, refugees, and other persons in vulnerable situations in the context of human mobility. The Rapporteur was one of the main speakers at this conference. Based on the conference’s reports, a book entitled *Migraciones. Conferencia Internacional sobre Migraciones y Derechos Humanos: Estándares y Prácticas* [Migration. International Conference on Migration and Human Rights: Standards and Practices], was drafted and then published by Le Monde Diplomatique.

27. In early May 2013, The Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants presented its assessment and observations in the context of the work being done by the Special Committee on Migration of the OAS in the review, implementation, and monitoring of the “Inter-American Program for the Promotion and Protection of the Human Rights of Migrants, Including Migrant Workers and Their Families (AG/RES. 2141 (XXXV-O/05).”

28. On May 15, 2013, an attorney from the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants made a presentation by videoconference on the work and standards of the inter-American human rights system in relation to labor laws on migrant workers and their families in the context of the course on “Social Security in Globalization,” organized by the Inter-American Center for Social Security Studies (CIESS) in Mexico City.

29. In the context of the presentation of the report “Dignidad sin Excepción: Alternativas a la Detención Migratoria en México” (“Dignity without Exception: Alternatives to Migratory Detention in Mexico”), produced by the International Detention Coalition (IDC), on May 28, 2013, an attorney from the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants made a presentation in Mexico City on the standards developed in the inter-American human rights system according to which migratory detention is to be used only on an exceptional basis in light of the obligations that stem from the right to personal liberty. This event included presentations by Sin Fronteras I.A.P., the Instituto para la Seguridad y la Democracia A.C. (INSYDE), the Women’s Refugee Commission, the Migration Policy Unit of the Mexican State, and a representative of the federal legislature.

30. On June 13, 2013, in the context of the conference entitled “Academic Reflections for Commitment for a New Model for Managing Migration in the Dominican Republic,” an attorney from the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants made a presentation on international and inter-American standards on migration and human rights at the Universidad Iberoamericana (UNIBE) in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. This event was held in coordination among the Centro Bonó, the School of Law of

the Universidad Iberoamericana (UNIBE), and the Center for Social Research and Studies of the Universidad Iberoamericana (UNIBE), and included academics, attorneys, staff of international organizations, representatives of civil society, representatives of the State, and law students.

31. On June 20, 2013, during the Fourth International Forum on Migration and Peace, organized by the Scalabriniana International Migration Network in New York, USA, IACHR Executive Secretary, Emilio Álvarez Icaza L., gave, on behalf of the Commission, a presentation entitled “Seguridad Humana, Desarrollo Humano y Derechos Humanos: Tendencias y Desafíos para Políticas sobre Migración Internacional desde la Perspectiva de la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos” [Human Security, Human Development, and Human Rights: Trends and Challenges for International Migration Policies from the Perspective of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights]. This presentation was published in the Forum’s proceedings.

32. On September 5, 2013, during the "Forum on Migrant Children not Accompanied: The Role of Civil Society" organized by the Senate of the Republic of Mexico, a lawyer of the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants made a presentation on the main standards concerning migrant children developed by the Inter-American System of Human Rights.

33. On September 30, 2013 the "Action Protocol for those who Apply Justice in Cases that Affect Migrants and People subject to International Protection in Mexico City" was presented by the President of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation of Mexico and members of the court. The Rapporteur on the Rights of Migrants was part of the Advisory Council who assisted in the preparation and development of this protocol.

34. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) organized a meeting of experts on the interpretation of the definition of refugees contained in the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees and how it applies to asylum seekers fleeing from the conflicts and violence that took place on October 15 – 16, 2013, in Montevideo, Uruguay. During this meeting, an attorney from the Rapporteurship on Migrants Rights made a presentation on the scope and content the IACHR has assigned to the term ‘widespread violence’ in its case reports and country and thematic reports.

35. On October 21, 2013, the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation of Mexico organized a forum in Mexico City on “The Judiciary and the Human Rights of Migrants and Persons Subject to International Protection.” The objective of this forum was to disseminate the “Action Protocol for Those Who Impart Justice in Cases that Affect Migrants and Persons Subject to International Protection” among members of the judiciary. This forum was sponsored by Mexico’s Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation, the organization Sin Fronteras I.A.P., the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), the Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales [Center for Legal and Social Studies] (CELS), and the Federal Judiciary Council of Mexico. An attorney from the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants gave a presentation on the main international and inter-American standards that exist regarding the exceptional nature of migrant detention and the use of alternatives to detention.

36. On October 30, 2013, during the IACHR’s 149th period of sessions, a meeting was held between the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants and civil society organizations and academics from several countries in the Americas. The meeting was led by Commissioner Felipe González, Rapporteur on the Rights of Migrants and was aimed at discussing the main challenges that exist in

terms of the human rights of migrants and their families, asylum seekers, refugees, stateless persons, victims of human trafficking, internally displaced persons, and other vulnerable groups in the context of human mobility. The meeting was held at the headquarters of the IACHR and included the participation of academics and representatives of civil society organizations from Brazil, Cuba, Colombia, Ecuador, the United States, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic.

4. Office of the Rapporteur on the Rights of the Child

37. The Inter-American Commission decided to create the Office of the Rapporteur on the Rights of the Child at its 100th regular session on October 13, 1998, for the purpose of bolstering respect for the human rights of children and adolescents in the Americas. In 2012, the Office of the Rapporteur on the Rights of the Child. Continued its promotion activities as well as publishing reports aimed at addressing the different forms of violence faced by children and adolescents in the Americas. Commissioner Rosa María Ortiz has been the Rapporteur since January 2012.

38. On January 14 and 15, 2013, the Rapporteur on the Rights of the Child was in Port-au-Prince, Haiti to participate in a training session on "The role of the Ombudsman in the protection of human rights and peaceful settlement of disputes" organized by the Department of Democratic Sustainability and Special Missions of the OAS, in the framework of a project by the OAS General Secretariat to support Haiti's Office of Citizen Protection (OPC). Also, the Rapporteur held a working meeting with staff from the UNICEF office in Haiti and discussed the main elements related to the agenda for protecting the rights of children in that country and identifying opportunities for technical collaboration between the two institutions.

39. From February 22 to March 2, the Rapporteur was in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, for an outreach visit. As part of this visit, she met with various authorities, presented the Commission's "Report on Corporal Punishment and Human Rights of Children and Adolescents," and gave a presentation to follow up on the IACHR report on "Juvenile Justice and Human Rights in the Americas." During her visit, the Rapporteur participated in a workshop on the functioning of the inter-American system for the protection of human rights and on decisions relating to the rights of the child, organized by the Coalition of NGOs for the rights of children and adolescents in the Dominican Republic.

40. While in Dominican Republic, the Rapporteur also met with UNICEF, civil society organizations, and children to discuss aspects related to violence against children and awareness-raising activities being carried out in those organizations. The Rapporteur participated in a television program to present the work of her office and the main content of the two IACHR reports that were presented in the framework of that visit.

41. On April 12 and 13 the Rapporteur participated in a meeting of experts in Montevideo to discuss the topic of boys and girls in protection and care institutions, and to analyze in particular policies and programs to prevent the separation of children from their families and to facilitate release from the institutions and family reintegration. The Rapporteur also took part in an event to release a handbook for application of the United Nations guidelines on alternative childcare arrangements, together with UNICEF and the NGO Aldeas Infantiles SOS.

42. On May 6 to 10 Commissioner Rosa María Ortiz participated in the annual meeting of the World Movement for Children in Latin America and the Caribbean, in Panama. The Commissioner

also held meetings with UNDP, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence against Children.

43. During her visit to Panama, Commissioner Ortiz met with UNICEF to discuss the content of the cooperation agreement for 2013, focused on organized armed violence and its affect on the rights of children and adolescents.

44. On May 17 the Rapporteur took part in a meeting of experts convened by the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Education in Argentina with the NGO Chicos.Net. Its purpose was to discuss opportunities and challenges posed by the new technologies from the perspective of the rights of children and adolescents, and to analyze the best practices for awareness building on the risks of new technologies in child protection, new opportunities in access to information, knowledge, and the exercise of citizenship, and some experiences with respect to regulation.

45. From May 27 to 29 the Rapporteur visited El Salvador at the invitation of the Office of the Human Rights Prosecutor. During the visit, the Rapporteur met with many government officials, civil society organizations and with organizations of children and adolescents. The Rapporteur participated in the presentation of a report by the Prosecutor's Office on violence against children in El Salvador.

46. From June 10 to 14 the Rapporteur participated in the meeting of the Permanent Committee of NIÑOSUR, in the MERCOSUR framework, which took place in Montevideo. In addition, she had working meetings with the Director of Human Rights of the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Education of Uruguay to follow up on topics concerning children's rights in the country.

47. The Rapporteurship completed drafting a report on children's right to a family and care institutions in the Americas, which sets forth the State's obligations for the protection of children lacking adequate parental care, or who are at risk of losing it, and makes recommendations to the States on that subject, in addition to analyzing the operation of the protection and care institutions and the implementation of children's rights there.

48. As part of the drafting process of a report on armed violence and the rights of the child, a meeting of experts was held in Washington, D.C., on June 18 and 19, in which the United Nations' Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children took part.

49. The Rapporteur made a promotional visit to Peru from August 26 to 29, 2013, at the invitation of UNICEF and Save the Children. During the visit she had meetings with a number of government officials and representatives of civil society organizations that work for the protection of children's rights. The Rapporteur also took part in a town hall meeting on "Rights of the Child to a Family and Alternative Care: International Standards, Preliminary Findings in the IACHR Report.

50. From September 2 to 6, the Rapporteur made a promotional visit to Chile at the invitation of several children's organizations. Her visit included meetings with various officials who work in the area of children's rights, the regional representative of the United Nations High Commissioner in South America, UNICEF, nongovernmental organizations, and children and youth. The Rapporteur took part in the seminar "Systems for the comprehensive promotion and protection of the rights of children and adolescents: the importance of linking networks and child welfare services," and in the presentation

of the study entitled “Diagnostic study on children deprived of or at risk of being deprived of parental care,” prepared by the MIDE UC Research Center.

51. Rapporteur Rosa María Ortiz took part in a meeting of experts on education, culture, and LGBTI issues organized by the IACHR’s Unit on the Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Intersex Persons on September 12-13 in Washington, D.C., to address issues related to access to education for LGBTI children and adolescents.

52. From September 30 to October 17, the Rapporteur and a lawyer from the Executive Secretariat of the IACHR traveled to Brazil (Rio de Janeiro, Brasília, and São Paulo), Mexico (Mexico City), and Honduras (Tegucigalpa) as part of the process of drafting a report on the issue of armed violence and its effects on the rights of the child in the region. The purpose of the visits was to collect information on this subject and, to that end, they held meetings and talks with government officials, representatives of civil society organizations, experts, and scholars, as well as children and youth. The visits were carried out with the support of the UNICEF regional office as well as the UNICEF offices in the countries concerned. The rapporteur noted the importance and relevance of addressing this issue from a human rights perspective as well as the great interest in the subject shown by all the stakeholders whom the rapporteur met.

53. On October 18, in the framework of the Ibero-American Summit, the Rapporteur, together with the Executive Secretary of the IACHR, the President of Costa Rica, Mme. Chinchilla, UNICEF’s regional representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, Mr. Aasen, and Ms. Perrault of UNICEF’s regional office presented the IACHR report on “The Right of Children to the Family. Alternative Care. Putting an End to Institutionalization in the Americas,” and launched the UNICEF call to action to prevent the institutionalization of young children and promote the strengthening of families as environments for the protection, care, and rearing of children.

54. On October 22, the Rapporteur took part in an event promoted by the Permanent Missions to the United Nations of the States of Brazil and Austria and the international NGOs, Save the Children and Aldeas Infantiles SOS; also in attendance was Dr. Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General on Violence Against Children. During this event, the IACHR’s thematic report, “The Right of Children to the Family. Alternative Care. Putting an End to Institutionalization in the Americas,” was presented to the delegates of the States.

55. On December 11, the Rapporteur participated in a training workshop on the Inter-American Human Rights System organized by the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (IIHR), the Secretariat for Human Rights of Brazil, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, during which she gave a presentation on the main progress that has been made on promoting and protecting the rights of children in the inter-American system.

56. In addition, on December 13, the Rapporteur, together with the Brazil UNICEF office and the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General on Violence Against Children, during the activities organized in the context of World Human Rights Forum, presented the IACHR thematic report entitled “The Right of Children to the Family. Alternative Care. Putting an End to Institutionalization in the Americas,” which constitutes a substantive contribution from the inter-American system to the protection of children who lack parental care or who are in danger of losing

such care, and complements and delves deeper into the recommendations offered by the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children and the World Report on Violence Against Children.

5. Office of the Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders

57. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights created the Office of the Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders at its 141st regular session, held in March 2011. Its predecessor was the Unit for Human Rights Defenders, which was established in December 2001. Commissioner José de Jesús Orozco Henríquez has been the Rapporteur since January 2010.

58. During its 2013 hearings, the Commission received disturbing information on continued killings, threats, and acts of harassment directed at human rights defenders, as well as acts of violence in protest demonstrations and the criminalization of the activities involved in defending human rights. In this context, States' failure to adopt effective measures to protect human rights defenders who are at serious risk is a matter of particular concern.

59. In its hearings, the IACHR continued to receive information on the increase in indirect measures that seek to restrict the exercise of the right to defend human rights in several countries through the use of criminal law to charge human rights defenders with such offenses as "inducement to rebellion," "terrorism" and "sabotage," or "justification of the crime." The IACHR also received troubling information on acts to disparage, discredit, or criminalize the work of those who defend environmental rights, reproductive and women's rights, and the rights of LGBTI persons.

60. The Commission also continued to receive information on the obstacles human rights defenders face in gaining access to specific protection measures when they are in situations of risk, as well as on States' failure to effectively investigate threats and attacks.

61. On another matter, in 2013 the Office of the Rapporteur carried out a series of activities around the preparation and publication of its report on *Guarantees for the Independence of Justice Operators. Towards Strengthening Access to Justice and the Rule of Law in the Americas*. On January 15, 2013, the IACHR published a consultation questionnaire for the preparation of a report on the situation of justice operators in the Americas. The questionnaire was published in four languages and was designed to receive input from the Member States of the Organization of American States and from civil society organizations. The questionnaire can be found at the following link: <http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/defenders/docs/pdf/CuestionarioJan2013.pdf>.

62. The report on Guarantees for the Independence of Justice Operators was a priority of the Office of the Rapporteur and was prepared thanks to the financial support of Finland, following a process to select a consultant to put together the draft report and carry out the public consultation with the States and civil society.

63. As part of the activities to prepare the report, the IACHR Office of the Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders held two consultations with experts to obtain specialized input on standards in international law and applied comparative law with respect to processes in place to select and dismiss judges, prosecutors, and ombudspersons, as well as the obstacles faced in such processes.

64. Participants in the consultation of July 15, included Jesús Orozco, Chair of the IACHR and Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders; Roberto de Figueredo Caldas, a Judge on the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (Brazil); Douglass Cassel, a professor from the University of Notre Dame (United States); Leandro Despouy, former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers (Argentina); Stella Maris Martínez, National Ombudsperson (Argentina); Claudia Paz y Paz, National Attorney General (Guatemala); Katya Salazar, Due Process of Law Foundation (United States); and staff of the IACHR Executive Secretariat. The input gleaned during the consultation was taken into account in the preparation of the report.

65. At the consultation of July 12, 2013, were Jesús Orozco, President of the IACHR and Rapporteur for Human Rights Defenders of the IACHR; Gabriela Knaul, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers; Rodrigo Escobar Gil, IACHR Rapportur on the Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty; Catalina Botero Marino, IACHR Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression; María del Carmen Alanís Figueroa, Judge on the Electoral Tribunal of Mexico and member of the Venice Committee; and a specialist from the Executive Secretariat.

66. The report *Guarantees for the Independence of Justice Operators. Towards Strengthening Access to Justice and the Rule of Law in the Americas* was approved by the Inter-American Commission on December 5, 2013. The report analyzes international law standards that are applicable to ensure the independence and impartiality of the following justice operators: magistrates and judges; prosecutors and attorneys; and ombudspersons. The report looks at the obstacles they face in carrying out their efforts and makes recommendations to the States.

67. On December 13, 2013, the Chair of the Inter-American Commission and Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, José de Jesús Orozco Henríquez, presented the report on Guarantees for the Independence of Justice Operators at an event on “Standards and Case Law in the Inter-American System regarding the Independence of Justice Operators,” held at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, in Mexico City.

68. As part of other activities carried out by the Office of the Rapporteur, on June 10-12, 2013, a specialist from the Office of the Rapporteur participated in a meeting in Warsaw, Poland, organized by the Focal Point on Human Rights Defenders and National Human Rights Institutions of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). At the meeting, experts from various international and civil society organizations provided input and suggestions for the preparation of “Recommendations for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders,” which the OSCE Focal Point is in the process of developing.

69. On June 13, 2013, Rapporteur Orozco took part in the presentation in Mexico City of the “Report on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders in Mexico: Update and Current Status” (*Informe sobre la situación de las y los defensores de derechos humanos en México: actualización y balance*), prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Mexico. Also at the presentation were Javier Hernández Valencia, representative in Mexico of the UNHCHR; Raúl Plascencia Villanueva, President of the National Human Rights Commission; Lía Limón, Under-Secretary for Human Rights of the Secretariat of the Interior; and Edgar Cortez, Member of the Consultative Committee of the Mechanism for Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists.

70. On July 12, 2013, Rapporteur Orozco participated via videoconference in a meeting organized by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights in Hofburg, Vienna, on the project “Developing Recommendations on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders” in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). In that context, the Rapporteur described the experience of the inter-American system with protection mechanisms for human rights defenders.

71. On October 9-11, 2013, a specialist from the Office of the Rapporteur participated in a meeting in Dublin, Ireland, called the Seventh Dublin Platform for Human Rights Defenders, organized by Front Line Defenders – The International Foundation for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders. At the event, the Office of the Rapporteur presented information on the various mechanisms available in the inter-American system for the protection of human rights defenders, as a member of a panel that also included representatives of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

72. On December 5-6, 2013, a specialist from the Commission was in Belém do Pará, Brazil, on behalf of the IACHR, where he participated in the Third Human Rights and Citizenship Forum of the Amazon Region and the Second International Congress on Global Justice and Human Rights Education in the Amazon Region. Both events took place at the Federal University of Pará. The lawyer gave presentations on “The Situation of Human Rights Defenders in Latin America” and on “Challenges for the Protection of Human Rights and the Reform of the Inter-American System,” respectively.

73. Finally, two fellowships opened up in the Office of the Rapporteur, thanks to the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), as part of the “Freedom of Expression in the Americas” project. The aim of the fellowships will be to work with the Executive Secretariat in the processing of petitions, cases, and requests for precautionary measures having to do with the rights of human rights defenders; prepare draft reports on petitions and cases concerning human rights defenders; prepare summaries of hearings, working meetings, and visits; and promote and publicize the inter-American human rights system in the context of the Office of the Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders.

6. Office of the Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty

74. Given the importance it has always placed on respect for the rights of persons deprived of liberty, the Inter-American Commission established, during its 85th and 86th sessions, a working group to examine detention conditions in the Americas. This could be considered the immediate forerunner of the current Office of the Rapporteur. Subsequently, during its 119th session, in March 2004, the Inter-American Commission formally established the Office of the Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty in the Americas. Commissioner Rodrigo Alonso Escobar Gil was the Rapporteur from January 2010 to December 31, 2013.

75. On March 15, 2013, in the context of the 147th Period of Sessions of the IACHR, the Rapporteurship officially launched the *Report on the Human Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty in the Americas*, at the Headquarters of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Participants in this panel included Ambassador Andres González Díaz, Chairman of the CAJP of the OAS; Ambassador Guillermo Marin, Deputy Observer from Spain before the OAS; Dr. Veronica Filippeschi Program Officer for the Americas of the Association on the Prevention of Torture (APT); and Commissioner Rodrigo

Escobar Gil, Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty of the IACHR. Dr. Emilio Álvarez Icaza, Executive Secretary of the IACHR acted as a moderator of the panel.

76. On April 5-6, 2013, the Rapporteurship participated in the Expert Meeting: Right to Reparation for Torture: the role of African Human Rights Mechanisms. This event took place on Kololi, The Gambia, and was organized by the Center for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation and The REDRESS Trust, in collaboration with other organizations.

77. On April 25-26, 2013 staff from the Rapporteurship participated in a meeting of experts on: Indicators for Measuring the Use of Pre-Trial Detention: What does “exceptional measure” in pre-trial justice mean in the Americas? This meeting was held in Bogota, Colombia; and was organized by Open Society/Justice Initiative and the Regional Network on Pre-Trial Justice of Latin America.

78. On May 9-10, 2013, the Rapporteurship held the Regional Meeting of Experts on Pre-Trial Detention, at the Headquarters of the Commission, in Washington, D.C. The aim of the meeting was to receive technical information that could be useful for the drafting of the thematic report on the use of pre-trial detention in the region. For that purpose, the debate was oriented to assess the possible measures that the Commission could recommend to the OAS Members States, in order to reverse the extensive use of this exceptional measure.

79. On June 14, the Rapporteur launched in person the Report on the Human Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty in the Americas in the city of Panama, in a ceremony organized by the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT), which was also attended by the Regional Representative for Central America of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the UN, officials from the Government of Panama and representatives of civil society.

80. On July 10, a representative from the Rapporteurship participated in a meeting of experts on the review of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners organized by the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Mr. Juan Mendez. This event took place at Oxford, England; and was sponsored by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Center for Human rights & Humanitarian Law of the American University and the project Human Rights for Future Generations of the University of Oxford.

81. On August 1 and 2, the IACHR Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty, Commissioner Rodrigo Escobar Gil, headed the delegation that presented the report to the President of the Republic, Porfirio Lobo; to family members of the victims of the fire at the National Penitentiary of Comayagua; to other high-level State authorities; and to civil society organizations and the people of Honduras, through the media. The report was prepared based on an April 2012 working visit to Honduras by an IACHR delegation led by Rapporteur Escobar Gil, which was carried out with the financial support of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (OAS).

82. From August 14 to 16, the Rapporteur participated at the First Working Meeting on the Prevention of Torture in the Southern Cone, sponsored by the *Procuración Penitenciaria de la Nación* and the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT), held in Buenos Aires. This event counted with the participation of public authorities, representatives from the civil society and national human rights institutions from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay, as well as representatives from international human rights organizations. The meeting provided an opportunity to focus on the

main challenges faced by the countries of the region in the prevention of torture, and to explore possible actions and solutions based on the successful experiences shared.

83. On September 10, the Rapporteur participated in the forum: “Prison, Pressure and Process: The Judicial Independence and its Impact on Pre-trial Detention”, sponsored by Due Process of Law Foundation (DPLF).

84. On September 25, a staff member of the Rapporteurship participated in the Expert Meeting on: “Standards for the design and/or strengthening of a national registry system for persons detained”, in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. This event was organized by the Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL), the Human Rights Center “Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez” (*Centro Prodh*) and the Committee of Relatives of the Disappeared in Honduras (COFADEH), and had also the participation of representatives from ILANUD, UNODC, the Working Group of the United Nations on Arbitrary Detentions, and other experts on this field.

85. On October 22, the staff of the Rapporteurship participated at the side event *Reviewing the Standards Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners – Preventing Torture and ill-treatment?*, organized by the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, in the frame of the 68th period of sessions of the General Assembly of the UN, in New York. The goal of this event was to provide an opportunity to draw attention to the on-going review process and to discuss the recommendations rendered by the Special Rapporteur in his recent report (A/68/295), delivered specifically for this process.

86. On October 28, under the 149 regular session of the Commission, a hearing on the Human Rights Situation of detainees at Guantanamo Bay was held.

87. On December 2, the Rapporteur delivered a conference about the *Report on the Human Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty in the Americas* at the University Santo Tomás, in Bogotá, in the course of an International Congress on the creation of a committee for the prevention of torture in the Americas.

7. Office of the Rapporteur on the Rights of Afro-Descendants and against Racial Discrimination

88. At its 122nd session, held from February 23 to March 11, 2005, the Inter-American Commission created the Office of the Rapporteur on the Rights of Afro-Descendants and against Racial Discrimination. The Office of the Rapporteur was charged with dedicating itself to activities of stimulating, systematizing, reinforcing and consolidating the action of the Inter-American Commission on the rights of people of African descent and racial discrimination. Commissioner Rose-Marie Belle Antoine has been the Rapporteur since January 2012.

89. On February 15, 2013, a staff member from the Office of the Rapporteur attended an information meeting of the International Committee of the Platform of the World Summit for Afro-descendants.

90. A roundtable was held on February 25 at OAS headquarters on “Milestones and Challenges in the Advancement of the Rights of Afro-Descendants in the Americas.” The Office of the Rapporteur and the Department of International Affairs of the OAS organized the event.

91. On March 19, 2013, the Rapporteur moderated a panel discussion at the launch of a new book by Prof. Robert J. Cottrol. The book is called *The Long, Lingering Shadow – Slavery, Race, and Law in the American Hemisphere*. The launch took place at the George Washington University Law School.

92. For the first time, the Rapporteurship issued a joint press release with the UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. This was to commemorate International Day on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination – which was March 21, 2013.

93. Between March and April, the Office of the Rapporteurship continued to attend meetings of The Working Group to Prepare the Draft Legally-Binding Inter-American Instruments Against Racism and Racial Discrimination and Against all Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance. The Office of the Rapporteurship participated in these meetings to offer technical assistance and observations on the Draft Legally-Binding Inter-American Instrument. Upon the adoption of the Convention on Racism at the 43rd OAS General Assembly, the Rapporteurship issued a press release on behalf of the IACHR.

94. The Rapporteur made a presentation at a side-workshop at the Technical Preparatory Meeting of the XVIII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor (IACML) This conference took place on April 16 - 18, 2013. The workshop was themed “Towards fairer labor conditions: promoting labor inclusion with equity”.

95. The Rapporteur made a presentation at a conference in Barcelona, Spain in June on the relationship between human rights, socio-economic rights and racial discrimination in the workplace.

96. The Rapporteur was invited in June to participate in a pre-General Assembly event organized by Global Rights in Antigua, Guatemala, entitled “The role of the Afro-descendant movement in the Inter-American Agenda. Participants in the meeting were principally Afro-Guatemalans, but included Afro-descendants from other countries of Latin America. The Rapporteur was asked to participate to share her thoughts on how to effectively use the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, and the Rapporteurship to advance the human rights of Afro-descendants in the region.

97. The Office of the Rapporteurship attended a plenary meeting on the US-Colombia Action Plan on Racial and Ethnic Equality. This meeting took place on June 12-13, 2013 at the State Department, of the United States.

98. On June 25, 2013, the Office of the Rapporteur launched a lecture series entitled “Transforming the Invisible into the Visible.” The inaugural lecture was presided over by Dr. Sheila S. Walker, an expert in cultural anthropology. The second of these lectures was opened on July 17, 2013, by Professor Eduardo Bonilla Silva, of Duke University, North Carolina, a sociologist and expert in racial affairs and racial discrimination.

99. The Rapporteurship has continued on its campaign of outreach to various state and non-state actors – with a view to incorporating them in the planned activities of the Rapporteurship. During the 147 sessions of the Commission, the Rapporteur met with US Representative Yvette Clarke of the Congressional Caribbean Caucus and with Congressman John Lewis during the 149 sessions of the Commission.

100. Commissioner Antoine participated in a consultation entitled “A conversation on intersectionality” on Monday, July 22, 2013 at the Center for Reproductive Rights in New York City, organized by Columbia Law School’s Human Rights Institute, the Bringing Human Rights Home Network, the Center for Reproductive Rights and the Rapporteur on the Rights of Women of the IACHR.

101. Throughout the year, the Rapporteurship worked with the Vance Center to formulate a research program to interrogate issues of race discrimination in relation to voting rights and access to justice in North America. The research is to be carried out by private attorneys based in the US.

102. On August 22, 2013, the office of the Rapporteurship participated in a workshop with the theme: Increasing the Participation and Impact of People of African Descent in, and on the Work of the Organization Of American States (OAS) Process And Summit Of The Americas. The workshop was sponsored by the OAS Department of International Affairs and Global Rights. Attending were over 15 Afro-descendants from Brasil, Colombia, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Dominican Republic, and Cuba.

103. On November 22-23, 2013, the IACHR, in conjunction with McGill University Faculty of Law and the Labour Law and Development Laboratory (McGill Faculty of Law), held a *Special Forum on Race, Discrimination and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in North America*. The forum was held at McGill University Faculty of Law, Montreal, Canada.

104. The IACHR’s role in the event was spearheaded by Commissioner Rose-Marie Belle Antoine, Rapporteur on the Rights of People of African Descent and against Racial Discrimination, as well as head of the Unit on Economic Social and Cultural Rights. Commissioner Antoine also delivered the keynote address, while Commission President, José de Jesús Orozco Henríquez delivered opening remarks on behalf of the IACHR.

105. The two-day forum brought together an array of civil society actors, academics, and state officials, who discussed, and shared information on various 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.

8. Unit for the Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Trans, Bisexual, and Intersex Persons

106. At its 141st session in March 2011, the IACHR decided to give special thematic emphasis to the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex persons (LGTBI) as it was “deeply concerned at the information it has received in recent years on the *de jure* and *de facto* discrimination against these persons, the effects of this discrimination on every aspect of their lives, and, in particular, the intolerable levels of violence to which they are subject in the countries of the Hemisphere.” In November 2011, in the context of its 143rd session, the IACHR created a specialized unit on these

matters within its Executive Secretariat. Subsequently, in the course of its 146th regular session, and the IACHR appointed Commissioner Tracy Robinson to lead the Unit.

107. Commissioner Tracy Robinson and Commissioner Dinah Shelton, the Rapporteur for Surinam and for Indigenous Peoples, conducted a working visit to Suriname from January 23 to 25, 2013, accompanied by staff from the Executive Secretariat. In the course of the visit the delegation met several organizations that work in defense of the rights of LGBTI persons and issued a series of recommendations to the State on the subject.²

108. During the months of January and February 2013 the technical team supporting the Unit participated in various promotion activities. On January 22, 2013, an informational meeting on the LGBTI approach of the IACHR was held with persons from Chile from the American Corners Program, organized by the U.S. Department of State. On January 25, 2013, it took part in a fair for Georgetown University law students, organized by Georgetown Outlaw, that university's LGBTQ organization. On February 12, 2013, it participated in a discussion/interview entitled, "*Homophobia in Honduras*," organized by Huffington Post, in the context of the presence in the United States of the founder of the Movement for Diversity in Resistance in Honduras.³ Moreover, on February 12, 2013, the technical team that supports the Unit organized a Brown Bag Lunch with Executive Secretariat staff to discuss intersex issues. On February 14, 2013, staff from the Unit attended a meeting organized by the Human Rights Campaign on violence and discrimination against LGTB persons in Honduras.

109. During its 147th session, from March 7 to 22, 2013, the Commission held three regional hearings, which it described as "important and landmark": the human rights situation of lesbian women; the human rights situation of intersex persons; and the human rights situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual transgender, and intersex persons of diverse descent. In addition, it received information on the human rights situation of LGBTI persons in Colombia and Honduras.⁴

110. On March 5, 2013, the principal specialist of the Unit was a commenter in the launching in Washington DC of the report "The Night is Another Country: Impunity and violence against transgender women human rights defenders in Latin America," produced by the Latin American and Caribbean Network of Trans Persons (REDLACTRANS) and the HIV/AIDS International Alliance.

111. On March 6, 2013, the principal specialist of the Unit participated in a hearing of the United States Congress convened by the Representative of the First District of the State of Rhode Island, David Cicilline. The hearing examined the situation of human rights of the LGTB population in the Americas.

112. On March 15, 2013, two specialists of the Unit took part remotely in the conference in El Salvador on "Happiness and Sexual Diversity as Human Rights," organized by Legal Aid for Sexual Diversity in El Salvador.

² IACHR, Press Release No. 9/13, "IACHR Concludes Its Working Visit to Suriname," February 12, 2013, available at https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2013/009.asp.

³ Huffington Post, Huffpost Live, February 12, 2013, available at: <http://live.huffingtonpost.com/#/segment/honduran-lgbt-deaths/51182bf202a7606b400006c3>.

⁴ IACHR, Press Release No. 23A, "Annex to the Press Release Issued at the Close of the 147th Session", April 5, 2013, available at: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2013/023A.asp.

113. On March 22, 2013, a specialist of the Unit participated in a briefing on the Unit with eight professors from two Colombian universities (Santiago University of Cali and Pontifical Javerian University of Cali), with attendance facilitated by American University.

114. On March 23, 2013, at the headquarters of the IACHR, the Unit organized a roundtable on “Dialogue on Families, Interpersonal Relations, and Rights of LGTBI Persons,” led by Commissioner Tracy Robinson. The Executive Secretary made welcoming remarks, followed by a discussion with the participation of more than 10 experts on the subject of interpersonal relations and LGBTI persons. This roundtable took place in the context of a series of meetings of experts that the Unit has been holding on different topics pertaining to the rights of these persons: health, violence, employment, and political participation, as part of the preparation of a regional report on the rights of LGBTI persons.

115. From April 3 to 5, 2013, the principal specialist of the Unit took part in the regional pre-conference of civil society and the Regional State Seminar on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, the latter of which was organized by the Brazilian government in preparation for the Oslo Seminar on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.

116. On April 15 and 16, 2013, Commissioner Tracy Robinson, in charge of the Unit, and the Principal Specialist of the LGBTI Unit participated in the Oslo Conference on Human Rights, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity, cosponsored by Norway and South Africa. Specifically, Commissioner Robinson moderated the roundtable on “Violence against LGBT persons” and was a panelist on the introductory panel for the discussion.

117. On May 17, 2013, to commemorate the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia, the IACHR, at the Unit’s request, issued a statement urging OAS member states to take measures to ensure that their male and female officials respect the rights of persons with diverse sexual orientations, identities, and gender expressions in the societies of the Americas. The statement also urged the States to contribute decisively to the construction of a climate of tolerance and respect in which all persons, including gays, lesbians, and trans, bisexual, and intersex persons and those who defend their rights may freely express their thoughts and opinions without fear of being attacked, punished, or stigmatized for it.⁵

118. During Commissioner Robinson’s visit to Honduras, from May 14 to 18, 2013, she had follow-up meetings on precautionary measures related to the rights of LGBTI persons, and meetings with civil society groups working to defend and promote their rights.

119. On May 24, 2013, the principal specialist of the Unit was a judge in the final round of the human rights contest organized by the American University Washington College of Law, the central theme of which was the rights of LGBTI persons in a hypothetical case co-drafted by the principal specialist.

⁵ CIDH, Press Release No. 37/13, “The IACHR Calls Member States to Ensure Respect of the Rights of LGTBI Persons by Public Officials”, May 17, 2013, available at: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2013/037.asp.

120. On June 19, 2013, the specialist of the unit participated in an event organized by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, titled 2013 LGBT Pride Celebration, in honor of the gays and lesbians who work for government agencies in the Foreign Service.

121. On August 15, 2013, the Unit issued a press release reiterating its deep concern over the violence and discrimination against LGBTI persons in general, and expressed special concern over the significant violence and discrimination faced by gay, lesbian, and trans youth in the Americas. In this press release, the IACHR urged States to take all necessary measures to apply due diligence in preventing, investigating and sanctioning violence against LGBTI persons, regardless of whether it occurs in the family, the community, or the public sphere, including education and health facilities. This includes the adoption of policies and public campaigns to promote awareness and respect for the human rights of LGBTI persons, in all sectors, including the educational and family settings, as a means to combat the prejudices that underlie violence related to sexual orientation and gender identity and expression.⁶

122. The Unit also issued a press release expressing its concern over a wave of violence against LGBTI persons in Haiti, which was reportedly connected to a protest against homosexuality led by the Haitian Coalition of Religious and Moral Organizations (*Coalition Haïtienne des Organisations Religieuses et Morales*) in Port-au-Prince on July 19, 2013. The IACHR urged Haitian State authorities to conduct the adequate investigations and prevent these acts.⁷

123. On September 11, 2013, Commissioner Tracy Robinson gave a talk at the University of Puerto Rico School of Law, at the “Forum to Assert Violations of the Rights of the LGBTI Community,” sponsored by the Clinic on Discrimination based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Pro Bono Sexual Rights UPR, ILSA-UPR and Pangea. The Rapporteur spoke about the IACHR’s work to promote respect for the rights of gays, lesbians, bisexual, trans, and intersex persons.

124. Additionally, the Unit held a meeting of experts on education, culture, and the rights of LGBTI persons on September 12-13, 2013 at IACHR headquarters, which was led by Commissioner Rosa María Ortiz, the Rapporteur on the Rights of the Child. More than 15 experts of different nationalities attended the meeting, which included discussion and debate on issues such as education on human rights and gender; bullying at school based on real or perceived sexual orientation or on gender identity or gender expression; the right to comprehensive sex education; access to education for trans persons; strategies for raising awareness of key players in the field of education; and the influence of the media, marketing techniques, religious groups, and cultural patterns of discrimination, segregation, and prejudice against LGBTI persons. Participants also examined the relationship between discrimination and violence against LGBTI persons and normativity, gender binarism and misogyny. Furthermore, the situation of violence against children and adolescents in the educational setting, including its causes and consequences, was widely debated.⁸

⁶ IACHR, Press Release No. 60/13, “IACHR expresses concern about violence and discrimination against LGBTI persons, particularly youth, in the Americas”, August 15, 2013, available at: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2013/060.asp.

⁷ IACHR, Press Release No. 54/13, “IACHR Condemns Recent Wave of Violence against LGBTI Persons in Haiti”, July 30, 2013, available at: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2013/054.asp.

⁸ IACHR, Press Release No. 68/13, “IACHR Holds Regional Meeting on Education, Culture, and Rights of LGBTI Persons”, September 19, 2013, available at: http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2013/068.asp.

125. During the month of October 2013, Commissioner Robinson participated as a presenter on a panel on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in International Human Rights Law. The event was part of a parliamentary conference on “Protecting Human Rights, Combating Discrimination, and Addressing HIV/AIDS of Persons with Diverse Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities.” The seminar, which took place October 9-11, 2013, was organized jointly by the Chamber of Deputies of the Dominican Republic and the organization Parliamentarians for Global Action.

126. Unit staff took part in the Course on the Inter-American and International Systems for the Protection of Human Rights organized for civil society organizations at the headquarters of the IACHR from October 21 to November 1, 2013, which focused in particular, on this occasion, on the rights of LGBTI persons.

127. During the 149th session, held from October 24 to November 8, 2013, the IACHR held three hearings on the situation of LGBTI persons in the region. In that regard, the IACHR acknowledged a number of encouraging signs in El Salvador, Brazil, and Guyana in terms of progress toward equality for LGBTI persons. However, the Commission urged that urgent measures be adopted to protect these individuals from violence and discrimination.⁹

128. From October 18 to 25, 2013, the IACHR distributed a questionnaire for the regional report that it is preparing on the situation of violence against LGBTI persons in the Americas.¹⁰

129. On October 24, 2013, the IACHR issued a press release in which it expressed concern at mob attacks, police abuse, and other forms of violence against LGBTI persons recorded during the months of August and September 2013, and it reiterated its appeal for member states to adopt urgent measures to prevent and punish such acts.¹¹

130. On November 8, 2013, the IACHR decided to create the Office of the Rapporteur on the Rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex (LGBTI) Persons, which will start to function on February 1, 2014, continuing the work that the Unit has been carrying out hitherto.¹²

131. On November 15, 2013, the Unit’s specialist took part as a panelist in an LGBTQ Rights Around the World Symposium, specifically in a panel discussion on “Attitudes and Laws: Challenges Faced by Members of the LGBTQ Abroad,” organized by OutLaw, an organization of LGBTQA students, at Georgetown University Law Center.

⁹ IACHR, Press Release No. 83A/13, “Annex to the Press Release Issued at the Close of the 149th Session,” November 8, 2013, available at https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2013/083A.asp.

¹⁰ Questionnaire for the Report on Violence against Lesbian, Gay, Trans, Bisexual and Intersex Persons in the Americas, available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/lgtbi/docs/CuestLGTBIViolenciaesp.pdf>.

¹¹ IACHR, Press Release No. 79/13, “IACHR Expresses Concern about Mob Attacks, Police Abuse and other Forms of Violence against LGBTI Persons,” October 24, 2013, available at <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/prensa/comunicados/2013/079.asp>.

¹² IACHR, Press Release No. 94/13, “IACHR creates Rapporteurship to address issues of Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Body Diversity” November 25, 2013, available at https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2013/094.asp.

132. On November 21 and 22 2013, the IACHR issued two press releases drawing attention to information that it had received in August, September, and October 2013. One of the press releases highlighted progress recorded in OAS member states in guaranteeing equality for LGBTI persons in the region.¹³ The purpose of the other press release was to underscore the situation of violence and discrimination against LGBTI persons, especially children and adolescents, in schools and family contexts.¹⁴

133. On November 29, 2013, Commissioner Robinson took part as a panelist in the “First Specialized International Course on Human Rights: Access to International Systems for Protection of Human Rights: Homage to Elías Carranza,” organized by the Colombian Institute of Human Rights (*Instituto Colombiano de Derechos Humanos*) in Cartagena, Colombia.

9. Unit on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights

134. At the 146th regular session, held from October 29 to November 16, 2012, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, in accordance with its commitment to strengthening its work to protect and promote economic, social, and cultural rights, and in response to suggestions made by the States and by civil society, decided to create a Unit on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ESCR), headed by Commissioner Rose-Marie Belle Antoine.

135. The Unit on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has a mandate to cooperate in the analysis and evaluation of the situation of these rights in the Americas; provide advice to the IACHR in the processing of individual petitions, cases, and requests for precautionary and provisional measures in connection with these rights; undertake working visits to OAS member States; and prepare studies and reports. It should be noted that the IACHR has worked relentlessly on ESCR, both in the framework of the individual petitions system and as part of its activities in monitoring and promoting ESCR as a crosscutting theme of its thematic reports and its country reports. Indeed, in analyzing the situation of human rights in different countries in the region, the IACHR has included a study on the situation of economic, social and cultural rights.

136. The IACHR is also part of the Special Working Group to Examine the National Reports Envisioned in the Protocol of San Salvador, a body that was established by the General Assembly in 2007 and has been operational since 2010. Commissioners Rose-Marie Belle Antoine and Rosa María Ortiz had been designated as lead and alternative member, respectively, of the Special Working Group.

137. On April 16, 2013, Commissioner Rose-Marie Antoine participated in a workshop in the Bahamas, in the context of the Second Meeting of the Working Groups of the XVII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labor. Commissioner Antoine made two presentations; the first was “The Situation of Vulnerable Groups in Latin America and the Caribbean as it Relates to Access to the Labor Market- Imagining A New Approach.” The second presentation was on “Human Rights and Poverty in

¹³ IACHR, Press Release No. 89/13, “IACHR acknowledges recent steps taken by several OAS Member States to further equality for LGBTI persons,” November 21, 2013, available at http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2013/089.asp.

¹⁴ IACHR, Press Release No. 92/13, “The IACHR is concerned about violence and discrimination against LGBTI persons in the context of education and family settings,” November 22, 2013, available at http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2013/092.asp.

Latin America and the Caribbean.” Commissioner Antoine was part of a panel. Workshop participants were labor Ministers and other government officials, as well as members of advisory bodies such as the International Labor Organization (ILO).

138. On May 9, 2013, Commissioner Rose-Marie Antoine led an event in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to present the Unit on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights of the IACHR (DESC Unit), which was conducted in the context of a Regional Consultation on that thematic. The event was attended by experts, civil society representatives, and academics, which provided many suggestions to help the DESC Unit consolidate its work agenda and prioritize certain thematic areas of special concern to civil society. The event was held in cooperation with the Center for Legal and Social Studies (CELS).

139. On May 10, 2013, while in Argentina, Commissioner Rose-Marie Antoine and a lawyer specialist of the Executive Secretariat met with senior officials of the Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security; and with Héctor Timerman, Foreign Affairs Minister of Argentina. On that occasion Commissioner Antoine described the work of the DESC Unit and received a commitment from the authorities visited to cooperate in the work of the IACHR in the ESCR area.

140. Between May 14 and 15, 2013 was held at the ECLAC headquarters in Santiago, Chile, a "Meeting of Experts to Define Strategic Priorities of the Regional Agenda on the Status of Persons with Disabilities", where Commissioner Rose-Marie Belle Antoine was invited and participated in the Panel No 2: Effective Realization of the rights of persons with disabilities. The Commissioner gave a presentation about “Cases of human rights violations against persons with disabilities reported to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights”.

141. On May 15, 2013, Commissioner Rose-Marie Antoine, and a specialist of the Executive Secretariat of the IACHR attorney met in Santiago de Chile with Lorena Fries Monleón, Director of the National Institute of Human Rights in Chile; Claudio Rojas Nash, Director of the Human Rights Center of the College of Law of the University of Chile; Judith Schönsteiner, Director for the Human Rights Center of the Faculty of Law of the University Diego Portales and senior officials of the Chilean Foreign Ministry. At that time, the Commissioner made a presentation of the ESCR Unit to establish collaborative links.

142. Commissioner Antoine made a presentation to the Regional Forum on Business and Human Rights in Latin-America and the Caribbean held in Medellin Colombia on 28-30 August. The event was organized by the United Nations Working Group on Business and Human Rights, the United Nations Development Program’s (UNDP) Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Government of Colombia.

143. Also, it is important to note that Commissioners Rose-Marie Belle Antoine and Rosa María Ortiz, as members of the Working Group to Examine the National Reports Envisioned in the Protocol of San Salvador, have continued to work at it.

144. It should be noted that the ESCR Unit has continued to receive information on different situations related to these rights in the hemisphere. During 2013, the Commission held two thematic hearings in this regard: “Freedom for Trade Unions in Chile” and “The Situation of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights of Farmers in Latin America,” which provided the IACHR with the opportunity to address these issues during its 149 period of sessions. In addition, the ESCR Unit is currently planning for a future Regional Consultation to continue its work of strategic assessment, which began with the Regional

Consultation of May 9, 2013 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, with a wide representation of different sectors of civil society, social movements, and subject-matter experts.

145. Lastly, it should be noted that the “Special Forum on Race, Discrimination and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in North America,” co-organized by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and McGill University, was held in Montreal, Canada on November 22-23, 2013. On the part of the Commission, the forum was organized by the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Persons of African Descent and the Unit on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, both of which fall under the responsibility of Commissioner Rose-Marie Antoine. During the Forum, Commissioner Antoine stated that “the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has a special interest in the analysis of the intersectional relationship between race, discrimination, and economic, social and cultural rights, in its interaction with the United States and Canada.” “Through this forum, we will gather crucial information and points of view on this topic from some of the experts who have studied these matters in depth.” In addition to Commissioner Antoine, Commissioner José de Jesús Orozco Henríquez, President of the IACHR, participated on behalf of the Commission.

B. Thematic and country reports

146. During 2013, the Inter-American Commission approved the following reports:

Report of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on the Situation of Persons Deprived of Liberty in Honduras

The Right of Boys and Girls to a Family. Alternative care. Ending Institutionalization in the Americas

Guarantees for the Independence of Justice Operators. Towards Strengthening Access to Justice and the Rule of Law in the Americas

Friendly Settlement Procedure Impact Report

Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact in the Americas: Recommendations for the Full Respect of their Human Rights

Report on Pre-trial detention in the Americas

Report on the Human Rights Situation of Migrants and other Persons in the Context of Human Mobility in Mexico

Truth, Justice and Reparation: Fourth Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Colombia

C. Promotional activities

147. On February 12, 2013, Emilio Álvarez Icaza, Executive Secretary of the IACHR participated in the seminar, “Development Actors,” organized by the Colegio de Mexico. On February 25, he also participated in two events in Washington, D.C.: a roundtable organized by Americas Quarterly on the reform process of the IACHR, and a roundtable on the “Milestones and Challenges in

the Advancement of the Rights of Afro-Descendants in the Americas,” organized by the IACHR’s Office of the Rapporteur on that topic, with assistance from the OAS’ Department of International Affairs.

148. A specialist from the Executive Secretariat participated as a consultant in the “Dominican Model on the Inter-American System” (MODOSI) from February 21 to 24 in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. MODOSI included models from the Permanent Council, the General Assembly, the Summit of the Americas, and the Board of Governors of the Inter-American Development Bank. The topic of the Permanent Council model was the right to freedom of expression.

149. On April 3, 2013, the Executive Secretariat participated in the Fifteenth Annual Grotius Lecture in the framework of the 107th Annual Meeting: International Law in a Multipolar World of the American Society of International Law, through the lecture on *The Inter-American System and Challenges for its Future*, in which he addressed issues related to the role that the IACHR has played in the region, its function in the strengthening of the Inter-American Human Rights System, and its main challenges. That meeting was aimed at professionals, scholars, and students interested in debating and discussing the latest developments in international law.

150. On April 19 and 20, 2013 an attorney from the Executive Secretariat participated in the conference, *The Quest for Global Environmental Equity in an Increasingly Inequitable World*, sponsored by the Goodwin-Niering Center for the Environment at Connecticut College. The conference addressed environmental injustice, its causes, and possible solutions. In attendance were professionals with different areas of expertise, including biologists, political scientists, attorneys, and activists from nongovernmental organizations devoted to protecting the environment. On that occasion, the attorney from the Executive Secretariat gave a presentation on the environmental damage caused by extractive industries in Latin America and the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples to their territory.

151. On May 7, the Executive Secretary participated in the II Brazilian Interdisciplinary Course on Human Rights, implemented jointly by the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (IIHR) and the Brazilian Institute of Human Rights (IBDH) in Fortaleza, Brazil, in the lecture on *Access to the Inter-American Human Rights System: The Commission*, the objective of which was to promote training and debate on human rights in Brazil and in the inter-American system.

152. On May 10, 2013, the Deputy Executive Secretary gave a class on the Commission’s work to representatives of the United States government at the U.S. Department of State’s Foreign Service Institute.

153. On May 14, the Executive Secretary took part in the *Academic seminar on the inter-American system for the protection of human rights*, organized by the OAS Country Office in Uruguay, the Training Center of the Public and Fiscal Ministry (MEC), together with the Foreign Service Artigas Institute (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), in the talk on "Protecting human rights in the inter-American system."

154. On May 15, 2013 an attorney from the Executive Secretariat participated in a videoconference on "Respect for the human and labor rights of migrants," together with panelists from the OAS Department of Social Development and Employment and a group of students participating from Mexico City, as part of the course on Social Security in Globalization offered by the Inter-American Center for Social Security Studies.

155. On May 23, 2013 a group of professionals from the IACHR Executive Secretariat gave talks at Headquarters on the inter-American system to participants in the Inter-American Human Rights Moot Court Competition at the American University Washington College of Law.

156. On June 10, 11, and 12, the Executive Secretary gave a course on various topics related to the Inter-American human rights system to students of the Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law of American University.

157. On June 11, 2013, an attorney from the Executive Secretariat gave a class to a group of diplomats on the inter-American human rights system at the U.S. Department of State's Foreign Service Institute. The class is part of the Foreign Service Institute's Southern Cone Area Studies.

158. In July 2013, several specialists from the Secretariat spoke at the Third Course on the Inter-American System for the Protection of Human Rights, taught at IACHR headquarters for the benefit of government representatives.

159. On August 20, 2013, the Executive Secretary gave a lecture entitled "Current status of the concept of Ombudsman in Mexico: conditions and perspectives," on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Ibero-American University in Mexico City.

160. On September 4-5, Commissioner José de Jesús Orozco Henríquez, President of the IACHR, and the Executive Secretary of the IACHR, took part in two events in Lima, Peru, discussing the Commission's recent reform process, with special emphasis on the impact of the reforms on human rights defense in the hemisphere and the new challenges arising from the process.

161. On September 9, the Executive Secretary gave a presentation on "the participation of the Ombudsman in citizenship- building," at the symposium entitled "The Office of the Ombudsman in the words of its leaders," held in Mexico.

162. On September 13, Deputy Executive Secretary Elizabeth Abi-Mershed took part in a round table on Guantánamo Bay, organized by American University. The Assistant Executive Secretary also taught a class about the Commission's work to representatives of the United States government at the Foreign Service Institute of the U.S. Department of State.

163. Commissioners José de Jesús Orozco, Rosa María Ortiz, Felipe González and Rodrigo Escobar Gil, as well as the Executive Secretary, the Deputy Executive Secretary and other specialists from the Secretariat took part in the "Héctor Fix Zamudio" training course on the Inter-American human rights system. The seminar was held in October, at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM).

164. In November 2013, Commissioner Tracy Robinson, Commissioner José de Jesús Orozco Henríquez, the IACHR Executive Secretary, and a specialist from the Executive Secretariat, participated as panelists at the "First Specialized International Course on Human Rights: Access to International Human Rights Protection Systems: In Homage to Elías Carranza," organized by the Colombian Human Rights Institute in Cartagena, Colombia.

165. From December 10 to December 13, Commissioner Rosa María Ortiz took part in the World Forum on Human Rights organized by the Secretariat for Human Rights of the Office of the President of the Republic of Brazil; the objective of the Forum was to promote an environment for public debate on human rights in Brazil and in the world, and specifically, the sharing of ideas on the progress made and challenges existing regarding social participation, reducing inequality, and the responses made by States to violations of human rights and the fight against impunity.

166. On December 10, 2013, the Commission was invited to a training seminar on human rights in Haiti by the International Institute of Human Rights of Strasbourg in order to discuss the Inter-American Human Rights System. An attorney from the Executive Secretariat participated in representation of the IACHR, delivering a six-hour discussion on the Inter-American Human Rights System to 93 people, among them, prosecutors, judges, attorneys, representatives of civil society, and students.