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IACHR

ANNUAL REPORT

2023



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Doc. 386 rev. 1

December 31, 2023

Original: Spanish

Annual Report of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights 2023

GENERAL SECRETARIAT
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C

OAS Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Annual Report of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2023: approved by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on December 31, 2023 / Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

v. ; cm. (OAS. Official records; OEA/Ser.L/V/II)

ISBN 978-0-8270-7806-2 (v. 1)

ISBN 978-0-8270-7807-9 (v.2)

ISBN 978-0-8270-7808-6 (v.3)

1. Human Rights--America--Periodicals. 2. Civil rights—America--Periodicals. 3. Freedom of Speech—America. 4. I. Title. II. Series. III. Annual Report of the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, 2023 (v. 2). IV. Annual Report of the Special Rapporteur on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights (REDESCA), VII, 2023 (v.3).

OEA/Ser.L/V/II. doc. 386/23

INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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Approved by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on December 31, 2023.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS 2023

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INTRODUCTION

1. In compliance with its mandates and the provisions of Article 59 of its Rules of Procedure, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) presents its Annual Report, which summarizes the work carried out through its mechanisms and the most relevant results achieved by this main body of the Organization of American States (OAS) from January 1 to December 31, 2023.

2. Thanks to the member states' decision to strengthen the capacities of the principal bodies of the inter-American human rights system by increasing their budget, and through the commitment and dedication of its Executive Secretariat's staff, under the leadership of Executive Secretary Tania Reneaum Panszi, the IACHR has consolidated and strengthened its presence in the region through outstanding achievements and results.

3. The IACHR began implementing its new [2023-2027 Strategic Plan](#), through nine strategic objectives and 34 programs seeking to achieve substantive long-term changes for the greater enjoyment of all human rights by all people in the hemisphere—the ultimate aim of the IACHR—and to make an essential contribution to the inter-American public interest. As reported in the [First Report on the Implementation of the 2023–2027 Strategic Plan](#) and in this Annual Report, the IACHR has made significant progress during 2023 in meeting the targets and objectives defined in this new Strategic Plan.

4. The achievements in terms of overcoming the procedural backlog and offering users of the inter-American human rights system a faster and more efficient response are noteworthy. Other results detailed in Chapter II of this Annual Report include the initial study of 88 percent of the 2,692 petitions received, the approval of 216 admissibility reports and 100 merits reports, and the referral of 34 cases to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

5. With regard to the petition and case system, this year saw a significant increase in the use and the follow-up of friendly settlements, with 19 new agreements signed and 32 agreements approved in 2023—the highest number of approved agreements in the history of this mechanism. There was an especially notable increase in the implementation of measures in 81 friendly settlement agreements, including full compliance with 112 measures of reparation.

6. Through its work in the petition and case system, the IACHR has deepened and consolidated its case law, reinforcing predictability, defining clearer human rights standards, and securing redress for victims of human rights violations.

7. As part of its commitments under the new Strategic Plan, the IACHR made progress in the development of a prioritization policy, which is currently under review by the IACHR, to manage pending matters appropriately and clearly, with a view to addressing matters more promptly when warranted. With this aim, the Commission held the [“Event Series: Reflections and Experiences for the Timely Delivery of Justice at the IACHR,”](#) to increase access to justice in the inter-American system by identifying, reflecting on, and analyzing its own and comparative experiences in the prioritization of cases.

8. Regarding precautionary measures, the Commission ensured at least one supervisory action in 100 percent of the precautionary measures in force and made sure the reports submitted by the parties were relayed to the other parties at least once a year in 100 percent of its portfolio of precautionary measures in force. It also analyzed 92.93 percent of the 1133 requests for precautionary measures received in the same year, granting and/or extending 52 precautionary measures by means of 51 resolutions, protecting over 13,040 identifiable individuals and groups. It adopted three follow-up resolutions on precautionary measures in force, fully lifting 36 precautionary measures in force and partially lifting two others, for a total of 91 resolutions on

precautionary measures. The Commission also filed six new requests for provisional measures and three requests for extensions, seven of which were granted by the Inter-American Court.

9. Another highlight of the year was the implementation of GAIA, the new central processing system for petitions and cases and precautionary measures. It is a software app designed to streamline the Commission's internal processes and enhance the parties' user experience in accessing the inter-American human rights system.

10. The IACHR continued to strengthen its work with the member states of the region to improve the coordination of the measures adopted to overcome the procedural backlog. It has increased the number of portfolio review meetings, and the number of working and advisory meetings during follow-up of compliance with recommendations, after which cases are referred to the Court or reports are published.

11. The Commission also continued to consolidate the timely and relevant monitoring of the human rights situation in the region by developing and enhancing standards, publishing 11 thematic reports and 2 country reports on the situation of human rights in Peru and Nicaragua, issuing 135 press releases, positioning the IACHR on social media to address relevant human rights situations in the region in an agile and timely manner, and sending 81 requests for information to 35 states regarding human rights situations.

12. The Commission observed the situation of human rights in 14 countries through two on-site visits to Bolivia and Honduras (March 27-31 and April 24-28, respectively); and 12 working, promotional and/or cooperation visits, to wit: a working visit to Peru from January 11 to 13; a promotional and technical cooperation visit to Suriname from February 6 to 8; a promotional visit to Paraguay from March 20 to 22; working visits to Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay from June 5 to 9; a technical cooperation and promotional visit to St. Lucia from June 27 to 30; a promotional visit to New Mexico (United States) from July 26 to 27; a promotional visit to Costa Rica between August 28 and 29; a promotional visit to Mexico between August 30 and 31; a promotional visit to Brazil between September 18 and 23; a promotional visit to Mexico from September 25 to 27; a technical cooperation and promotional visit to Guyana between November 28 and December 1; and a promotional visit to Canada from December 11 to 14.

13. The IACHR also reinforced its Special Mechanisms for Monitoring Recommendations, with the publication of the Special Follow-Up Mechanism for Nicaragua (MESENI) report "Closure of Civic Space in Nicaragua" and the report "Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela" of the Special Follow-Up Mechanism for Venezuela (MESEVE). As part of the work of the Follow-up Mechanism on the Implementation of the Recommendations of Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts for Bolivia (MESEG), two working visits were carried out, one from January 24 to 26, and one high-level visit in November. The [First Follow-up Report concerning the Recommendations of the GIEI for Bolivia](#) was published. Regarding the Follow-up Mechanism on the Recommendations of the Working Visit to Colombia, on January 25, the IACHR presented its [First Follow-up Report concerning 28 Recommendations Issued in June 2021](#), and on July 9, it set up the [Joint Mechanism to Monitor Recommendations Made to Colombia](#). Lastly, the Joint Follow-up Mechanism on the Recommendations Held in the Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Chile (MESECH) carried out a working visit to Chile on June 19 and 20, 2009.

14. The innovations of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan also include the development of a project on early warnings on risks to democratic institutions, to be carried out over three years (2022-2025). This is an initiative to strengthen the IACHR's methodology for the preventive monitoring of democratic institutional frameworks, with a crosscutting and multidisciplinary structure and development process. It will foster technological innovations, such as the introduction of data science, to strengthen information management.

15. The IACHR maintained its public presence and relevance in the region and, in addition to conducting the abovementioned visits, held three sessions in a hybrid format. Special mention should be made of the 186th Session held in Los Angeles, which allowed the Commission to build relationships with the University of California (UCLA) community and the local human rights community.

16. The IACHR has also continued to strengthen its ties with the Caribbean countries, holding meetings with the group of that region's states during its periods of sessions, carrying out working visits to Guyana, Saint Lucia, and Suriname, holding bilateral meetings with states, and conducting training activities for public officials from Caribbean countries.

17. The Commission continued to strengthen its promotion and training efforts for member states' public officials, civil society organizations, students, and other social actors. The IACHR held 107 training events and 214 promotion activities about the inter-American human rights system to raise awareness about the system and its mechanisms and standards and about priority issues and rights. These activities reached 82,959 people, of whom 5,729 received training.

18. In the area of technical cooperation, the Commission formalized its partnerships with different institutions by signing eight new inter institutional cooperation agreements. It also implemented the second edition of its Specialized Academic Network of Technical Cooperation, with the participation of universities and other educational centers in the region.

19. The IACHR continued to strengthen its presence within OAS political bodies by delivering 24 presentations to them.

20. Also noteworthy was the participation of the states in all the activities carried out by the Commission during the year, including public hearings, consultations, training workshops, bilateral and multilateral meetings, and on-site and working visits, among others. Most of the region's states took part in the 70 hearings held over three periods of sessions. The IACHR also held regular meetings with regional groups of states during its periods of sessions. In addition, 11 meetings were held to review portfolios of petitions, cases, precautionary measures, and friendly settlements, and to follow up on the recommendations made to ten countries.

21. The Commission highlights the participation of civil society in the activities of the IACHR. Numerous civil society organizations participated in the public hearings held during the 186th, 187th and 188th Periods of Sessions. During the 186th Period of Sessions, an open meeting was held in a hybrid format with U.S. civil society, in which organizations provided information on specific issues and on the general human rights situation in the United States, and a virtual meeting was held with civil society about risks and impacts on democratic institutions in the region as part of the 187th Period of Sessions. The IACHR held meetings with civil society organizations during two on-site visits and 14 working visits. It also organized regular meetings with coalitions and networks of human rights organizations in the region.

22. The participation of states and civil society is essential for the IACHR to fully comply with its mandate to promote and protect human rights. The IACHR appreciates and thanks the states and civil society for their active collaboration.

23. The IACHR continued to deepen its cooperation with other international human rights organizations under Program 30 of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. In the United Nations system, the IACHR continued to strengthen its cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). The event on Security and Human Rights held with experts from the region during the 188th Period of Sessions was particularly noteworthy. The IACHR also promoted its cooperation with the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2023, including a meeting with the president of this body. It maintained the practice implemented in previous years of providing its input to the Universal Periodic Review of Canada, Colombia, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic. It continued to collaborate with working groups and special procedures of the United Nations Human Rights Council. The IACHR participated in a series of events organized to mark the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the World Forum on Refugees, both in Geneva. It also continued to deepen its ties with other regional bodies in 2023. It carried out activities with the African Commission on Human Rights, the Caribbean Ombudsman Association (CAROA) and the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and the MERCOSUR Institute of Public Policies on Human Rights (IPPDH).

24. The IACHR continued to step up its efforts in the areas of transparency, accountability, and access to information. It published a press release on the results of the first six months of implementation of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan and created new information sections on its website. It also held a public consultation on its Policy on Access to Information and Proactive Transparency (PAITP).

25. The Commission continued to implement the [Inter-American SIMORE](#), an online software tool with over 7,144 classified and systematized recommendations relating to approved friendly settlement agreements, annual reports (Chapter IV.B), published merits reports, country reports, thematic reports, and precautionary measures granted. Also noteworthy is the publication by the [IACHR Impact Observatory](#) of the [Report on National Mechanisms to Implement Human Rights Recommendations](#), the Compendium on Progress and Compliance with Recommendations and Other Decisions, the booklet *Impact, and Effects of the Implementation of Resolution 1/2020 on the Pandemic and Human Rights*, and the compendium entitled [IACHR Impacts](#), which is a compilation of research and academic papers on the process of identifying, analyzing, and discussing the impact of IACHR activities and resolutions in the region.

26. As part of the strategy to publicize reports, issues, and the work of its rapporteurships, the IACHR carried out 20 digital campaigns to disseminate standards with a total of 2,817,285 million views and 38,873 interactions with the IACHR's social media accounts. These campaigns addressed the following topics: the 8 March Campaign; the Pandemic and Human Rights Booklet; the Report on Peru; the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; the 2022 Annual Report, the 186th, 187th, and 188th Periods of Sessions; the Pandemic and Human Rights Report; the Report on Older Persons; the Report on Labor and Union Rights in Cuba; the Chile Mechanism; the Colombia Follow-up Mechanism; Pride; The exhibit "Being Women at ESMA"; and the Report on Haiti, as well as the dissemination of courses and questionnaires for public consultation, among others.

27. Another noteworthy development was the launching of the Co-Labora Program, *Construyamos nuestro espacio* ("Working Together, Building our Own Space"), which aims to improve the workplace environment and change the organizational culture, particularly the Leadership and Personnel Management Development Program for the Executive Secretariat's Management Team and Coordinators (23 people), designed to enhance basic and essential personnel management skills.

28. The management of public competitions to fill 26 vacant positions—nine financed by regular funds and 17 by specific funds—and the selection of Javier Palummo to head the Office of the Special Rapporteur on Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights (REDESCA) also deserves mention.

29. The Commission continues to strive to make the IACHR more transparent in its processes, more predictable in its objectives and goals, and more result-oriented in its planning and management. The Commission will continue to foster a management approach that embraces dialogue and a shared willingness to solve problems, keeping its responses and commitment focused on the best interests of victims, their families, and the public in general.

30. The IACHR is grateful to the inter-American civil society human rights organizations, the OAS member and observer states, international and regional agencies, OAS Secretary General Luis Almagro and his team, as well as the team of the IACHR Executive Secretariat for all the support they provided in pursuit of the accomplishments presented in this Annual Report. It also thanks the member states for strengthening the IACHR through the sustained increase of the regular fund. It thanks the member countries, observers, and donors whose voluntary contributions have been decisive for achieving the outcomes presented in this report: Canada, Costa Rica, the United States, Mexico, Panama, Peru, the European Commission, Spain, France, Ireland, Italy, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, Sweden, the Arcus Foundation, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Ford Foundation, Google/Meta and the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), the O'Neill Institute, George Washington University and UNESCO.

31. The IACHR dedicates its work to the memory of victims and acknowledges the leading role of civil society organizations and social movements in building societies that are more just and more respectful of human rights.

A. Progress Achieved

32. Pursuant to Article 59 of its Rules of Procedure¹, in Chapter IV.A of this report the Commission provides a descriptive overview of the human rights situation in the region, highlighting the main trends, progress, and challenges in the area of human rights based on the cross-cutting themes and topics prioritized in its Strategic Plan. Below, the Commission identifies the main advances made by the member states during 2023. The actions referred to stand out for being aimed at promoting and protecting the human rights of individuals in accordance with the international obligations assumed by the States and contained in the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man, the American Convention on Human Rights, and other inter-American instruments on the subject.

33. Each year, the IACHR highlights a series of measures, policies, practices, and programs adopted by States in the Americas as examples of good practices that comply with inter-American human rights standards, although their inclusion in this section does not translate into general considerations regarding the human rights situation in the countries referenced, which can be consulted in detail in Chapter 4 of this report.

34. The measures highlighted in this section are classified into three groups. The first refers to cross-cutting and intersectoral issues that have a multidimensional impact on human rights protection guarantees. Within this group are those actions that the States have taken to strengthen democratic institutions, participation, access to justice, citizen security, and efforts to combat torture and the forced disappearance of persons, and to prevent violence. The second group refers to measures adopted by States to protect priority populations including those in vulnerable circumstances and those who have historically been victims of discrimination. Finally, the third group includes actions taken to strengthen public policies in a number of areas that are strategic for human rights. It should be noted that the survey of measures included here corresponds to the chapters for each country and is part of the trends that are described in greater detail in section A of chapter 4, which contains an overview of the human rights situation in the region. The particular references of the measures surveyed here can be found in the section referred to.

35. With regard to the progress made in strengthening **democratic institutions**, the Commission takes note of the appointment of the members of Haiti's High Transition Council (HCT), which is designed to promote dialogue and national consensus. It also welcomes the election of the first woman and indigenous person as President of Dominica, the appointment of the first woman Governor General of Saint Kitts and Nevis, and the appointment of the first indigenous woman foreign minister in Bolivia. In addition, it recognizes a landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision that safeguards the right to vote and prevents gerrymandering of electoral districts. Also important are actions to guarantee political rights in the general elections in Panama. The Commission also draws attention to the development of electoral processes that included initiatives to guarantee the political rights of persons with disabilities in Paraguay. The Commission likewise takes note of the enactment of procurement legislation aimed at increasing accountability and transparency in Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname's efforts to combat corruption through the installation of the Anti-Corruption Commission that will focus on maintaining the rule of law by preventing acts of corruption.

36. With regard to **access to justice**, the IACHR noted with satisfaction the measures taken in Canada for the use of technology and artificial intelligence as tools to promote equal access to justice. The Commission also highlights the modernization of the Supreme Court of Grenada to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of judicial services and improve access to justice and the enactment of legislation for the provision of legal aid in Belize. It also welcomes the launching of a plan to improve access to justice and overcome the language barrier in the United States. The IACHR notes the launch of the Pilot Program of the Restorative Justice Center as well, to strengthen the criminal justice system in Guyana and the efforts made in the Bahamas to improve the efficiency of the justice system and restore citizens' confidence in access to justice. Finally, the

IACHR welcomes the repeal and reform of decrees that impeded the investigation of crimes related to acts of corruption in Honduras.

37. With respect to measures to strengthen **human rights institutions**, the IACHR highlights efforts to establish a framework for the protection of human rights and National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) in the Caribbean region; in particular to advance in the establishment of NHRIs in accordance with the Paris principles. To this end, the IACHR has been supporting Ombudsperson's Offices by providing technical cooperation and inter-institutional liaison. During 2023, the State of Brazil created and reestablished various bodies and entities aimed at guaranteeing the rights of groups exposed to situations of vulnerability. The IACHR also highlights the design of methodological guidelines for applying the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) in the Executive Branch of Honduras, focusing on policies that prioritize people in vulnerable situations and promoting collaboration with civil society organizations and international agencies. It also welcomes the launch of a digital platform to follow up on Mexico's National Human Rights Plan, which serves as a form for staying in contact with citizens.

38. **Citizen security** continues to be one of the challenges facing the countries of the Americas. The Commission highlights the progress made in this area in 2023. For example, it notes that the homicide rate is continuing to fall in Honduras, Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, and Belize. It also recognizes the proposed creation of a Firearms and Ammunition Control Board in Belize. In addition, the Commission underscores the establishment of an office to address the prevention of gun violence in the United States.

39. With regard to **the second group of measures**, which includes actions to protect priority and especially vulnerable populations, the Commission takes note of the measures adopted to guarantee the universal, indivisible, and interdependent nature of human rights, considering the principles of equality and non-discrimination. These are measures intended to mitigate actions that may accentuate human rights violations against various individuals, groups, and collectivities in the Hemisphere.

40. With regard to **human rights defenders**, the Commission noted positively that countries such as Brazil, Chile, and Colombia are in the process of developing national policies for the protection of human rights defenders.

41. In relation to the **rights of indigenous peoples**, the Commission welcomes the recognition of territorial rights of Indigenous Peoples and Quilombolas in Brazil. The IACHR also notes the adoption of a series of norms, policies, and programs aimed at guaranteeing the development of indigenous peoples and the eradication of discrimination against Afro-descendant peoples in Panama. The IACHR also appreciates the incorporation of five indigenous languages to address cases in the system of assistance and counseling for women and LGBTI persons in situations of gender violence implemented in Argentina.

42. With respect to **women's rights**, and in relation to the measures adopted by the States with a view to eradicating all types of violence, for example, the Commission welcomes the creation of the Ministry of Women's Affairs in Panama. The IACHR welcomes the approval of a new Domestic Violence Law aimed at providing greater protection to victims of domestic violence in Dominica and the measures for the prevention and punishment of gender-based violence in Chile and the Dominican Republic. With respect to sexual and reproductive rights, the IACHR welcomes the publication of the Executive Decree approving the free use, sale, and marketing of Emergency Contraceptive Pills (ECP) in Honduras and the strategies for the prevention of gender-based violence and the guaranteeing of sexual and reproductive rights pursued in Brazil. The Commission also highlights the actions to mainstream the approach of equality, non-discrimination, and a life free of violence for women in the different public authorities and institutions of El Salvador, as well as the efforts to ensure women's labor rights through regulatory reforms.

43. With respect to measures to protect the **rights of persons in a context of human mobility**, including migrants, refugees, stateless, internally displaced persons, and victims of trafficking, the Commission welcomes first of all the various measures adopted to guarantee and promote the rights of migrants, for example, the new law for the prevention and protection of internally displaced persons in Honduras. The

Commission also takes note of the approval of the Regulations on Residency for International Students and Knowledge-related Activities, which streamline the administrative process for granting residency to migrants participating in educational and knowledge-related activities in Argentina. The IACHR also notes that Peru approved Law No. 31.685, which prohibits the expulsion of migrant women with children in vulnerable situations who are victims of domestic and sexual violence, human trafficking, and smuggling of migrants; and Supreme Decree No. 003-2023-IN, which establishes simplified procedures for regularizing the status of children and adolescents. With regard to the prevention, reduction, and eradication of statelessness, the Commission welcomes the amendment of Article 12 of the Federal Constitution of Brazil, which eliminates the possibility of loss of Brazilian nationality for persons who acquire another nationality.

44. With regard to **trafficking in persons**, the Commission applauds the creation of the National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons in Jamaica and progress in the fight against trafficking in persons and related crimes in Paraguay. The IACHR also takes note of the first conviction of a person for trafficking in persons under the Trafficking in Persons Act in Trinidad and Tobago. In addition, the IACHR highlights the enactment of regulatory frameworks to combat human trafficking in Ecuador.

45. With regard to the **rights of children and adolescents**, the Commission welcomes the implementation of measures and initiatives to eradicate violence and child abuse. In this regard, the Commission welcomes the approval of the law prohibiting child marriage, which granted greater protection to children and adolescents in Peru. The IACHR highlights the decision of the Privy Council of The Bahamas to allow children born in the State to acquire citizenship at birth when one of their parents is Bahamian, regardless of their marital status. It also notes the launch of the digital portal for reporting images and videos of sexual abuse of children and adolescents in the Dominican Republic. The IACHR also welcomes the initiative of Antigua and Barbuda and Paraguay to prevent and end all forms of child labor. The Commission notes the end of the civil-military school program in Brazil and the progressive demilitarization of the educational entities that were part of this program. The IACHR also highlights the initiatives of Ecuador, Guyana, and Grenada to provide early childhood support.

46. Regarding the **rights of persons deprived of their liberty**, the Commission takes note of the measures implemented in Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to facilitate the social reintegration of persons deprived of their liberty. In the same vein, the IACHR highlights Grenada's efforts to promote reintegration and restorative justice measures to reduce recidivism rates among adolescents. The Commission also underscores the willingness of the State of Ecuador to implement a work plan to enforce the cooperation agreement to strengthen the capacities of public officials in the area of the rights of persons deprived of their liberty. The Commission also takes note of the ongoing efforts to improve conditions at the Bordelais Correctional Center, Saint Lucia's only prison. The Commission also welcomes the Department of Justice's recommendations regarding access to counsel in U.S. pretrial detention facilities. In addition, the Commission learned of the passage of a Bail Act in Jamaica that aims to reform the framework for bail in the criminal justice system to facilitate access to bail.

47. Regarding the measures adopted to protect the **human rights of people of African descent and to combat racial discrimination**, the Commission values the policies for combating racism, as well as the affirmative actions for the inclusion of people of African descent and indigenous people in Brazil. It also highlights the inclusion of Afro-descendants in public policies in Chile and political participation in Ecuador. Also noteworthy is the reactivation of the Ethnic Relations Commission to promote good relations between people of different ethnic groups in Guyana.

48. On the **rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, gender diverse, and intersex (LGBTI) persons**, the Commission welcomes the promotion of legal initiatives for the protection of LGBTI persons in Costa Rica and the presentation of the Vicky Hernández educational scholarship for members of the Honduran trans population. The IACHR also welcomes the judgment of the Supreme Court of Barbados that declared the crime of sodomy under the Sexual Offences Act to be unconstitutional, as it discriminated against members of the LGBTI community. Likewise, the rights of LGBTI people were secured through the legal recognition of same-sex unions in Bolivia, as well as initiatives to guarantee access to justice for LGBTI people in Ecuador.

49. With regard to the **rights of persons with disabilities**, the Commission applauds the enactment of the law recognizing sign language in the Dominican Republic. In addition, the IACHR appreciates the initiative to establish an inclusive educational system for students with disabilities in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. It also highlights progress in guaranteeing the rights of elderly people with disabilities who are unprotected by their families or at risk of social exclusion in Peru.

50. With regard to the **rights of the elderly**, the Commission welcomes the implementation of the National Policy on Aging and Old Age in Costa Rica. The IACHR appreciates the measures adopted by the electoral bodies of Antigua and Barbuda to guarantee the right of older persons to vote. The IACHR welcomes the accession of Mexico and Suriname to the Inter-American Convention on the Protection of the Human Rights of Older Persons. Finally, the Commission highlights the participatory activities carried out by public authorities and civil society to create the first national legislation for the elderly in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

51. With regard to the **third group of measures**, the Commission highlights the actions taken to advance memory, truth, and justice policies and practices in the region. In this regard, the Commission highlights the creation of the National Plan for the Search for Victims of Forced Disappearance during the 1973-1990 civil-military dictatorship in Chile. It also highlights the progress in the investigations carried out by Colombia's Special Jurisdiction for Peace and, in particular, the opening of macro-case 11, which will investigate gender-based violence, including sexual and reproductive violence, and crimes committed out of prejudice. It also highlights dialogues with non-state armed groups as well as actions aimed at correcting historical and structural inequities in Colombia. The IACHR also noted that Bolivia implemented initiatives aimed at assisting victims of military dictatorships. For its part, the IACHR highlights the progress made in the search for missing persons in a large part of Mexico, thanks to operations conducted by the National Center for Human Identification. With respect to memory, the IACHR appreciates the inauguration of a memorial with a gender focus in Uruguay and the designation of the Former ESMA Museum in Argentina as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

52. In conclusion, the Commission observed noteworthy efforts by States to develop policies, practices, and legislative and judicial measures to advance the promotion and effective protection of the human rights of their inhabitants. It acknowledges these efforts and urges the States to continue to formulate and implement the human rights approach in public policies in response to recommendations by the bodies of the inter-American human rights system and to disseminate this approach in all State institutions and in society as a whole. The Commission places itself at the disposal of the States to provide the technical assistance required to achieve these goals.

B. Universalization of the Inter-American Human Rights System

1. Ratification Status of Inter-American Instruments

53. The current status of signatures and ratifications of inter-American treaties on human rights can be consulted on the web page of the Department of International Law of the OAS Secretariat for Legal Affairs at the following website: http://www.oas.org/es/sla/ddi/tratados_multilaterales_interamericanos_firmas.asp

Ratification status of the American Convention and acceptance of the Court's Contentious Jurisdiction

SIGNATORY COUNTRIES	SIGNATURE	RATIFICATION/ACCESSION	DEPOSIT	ACCEPTANCE OF THE COURT'S JURISDICTION
Antigua and Barbuda				
Argentina	02-02-84	14-08-84	RA 05-09-84	05-09-84
Bahamas				
Barbados	20-06-78	05-11-81	RA 27-11-82	04-06-00
Belize				
Bolivia		20-06-79	AD 19-07-79	27-07-93
Brazil		09-07-92	AD 25-09-92	10-12-98
Canada				
Chile	22-11-69	10-08-90	RA 21-08-90	21-08-90
Colombia	22-11-69	28-05-73	RA 31-07-73	21-06-85
Costa Rica	22-11-69	02-03-70	RA 08-04-70	02-07-80
Dominica		03-06-93	RA 11-06-93	
Ecuador	22-11-69	08-12-77	RA 28-12-77	27-07-84
El Salvador	22-11-69	20-06-78	RA 23-06-78	06-06-95
United States	01-06-77			
Grenada	14-07-78	14-07-78	RA 18-07-78	
Guatemala	22-11-69	27-04-78	RA 25-05-78	09-03-87
Guyana				
Haiti		14-09-77	AD 27-09-77	20-03-98
Honduras	22-11-69	05-09-77	RA 08-09-77	09-09-81
Jamaica	16-09-77	19-07-78	RA 07-08-78	
Mexico		02-03-81	AD 24-03-81	16-12-98
Nicaragua	22-11-69	25-09-79	RA 25-09-79	12-02-91
Panama	22-11-69	08-05-78	RA 22-06-78	09-05-90
Paraguay	22-11-69	18-08-89	RA 24-08-89	26-03-93
Peru	27-07-77	12-07-78	RA 28-07-78	21-01-81
Dominican Republic	07-09-77	11-01-78	RA 19-04-78	25-03-99
San Kitts and Nevis				
Saint Lucia				

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines				
Suriname		12-11-87	AD 12-11-87	12-11-87
Trinidad and Tobago		03-04-91	AD 28-05-91*	28-05-91
Uruguay	22-11-69	26-03-85	RA 19-04-85	19-04-85
Venezuela	22-11-69	07-01-19	RA 07/31/19**	07-01-19

Source: Department of International Law of the OAS General Secretariat

* Complaint filed in May 1998

** Complaint filed in September 2012

RA = RATIFICATION

AD = ACCESSION

54. With respect to the other eight treaties that make up the Inter-American System, the following table indicates the OAS member states that have ratified or acceded to them:

Status of ratification of the additional protocols to the American Convention and other Inter-American Human Rights treaties

States	PACAMDESC ²	PCADHAPM ³	CIPST ⁴	CIDFP ⁵	CIPSEVM ⁶	CIEFDPD ⁷	CICTFDI ⁸	CICDRFCI ⁹	CIPDHPM ¹⁰
Antigua & Barbuda					A 12-08-98			R 01-06-18	
Argentina	R 30-03-03	R 18-06-08	R 18-11-88	R 31-10-95	R 09-04-96	R 28-09-00	F 07-06-13	F 07-06-13	R 23-10-17
Bahamas					A 03-05-95				
Barbados					R 08-02-95				
Belice					A 25-11-96				
Bolivia	R 12-07-06		R 26-08-96	R 19-09-96	R 26-10-94	R 27-02-03	F 10-03-15	F 10-03-15	R 17-05-17
Brazil	A 08-08-96	R 31-07-96	R 09-06-89	R 26-07-13	R 16-11-95	R 17-07-01	F 07-06-13	R 28-05-21	F 15-06-15
Canada									
Chile	R 27-08-22	R 04-08-08	R 15-09-88	R 13-01-10	R 24-10-96	R 04-12-01	F 22-10-15	F 22-10-15	R 15-08-17
Colombia	A 22-10-97		R 02-12-98	R 01-04-10	A 03-10-96	R 04-12-03	F 08-09-13	F 08-09-14	R 27-09-22
Costa Rica	R 29-09-99	R 30-03-98	R 25-11-99	R 20-03-96	R 05-07-95	R 08-12-99		R 12-12-16	R 12-12-16
Cuba									
Dominica					R 30-06-95				
Ecuador	R 10-02-93	R 05-02-98	R 30-09-99	R 07-07-96	R 30-06-95	R 01-03-04	F 07-06-13	R 14-01-20	
El Salvador	R 04-05-95		R 17-10-94		R 13-11-95	R 15-01-02			A 18-04-18

² Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, adopted in San Salvador, El Salvador, November 17, 1988, 18th regular session of the General Assembly.

³ Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights to Abolish the Death Penalty, adopted in Asuncion, Paraguay, on 8 June 1990, 20th regular session of the General Assembly.

⁴ Inter-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture, adopted at Cartagena de Indias, Barranquilla, Colombia, on December 9, 1985, 15th Regular Session of the General Assembly.

⁵ Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance of Persons, adopted in Belém do Pará, Brazil, on June 9, 1994, 24th Regular Session of the General Assembly.

⁶ Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, adopted in Belém do Pará, Brazil, on June 9, 1994, 24th Regular Session of the General Assembly.

⁷ Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, adopted in Guatemala City, Guatemala, June 7, 1999, 29th regular session of the General Assembly.

⁸ Inter-American Convention against All Forms of Discrimination and Intolerance, adopted in Guatemala City, Guatemala, June 5, 2013, 43rd regular session of the General Assembly.

⁹ Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Intolerance, adopted in Guatemala City, June 5, 2013, 43rd regular session of the General Assembly.

¹⁰ Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons, adopted in Washington, D.C., on June 15, 2015, 45th regular session of the General Assembly.

States	PACAMDESC ²	PCADHAPM ³	CIPST ⁴	CIDFP ⁵	CIPSEVM ⁶	CIEFDPD ⁷	CICTFDI ⁸	CICDRFCI ⁹	CIPDHPM ¹⁰
United States									
Grenada					R 29-11-00				
Guatemala	R 30-05-00		R 10-12-86	R 27-07-99	R 04-01-95	R 08-08-02			
Guyana					R 08-01-96				
Haiti					A 07-04-97	R 29-05-09	F 25-06-14	F 25-06-14	
Honduras	A 14-09-11	A 14-09-11		R 28-04-05	R 04-07-95	A 14-09-11			
Jamaica					R 11-11-05				
Mexico	R 08-03-96	R 28-06-07	R 11-02-87	R 28-02-92	R 19-06-98	R 06-12-00	R 21-01-20	R 21-01-20	A 03/28/23
Nicaragua	R 15-12-09	R 24-03-99	A 23-09-09		R 06-10-95	R 15-07-02			
Panama	R 28-10-92	R 27-06-91	R 27-06-91	R 31-07-95	R 26-04-95	R 24-01-01	F 05-06-14	F 05-06-14	
Paraguay	R 28-05-97	R 31-10-00	R 12-02-90	R 26-08-96	R 29-09-95	R 28-06-02			
Peru	R 17-05-95		R 27-02-90	R 08-02-92	R 02-04-96	R 10-07-01	F 25-10-16	F 25-10-16	A 01-03-21
Dominican Republic		A 19-12-11	R 12-12-86		R 10-01-96	R 28-12-06			
	PACAMDESC	PCADHAPM	CIPST	CIDFP	CIPSEVM	CIEFDPD	CICTFDI	CICDRFCI	CIPDHPM
San Kitts y Nevis					R 17-03-95				
Santa Lucia					R 08-03-95				
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines					R 23-05-96				
Suriname	A 28-02-90		R 12-11-87		R 19-02-02				A 05/08/23
Trinidad and Tobago					R 04-01-96				
Uruguay	R 21-11-95	R 08-02-94	R 23-09-92	R 06-02-96	R 04-01-96	R 24-05-01	R 11-05-18	R 12-10-17	R 18-11-16
Venezuela	R 24-07-20	R 06-04-94	R 25-06-91	R 06-07-98	R 16-01-95	R 06-06-06			

Source: Department of International Law of the OAS General Secretariat

2. Progress Made with the Ratification and Signature of Instruments of the Inter-American System in 2022

55. The IACHR has stressed the importance of universal ratification of the instruments of the inter-American system as a critical element in ensuring full respect for and guaranteeing human rights in the Americas.

56. The Inter-American Commission applauds the states of Chile and Colombia for their ratification of and adhesion to the international instruments for the protection of human rights identified below, in chronological order.

57. On July 28, 2022, Chile deposited its instrument of ratification of the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (“Protocol of San Salvador”).

58. On September 27, 2022, Colombia deposited the instrument of accession to the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons.

59. The Inter-American Commission urges the member States of the OAS to follow the above-mentioned examples, since universal ratification of inter-American instruments is indispensable to achieve full protection of the human rights of all persons in the Hemisphere.

C. Origin, Legal Basis, Structure, Purposes and Mandates

60. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (“IACHR” or “Inter-American Commission”) is an autonomous organ of the Organization of American States (OAS), headquartered in Washington, D.C. Its mandate is established in the OAS Charter, the American Convention on Human Rights (“American Convention”) and the IACHR Statute. Along with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, headquartered in San Jose, Costa Rica, the Inter-American Commission is one of two organs of the inter-American system responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights.

61. The IACHR is comprised of seven members, who act independently of each other and do not sit in representation of any country. The Commissioners are elected by the OAS General Assembly for a four-year period and are eligible to be reelected once. The Inter-American Commission convenes regular and special sessions several times each year. Under Article 13 of the IACHR Rules of Procedure, the Executive Secretariat of the Inter-American Commission performs the tasks entrusted to it by the Commission and provides legal and administrative support to the Commission so that it can fulfill its duties.

62. In April 1948, in Bogota, Colombia, the OAS approved the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man (“American Declaration”), which was the first international human rights instrument of a general nature. The IACHR was created in 1959 and held its first session in 1960.

63. In 1961, the IACHR began to conduct in situ visits to different countries in order to observe the human rights situation firsthand on the ground. Since that time, it has conducted several visits to Member States of the Organization. Based partly on these fact-finding missions, the IACHR has thus far published 135 country and thematic reports.

64. In 1965, the IACHR was expressly authorized to hear complaints or petitions pertaining to specific human rights violations. Final published reports on these individual cases can be found in the Annual Reports of the IACHR and can also be viewed on the IACHR Web page under the Petitions and Cases tab.

65. The American Convention on Human Rights was approved in 1969 and came into force in 1978. As of December 2022, twenty-four Member States are parties to this instrument: Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

66. The American Convention defines the human rights that the ratifying States have agreed to respect and ensure. This instrument also created the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and established the functions and procedures of the Inter-American Commission and Court. In addition to considering complaints where responsibility is attributed for violations of the American Convention committed with respect to States Parties to that instrument, the IACHR has the legal authority, under the OAS Charter and its own Statute, to examine alleged violations of the American Declaration by OAS Member States that are not yet parties to the American Convention.

67. In fulfillment of its mandate, the duties of the IACHR are to:

- a) Receive, examine, and investigate individual petitions alleging human rights violations, in keeping with Articles 44 to 51 of the American Convention, Articles 19 and 20 of its Statute, and Articles 23 to 52 of its Rules of Procedure.
- b) Observe the general human rights situation in the Member States and publish special reports on the situation in a particular Member State, when it is deemed necessary, as provided under Article 60 of its Rules of Procedure.

- c) Conduct *in situ* visits to countries in order to carry out a thorough analysis of the general situation and/or to investigate a specific situation, as provided for under Article 18 of its Statute and Article 53 of its Rules of Procedure. In general, these visits result in the preparation of a report on the human rights situation of the country concerned, which is published and submitted to the OAS Permanent Council and General Assembly.
- d) Raise public awareness about human rights in the Americas. For this purpose, the IACHR conducts and publishes studies on specific themes in keeping with Article 15 of its Rules of Procedure. Examples include what measures must be adopted to ensure greater access to justice; the effect of internal armed conflicts on particular groups of persons; the human rights situation of children, women, LGBTI persons, migrant workers and their families, persons deprived of liberty, human rights defenders, indigenous peoples and persons of African descent; racial discrimination, freedom of expression and economic, social and cultural rights.
- e) Organize and host visits, conferences, seminars, and meetings with representatives of governments, academic institutions, non-governmental entities and others, in order to disseminate information and foster broad awareness of the work of the Inter-American human rights system, in accordance with Article 41 of the American Convention on Human Rights and Article 18 of the IACHR Statute.
- f) Recommend that the OAS Member States adopt measures that contribute to the protection of human rights in the countries of the hemisphere, in accordance with Article 41 of the American Convention on Human Rights and Article 18 of the IACHR Statute.
- g) Request Member States to adopt precautionary measures, as provided for by Article 25 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure, in order to prevent irreparable harm to persons in serious and urgent cases. Additionally, in keeping with Article 76 of its Rules of Procedure, the IACHR may request that the Inter-American Court orders the adoption of provisional measures in cases of extreme gravity and urgency to prevent irreparable harm to persons.
- h) Bring cases and appear before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights during the processing and consideration of the cases, in accordance with Article 61 of the American Convention on Human Rights and Articles 45 and 74 of the IACHR Rules of Procedure.
- i) Request advisory opinions from the Inter-American Court, in accordance with Article 64 of the American Convention and Article 19 of the IACHR Statute.

68. Every person, group of persons, or non-governmental entity legally recognized in one or more OAS Member States may submit petitions to the Inter-American Commission regarding violations of a right recognized in the American Convention, the American Declaration, or other relevant instruments, in accordance with the respective provisions thereof, the IACHR Statute, and the Rules of Procedure. Additionally, in the circumstances described and regulated under Article 45 of the American Convention, the IACHR may consider interstate communications. Petitions may be submitted in any of the four official OAS languages (Spanish, French, English, or Portuguese), either by the alleged victim of the human rights violation or by a third party; and in the case of interstate communications, by a State.

D. Structure of the Executive Secretariat

