

ANNUAL REPORT **2020**

on implementation of
the IACHR Strategic Plan
2017-2021



Strategic Plan
2017-2021

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The Executive Secretary is submitting a report on results for the period of January to December 2020 in implementing the 2017-2021 IACHR Strategic Plan, which was approved by the IACHR on March 20, 2017 (OEA/Ser.L/V/II.161, Doc. 27/17) as its main institutional management tool.

The report begins with a summary of the main results achieved in the period covered by it. That summary is followed by six chapters, five of which are about each of the strategic objectives set forth in the Plan, with the sixth covering the Special Program to Monitor IACHR Recommendations (Program 21). In the final section, conclusions are drawn regarding plan implementation.

We would like to thank the member and observer States and donor countries whose voluntary contributions were crucial to achieving the results described in this report: Brazil, Canada, Chile Costa Rica, United States, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Dominican Republic, European Commission, Spain, France, Ireland, Norway, Netherlands, Switzerland, Arcus Foundation, the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Justice Studies Center of the Americas (CEJA), Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR), Ford Foundation, Google, Open Society Foundation, Pan American Development Foundation (PADF) and OXFAM.

The IACHR also highlights and expresses its gratitude to the State of Haiti for the invitation, hospitality and logistical support it provided in hosting the 175th Regular Session in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, March 2 to 8, 2020.

The IACHR dedicates its efforts to the memory of victims and recognizes the leading role played by civil society organizations and social movements in building fairer and more human rights-abiding societies.

Main Achievements

Inter-American Justice more accessible for the inhabitants of the hemisphere (SO1)

- ▶ Victims of human rights violations, and especially the individuals and groups who have traditionally borne the brunt of discrimination, now have better and more effective access to the Inter-American human rights system.
 - More expeditious management and decision-making in the individual cases system, with an increased number of petitions and cases being examined, in comparison to 2019. At the initial review stage, 5,231 petitioners were evaluated, while 245 reports on admissibility and 45 on inadmissibility were approved, and 67 reports on the merits were produced.
 - With expanded capacity of the Executive Secretariat to handle precautionary measures in response to increased demand stemming from a deterioration in the human rights situation in several regions of the hemisphere and more widespread familiarity with the mechanism, the ES is able to keep up-to-date with the review of the 1170 requests it received. Approval of Resolution 2/2020 – Strengthening of the Monitoring of Precautionary Measures in Force.
- ▶ Victims of human rights violations now have alternative ways to obtain full reparation.
 - Greater use of Friendly Settlement (FS) Mechanism, as 10 Friendly Settlement agreements were entered into, 25 agreements were approved and it was corroborated that progress was made in the implementation of 148 measures of reparation.
 - In 2020, the FS mechanism portfolio expanded to include friendly settlement negotiations of 18 new negotiation processes.
 - More effective friendly settlement mechanism, as a result of the approval of [Resolution 3/2020](#), which addresses procedural backlog in friendly settlement procedures.

Timely prevention of human rights risks and violations; and stepped-up output of Inter-American human rights standards (SO2).

- Increased number of Inter-American human rights standards for the protection of the rights of vulnerable individuals and groups in terms of pandemic containment measures through Resolution 1/2020 on the Pandemic and Human Rights in the Americas.
- Monitoring the human rights situation in the region and expanding coverage of monitoring actions in the region.
 - Conducting in-person country visits to Chile and the Colombian-Venezuelan border.
 - Two working visits to Peru and Mexico.
 - Approving and publishing the country report on the situation of human rights in Cuba.
 - Publishing 5 thematic reports: Report on Trans and Gender-Diverse Persons and their Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights; Report on Persons Deprived of Liberty in Nicaragua in the Connection with the Human Rights Crisis that Began on April 18, 2018; Report on Due Process in Procedures to Determine Refugee and Stateless Person Status and Grant Complementary Protection; Compendium on Labor and Trade Union Rights; and Report on the Right to Information and National Security
 - Installing the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts (GIEI) for Bolivia and reinstalling the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts for the matter of Ayotzinapa in Mexico.
 - Holding 16 public hearings
- The IACHR had the capacity to respond in a timely and coordinated way to situations of risk of human rights violations, providing a structured, coordinated and timely response to crucial human rights situations through SACROI.
 - Adding 3 new SAROIs: COVID-19, Colombia and United States;
 - Developing and enhancing SACROI work methodologies;
 - Publishing a SACROI COVID-19 outcome statement
 - Making progress in the implementation of monitoring information management tools as a part of PIAGI
- Expanding and strengthening the public presence of the IACHR in the countries of the region, in person and virtually.
- Monitoring freedom of expression and economic, social, cultural and environmental rights, along with developing standards on novel subject matter. Publishing the report on the right to information and national security.

Capacities created and strengthened in States and civil society organizations for the defense and promotion of human rights in accordance with Inter-American norms and standards (SO3)

- Strengthening member states' ability to bring Inter-American human rights standards into their domestic body of law, State institutions and public policies with a human rights-based approach.
 - Providing 21 training courses on standards and mechanisms of the Inter-American human rights system to 196 participants.
 - Holding 136 promotional activities in conjunction with multilateral institutions and agencies of the region and the world on the mechanisms of the IAHR and Inter-American human rights standards in a variety of topics.
 - SACROI COVID-19 conducted 31 public webinars to more than 7000 participants and 10 training and updating webinars to the IACHR and its Executive Secretariat on the pandemic and human rights. Posting the timeline and measures taken by States to contain the COVID-19 pandemic on the SACROI-COVID-19 micro-website.
- Forging effective cooperation with the countries of the Caribbean and Central America to strengthen human rights and democratic institutions. Holding the 175th Regular Session in Haiti. The IACHR provided training sessions and received and addressed requests for training from Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Barbados.
- The IACHR expanded channels of collaboration and mechanisms of social participation with civil society and academia in the activities of the IACHR.

Greater coordination with the IA Court of HR, international, regional and sub-regional human rights organizations for joint actions to defend and promote human rights in the Americas (SO4)

- Bolstering IACHR relations with United Nations and other agencies, and international, regional and sub-regional organizations on human rights-related matters.
 - Expanding and strengthening collaboration with the United Nations through technical cooperation, dialogue and joint statements. Strengthening the joint mechanism with the OHCHR for the protection of human rights defenders in the Americas.
 - Collaborating with other regional human rights commissions through cooperation, dialogue, and information exchange, which has led to joint action planning to address the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Modern, results-focused institutional management, leading to efficient, effective, and measurable improvement, accompanied by financial sustainability, transparency, accountability, and gender and diversity policies (SO5)

- In response to the pandemic-triggered health crisis, strengthening work, planning, management and accountability processes to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the IACHR, while staff works from home.
- Implementing a collectively draft workplace environment improvement plan.
- Greater public presence of the IACHR in the countries of the region and strengthening communicational capacity by launching the IACHR Channel and conducting social forums and online platforms.
- Continuing increased geographic representation among the staff of the IACHR Executive Secretariat.
- Efficiently implementing the financial sustainability plan. The IACHR had enough funding for all 2020 planned activities.
- New and current donors happy and committed to the Commission, as demonstrated by public recognition of the quality, scope and timeliness in implementation reports, as well as by the increased number of multi-year projects.
- 18 projects carried out by the IACHR covering a variety of programs of the Strategic Plan and of the IACHR mechanisms to fulfill its mandate. These projects are supported by 13 donors which include Member States, observer countries, international organizations and foundations.
- Implementing technological innovation.
- Enhancing user service by establishing the Center for Attention to Users (*Central de Atención a Usuarios*) and improving information management.

Special Program to Monitor IACHR Recommendations (P21)

- Implementing Inter-American Follow-Up and Monitoring System –SIMORE:
Public launching and dissemination of the Inter-American System for Monitoring Recommendations [Inter-American SIMORE](#)
- Creating and implementing Special Monitoring Mechanisms:
 - Installing the Technical Support Group (GAT) for the Ayotzinapa Case in Mexico, in a new stage of the Monitoring Mechanism (MESA);

- Special Monitoring Mechanism for Nicaragua (MESENI) operating out of headquarters and yielding results and engaging in ongoing actions with relation to Nicaragua;
 - Special Technical Advisory Group for compliance with the IACHR's human rights recommendations (MESAT) developing a work plan;
 - Special Monitoring Mechanism for Venezuela (MESEVE) operating with a view toward bolstering its monitoring activity in Venezuela, and providing a timely response to new challenges posed by the dire human rights crisis in that country.
- The IACHR's enhanced capacity has led to more vigorous monitoring and follow-up on the implementation of recommendations:
- Progress in implementation of 23 recommendations: full compliance was declared for 4 measures; substantial partial compliance was declared for 6; and partial compliance was declared for 13 measures. The progress report was included in the IACHR's Annual Report. The progress was announced in [Press Release No. 95/2020](#).
 - Supervision of compliance with 100% of the 105 cases with published merits report since 2000. In response to follow-up communications from those cases, in 2020, the IACHR received information from both parties in 49.5% of the cases and from at least one party in 41% of the cases.
 - Following up on and making progress in investigating the impact of the IACHR on the protection of human rights with respect to the countries of the Northern Triangle;
 - Publishing 53 follow-up press releases

SO1

To contribute to the development of more effective and accessible Inter-American justice in order to overcome practices of impunity in the region and achieve comprehensive reparation for victims through decisive measures for the strengthening of the petition and case system, friendly settlements and precautionary measures.

Achievements:

- More streamlined management and decision-making in the individual cases system, resulting in a larger volume of petitions and cases being reviewed over the past years. This achievement also means better access to justice via the Inter-American system for the victims of human rights violations who turn to the IACHR.
- Initial review of petitions, for the first time in decades, is up-to-date, meaning that all petitions pending review are examined and disposed of when they are received. Examining 5231 petitions at the stage of initial review and re-examining 260 petitions in keeping with Resolution 1/19.
- Drafting 502 reports on admissibility, with the IACHR deciding on 290 of them (245 admissible and 45 inadmissible), a 190% increase over the previous year. Also approving 67 reports on the merits (106% more than the previous year), disposing of a total of 83 cases, and sending 23 cases to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.
- Approving and publishing the IACHR Digest on its Admissibility and Competence Criteria; and standardizing the methodology and formats of reports on admissibility.
- Increasing capacity of the IACHR Executive Secretariat to process petitions and cases, through the addition of new staff and changes in methodology, which has led to an unprecedented reduction in procedural backlog.
- Bolstering the friendly settlement mechanism with approval of an historical number of 25 friendly settlement agreements, the signing of 10 new friendly settlement agreements and corroborating progress in the implementation of 148 reparation measures. This is also a significant demonstration of the willingness of States to

implement the measures included in the friendly settlement processes and to build trust through compliance with the terms of agreements. In addition, approving Resolution 3/2020, on the reduction of potential procedural backlog in friendly settlement proceedings.

- Significant progress in implementing measures under 59 friendly settlement agreements, amounting to a 280% increase over the number in 2019. The year 2020 also saw 8 petitions and cases attaining total compliance and 22 cases attaining partial compliance.
- Strengthening the precautionary measures mechanism, with review of 1170 requests filed in 2020, 58 precautionary measures granted and expanded, 37% of which were completed within 30 days of the date of request and 63.8%, within 90 days of the date of request. Additionally, approving Resolution 2/2020, Strengthening the Monitoring of Precautionary Measures in Force.
- Improving active transparency through accountability reports to the member and observer states, and donors and users in general. Also, the IACHR Policy on Access to Information and Protection of Personal Information is in its final phase, yielding progress in access to information for users of the IACHR.

Based on all of the foregoing, it would be safe to say that in 2020 highly satisfactory results were achieved under Strategic Objective 1.

P1: Special Procedural Backlog Reduction Program

Under this program, the Commission has been processing older cases on a priority basis in chronological order to solve the issue of chronic backlog. This criterion has been strictly followed in reviewing petitions and, as a priority, at the stages of admissibility and merits in order to make progress in disposing of all pending petitions and cases under this program. Thus, in 2020, priority was given to processing all cases at the merits stage dating back to before 2000, so delay at this stage would be no longer than 20 years; and, all cases at the admissibility stage dating back to before 2010, so delay at this stage would be no longer than 10 years.

In this process, teams and case files were clearly organized on the basis of how old the cases were and in chronological order. The IACHR disposed of admissibility reports dealing with large groups of victims, such as indigenous communities; cases relating to fundamental human rights violations, such as the right to life, humane treatment and personal liberty; cases pertaining to the exercise of freedom of expression in the context of election campaigns, the right of access to pensions and other important issues of economic, social, cultural and environmental rights; as well as structural issues in the region, such as respect for due process of law in cases of punishments imposed on justice operators; and

novel and topical issues, such as marriage equality and human trafficking. Under this criterion, landmark cases of great consequence to the region, which had not been processed due to the breadth and complexity of the case file, were also disposed of at the merits stage and thus enabled the Commission to weigh in on important issues of Inter-American public order, including the prevention and investigation of terrorist acts and serious human rights violations. This is all particularly noteworthy because of the difficult working conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, priority was given to petitions and cases involving emergency situations, or those whose standards could help to address such situations. These petitions and cases were identified in the framework of the Rapid and Integrated Response and Coordination Unit (SACROI). By way of example, in 2020, SACROI COVID-19 identified as a priority one case about conditions of care in a hospital and another case about a migrant's access to basic services. Secondly, priority was also given to urgent cases and petitions, such as those involving application of the death penalty. Thus, the Commission completed preparation of reports on cases that were procedurally ready and cases that were in the process of approval.

Thirdly, priority was given to petitions and cases that address structural issues in the States of the region, which help to support national and international processes, such as issues of transitional justice, access to justice, review of judicial remedies, attacks on human rights defenders or social leaders.

Lastly, petitions and cases were processed that developed standards on the Commission's priority topics, as reflected in its thematic rapporteurships, including cases of racial discrimination, the rights of Amazonian peoples, violence against women and girls, international return of children, discrimination against migrants, LGBTI persons, freedom of expression, economic, social, cultural and environmental rights. Thus, the IACHR followed different criteria in order to solve the issue of chronic procedural backlog, and help to remedy emergency and structural situations, and meet the need to progress in developing standards.

➤ **Initial Review**

In 2020, the Initial Review Section examined a total of **5,231 petitions** (581 received in 2018; 2,660 received in 2019; and 1,990 received in 2020). Of this total of 5,231 petitions, the decision was made to process 878 (17%); to not process 4,135 (79%); and to request additional information in 218 (4%).

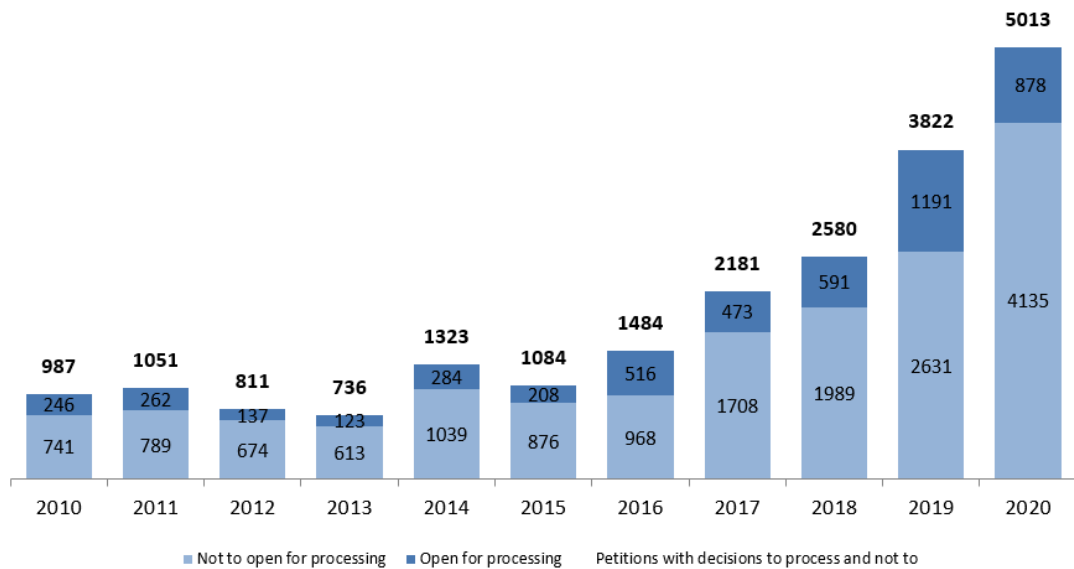
This total number of **5,231 petitions** examined in **2020** was achieved in the following way: (a) as of January 31, 2020, examination was completed of the petitions received in 2018 (this job had begun in the second half of 2019); (b) from January to July, **96%** of the petitions received in 2019 was examined (the remaining 4% are physical case files that require the presence of staff in the office); and from August to December, 95% of all petitions received

in 2020 itself were examined (the remaining 5% are physical case files that require the presence of staff in the office).

In addition, the IACHR consistently follows up on petitions for which additional information has been requested from the petitioners and, in general, periodically follows up on petitions from previous years that were already examined, in order to enforce decisions.

Likewise, based on [Resolution 1/19](#) “Initial Review of Petitions”, 260 **petitions** (originally received between 1998 and 2019, and rejected at some time prior to the resolution that came into force on December 7, 2019), were re-examined. The decision was made to process 49 (18.85 %) of these 260 petitions, and not to process—in other words, reiterate the rejection— 211 of them (81.15%). There is also a group of 109 of these petitions that only have a physical case file and therefore require the physical presence of staff in the office to process them.

Decisions to process and not to process



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Because this process is dispositive, additional information may not be requested from the petitioner. It should be emphasized that the work to implement Resolution 1/19 not only involved the legal analysis of the aforementioned petitions, but also a process of thorough review, examination, and administrative procedures including the management of physical and virtual case files, preparation of special letters, and several coordination activities to organize the work of this re-examination portfolio. Furthermore, the files for these petitions are generally much larger and much more complex than those received by the IACHR in recent years.

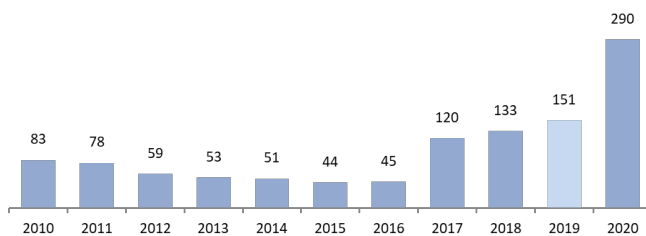
➤ **Admissibility and merits stages.**

Processing and decision-making in the case system were streamlined, increasing the number of petitions and cases examined, as compared to recent years. At the initial review stage, 5,231 petitions were examined, while 502 reports on admissibility and 74 reports on the merits were prepared.

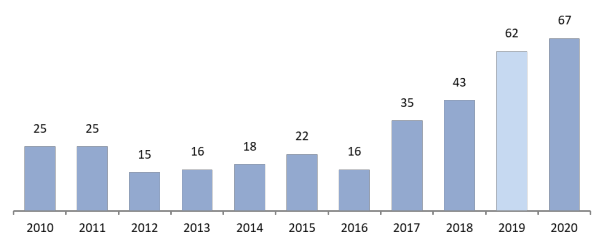
In 2020, the IACHR adopted 290 admissibility reports (245 admissibility and 45 inadmissibility), amounting to a 192% increase over the prior year and 245% increase over 2018.

Additionally, the IACHR approved 67 of the 74 reports on the merits that were prepared, which disposed of a total of 83 cases. This figure amounts to more than 419% of the number of reports approved in 2006 (prior to implementation of the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan) and 106% more than those approved in 2019.

Admissibility Reports approved



Merits Reports approved



With regard to the merits stage, the IACHR addressed cases that have been languishing for a long time and that, because of their scope or diverse procedural aspects involved, were pending a decision on the merits. Additionally, it has been identifying cases with similar issues involved in order handle the reports in a more standardized way and adopting measures to address the procedural backlog, such as joining cases that share similar factual and legal aspects. The Commission has reduced the length of reports and has endeavored to simplify them, while maintaining their technical quality and safeguarding the parties' right of defense. This has yielded significant results, which are evident in aspects of Inter-

American public order the Commission has ruled on, as well as in increased output of merits reports since the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan was adopted.

In its 2020 merits reports, the IACHR addressed topics such as the right to judicial protection and its limits in terms of immunity from execution of judgment, the prevention and investigation of acts of terrorism, the right to private life and sexual and reproductive health, life sentences for adults, the right to a healthy environment vis-à-vis extractive industries, foreigners' right to equality and non-discrimination in access to health services, access to public functions on an equal basis and without discrimination, and the rights of children in international restitution proceedings. In addition, the Commission continued to take positions in cases involving gross human rights violations, including cases of forced disappearance, torture and extrajudicial executions.

Over the course of 2020, the IACHR held a total of 25 working meetings to enforce measures and further compliance with the recommendations, a higher number than in previous years.

Furthermore, the Commission approved 11 final reports and reports for publication.¹ It also deliberated, by means of 175 memoranda of consultation, on cases that are in a transitional stage, ruling on the granting of extensions for compliance with the recommendations of merits reports in accordance with Article 46 of its Rules of Procedure, the publication of the report, or the referral of the case to the Inter-American Court.

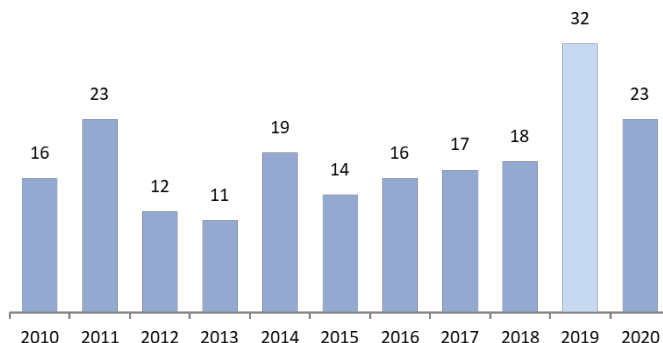
► **IACHR action before IA CT of HR**

Pursuant to Article 51 of the American Convention and Article 45 of its Rules of Procedure, in 2020, the Commission submitted 23 cases to the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court. Through the cases submitted to its jurisdiction, the Court will have the opportunity to rule on the responsibility of the States and the appropriate reparation for the victims.

The Commission notes that when it examined the status of compliance with the recommendations of the merits reports and decided whether to refer the cases to the Inter-American Court in 2020, it particularly took into account the obstacles faced by parties as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and showed the flexibility the parties needed to be able to continue to make progress in compliance with the recommendations. The IACHR decided to submit to the jurisdiction of the Court cases it believed met the requirements of Article 45 of the Rules of Procedure, and did not meet the requirements set forth in Article 46 of the Rules of Procedure to grant an extension to continue to comply with these recommendations.

¹ These reports are approved pursuant to Article 47 of the Rules of Procedure and, for States that are signatories to the American Convention, to Article 51 of the same instrument. Through these mechanisms, the Commission monitors the recommendations of its merits reports prior to making the decision to publish them.

Cases submitted to the Court



In proceedings before the Inter-American Court, the Commission continues to take part in all cases submitted as provided for by the American Convention and the Court’s Rules of Procedure. Other proceedings of the Commission before the Court include submitting observations on preliminary objections, offering expert witness testimony when the inter-American public order is significantly in jeopardy, and submitting its oral and written observations in relation to the parties’ pleadings. It also takes part in public hearings in cases convened by the Court. In 2020, the IACHR made more than 120 written submissions to the Inter-American Court relating to such proceedings.

The Commission participated in a total of 22 hearings, ten of which concerned adversarial proceedings before the Court, nine were about oversight of compliance with judgment, and three pertained to requests for advisory opinion to the Inter-American Court.

Given the COVID-19 emergency from March to May 2020, through a press release the IACHR announced that it would take the circumstances and problems associated with the pandemic into account when evaluating requests for an extension to comply with the recommendations of the Merits Reports. This had an impact on its decision to refer cases to the Court in those months. Moreover, the Inter-American Court suspended the deadlines for cases before it from March to May 2020.

In 2020, the IACHR submitted 70 written briefs to the Inter-American Court on supervision of compliance with judgments. In these briefs, pursuant to Article 69 of the Rules of Procedure of the Inter-American Court, the Commission argued on the status of compliance of the reparations that were issued in the respective judgments.

➤ **Standards in Merits Reports**

Standards in merits reports developed in 2020 are summarized below:

Nº	Standard developed
1	Lack of due diligence in the investigation and punishment of those responsible, when allegations of racial discrimination are involved, is a violation of the protection component of the right to equality.
2	Insecurity, conflict, and risk to subsistence as a result of State actions and omissions related to the lack of protection for the collective property of the community has caused and continues to cause harm to the psychological and moral integrity of its members.
3	Loss of a file or some of its pages does not <i>per se</i> constitute justification for unreasonable delay under the obligation to issue title to the land and territories of indigenous and tribal peoples.
4	Restrictions on the interruption of pregnancy are not exempt from an analysis of proportionality in light of the rights of the women who could be affected. Therefore, while the gradual and incremental protection of life from conception is a legitimate end, such protection could be unacceptable if it is not appropriate for achieving that end, or unnecessary if, because it is absolute, it disproportionately affects other rights at stake.
5	Four soldiers and an independent judge acting as a court of military justice does not guarantee the impartiality of the final verdict which, furthermore, does not require unanimity but a simple majority.
6	The concept of recidivism would in practice lead to the existence of greater punitive action that results in a lack of expectation that the convicted person will obtain early release, a measure that could reasonably serve as an incentive to seek social rehabilitation. This automatic constraint to obtaining release due to recidivism, without considering the specific situation of the repeat offender, is problematic in terms of the principle of proportionality, since it makes a single factor—recidivism—a determinant of the execution of the sentence and fails to weigh other factors, such as good behavior and the suitability and purpose of the sentence. Therefore, when imposing a prison term, since it is a severe constraint on the right to personal liberty, many aspects must be considered that, as indicated, include both the participation and the culpability of the accused, the right of the victims to obtain justice, and the very ends that the sentence itself should pursue.
7	Being disqualified from a competitive process to become a judge because of indebtedness amounts to discriminatory differential treatment based on economic standing, which also infringes the right of access to work without discrimination. This measure does not pass the first step of a proportionality test and, therefore, is an arbitrary difference in treatment.
8	The guarantee of the presumption of innocence is infringed when the gender stereotypes used by justice operators and authorities in charge of the investigation end up reversing the burden of proof.
9	Failure of the State to prevent an act of terrorism, which also amounts to a form of discrimination, gives rise to its international responsibility for breach of the duty to prevent and the principle of equality and non-discrimination, even though it has not been proven that it was deliberate, it does demonstrate that the State was aware and refrained from taking reasonable measures to protect a group that was susceptible to enduring a discriminatory attack.
10	As part of the duty of due diligence, incorporating into criminal proceedings intelligence reports, that will be used as material evidence in the case, triggers the obligation to take additional investigative steps to enable confirmation of the hypotheses posited in them. Should investigative steps not be taken with the aim of obtaining evidence that could be incorporated into the case file, in accordance with procedural rules, the possibility of obtaining a judicial decision that determines the charging hypotheses put forth in such reports are consistent with the truth, would be seriously compromised.
11	When there is opposition to immunity from execution of a judgment in favor of an embassy worker, the right to judicial protection includes as one of its components verifying whether other means exist to achieve the execution while respecting the immunity from execution without affecting property required for discharging her diplomatic or consular duties in the exercise of sovereignty, such as property that may be commercial.
12	Retroactively prohibiting prisoners benefiting from a reduced sentence through work or education, work release or conditional release violates the principle non-retroactive effect of criminal law, the right to personal freedom and the rehabilitative purpose of the punishment and the right to equal protection.
13	Failure to provide essential health information <i>ex officio</i> to foreign nationals breaches States' obligations with respect to the right to health and the right to equality and non-discrimination.

14	<p>Merely citing reasons of discretionary power in a selection process to choose a candidate does not overcome the presumption of discrimination that exists when a person with disability is not chosen, despite being qualified for the position.</p>
15	<p>In cases of foreign nationals whose migratory status is regular in a State, the Convention requires States to fulfill a number of obligations in the context of proceedings that can lead to a challenge to that status and consequent expulsion. In terms of the procedural sphere, these requirements are aimed at enforcing fair trial rights and, likewise, in terms of the more substantive sphere, making it possible through a reasoned decision to know the reasons for the revocation of status and, when applicable, an analysis of the situation of the rights of the foreign national that could be infringed in the event of expulsion. For this purpose, the Commission also understands that States must offer an adequate and effective recourse to examine such issues.</p>
16	<p>In order to respect and ensure the right to family life, protection of the family and the rights of the child, the State is obligated to make a decision without delay on international restitution of children. This case must be decided within a reasonable time and take into account the opinion of the boy or girl in accordance with current circumstances at the time of the restitution.</p>
17	<p>When an indigenous people makes a decision rejecting the imposition of the death penalty, which is written into an agreement between the State and the people, for the State to fulfill its obligations regarding the right to due process and to a fair trial, it must respect the self-determination and cultural identity of indigenous peoples, including as it pertains to the will of the people with respect to this punishment.</p>
18	<p>In cases of the disappearance of a person, when the State has not diligently and exhaustively fulfilled the duty to investigate potential evidence of State involvement, even when it cannot be proven that it was perpetrated by State agents, the right to juridical personality must be considered infringed.</p>
19	<p>The right to access, on an equal basis, to public functions of a country is infringed when the incumbent candidate holds an edge or is placed in a situation of superiority, such as when one of the candidates is President of the Republic having been reelected repeatedly for long periods of time, which gives rise to power being concentrated in the hands of the Executive Branch of government, and includes a lack of independence of the judiciary and of the body in charge of overseeing the electoral process, the use of additional public resources and media for campaign advertising and not providing air time on State channels to the other political parties.</p>
20	<p>The right to autonomy and self-government of indigenous peoples is part of the right to participate in government and is realized through their own political and juridical institutions, which are structured and managed in accordance with their own laws, traditions and customs. Thus, the exercise of this right entails, on the one hand, recognition and maintenance of their own decision-making institutions, which includes the free election of their traditional authorities. That must be carried out without any external interference; which means that it is the general duty of States to not interfere in the functioning of these institutions. The effectiveness of this right is, in turn, contingent upon the capacity of indigenous peoples to utilize their lands, territories and natural resources. On the other hand, in its external sphere, this right involves the participation of these peoples, through their authorities and institutions, in decision-making processes on matters that affect their rights. One of the substantial elements for this participation to be considered effective is the capacity to influence the results of these processes. Along with its collective dimension, this right also has an individual dimension to it, since all indigenous individuals, authorities and representatives are entitled to exercise their right to participate in government effectively, which means that States must refrain from interfering in this right, in addition to putting in place optimal mechanisms to ensure the exercise thereof on an equal footing. Likewise, both access to and stability in a position include freedom from arbitrary interference.</p>
21	<p>The high evidentiary standard imposed by domestic judicial bodies, even when there was evidence and indications that a woman was the target of sexual orientation-based discrimination, renders useless the right to effective judicial protection to which the alleged victim was entitled. Likewise, the failure to conduct an examination to determine reasonableness and proportionality of the interference and differentiated treatment endured by the victim, confirms the violation of the right to privacy and to the principle of equality and non-discrimination, even when the discrimination was perpetrated by a non-state agent.</p>

► **Managing and processing petitions and cases**

In 2020, despite the operational challenges posed by COVID-19, notice was served to both parties of 359 decisions to process, giving the highest priority to the oldest petitions of the portfolio (those prior to 2014) and thus address the chronic procedural backlog at this stage. Given the long delay in these communications, in 2021 strict processability criteria were adopted, such as archiving at this stage when there has been protracted procedural inactivity, and the number of members on the responsible for this function was increased. As a result of the strengthening of the Executive Secretariat's Processing and Support Section and the adoption of new work methodologies designed to ensure more energized and efficient processing, a there was a 33% increase in the number of communications sent to the parties involved, for a total of 17,950 communications drawn up over the reporting period, as compared to 13,476 communications produced over the same period of 2019.

Additionally, 212 notifications were served of joining the stage of admissibility with that of the merits, pursuant to the criteria set forth in Resolution 1/16, *Measures to Reduce Procedural Backlog*, which was approved on October 18, 2016, for a total of 700 notifications of this type since it was implemented. The Commission also broadened the interpretation of the concept of "archiving" as established in Articles 48.1(b) of the American Convention on Human Rights and 42 of the IACHR Rules of Procedure, expanding the application thereof to petitions at the stage of initial review. Consequently, pursuant to the provisions of Article 42.2 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure, the Executive Secretariat requested petitioners to submit the necessary information, in addition to warning them about the possibility of a decision to archive, in more than 1100 petitions at the initial review stage. This new measure will help break up the log jam of hundreds of petitions that have been procedurally inactive for more than three years, in addition to overcoming other obstacles in the processing thereof.

Based on the criteria set forth in Article 42.3 of the IACHR Rules of Procedure, the IACHR examined ten pending requests for review of decision to archive, notifying the parties as appropriate.

The impact of other measures implemented at the beginning of this year, such as simplified processing at the admissibility stage; the use of new form letters, with attachments of informational brochures according to the particular stage of procedure; information campaigns individually targeting frequent users; as well as a broader interpretation of the concept of archiving to include petitions in initial review with procedural inactivity longer than 3 years, promise significant progress in the reduction of procedural backlog at all stages.

The IACHR Executive Secretariat remains at the disposal of all its users, tending to their requests for information on the status of petitions and cases. In the case of the States, it has responded to 18 requests in connection with the portfolio of petitions and cases of the

States of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama and Dominican Republic.

P2: Program to Expand the Use of Friendly Settlements

In 2020, important results were attained with regard to the promotion of friendly settlements and raising awareness about the mechanism, as described hereunder:

► Achievements and promotion of new follow-up methodologies in friendly settlements

Over 2020, the IACHR took a variety of actions to promote negotiations and compliance with signed friendly settlement agreements. It also engaged in promotional activities of the friendly settlement mechanism as an alternative means to contentious cases before the Commission for full reparation of the victims of human rights violations. These actions and activities included the following:

On April 21, 2020, the Commission approved [Resolution 3/20](#) “Differentiated Actions to Address the Procedural Backlog in Friendly Settlement Agreement Procedures,” to prevent delays in the negotiation of FSAs, which in some cases keep the bodies of the Inter-American human rights system from issuing timely decisions on the petitions and cases before them. The Commission deemed it necessary to adopt basic guidelines to provide a semi-structured framework for negotiations, preserving the flexibility of the procedure and, at the same time, adhering to the principles of celerity and voluntariness that should guide alternative mechanisms for conflict resolution. In addition, through this Resolution, the Commission adopted differentiated actions with respect to matters currently under friendly settlement procedure, based on when the petition was filed, whether or not there is a friendly settlement in the case, and the date the negotiations began, deciding the course of action in each process of negotiation. It terminated friendly settlement procedures in which no substantial progress and/or any ongoing dialogue between the parties had been observed, and set specific deadlines to assess progress in some friendly settlement procedures. Thus, the impacts of applying this resolution has had an unprecedented effect in moving older cases forward and has made a significant contribution to enhancing management of the portfolio of matters in friendly settlement procedure.

As for the IACHR’s lines of action for the promotion and dissemination of best practices in friendly settlements, it is a positive development that, in 2020, different training activities were carried out, as well as public education via social media on best practices in friendly settlements. In this regard, on February 14, 2020, a virtual workshop on friendly settlement mechanisms for members of the civil society organization COFADEH of Honduras was held,

covering theoretical and practical procedural elements of the friendly settlement mechanism in light of the legal framework regulating it.

Likewise, several spaces for dialogue were created to engage users of the system of petitions and cases, both civil society organizations and States, to raise awareness of Resolution 3/20 “differentiated actions to address the procedural backlog in friendly settlement procedures,” providing important information about the evolution of the friendly settlement mechanism over the past ten years, as well as harmonization of the principles of voluntariness, flexibility and agility with the Commission’s role as guarantor of the rights of victims, their informed consent in the framework of FSPs, the Commission’s efforts to balance power, the compatibility between the role of guarantor and the role of impartial mediator of FSPs and about the objective criteria developed in Resolution 3/20. In this context, it replied to queries about the potential impacts of this resolution on specific cases of interest to the parties subject to this mechanism.

Lastly, it should be noted that, on May 4, 2000, in the framework of the powers established in Article 41(d) of the American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR), the Commission sent a request for information on actions taken by the Mexican State in relation to the Decree on extinguishment or termination of public trusts, in terms of specific implications on reparation and assistance for victims of human rights violations. Even though the Mexican State submitted a response on June 9, 2020, the Commission continues to monitor that situation and awaits notification of alternative mechanisms established by the State to continue complying with its international obligations emanating from the system of petitions and Individual cases before the IACHR.

► **Promotion and dissemination of information on friendly settlement agreement negotiation processes**

Additionally, during the reporting period, progress was made in developing tools to highlight friendly settlement agreements that had been fully complied with and were no longer subject to follow-up by the Inter-American Commission, since they were published prior to the Reform of the Rules of Procedure of 2000. This information is now available on the new Spanish webpage on follow-up to IACHR friendly settlements. The IACHR is currently reviewing the translations for the English webpage.

As for promoting negotiation processes and compliance with friendly settlement agreements, in 2020, the Commission held 67 working meetings to facilitate friendly settlement agreement negotiation processes and implementation, in different matters from 11 countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama and Paraguay. The Commission also held 8 virtual portfolio meetings to facilitate friendly settlement processes for Argentina (July 23), Colombia (July 30), Mexico (August 6 and October 23), Bolivia (August 31), Honduras (September 2), Chile (September 14 and 15), Ecuador (September 15) and Paraguay (October 23). In this same vein, the Commission facilitated 65 technical meetings for promotion and/or pre-mediation over the course of the year on different matters from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia,

Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama and Paraguay. Consequently, in 2020, a total of 132 spaces for dialogue for parties to move forward toward friendly settlement were facilitated. From 2017 to 2020, the Commission facilitated a total of 407 spaces for dialogue in the framework of the friendly settlement mechanism thus attaining the strategic goal of expanding the mechanism.

Over 2020, the Commission held 10 periodical review meetings of the friendly settlement negotiation and follow-up portfolios with Argentina (2), Bolivia (1); Colombia (3); Mexico (3); Panama (1).

In 2020, the Commission issued 31 press releases on friendly settlements² and adopted the practice of highlighting progress in the implementation of friendly settlement agreements at the negotiation phase, provided that both parties are in agreement, given the confidential nature of friendly settlement negotiations prior to the respective approval and publication of reports. The Commission also continued the practice of issuing press releases when friendly settlement agreements are entered into and are approved. The Commission also began to publicize compliance with the measures of friendly settlement agreements when full compliance was achieved at the follow-up phase, in order to provide incentive to the authorities responsible for implementation of these measures to make good on the commitments assumed by the States through friendly settlement agreements.

In 2020, the Commission approved an historic number of friendly settlement agreements in one year. To date, 25 friendly settlement agreement approvals have been issued in light of Article 49 of the American Convention. With that output, the Commission surpassed its record high number, which up until this year had been 14 approval reports published in 2019. Four of the 25 agreements published in 2020 had full compliance, 10 had substantial partial compliance, 9 had partial compliance and 2 were published prior to implementation.

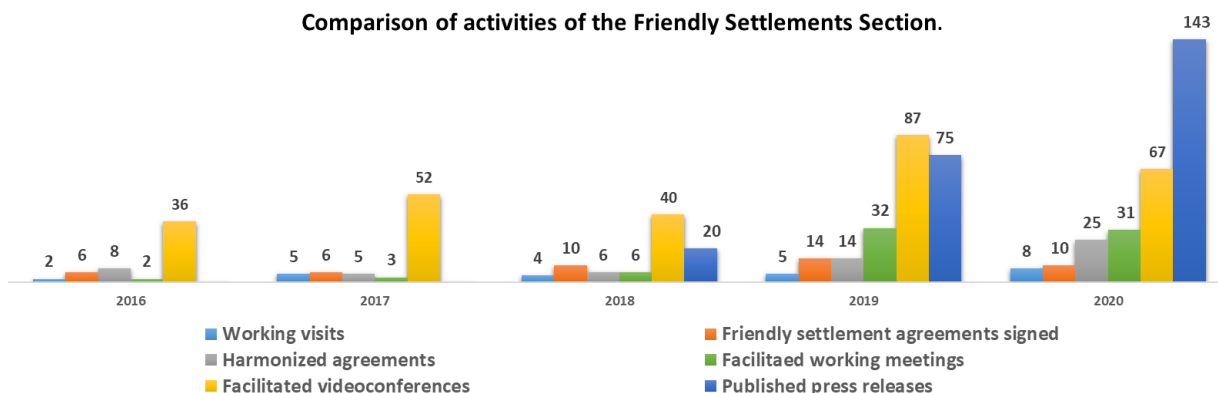
In light of the approval of IACHR Resolution 3/20, progress was made in determining the course of action in the friendly settlement processes of 45 matters, with older and/or unproductive friendly settlement proceedings being terminated, deadlines being set on specific issues in order to advance in the negotiations, and proceeding to approval of agreements based on an individual assessment of each case. In this regard, it should be noted that, in 2020, 18 new matters began the friendly settlement mechanism process and there are currently 81 processes in the negotiation phase and 71 in the follow-up phase, which will continue to be actively promoted under the guidelines laid out in Resolution 3/20.

Additionally, the Commission provided technical advisory service to parties in 4 matters applying standards on truth commissions, modalities of compliance with housing measures and, in general, about technical and substantive aspects pertaining to the design of and full compliance with friendly settlement agreements.³

² In this regard, see IACHR Press Releases on the subject of Friendly Settlements 2020.

³ Case 12.854 Ricardo Javier Kaplun, Argentina; Case 11.182 Florentino Rojas, Argentina; Case 13.017 Family Members of the victims of the Military Dictatorship, Panama; P-1186-09 Adela Villamil, Bolivia.

Comparison of activities of the Friendly Settlements Section.



Furthermore, in 2020, the IACHR launched a campaign on the social networks, spotlighting progress in compliance with friendly settlement agreements during the drafting of Chapter II.D of the 2019 Annual Report. Likewise, three special reports were posted on the IACHR Channel about the history of landmark cases in the area of friendly settlements,⁴ namely, the cases of Ananías Laparra of México, Gerardo Bedoya of Colombia and Pedro Antonio Centurión of Paraguay, in order to shed light on the impacts of the friendly settlement mechanism, as narrated by the victims themselves and their representatives and with input as well from the States in their experience with these reparation processes.

In addition, over the reporting period, progress was made in fashioning tools to highlight friendly settlement agreements with full compliance that are not subject to follow-up by the Inter-American Commission, because they were published prior to the 2000 Reform of the Rules of Procedure. This information is now available in Spanish on the new IACHR webpage on friendly settlement agreement follow-up. The IACHR is currently reviewing the translations for the webpage in English.

The Commission’s effort to actively promote friendly settlement negotiations yielded notable results in 2020, which saw a total of 10 new friendly settlement agreements entered into.

Nº	Report /Case /Petition-Agreements signed	Signing	Country
1	Petition 1275-04 A Juan Luis Rivera Matus	January 31, 2020	Chile
2	Case 13.319 William Fernandez	April 29, 2020	Colombia
3	Case 13.011 Graciela Ramos Rocha and Family	May 29, 2020	Argentina
4	Case 13.642 Edgar José Sánchez Duarte	July 14, 2020	Colombia
5	Petition 245-03 Walter Mauro Yáñez	July 29, 2020	Argentina
6	Case 12.972 Marcelo Ramón Aguilera Aguilar	August 12, 2020	Honduras

⁴ In this regard see IACHR Channel Web Site. Available at: <https://www.canalcidh.org/>

7	Case 12.908 Jorge Adolfo Freyter	August 28, 2020	Colombia
8	Case 12.790 Manuel Santiz Culebra et al “Massacre of Acteal”	September 2020	Mexico
9	Petition 1186-09 Adela Villamil	October 22, 2020 ⁵	Bolivia
10	13.171 Luis Argemiro Gómez Atehortua	December 2 de 2020	Colombia

Over the course of the year, the IACHR examined 63 matters under the friendly settlement mechanism approving 25, terminating 13 negotiations at the request of the parties, examining 7 matters in light of Resolution 3/20 and archiving 18 at the phase of follow-up due to inactivity or at the petitioner’s request. In relation to approved and published friendly settlement agreements over the course of 2020, it should be noted that the Commission decided to approve the following matters:

Nº	Report /Case /Petition-Approved agreements	Country
1	Report No. 1/20, Case 13.776, German Eduardo Giraldo and Family	Colombia
2	Report No. 2/20, Case 12.915, Ángel Díaz Cruz et al	Mexico
3	Report No. 3/20, Case 12.095, Mariela Barreto Riofano	Peru
4	Report No. 20/20, Case 12.961 F, Miguel Angel Chinchilla Erazo et al	Honduras
5	Report No. 21/20, Case 13.728, Amira Guzmán de Alonso and Family	Colombia
6	Report No. 22/20, Case 12.909, Gerardo Bedoya Borrero	Colombia
7	Report No. 23/20, Case 1275-04 A, Juan Luis Rivera Matus	Chile
8	Report No. 80/20, Case 13.370, Luis Horacio Patiño and Family	Colombia
9	Report No. 81/20, Case 11.626 A, Fredy Oreste Cañola Valencia	Ecuador
10	Report No. 82/20, Case 11.626 B, Luis Enrique Cañola Valencia	Ecuador
11	Report No. 83/20, Case 11.626 C, Santo Enrique Cañola Gonzáles	Ecuador
12	Report No. 84/20, Petition 595-09, Jorge Alberto Montes Gallego and Family	Colombia
13	Report No. 85/20, Case 12.374, Jorge Enrique Patiño Palacios	Paraguay
14	Report No. 86/20, Case 12.732, Richard Conrad Solórzano Contreras	Guatemala
15	Report No. 110/20, Petition 735-07, Ismael Mondragón Molina	Mexico
16	Report No. 111/20, Case 12.674, Marcio Lapoente Da Silveira	Brazil
17	Report No. 197/20, Case 13.011, Graciela Ramos Rocha and Family	Argentina
18	Report No. 212/20, Case 12.891, Adán Guillermo Lopez Lone et al	Honduras
19	Report No. 213/20, Case 13.319, William Fernández Becerra and Family	Colombia

⁵ According to the wording of the agreement, it was still subject to eventual approval of a law that allows for its materialization and that, in the event that said legislation is not enacted, the friendly settlement agreement would be rendered null and void.

20	Report No. 214/20, Case 10.441 A, Silvia Maria Azurdia Utrera et al	Guatemala
21	Report No. 215/20, Case 10.441B, Carlos Humberto Cabrera Rivera	Guatemala
22	Report No. 216/20, Case 11.824, Sabino Díaz Osorio and Rodrigo Gomez Zamorano	Mexico
23	Report No. 333/20, Case 13.421, Geminiano Gil	Colombia
24	Report No. 334/20, Case 12.972, Marcelo Ramón Aguilera Aguilar	Honduras
25	Report No. 256/20, Petition 747-05, Y'akâ Marangatú pueblo MBYA Indigenous Community	Paraguay

As for compliance with agreements, the Commission is pleased with the progress made in the implementation of measures under 59 friendly settlement agreements, which is 180% more than in 2019.⁶ It was also noted in the Commission's analysis that in 2020, eight petitions and cases attained full compliance⁷ and 22 cases attained partial compliance.⁸

Likewise, the Commission notes that progress was made in the implementation of 148 measures, achieving full compliance with 85 measures of reparation; substantial partial compliance with 26 reparation measures; and partial compliance with 37 measures of reparation. Of the 148 measures for which progress was reported in 2020, 34 are structural and 114 are individual. It should be noted for purposes of comparison that, in 2019 the Commission observed progress in the implementation of 111 measures, achieving total compliance with 76 measures of reparation; substantial partial compliance with 18 measures of reparation; and partial compliance with 17 measures of reparation.⁹ Based on the foregoing, there has been significant progress in the implementation of measures of reparation of friendly settlement agreements across all headings or categories as compared the previous year, posting a 33% increase in compliance. From 2018 to 2020, progress was made in the implementation of 365 measures of reparation in different friendly settlement agreements at the stage of follow-up, achieving full compliance with 230 measures,

⁶ It was noted in the Commission's analysis that in 2019, 11 petitions and cases attained full compliance and 10 cases attained partial compliance. See IACHR, 2019 Annual Report, Chapter II, Section G. Friendly Settlements, Available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/docs/anual/2019/docs/IA2019cap2-es.pdf>

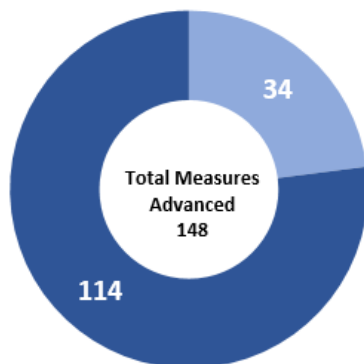
⁷ In this respect see, Petition 1275-04 A, Report No. 23/20, Juan Luis Rivera Matus (Chile); Case 11.141, Report No. 105/05, Massacre of Villatina (Colombia); Petitions 279-03, Report No. 39/15. Fredy Rolando Hernández Rodríguez et al (Guatemala); Report No. 20/20, Case 12.961 F, Miguel Angel Chinchilla Erazo et al (Honduras); Case 12.972, Report No. 334/20, Marcelo Ramón Aguilera Aguilar (Honduras); Case 12.986, Report No. 106/19, José Antonio Bolaños Juárez (Mexico); Case 11.824, Report 216/20, Sabino Díaz Osorio and Rodrigo Gomez Zamorano, (Mexico); Petition 1516-08, Report No. 130/18, Juan Figueroa Acosta (Peru).

⁸ In this regard see, Case 13.011, Report No. 197/20, Graciela Ramos Rocha and Family (Argentina); Case 12.674, Report No. 111/20, Marcio Lapoente Da Silveira (Brazil); Case 13.776, Report No. 1/20, German Eduardo Giraldo and Family (Colombia); Case 13.728, Report No. 21/20, Amira Guzmán Alonso (Colombia); Case 12.909, Report No. 22/20, Gerardo Bedoya Borrero (Colombia); Case 13.370, Report No. 80/20, Luis Horacio Patiño and Family (Colombia); Case 13.421, Report No. 333/20, Geminiano Gil Martinez and Family (Colombia); Case 12.957, Report No. 167/18, Luis Bolívar Hernández Peñaherrera (Ecuador); Case 11.626 A, Report No. 81/20, Fredy Oreste Cañola Valencia (Ecuador); Case 11.626 B, Report No. 82/20, Luis Enrique Cañola Valencia (Ecuador); Case 11.626 C, Report No. 83/20, Santo Enrique Cañola González (Ecuador); Case 12.732, Report No. 86/20, Richard Conrad Solórzano Contreras (Guatemala); Case 10.441 A, Report No. 214/20, Silvia María Azurdia Utrera et al (Guatemala); Case 10.441 B, Report No. 215/20, Carlos Humberto Cabrera Rivera (Guatemala); Case 12.891, Report No. 212/20, Adán Guillermo López Lone et al (Honduras); Case 12.915, Report No. 2/20, Ángel Díaz Cruz et al (Mexico); Petition 735-07, Report No. 110/20, Ismael Mondragón Molina (Mexico); Case 13.017 C, Report No. 91/19, Family Members of the Victims of the Military Dictatorship, October 1968 to December 1989 (Panama); Case 13.017 A, Report No. 102/19, Family Members of the Victims of the Military Dictatorship, October 1968 to December 1989 (Panama); Case 12.374, Report No. 85/20, Jorge Enrique Patiño Palacios (Paraguay); Petition 747-05, Report No. 256/20, Y'akâ Marangatú of the Pueblo Mbya Indigenous Community (Paraguay); Case 12.095, Report No. 3/20, Mariela Barreto (Peru).

⁹ See IACHR, 2019 Annual Report, Chapter II, Section G. Friendly Settlements, Available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/docs/anual/2019/docs/IA2019cap2-es.pdf>

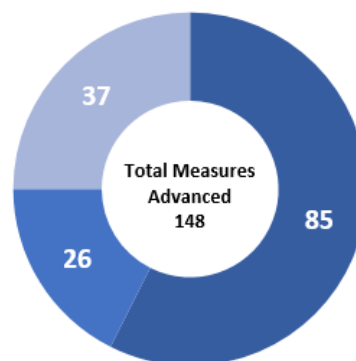
substantial partial compliance with 64 measures and partial compliance with 71 measures. It should be pointed out that 258 of the reparation measures implemented were individual and 107 were structural. This has helped to achieve the strategic objective of timely access to Inter-American justice and full reparation for victims.

Number of measures by type of impact



- Total of structural measures advanced
- Total of individual measures advanced

Number of measures by compliance



- Total of measures with full compliance
- Total of measures with substantial partial compliance
- Total of measures with partial compliance

In this regard, the Commission notes that the country that posted the highest rates of progress in implementation of measures was Colombia with progress in 32 measures in 2020, of which 13 achieved full compliance, 8 achieved substantial partial compliance and 11 achieved partial compliance. This rate is higher than the rate achieved by this same State in 2019.¹⁰ Likewise, Mexico made progress in the implementation of 26 provisions, 20 of which achieved total compliance, 3 achieved substantial partial compliance and 3 partial compliance. The Commission also noted significant progress in compliance by the Argentine State, which made headway in 24 measures of reparation, 11 of which achieved total compliance, 9 substantial partial compliance and 4 partial compliance. Thus, the Argentine State also posted an increase in its rate of progress in compliance with agreements in 2020 as compared to the previous year.¹¹

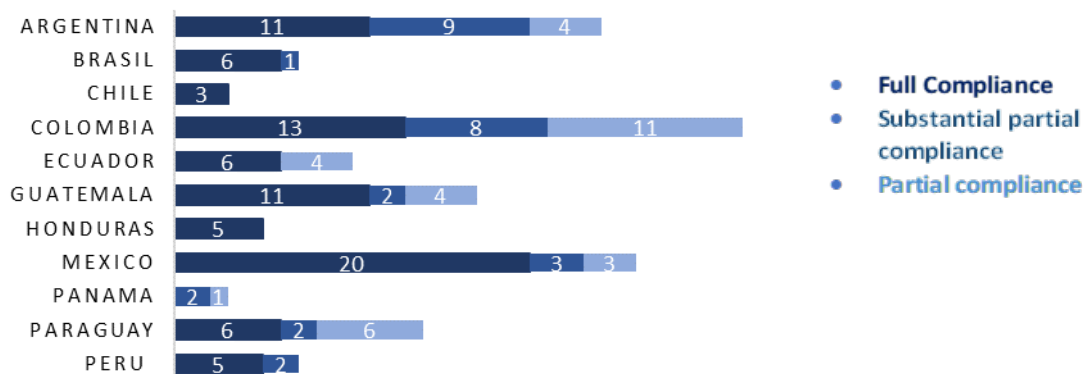
Other States that made headway in the implementation of friendly settlement agreements were Guatemala, which made progress in 17 provisions (11 with total compliance, 1 with substantial partial and 5 with partial compliance); Paraguay, which made progress in compliance with 14 measures (6 with total compliance, 2 substantial partial and 6 partial);

¹⁰ In 2019, the Commission noted that Colombia made progress in the implementation of 23 provisions, of which 11 achieved full compliance, 5 achieved substantial partial compliance and 7 partial compliance. Additionally, the Commission also noted significant progress in compliance from the Chilean State, which made progress in 13 measures of reparations, of which 9 achieved full compliance, 3 substantial partial compliance and 1 partial compliance. See IACHR, 2019 Annual Report, Chapter II, Section G. Friendly Settlements, Available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/docs/annual/2019/docs/IA2019cap2-es.pdf>

¹¹ In 2019, the Commission noted that Argentina achieved full compliance with 4 measures, substantial partial compliance with 3 measures and partial compliance with 4 measures, bringing the total number of instances of progress in measures of reparation of its friendly settlement agreements to 11. See IACHR, 2019 Annual Report, Chapter II, Section G. Friendly Settlements, Available at: <http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/docs/annual/2019/docs/IA2019cap3-es.pdf>

Ecuador, which made progress in implementation of 10 provisions (5 with total compliance and 5 partial); Brazil, which made progress in implementation of 7 measures (6 with total compliance and 1 with partial compliance); Honduras, which made progress in the implementation of 5 provisions; Peru, progressed in the implementation of 7 provisions (5 with total compliance and 2 with partial); Chile, made progress in compliance with 3 measures of reparation with full implementation; and lastly, Panama, made progress in implementation of 3 measures of reparation (2 with substantial partial compliance and 1 partial).

Number of measures with progress in implementation over 2020, by State



P3: Program to Strengthen Precautionary Measures

In the first half of 2020, through its precautionary measures mechanism, the IACHR has continued to protect the rights of individuals throughout the hemisphere who are at urgent and serious risk of irreparable harm, with particular attention to the specific problems created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

➤ Strengthening institutional management

In the first half of 2020, the Commission approved Resolution 2/2020 “Strengthening of the Monitoring of Precautionary Measures in Force,”¹² with a view to following up more effectively on precautionary measures in force, in accordance with Article 25 of the Rules of Procedure, which governs precautionary measures. This is part of the IACHR Plan to provide greater transparency to the work of the IACHR, by clarifying the tools it is going to use to continue monitoring precautionary measures, including the ability to issue Monitoring Resolutions and conducting *in situ* visits. Additionally, it appointed a team within the Precautionary and Provisional Measures Section (GESP) to periodically assess the portfolio of precautionary measures in force. Likewise, pursuant to subsection 9 of Article 25 of the Rules of Procedure, it reported on the review that it would conduct of its portfolios for purposes of identifying matters that do not meet the prescribed rules in light

¹² IACHR, Press Release 201/20 – IACHR Reports Implementation of Resolution 2/2020 on Strengthening of the Monitoring of Precautionary Measures in Force, August 17, 2020.

of available information. In this way, the IACHR has been successfully keeping the portfolio focused on matters that, based on the Rules, require proper attention.

Additionally, the Commission has published 48 press releases on precautionary measures, thus expanding dissemination of information on them. Likewise, an informational sheet was posted on the website of the Commission, which succinctly explains how to file a request for precautionary measures. The sheet is available in the 4 official OAS languages and is being disseminated through the IACHR networks.

► Achievements

In 2020, a total of 1170 request for precautionary measures were received. All requests received to date have been reviewed and ranked according to their gravity and urgency, pursuant to the criteria set forth in Article 25 of the Rules of Procedure, with 98% successfully undergoing a legal examination for the year.¹³ The highest number of requests was received in relation to Colombia (285), Mexico (183) and Argentina (102). It should be noted that a significant number of the requests were received in the context of the COVID-19 situation, accounting for almost 30% of the total number of requests filed, with posting Colombia (68), Mexico (47) and Peru (41), thus being the countries with the highest number of requests in that context.

Over the year, the Commission granted 49 precautionary measures, expanded 9, and lifted 40, bringing the total number of precautionary measures in force making up the portfolio to 591. Beneficiaries of precautionary measures include persons from the following groups: human rights defenders, children and adolescents, survivors of acts of violence, indigenous peoples, persons in custody or in circumstances in which their whereabouts are unknown, as well as other persons or groups of persons in highly vulnerable situations. Of the total number of new measures granted, 63.8% were granted within at least 90 days. Of those measures, 37.8% were granted within the same month of the request. Moreover, the Commission has deliberated on a total of 1018 matters over the course of the year.

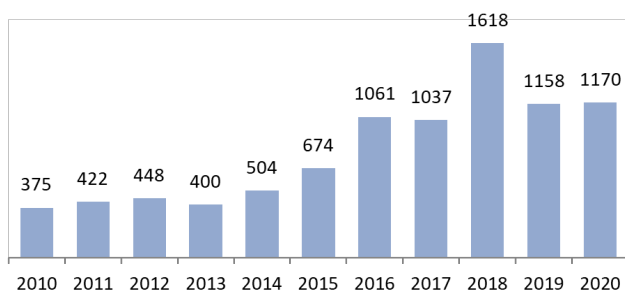
In response to the pandemic, the IACHR has prioritized the review of requests alleging risk in this context. In 2020, the Commission conducted initial review of 338 of the 343 requests filed relating to the COVID-19 pandemic, for an examination rate of 98.5%. Six precautionary measures of those requests were granted with respect to the States of Brazil, United States, Argentina, Colombia and Venezuela. It should be noted that from March 19, 2020 to May 21, 2020, the IACHR suspended the application of Resolution 3/2018 “Strengthening of the processing of requests for precautionary measures,” with regard to discontinuing processing requests due to lack of a timely response by the petitioners. This was intended to allow the parties to continue filing requests, even though processing them in a timely fashion posed challenges. With a view toward suspending deadlines, the Commission again discontinued processing requests due to lack of updated information or a response from the petitioners to the Commission’s requests. If additional information is

¹³ The initial review looks at what the matter is about and ranks its degree of urgency to enable the Commission to prioritize higher risk situations. That review is different from the legal evaluation of the matter, which involves a technical examination as to whether the request meets the requirements prescribed under the Rules of Procedure to grant a precautionary measure.

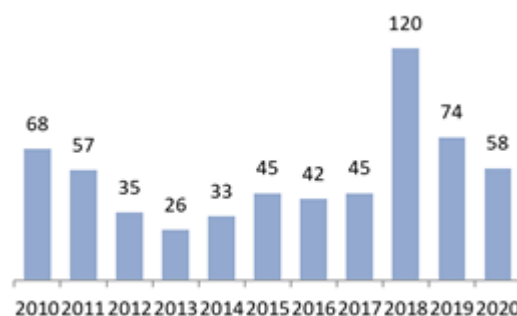
provided in such cases, the Commission will review their current situation pursuant to Article 25 of the Rules of Procedure, as indicated in the aforementioned resolution.

Thus, the Commission has been able to ensure efficiency and a timely response of the precautionary measures mechanism, by streamlining the decision-making process, focusing efforts and available resources on the examination of the matters of persons who are at risk and who require a precautionary measure to safeguard their rights.

Requests for Precautionary Measures received by year



Precautionary Measures granted and expanded.



➤ **Increasing visibility and monitoring of precautionary measures**

To cast a brighter light on the universe of measures in force, the Commission is updating an interactive map of the precautionary measures granted since 2013. This map has filters that enable the user to search for specific information and facilitates access to information for interested persons about the IACHR’s precautionary measures.

In 2020, within the framework of the strategy of “Strengthening the Monitoring of Measures in Force,” pursuant to Resolution 2/2020, the Commission conducted a portfolio review of precautionary measures in force, with a view toward identifying inactive cases; cases that lost their purpose; and, in general, those in which no risk factors are verified to support their remaining in force. Consequently, 40 precautionary measures were lifted, through 39 resolutions. It must be noted that, since the 2013 Reform of the Rules of Procedure, 2020 saw the highest number of resolutions lifting precautionary measures. By way of comparison, in 2019 only one resolution to lift was issued, and in 2015, 23 resolutions were issued for this purpose. This was done in the context of the strategy to keep the portfolio more focused on matters that demand the special attention of the IACHR.

In the framework of supervision of precautionary measures, and after strengthening supervision capacity through Resolution 2/2020 and creating the Precautionary and Provisional Measure Section (GESP), in 2020, more than 968 follow-up letters were sent to States and representatives requesting information to oversee implementation of such measures. Additionally, a total of 39 working meetings and 32 bilateral meetings were held with the parties to a precautionary measure to receive information from the parties about progress and challenges in implementing the measures. It should be noted that, given the

current context of the COVID-19 health crisis, virtual working meetings are being encouraged, with a view toward improving and increasing engagement between the parties, as well as making follow-up and monitoring of precautionary measures more effective.

► **Submissions on provisional measures granted by the IA Court of HR**

The Commission submitted a total of 59 legal briefs on supervision of current provisional measures issued by the Inter-American Court. It notes that on February 6, 2020, the Inter-American Court granted an expansion of the provisional measures requested by the Commission on behalf of the residents of the Miskitu indigenous communities in Nicaragua. In addition, on March 13, in a public hearing convened by the Court at its 134th Regular Session, the Commission presented its observations to the Court on this matter. It is important to note that, as part of its statutory functions, the Commission submits observations on precautionary measures in force and monitors these cases to ensure proper implementation of these measures and cooperation between the parties.

P4: Program for Transparency and Access to Information

In 2020, the IACHR continued to heighten efforts to promote transparency, accountability and access to information, as described below.

► **Access to Public Information Policy and its protocol**

In 2020, the final drafting stage of the Access to Public Information Policy was completed and it was submitted to the IACHR at the 178th Session, with the Commissioners' observations still pending. Likewise, progress was made on the first draft of the Protocol to the Access to Public Information Policy.

Over the first half of 2020, consultations were held with the different sections of the Executive Secretariat, yielding a text that reflects Inter-American standards in this area while also respecting the institutional characteristics of the Commission.

In terms of its scope, the Access to Information Policy is aimed at establishing a number of active transparency-related obligations, a regulated information delivery procedure, creating standards and protocols that ensure the confidentiality of personal and sensitive information on complainants, petitioners, victims and/or witnesses, among other things.

► **Active Transparency Policy**

With respect to active transparency measures, the Executive Secretariat updates on an ongoing basis its institutional information, as well as its Reports, Resolutions and other decisions it adopts in keeping with its mandates.

Additionally, work was done on the preliminary draft of the Active Transparency Policy, which is slated to be presented during the first quarter of 2021 to the IACHR Executive Secretariat, prior to being submitted to the IACHR.

➤ **Archiving Policy and its Protocols**

As for archiving management, the proposed IACHR Archiving Management Policy is in the process of internal review. The archiving protocols for the Office of the Assistant Executive Secretary for Monitoring, Training and Technical Cooperation and the Office of the Chief of Staff were drafted and are still in the process of internal review and comment and will be presented to the Executive Secretariat in the first quarter of 2021.

➤ **Published reports**

The Annual Report is the IACHR's main instrument for reporting to the States, civil society, users of the Inter-American human rights system and all actors that participate in and cooperate with the work of the IACHR. [The 2019 Annual Report](#) was submitted to the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs (CAJP) on April 30, 2020.

- On February 10, 2020, the IACHR submitted its progress report on the third year of implementation of the Strategic Plan and took stock of the major achievements of its work over 2019, with a view toward expanding transparency and accountability to the international human rights community.
- On April 30, 2020, as part of the IACHR's 2019 Annual Report, the 2019 Annual Report of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression was presented to the OAS Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs (CAJP).
- On May 16, 2020, the IACHR presented the [balance of actions taken and the results and impacts](#) achieved through its Rapid and Integrated Response Coordination Unit for the COVID-19 Pandemic (SACROI VOVID-19) outlining the results since its creation.
- On July 7, 2020, the IACHR presented its report on progress and of [the first half of 2020](#) on implementation of the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan.

In addition, the Special Monitoring Mechanism for Nicaragua (MESENI) continued to publish monthly bulletins reporting on the progress made by this mechanism, as well as on the human rights situation in Nicaragua.

➤ **Greater access to information through agreements.**

Pursuant to an agreement between the IACHR and the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence, and Non-Repetition, access was facilitated to the historical archives of Colombia, housed in the Columbus Library. As of the date of this report, efforts continue to be made, despite the context of the pandemic, for the Truth Commission to be able to access documents before its mandated term expires.

➤ **Responses to request for access to information.**

In the first half of 2020, responses were provided to 11 requests for access to information received by the IACHR Executive Secretariat.

► **Other transparency-related actions.**

Though previously mentioned under Program 1 of this report, it should be noted that on March 30, 2020, the IACHR published a Digest of Admissibility Decision Criteria, a document that systematically lists, for the first time, the main criteria currently followed by the IACHR regarding the processing of petitions, and that is described in its plan for transparency and democratization of the knowledge of the Inter-American system.

In addition, the IACHR published the announcement of competitive selection process, the [shortlist for the position of Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression](#) (RELE), and hosted an [open discussion](#) with the 10 finalists in the selection process for the position of Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression.

Likewise, because the term of the ES was not renewed by the SG, on September 25, 2020, the IACHR published the [notice](#) of the competitive selection process for the position of Executive Secretary and on December 15, a [list of finalists](#) for the aforementioned position was published.

SO2

To have an impact on prevention measures and the factors that lead to human rights violations through the coordinated use of IACHR mechanisms and functions to achieve improved capacity for monitoring and coordinating relevant, timely, and appropriate responses.

Achievements:

- Monitoring of the human rights situation in the region and expansion of the coverage of monitoring activities in the region.
 - Two in-person on-site visits (Chile and the Colombia-Venezuela border).
 - Approval and publication of the country report on the human rights situation in Cuba.
 - Publication of 5 thematic reports: [Report on Trans and Gender Diverse People and their Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights](#), [Report on Persons Deprived of Liberty in Nicaragua in Connection with the Human Rights Crisis that Began on April 18, 2018](#); [Report on Due Process in Procedures for the Determination of the Refugee Status and Statelessness and the Granting of Complementary Protection](#); [Compendium on Labor and Trade Union Rights](#); and the [Report on the Right to Information and National Security](#).
 - 5 country reports at the drafting stage for publication in 2021: Brazil, Chile, Venezuela, El Salvador and Haiti.
 - Conducting two regional consultations through requests for information (Article 41/18 Letters): about measures adopted by the countries to prevent, address and contain the COVID-19 pandemic and about the rights of LGTBI persons, specifically protection of the right to education and cultural rights.
 - Installing of the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts ([GIEI](#)) for Bolivia and reinstating the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts for the Ayotzinapa Matter in Mexico.
- Heightened IACHR physical and virtual presence in the region:
 - Holding the Regular Session in the Caribbean ([Haiti](#)).
 - 3 Virtual Regular Sessions ([176](#), [177](#) and [178](#)).
- Greater output and enrichment of Inter-American human rights standards to protect the human rights of individuals and groups in conditions of vulnerability in light of pandemic containment measures through [Resolution 1/20](#) on Pandemic and Human Rights in the Americas and [Resolution 4/20](#) on Human Rights of Persons with

COVID-19, as well as through two practical guides: [concerning standards to ensure respect for the grieving, funeral rites, and memorials of those who died during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) and [on access to the Right to Education for Children and Adolescents during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) .

- Organized, coordinated and timely response to critical human rights situations through SACROI.
 - Creating 3 new SACROIs: COVID-19, Colombia and United States
 - Developing and improving SACROI work methodologies;
 - Publishing progress report of SACROI COVID-19
 - Establishing PIAGI methodology and platform
- Monitoring of freedom of expression and economic, social, cultural and environmental rights, with the development of standards on novel subject matter.

P5: Program to Improve the Scope and Impact of the Monitoring of Human Rights Situations by Theme and Country

The institutional changes promoted in monitoring over recent years continued to yield significant results in 2020, as described below:

- **Integrating the methodology and work processes for thematic and country monitoring**

In 2020, the Monitoring System was adjusted to become a collaborative technological tool to include monitoring of the impact of IACHR actions (mention of resolutions, recommendation compliance, etc.). Specific training was given to the teams that have been systematically organizing the monitoring information in that tool. This facilitates the work process enabling it to meet the demands of working remotely.

- **Developing novel Human Rights Standards in the region.¹⁴**

In 2020, significant progress was made in terms of standards that expand the scope of protection for the people of the Americas and contribute, in turn, to development in the interpretation of the human rights enshrined in Inter-American instruments. These standards are set forth in the different reports and documents approved by the Commission in 2020:

In [Resolution 1/20](#): due to the health emergency caused by the pandemic, the IACHR set standards and issued recommendations to guide States on the measures that they should

¹⁴ In this section, some of the novel standards created over 2020 are mentioned; however, no detailed listing is provided of them all. For further information, please visit the cited documents.

take in addressing and containing the pandemic, while fully respecting human rights and, in turn, taking into account differentiated and intersectional impacts on the realization of economic, social, cultural and environmental rights (ESCRs) for certain groups and populations living in an especially vulnerable situation. Therefore, it has become essential to adopt policies to effectively prevent infection, as well as measures of social security and access to public health systems to facilitate timely and affordable diagnosis and treatment, in order to provide populations in situations of vulnerability with comprehensive physical and mental health care, without discrimination.

The standards include the following:

- States must take immediate and diligent measures to prevent infringements of the right to health, humane treatment and life from happening. These measures must give high priority to preventing infection and providing adequate medical treatment to those who need it.
- The objective of all policies and measures adopted must be based on a human rights approach that takes into account universality and inalienability; indivisibility; the interdependence and interconnectedness of all human rights; equality and non-discrimination; a gender, diversity and intersectionality perspective; inclusion; accountability; respect for the rule of law and strengthening of cooperation between States.
- Protecting the human rights, and particularly the ESCR rights, of workers who are at high risk as a result of the pandemic and its consequences. It is important to take measures that ensure the economic income and livelihoods of all workers so they are able to comply on an equal basis with measures of containment and protection, as well as conditions of access to food and other essential rights. People who have continued performing their jobs must be protected from risk of virus infection and, in general, adequate protection must be given to jobs, salaries, trade union freedom and collective bargaining, pensions and other social rights that are interconnected to the labor and trade union sphere.
- Make sure that all restrictions or limitations imposed on human rights for the purpose of protecting health in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic meet international human rights law standards. In particular, these restrictions must abide by the principle of legality, be necessary in a democratic society and, therefore, be strictly proportional to serve a legitimate purpose of protecting health.
- Make sure that any restriction or suspension adopted is supported by the best scientific evidence and takes into consideration, prior to the adoption and during the implementation thereof, the specific effects that it could have on the most vulnerable groups in order to ensure that its impact is not especially disproportionate when adopting positive measures that are necessary. Likewise, in every decision and measure that is adopted in this context, the gender, intersectional, linguistic and intercultural perspective must be taken into consideration in a particularly meaningful way.
- Refrain from restricting the business and movement of journalists and human rights defenders, who play a key role during the public health emergency of reporting and monitoring the actions of the State. States should not include

communicators among those whose movements are restricted and they are obligated to allow access to official press conferences for all media outlets, without discrimination based on editorial line, except for necessary and proportional measures to protect health. At the same time, States must respect the secrecy of sources of information and assess each individual situation of risk to the journalists or communications workers, establish adequate biosafety measures and facilitate priority access for them to evaluate their own state of health.

- Give priority to older persons in pandemic response programs, especially access to COVID-19 tests, to timely treatment, to medications and to palliative care as necessary, making sure they give prior, free and informed consent and taking into account specific situations such as belonging to an indigenous people or being afro-descendant.
- Adopt measures to address overcrowding at prison facilities, including re-examination of cases of pretrial detention to identify when non-custodial alternative means of incarceration could be used, giving priority to high COVID-19 infection risk populations, mostly older adults and pregnant or nursing women.
- Ensure the participation of women in decision-making positions on committees and working groups that respond to the COVID-19 health crisis, making sure a gender-based perspective is included into the design, implementation, execution and monitoring of the measures and policies adopted in response to that health crisis. Particularly, include a gender perspective based on a cross-cutting approach taking into account the contexts and conditions that magnify the effects of the crisis, including economic precariousness, status of migrant or displaced person, deprivation of liberty, ethno-racial origin.
- Refrain from promoting legislative bills or advancing implementation of productive and/or extractive projects in the territories of indigenous peoples for the duration of the pandemic, inasmuch as prior, free and informed consultation processes cannot be conducted (because of the WHO recommendation of social distancing) as provided for in ILO Convention 169 and other relevant international and national instruments on the subject matter.
- Guarantee the right of return and return migration to States and territories of origin or nationality, through cooperation, information exchange and logistical support between the States concerned, following the requisite health protocols and particularly taking into consideration the right of stateless persons to return to their countries of habitual residence, and guaranteeing the principle of respect for family unity.
- Heighten protection of children and adolescents –including, most particularly, those who are not cared for by family care and who live in care institutions–, and prevent COVID-19 infection, implementing any measure that takes into account their particular characteristics as persons in a stage of development and that serve as broadly as possible their best interests. The protection should, to the extent possible, guarantee family and community ties.
- a) Implement measures of economic support, such as vouchers, subsidies, to the Afro-descendant persons and tribal communities, who are living in a situation of poverty or extreme poverty, and other situations of particular vulnerability in the context of the pandemic; b) disaggregate data by ethnic-racial origin, gender, age and disability on the records of infected, hospitalized and deceased persons from

the COVID-19 pandemic; c) guarantee access to timely comprehensive health care for Afro-descendants and tribal communities, using an intercultural approach and guaranteeing for this population clear, understandable and inclusive information about the medical procedures that may be performed on them. Ensure preferential medical care for persons with disability without discrimination, even in cases of rationing of medical resources. Ensure the participation of persons with disabilities in the design, implementation and monitoring of the measures adopted against the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the Report [*Due Process in Procedures to Determine Refugee Status and Statelessness and the Granting of Complementary Protection*](#): a structure is included that is based on recognition of the minimum standards to verify the adequacy of due process guarantees in procedures for the recognition of protection status. In addition, it offers an interpretation that is consistent with the recent publication of the Inter-American Principles on the Human Rights of All Migrants, Refugees, Stateless Persons and Victims of Human Trafficking, approved by the IACHR through Resolution 04/2019, with a view to expand the repertoire of institutional best practices at the disposal of the States to strengthen and enhance existing procedures, as well as to innovate these process in response to the new contexts of human mobility.

Novel standards to consider include:

- Adapt protection systems to recognize and process new factors of forced displacement and new hypotheses that expand the principle of non-refoulement, such as widespread violence and gross infringements of economic, social, cultural and environmental rights in the context of pandemics and other emergencies.
- States must make it a high priority for the functions and infrastructure, where procedures involving children and adolescents take place, to be endowed with specially trained personnel and outfitted appropriately and, especially, not shared with security or law enforcement facilities.
- States must guarantee seekers of international protection sufficient and adequate information about deadlines, procedures, decisions and the potential effects thereof, as well as about the possibility and the means to appeal the respective proceedings.
- States must strive to attain the highest level of technical and institutional specialization, by seeking to establish a technical, specialized, independent and autonomous authority, led by its own staff, who are selected based on the criteria of technical competency and specific training on international human rights law and on the law of refugees and on statelessness, eschewing political interference.
- States should provide adequate means to receive and process reports of crime and infringements of rights endured by asylum seekers throughout their migratory journey, such as human trafficking, extortion, sexual violence, that may be brought to their attention during the refugee status proceeding or granting of complementary protection/statelessness status.
- States should accept all material evidence (including statements, documentation and other exhibits introduced by the seekers) to prove the facts that are the basis for the application for international protection. When the person is unable or does

not have the necessary resources to prove all the substantial facts of his or her application, the competent authorities should aid in securing this evidence. This means that the burden of proof shall be shared between the applicant and the State.

- Considering the special situation of vulnerability of stateless persons, States should actively promote their inclusion into society and grant legal treatment and protection under the highest standards, when expeditious naturalization is not possible or desirable.
- States must clearly establish in their domestic legislation what body is competent to adjudicate the appeal and this body should be independent and above the authority that made the decision at the trial level, as well as have training and competency on the subject of statelessness.

In the context of the drafting of the **Observations on the Request for Advisory Opinion** relating to differential approaches in the area of deprivation of liberty –in view of the protection gaps among certain especially at-risk groups, the IACHR identified, in light of its obligations under the ACHR and other Inter-American instruments, the specific obligations of States regarding differential approaches. In particular, guidelines were drawn up on the treatment of: i) pregnant women, women in the postpartum period and nursing mothers; ii) mothers with children outside of prison; iii) LGBT persons; iv) indigenous persons; v) older persons; vi) and children living with their mothers in prison. Specifically, the Observations on the Request for Advisory Opinion were meant to offer the Court a joint and comprehensive interpretation of the different international norms on the differential obligations that the principle of equality and non-discrimination imposes on States in the context of deprivation of liberty.

In the context of COVID-19, through [Resolution 1/20](#), recommendations were issued to encourage a reduction in prison population, and are specifically described in that Resolution and in other press releases on the subject. Likewise, standards were developed to guarantee that mechanisms against torture will be engaged in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Additionally, in [Practical Guide No. 1](#) called What are the standards for ensuring respect for the grieving, funeral rites, and memorials of those who died during the COVID-19 pandemic?, the Commission lays out best practices and notes international obligations that States must meet in handling the bodies of the deceased. In the document, standards are addressed that must be fulfilled with a view to respecting grieving family members and not violate their rights, which are protected by the Inter-American human rights system *corpus juris*. It also gives guidelines for appropriate practices of corpse removal and transportation with a view to preventing their disappearance, as well as reinforcing the State's obligations to investigate in cases of violent deaths.

[Report on Trans and Gender-Diverse Persons and their Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights](#): as for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse and intersex persons, the IACHR published this report, which examines the barriers that keep trans and gender-diverse people from realizing their full potential and from accessing

economic, social, cultural and environmental rights from a young age, due to the social context of discrimination in which they grow up. This report includes a specific chapter on the impacts of the pandemic on the rights of Trans and gender-diverse people, as well as specific recommendations to States to protect their rights.

Novel standards include the following:

- Prohibit the illegitimate use of “exceptions of conscience” by public servants and professionals to discriminate against trans and gender-diverse people, particularly, as it concerns denial of public or vital services, with a view to prevent acts of discrimination and ensure the full exercise of the ESCE rights of trans and gender-diverse persons, on an equal basis and without any type of discrimination. Furthermore, processes must be established to sanction public servants and professionals who illegitimately use exceptions of conscience to discriminate against Trans persons and deny them the exercise of ESCE rights.
- Including and respecting the rights of trans and gender-diverse people in education processes must encompass both formal and informal education, education delivered by public, private or public-private institutions; and should not be limited to elementary education, but should be done at all levels of education.
- Institute directives or protocols for the care of Trans patients, who plan to be lodged at health care facilities or are hospitalized with full respect for their gender identity.
- Amend laws on maternity and/or paternity leave with pay or comparable benefits, fully ensuring the principles of equality and non-discrimination with respect to the enjoyment of these rights of gestating Trans persons and those that are beginning the stage of maternity and/or paternity, for example, through adoption. In this same vein, States should review their domestic legislation to make sure that it is not based on stereotypes regarding child care and the paramount role of the duty to care for children.
- Foster equal hiring opportunities of Trans and gender-diverse people, including implementing job campaigns or fairs jointly with private entities to facilitate access of Trans persons to employment.

➤ **Coordinated Strategy to address the situation of the serious human rights crisis in Venezuela**

The IACHR coordinates its strategy to address the serious human rights crisis in Venezuela through the Special Monitoring Mechanism for Venezuela (MESEVE). In 2020, the IACHR conducted a visit to the Colombian-Venezuelan border from February 4 to 8 with a view to monitor the human rights situation in Venezuela. After the on-site visit, MESEVE prepared a [preliminary observation](#) report, which laid out **45 recommendations** to the State. On May 8, MESEVE presented a report through a virtual seminar, which was attended by 347 viewers. The preliminary observations were also presented to the [OAS Permanent Council](#) on May 27.

Furthermore, in the framework of its communication strategy, MESEVE published at least 115 tweets addressing the human rights situation of different groups and published 26

press releases, 14 of which were about the granting or expanding of precautionary measures. In general terms, MESEVE shed light on the human rights situation of several groups in a situation of particular vulnerability in different regions of Venezuela in coordination with the Special Rapporteurship on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights and the Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression. MESEVE spoke out on several issues, such as the situation of journalists, persons deprived of liberty, human rights defenders and [representatives of the National Assembly](#), as well as the situation of human rights in the context of the [COVID-19](#) pandemic. Additionally, in 2020, the mechanism took around 186 virtual testimonies and launched its micro-website, which publicizes important information on monitoring actions and precautionary measures. Lastly, MESEVE authored Chapter IV.B on Venezuela for the Inter-American Commission’s annual report.

➤ **Publication of the Report “Situation of Human Rights in Cuba**

The first half of this year saw the approval and publication of the report “[Situation of Human Rights in Cuba](#)”. In the report, the Commission notes the lack of pluralism in political participation. The existence of a one-party system stands as a serious constraint on persons with different political views to participate in public representative positions. Moreover, bodies such as the National Assembly of the People’s Power continue to exercise broad authority to make public policy decisions, which blurs the lines usually present in a system with a separation of powers. Moreover, conditions are lacking to ensure an independent judiciary, especially in cases of activists and opposition members. The IACHR also points out that Cuba remains the only country in the Hemisphere with no guarantee whatsoever of the exercise of the right to freedom of expression, and it continues to be concerned about the serious limitations on freedom of opinion, expression, and dissemination of information.



Nonetheless, the Commission stresses that with Cuba’s adoption of a new constitution and the recognition of a number of rights, the country has an opportunity to embrace the recommendations issued by the IACHR to fulfill the obligations enshrined in the American Declaration. The report was presented in an [online event](#).

➤ **Preparation and approval of 5 thematic reports**

- In 2020, the following thematic reports were written, as presented in the table below.

Table of thematic reports:

REPORTEURSHIP	TITLE OF THE REPORT
Rapporteurship on the Rights of LGBTI Persons and REDESCA	Report on Trans and Gender Diverse People and their Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights
Rapporteurship on the Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty and Country Rapporteurship	Report on Persons Deprived of Liberty in Nicaragua in Connection with the Human Rights Crisis that Began on April 18, 2018
Rapporteurship on the Rights of Migrants	Report on Due Process in Procedures for the Determination of the Refugee Status and Statelessness and the Granting of Complementary Protection
Promotion, Training and Technical Cooperation Section and REDESCA	Compendium on Labor and Trade Union Rights;
Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression	Report on the Right to Information and National Security

► **Working and on-site visits to countries of the region:**

Place/State	Date	Type of visit	Object/Topic(s)/Rapporteurships
Chile	January 25 and 31	In loco	To observe the human rights situation on the ground based on the events of the social protests, examining their causes and consequences
Visit to Colombian-Venezuelan Border	February 4 to 8	In loco	To monitor the human rights situation in Venezuela, through the Special Monitoring Mechanism of the situation in Venezuela –MESEVE
Peru	November 29 to December 2, 2020	Working	To observe the human rights situation on the ground in the context of the social protests related to the recent political and institutional crisis.
Mexico	December 16 to 18, 2020	Working	To observe the human rights situation of migrants, with a sub-regional approach.

► **59 public hearings relating to monitoring and new human rights situations in the region**

The IACHR monitored and spotlighted a significant number of human rights situations through thematic hearings.

In 2020, 59 public hearings were held during the 175th, 177th and 178th Sessions. The topics included monitoring human rights in situations in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, United States, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Venezuela, as well on regional topics, such as the rights of migrants and ESCE rights of the LGBTI population; sexual violence, forced pregnancies and access to health in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic; the right to prior, free and informed consultation and consent of indigenous peoples; the human rights situation of migrants, refugees and unaccompanied children and adolescents; the human rights situation of persons with disability in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic; and challenges and obstacles of systems of justice. Also, in this context, sexual abuse of children and adolescents at religious institutions; the situation of prosecutor’s offices in the protection of human rights; the human rights situation of LGBTI persons in the Caribbean; police violence and racism against Afro-descendants; the human rights situation of migrants in Mexico and the Northern Triangle; and search commissions. In addition, working meetings were held with States and civil society, as well as bilateral meetings. At these virtual meetings, 100 representatives of organizations from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, United States, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Dominican Republic and Venezuela were registered. The participants reported on infringements of human rights in their respective countries.

Number of Hearings by priority theme

Temas Prioritarios/Priority topics	2017	2018	2019	2020
DESCA/ESCE	18	18	15	4
Libertad de Expresión/ Freedom of Expression	9	11	2	5
Privados de Libertad/ Persons Deprived of Liberty	5	10	5	6
Migrantes/ Migrants	6	8	12	6
Niñez/ Children	7	7	9	4
LGTBI/ LGBTI	6	8	4	4
Pueblos Indígenas/ Indigenous Peoples	8	14	13	7
Discriminación Racial/ Racial Discrimination	6	4	7	4
Personas con discapacidad/ Persons with Disabilities	1	4	2	1
Defensores de DDHH/ HR Defenders	14	11	6	3
Mujeres/ Women	3	12	6	5
Memoria, Verdad y Justicia/ Memory, Truth and Justice	10	10	9	7
Personas Mayores/Older Adults	1	3	1	0
Cobertura Temas Prioritarios/Theme Coverages	13	13	13	12

Number of Thematic Hearings by country

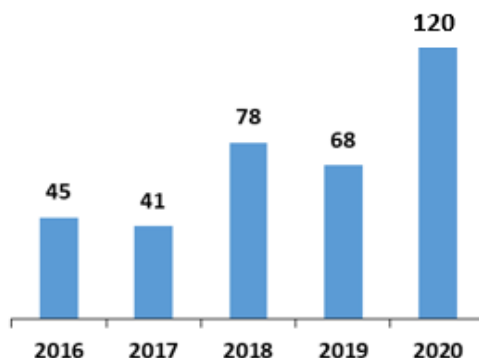
Country	2017	2018	2019	2020
Argentina	7	3	2	0
Bahamas		1	1	0
Bolivia	2	3	2	5
Brazil	11	7	9	5
Canada	3	1	1	0
Chile	6	1	3	1
Colombia	8	9	8	5
Costa Rica	2	0	0	1
Cuba	2	2	2	2
Ecuador	3	6	2	2
El Salvador	3	6	4	3
United States	9	7	5	2
Granada		0		0
Guatemala	4	5	5	1
Guyana	1	0	0	0
Haiti	2	2	3	1
Honduras	3	5	2	2
Jamaica	1	0	0	0
Mexico	12	8	7	6
Nicaragua	2	5	6	2
Panama	2	1	0	1
Paraguay	4	1	0	0
Peru	6	8	8	2
Dominican Republic	1	2	1	0
Trinidad and Tobago		0	2	0
Uruguay	4	1	1	0
Venezuela	9	11	8	4
Country Coverage	24	22	21	17
Regional	18	23	18	14
Total hearings	125	118	100	59

► **Impact on prevention measures and on factors giving rise to human rights violations through transmittal of 120 Requests for Information to 35 Member States**

During this period, the IACHR issued 120 letters requesting information from States of the region. 97 of those letters were sent under Article 41 of the American Convention on Human Rights and 23 of them, under Article 18 of the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man. It should be noted that 59 of the letters were answered by the States and 61 went unanswered, a 49.16% response rate by the States.

In the context of these requests for information, the IACHR sent letters to 35 States to conduct a regional consultation about prevention measures, addressing and containing the COVID-19 pandemic. Letters were also sent to all States in order to gather information about the rights of LGBTI persons to prepare a report on education and cultural change as tools to advance the recognition of rights and social inclusion of these persons. In addition, requests were sent with respect to eviction of indigenous peoples from their territories and infringements of their rights, on the situation of persons deprived of liberty, on the murder and criminalization of human rights defenders and journalists, as well as in the sphere of the monitoring mechanism for Nicaragua (MESENI).

Requests for information by year. Art 18 and Art 41 Letters



Number of requests for information by State

Countries	Requests for Information (Art. 18 and Art. 41 Letters)
Antigua and Barbuda	2
Argentina	3
Bahamas	2
Barbados	2
Belize	2
Bolivia	3
Brazil	9
Canada	2
Chile	5
Colombia	8
Costa Rica	2
Cuba	2
Dominica	2
Ecuador	4
El Salvador	3
United States of America	3
Grenada	2
Guatemala	6
Guyana	2
Haiti	2
Honduras	6
Jamaica	2
Mexico	7
Nicaragua	8
Panama	3
Paraguay	4
Peru	4

Dominican Republic	3
Saint Kitts and Nevis	2
Saint Lucia	2
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	2
Surinam	2
Trinidad and Tobago	2
Uruguay	5
Venezuela	2
Total	120

► **143 IACHR press releases on the monitoring of the human rights situation in the region, in relation to countries and IACHR thematic priorities**

The IACHR has expanded its scope of protection and promotion of human rights in the region through this mechanism. In 2020, it issued 143 press releases on situations that raised concern. Through these releases, the Commission addressed the human rights situation in 17 countries of the region (Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, United States, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela).

Specifically, 40 releases dealt with different issues and countries in the context of human rights violations during the COVID-19 virus pandemic. They also addressed such topics as protests, racial discrimination, forced evictions and internal displacement, migration policies that lead to greater restrictions on human mobility, human rights defenders, excessive use of force, rights of women and girls, rights of LGBTI persons and older persons, rights of indigenous and tribal peoples, issues relating to memory, truth and justice, right to freedom of expression, and economic, social, cultural and environmental rights, *inter alia*.

Summary:

Press Releases 2020 Categories and numbers				
Regional: SACROI COVID-19	Regional: varied theme	By country	By group of countries	TOTAL
40	25	76	2	143

► **2 resolutions and two guides issued by the IACHR on the pandemic and human rights**

Increasing output and enriching Inter-American human rights standards for the protection of the human rights of persons and groups living in conditions of vulnerability in terms of measures to contain the pandemic through [Resolutions 1/20](#) (Pandemic and Human Rights) and [04/20](#) (Human Rights of Persons with COVID-19), as well as through two practical guides: [standards to ensure respect for the grieving, funeral rites, and memorials of the deceased](#) and [access to the right to education for children and adolescents during the pandemic](#)

P6: Special Rapporteurship Program

Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression (RELE)

► **Designing the Plan of Action**

In executing its 2018-2021 Plan of Action, the Special Rapporteurship continued implementing projects focused on democratic governance, defense of the civic sphere, and the protection of online freedom.

During the final quarter of the year, and coinciding with the turnover in leadership of the Special Rapporteurship, the new Rapporteur kicked off the process of Strategic Planning for 2021-2023, with a view to building on the achievements of the current plan and including new challenges to freedom of expression related to the COVID-19 pandemic, authoritarian backsliding in the region, and the digital setting. The active participation of the different stakeholders involved is planned for this process.

► **Response to the COVID-19 pandemic**

In the framework of the IACHR's Rapid and Integrated Response Coordination Unit (SACROI), and through the mechanisms of the System, the Commission and its Special Rapporteurship issued recommendations, and urged the States to ensure the exercise of these rights, including protection of the practice of journalism. These efforts have included press releases, public policy guides, internal virtual seminars, participation at virtual training, letters to the States [Resolution 1/20 – Pandemic and Human Rights](#) and [Resolution 4/20 – Human Rights of Persons with COVID-19](#). For these pronouncements, the Special Rapporteur provided his expert advisory services in the sections relating to the right of Access to Information, including the prohibition on censorship, and the guarantee of access to internet; special care in statements by public officials; combatting disinformation; the role of journalism; the right to privacy and protection of personal information; and safeguards on surveillance activities.

Jointly with the UN and OSCE Special Rapporteurs for Freedom of Expression and Opinion, the Rapporteurship issued a [statement](#) on access to and free circulation of information during the pandemic, calling on the States to guarantee these rights without improper restrictions. As has been the case with Resolution 1/20, the statement has been widely cited by civil society and by guarantor bodies throughout the world to prevent or remove potential constraints on these rights.

➤ **Disseminating and promoting Inter-American standards**

The Special Rapporteurship hosted and took part in some 40 events to raise awareness of Inter-American standards and provide training on freedom of expression. Due to the recommended lock-down measures and travel restrictions, as of March these events were conducted virtually. In this context, the Rapporteurships' interventions focused on the most pressing topical issues, such as [freedom of expression and COVID-19](#), access to information, Internet and privacy; protection of personal information, the phenomenon of disinformation; security, censorship and harassment of journalists; and criminalizing statements protected by the right to freedom of expression. The Rapporteurship paid particular attention to the situation in Nicaragua, Cuba, Bolivia, Brazil, and Venezuela, where the most serious constraints were identified.

Hosting partners for outreach events include Inter-American Dialogue, the government of Canada, guarantor bodies of the region, and different civil society organizations. The Special Rapporteur also addressed other issues such as violence against journalists in Mexico, guarantees of freedom of expression in the context of elections – in the framework of the [2020 Joint Declaration of Special Rapporteurs](#), the [IACHR 2019 Annual Report](#), and the situation of freedom of expression in Honduras, among others.

➤ **Monitoring the situation of freedom of expression**

The Special Rapporteurship also fulfilled important objectives in the context of monitoring the most direct situations in the hemisphere, despite the travel and meeting restrictions imposed by COVID-19, which hampered on-the-ground monitoring. In this context, virtual public hearings and meetings took on particular significance for purposes of continuity in receiving information.

Despite these restrictions, the Special Rapporteurship took part in two important IACHR working visits. The first one was an [IACHR visit to Venezuela](#), to the [Colombian-Venezuelan border](#). Along with the delegation, the Rapporteur attended different meetings in the border city of Cucuta, including Colombian and Venezuelan civil society organizations, exiled journalists and groups of Venezuelan victims of human rights violations. In November, the Special Rapporteur, Pedro Vaca, participated in the IACHR's [working visit to Peru](#) organized around the social protests related to the political and institutional crisis of that country in November 2020. Over the four days, the Special Rapporteur received

information from journalists, demonstrators and authorities about the events that occurred in the context of the protests, and toured several sites of the events.

As for public hearings, the Rapporteurs took part in more than 15 hearings over the course of the year, the topics of which included the [situation of human rights of women, young people and activists in Cuba](#), restrictions on [freedom of expression in Brazil](#), illegal practices of wiretaps in Colombia, freedom of expression and the practice of journalism in protests in the United States and [the situation of freedom of expression in El Salvador](#)

We can note the publication of three press releases in the context of SACROI COVID-19. The first release addressed [restrictions on freedom of expression and access to information in States' responses to COVID-19](#). In the second one, jointly with the IACHR and the REDESCA, it expressed serious concern over violations of the [right to information in Nicaragua](#) and its consequences for access to health in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the third release, it addressed the [need to speed up universal access to internet policies during the COVID-19 pandemic with emphasis on groups in a situation of vulnerability](#). Through these statements, the IACHR and its Rapporteurship urged States to ensure the exercise of the right to freedom of expression and access to information. In addition, specific situations of constraints and restrictions on these rights were described, offering recommendations to reverse potential violations and to ensure access to information for the population.

Lastly, we must note the presentation of the 2019 Annual Report of the Office and of the IACHR's Report on the [Situation of Human Rights in Cuba](#), published in June and [presented virtually](#) with the participation of Cuban journalists and activists.

► Thematic Reports

On the occasion of the International Day for Universal Access to Information, the IACHR's Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression published its thematic report "[Right to Information and National Security](#)" which addresses the legal and *de facto* obstacles existing in the region to reconciling the circulation of information of public interest with national security interests. The report examines the national security exception, as well as the challenges that citizens still face to gain access to information on topics of high public interest, such as files and documents on gross human rights violations, or information that can help to combat corruption and abuse of power.

The Office made progress in drafting two thematic reports and one Guide: *Children, Freedom of Expression and Media*; and *Guide on access to environmental information in the context of extractive industries*. These reports will be published in the first half of 2021. Additionally, with a view to better disseminating advanced standards and encouraging their use by different sectors, the Office is drafting two manuals on protest and human rights: A

Manual for journalists on how to cover and report on protests and human rights, and a Manual for public security and police forces.

➤ **Press Releases and Communications to States**

In 2020, the Special Rapporteurship published [26 press releases](#), which were re-published by different media outlets worldwide. In addition to the three press releases issued in the framework of SACROI COVID-19, four communications were published about murders of journalists occurring in México, Guatemala, Honduras and Paraguay; others addressed incidents of attacks, threats, intimidation of journalists and media outlets in Cuba, Nicaragua and Guatemala, and the use of force against journalists in the [context of protests in the United States](#), and in [Peru](#).

As for the joint line of work with United Nations Special Procedures and other Special Rapporteurs, this included a Joint Statement on guarantees of access to information in the context of COVID-19, the [2020 Joint Declaration](#) on elections and freedom of expression in the digital age, [Joint Declaration on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Democratic Governance](#), Communications to States, among other efforts and information exchanges on the situation in the region.

Additionally, the Special Rapporteurship requested information from the States on situations that could affect freedom of expression, through five letters pursuant to Article 18 of the IACHR's Statute and Article 41 of the American Convention on Human Rights. Three of the letters were sent jointly with the United Nations Special Procedures Mechanism. The communications addressed structural situations of violations of freedom of expression such as the cases of Nicaragua, allegations about illegal spying on journalists in Colombia, the use of criminal law against journalists in Brazil and a legislative bill that could restrict freedom of expression in Uruguay. Lastly, the fifth communication dealt with bringing criminal charges to address disinformation in the context of COVID-19 in Bolivia.

➤ **Promoting petitions and strategic cases**

The Special Rapporteurship submitted and the IACHR approved the [Reports on the Merits](#) with respect to the cases of Rogelio Julio Viteri Ungaretti and Family v. Ecuador (whistleblowers and corruption in the Armed Forces), which was received in 2002; and Santiago Leguizamón Zaván and Family v. Paraguay (violence against journalists and impunity), which was received in 2007. Additionally, the IACHR decided to [refer to the IA Court of HR](#) the cases of the Mayan Kaqchikuel of Supamgo Indigenous Peoples et al v. Guatemala; Ronald Moya Chacón and Freddy Parrales Chaves v. Costa Rica, and Carlos Baraona Fray v. Chile. Lastly, the Special Rapporteur took part in three working meetings between petitioners and State to follow up on case 11.728 - Guillermo Cano et al (Colombia). The main purpose was to obtain information on compliance with the

recommendations issued by the Commission and to move forward toward an agreement on compliance with concrete measures of reparation by the State. The Office also collaborated in giving its technical opinion on 7 merits reports drafted by the IACHR and on the referral to the IA Court of HR of the case of Members of the “Jose Alvear Restrepo” Lawyers’ Collective (CAJAR) v. Colombia, which are also related to the right to freedom of expression. Finally, the Court passed judgment in the case of Urrutia Laubreaux v. Chile (freedom of expression of judges), a case in which the Rapporteurship also provided technical assistance to the IACHR.

As for the system of petitions, the Office collaborated with its technical opinion on 22 admissibility reports drafted by the IACHR, which are also related to the right to freedom of expression.

As for the [precautionary measures mechanism](#), in 2020, the Special Rapporteurship collaborated in the review of 27 requests for precautionary measures, including five that were granted by the IACHR. Three of them involved protection granted to independent journalists in Nicaragua in the context of the repression and restriction on freedom of the press experienced by the country since the protests broke out in April 2018: **MC 1606-18** (Nicaragua) – expansion of the measures granted to Maria Waleska Almandares, for threats and harassment of journalists and media workers of the outlet Confidencial; **MC 399-19** (Nicaragua) – expansion of precautionary measures for threats and harassment of the journalist Carlos Edy Monterrey, commentator of the radio station Costeñísima, **MC 399-20** (Nicaragua), granted to the journalist of Notimat, Eduardo Montenegro, and **MC 1205-19** (Venezuela), it involves threats and harassment of the family members of journalist Roberto Deniz of Armando Info. And lastly, **MC 1043-20** (Cuba), which was granted to Niober García Fournier.

► **Training justice operators on Inter-American standards of freedom of expression**

In furtherance of its plans to train justice operators on Inter-American standards regarding freedom of expression, in partnership with UNESCO, the Special Rapporteurship successfully trained 2,348 judges and operators of justice of the region in 2000 on enforcing Inter-American standards of freedom of expression, through an [online course hosted at the University of Austin \(Texas\)](#), which includes the participation of former Special Rapporteur Edison Lanza, former IACHR and UN Rapporteurs for freedom of expression, and a faculty of experts. This course has been taken by 11,000 judges of the Americas over the past 5 years.

Likewise, in conjunction with UNESCO, the Rapporteurship offered training to more than 30 justice operators of Mexico, including public defenders, who attended the virtual sessions on the subjects of security of journalists, access to information and use of criminal law.

Special Rapporteurship on the Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights – REDESCA

► Progress in installing, positioning and sustaining the IACHR-REDESCA

In 2020, the Special Rapporteurship on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights (REDESCA) fulfilled its mandate under the three fundamental pillars of the IACHR, such as the system of petitions and cases, monitoring of the ESCER situation in the region and promotion of ESCE rights and technical assistance to the Member States to adopt legislative, judicial, administrative or other types of measures that lead to the effective exercise of ESCE rights. The REDESCA continued to play its role as the IACHR's representative in the Working Group on the Protocol of San Salvador [Working Group on the Protocol of San Salvador](#) (WGPSS).

In 2020, the REDESCA continued with implementation of ESCE rights promotion and protection in the Americas, financed by the Spanish Fund for the OAS (FEPO), the Kingdom of Norway, Open Society Foundation and OXFAM.

Likewise, the REDESCA held a number of meetings with different organizations and other networks, with a view to strengthen the work of the Rapporteurship, with organizations such as GIZ, FLASCO and *Food for the Poor*, University of Buenos Aires; Lawyers without Borders and the Organization of Ibero-American States (OEI).

► Promoting ESCE rights and publicizing its mandate

In 2020, the Rapporteurship carried out 73 promotional and academic activities in different countries of the region on a variety of topics linked to its mandate. Specifically, it held promotional workshops with civil society organizations and with Nicaraguan medical personnel, as well as with CSOs, public officials, and officials of national human rights institutions from Central America and Mexico on subjects such as the effects of climate change on the guarantee, respect and protection of human rights. The REDESCA also participated in the First Regular Meeting of the Central American Council of Human Rights Ombudsmen (CCPPDH)" and contributed to writing an article related to Inter-American standards on business and human rights for a report on the subject in the Human Rights Review of the Human Rights Council of the Office of the Ombudsman of the City of Buenos Aires. The REDESCA provided support as well in the drafting of the National Plan of Action on Business and Human Rights (PAN) of Ecuador.

Also worthy of mention is the training given by the REDESCA to the students in the "Héctor Fix-Zamudio" Diploma Course on the Inter-American Human Rights System, of the Diploma Degree Course in Litigation of Social and Environmental Rights of the National University of José C. Paz (UNPAZ) and students of the George Washington University in the Global Health Organizations and Regulations course.

► **Monitoring the situation of ESCE rights in the region**

Since the start of its mandate, the REDESCA has been monitoring the economic, social, cultural and environmental rights situation in the region in close coordination with the teams of the IACHR Executive Secretariat. Particularly, in 2020, the REDESCA monitored the ESCE rights situation in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, with an emphasis on the right to health, the right of health workers and the intersectional impact on other ESCE rights.

Specific highlights in these tasks include: (i) preparation/participation in 7 press releases; (ii) participation in the on-site visit to the Colombian-Venezuelan border and preparation of the observations and recommendations; (iii) drafting of the economic, social, cultural and environmental rights chapter for the report on the situation of human rights in Cuba; iv) publication of the 2019 Annual Report; v) participation in 8 thematic hearings; vi) active participation and coordination in the SACROI COVID-19.

Additionally, over this period, the REDESCA prepared a release on the right to mental health in the region, with a view to calling on the States of the region to take urgent measures towards effective protection of mental health in the context of the pandemic and the guarantee of universal access.

It is also fitting to note that, in this context, the REDESCA remains very active in organizing events within SACROI COVID-19, in particular, in participating in two webinars hosted by the IACHR, namely: “protection of ESCE rights in the context of the pandemic” and “Inequality and human rights in the face of the pandemic: taking stock of the impact of the IAHRs.” Additionally, the Report “Business and Human Rights: Inter-American Standards” was launched, which will be further described hereafter in the section on thematic reports.

Additionally, on August 13, 2020, the REDESCA issued a joint statement with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment so that in the midst of the challenges related to the Covid-19 pandemic and the global environmental crisis, governments strengthen environmental protection during the COVID-19 pandemic. The REDESCA also provided input for the publication of the IACHR’s press release calling on the United States to implement structural reforms of institutional systems of security and justice to combat historic racial discrimination and institutional racism, dated August 8, 2020.

Furthermore, the REDESCA continues actively monitoring on an ongoing basis the ESCE rights situation in the Americas, in close coordination with the teams of the IACHR Executive Secretariat, with a view to providing Member States with advisory service and specialized technical assistance to take legislative, judicial, administrative or other types of measures that lead the effective exercise of ESCE rights. The monitoring has emphasized the right to health, the right of health care workers and the intersectional impact with other ESCE

rights, along with follow-up on the directives established under Resolutions 1/2020 and 4/2020.

It should be noted that, in this context, the REDESCA has been especially active in hosting events within the framework of the SACROI COVID-19, specifically the presentation of Resolution 4/2020, which was attended by a multidisciplinary panel and was widely broadcast. Additionally, on August 26, 2020, the Rapporteurship hosted a high level Webinar on Poverty and Fiscal Policies, which was attended by the IACHR President, former IDB Executive Director Mr. Enrique Iglesias and the former Executive Secretary of ECLAC, ECLAC Executive Secretary Mrs. Alicia Bárcena, among other important figures in the field.

► **Specialized input and opinions in the processing of petitions and cases**

The Rapporteurship also provided its specialized input to the system of petitions and cases, at all stages of the process before the IACHR, as well as in the precautionary measures on which its opinion was requested. Over the course of 2020, the REDESCA submitted input regarding 37 petitions at admissibility stage, 10 cases and 14 requests for precautionary measures.

In conjunction with the IACHR Executive Secretariat, the REDESCA prepared and submitted the written observations of the Commission concerning the [Advisory Opinion *Scope of State Obligations under the Inter-American System, with regard to the Guarantee of Trade Union Freedom, its Relationship to other Rights and its Application from a Gender Perspective*](#). Likewise, it helped to prepare the written arguments and oral presentation on the request for Advisory Opinion on trade union freedom and gender perspective, which took place before the Court, at a hearing that was attended by several institutions of the region, as well as from other parts of the world; in addition to being supported by the team of the Executive Secretariat.

► **Thematic and country reports**

● **Report: Business and Human Rights: Inter-American Standards**

The REDESCA published the [report *Business and Human Rights: Inter-American Standards*](#) and disseminated information about the publication through a [press release](#) and its social networks. The publication of the report has been widely and positively received by the international community. Likewise, the report was widely commented at the 5th Regional Forum on Business and Human Rights hosted by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

On October 22, 2020, the REDESCA launched the report Business and Human Rights, which drew a large crowd of 537 registered participants and 309 attendees via Zoom, as well as 2900 views on Facebook. The report launch was attended by high level actors from States, international agencies (OHCHR), academia and the private sector. Likewise, the micro-website on the report was launched as was a promotional campaign via the social networks

with the support of three consultants: a communications expert and two consultants to support web design.

- **Economic, social, cultural and environmental rights section for country reports**

In 2020, the REDESCA drafted the respective section for the report on the November 2019 visit to Ecuador and the preliminary observations on economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights from the on-site visits to El Salvador (2019), Chile (January 2020) and Venezuela (February 2020). The REDESCA also drafted the section on economic social, cultural and environmental rights for the report on the Situation of Human Rights in Cuba. Lastly, the REDESCA completed and submitted its 2019 Annual Report, which describes the main economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights issues in the region and in each country of the hemisphere. The REDESCA has contributed input to the memoranda drafted by the monitoring sections for the 2020 annual report.

- **SACROI COVID-19 and Resolution 1/2020: Pandemic and Human Rights**

The REDESCA has regularly and actively participated in the work of the SACROI COVID-19 and has worked with the Executive Secretariat and the Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression on the drafting of [Resolution 1/2020–Pandemic and Human Rights in the Americas](#), which sets forth numerous recommendations on the right to health and other economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights impacted by the pandemic. Furthermore, the REDESCA has coordinated and actively contributed to the preparation of Resolution 4/20—Right of Persons with COVID-19, to be published in the coming months.

- **Compendium of labor rights standards**

The compendium of main labor rights standards prepared by the REDESCA, with the support of the technical cooperation section, was approved by the Commission plenary.

P7: Rapid and Integrated Response Coordination Unit (SACROI)

In 2020, the IACHR updated and reorganized its SACROI to intervene more rapidly and effectively in emerging human rights situations in the region.

SACROI Colombia

In March 2020, the IACHR installed a [SACROI for Colombia](#) and prepared the respective work plan. The IACHR has been closely monitoring the human rights situation in Colombia through its various mechanisms. In recent months, it has viewed with concern the growing violence and undermining of human rights in the country, especially those of social leaders, and its negative impact on people who have been forced to flee in the face of this violence. Given this situation, the IACHR deemed it necessary to create a SACROI, to strengthen its monitoring activities through a rapid, coordinated, and integrated response among the different areas of the IACHR Executive Secretariat.

SACROI COVID-19

Additionally, [the IACHR also created a SACROI](#) to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. This SACROI, the first of a thematic nature, closely monitors the human rights situation in the context of COVID-19, thus bolstering comprehensiveness and the intersectional approach in protecting human rights. To this end, it gathers evidence on the impact of the pandemic; monitors the responses of the States of the region; identifies urgent cases within the system of petitions and cases and precautionary measures to ensure a timely response; proposes IACHR action with regard to the member states to ensure effective protection and defense of human rights during the COVID-19 pandemic; identifies opportunities to provide technical assistance for the development of State policies and actions with a human rights approach; monitors compliance with its recommendations; conducts activities to raise awareness and build capacities; improves dialogue and coordination with specialized international and civil society organizations; etc. The [SACROI COVID-19](#) operates as a crisis response team coordinated by the Executive Secretary and is made up of the Special Rapporteurs and staff assigned by the Executive Secretary.

Following its creation, the IACHR approved SACROI COVID-19's [work plan](#). The main results and impact of the SACROI COVID-19 include the preparation of [Resolution 1/2020– Pandemic and Human Rights in the Americas](#), which lays out 85 recommendations for the States of the region; [Resolution 4/2020 -Human Rights of Persons with COVID-19](#) ; the publication of press releases on the human rights situation in the context of the pandemic, with a specific country or thematic approach; the preparation of [newsletters](#); bilateral dialogue with States and social forums; and the hosting of [virtual seminars](#), among other things.

As concerns the impact of the recommendations of Resolution 1/2020, it is important to note that different authorities and branches of government of the States of the region, among them the judiciary, have adopted decisions and resolutions referencing the recommendations issued by the IACHR with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic. The IACHR has published a [report on the results and impact of the work of the SACROI COVID-19](#). The SACROI work plan was recently updated with the addition of a new series of activities that are currently in progress.

SACROI United States

Given the mass protests sparked by the [murder of George Floyd in the United States due to structural racism and systemic violence against Afro-descendants](#), the IACHR recently created a SACROI for that country, whose work plan is focused on these issues as well as on the situation of human mobility in the country.

SACROI PERU

Lastly, the IACHR created a SACROI for Peru to monitor the human rights situation in the context of the institutional crisis that the country is undergoing after the recent declaration of vacancy of the office of the president. In that context, close monitoring of the situation has been conducted, 4 press releases (one of them issued by the RELE) and several tweets

have been issued, meetings have been held with Peruvian and Inter-American civil society organizations and a [country visit](#) was conducted from November 29 to December 2, 2020.

Deactivated and operating SACROIs

Additionally, in 2020, the IACHR decided to deactivate SACROIs for Guatemala, Honduras and Ecuador, which the Commission had visited in previous years. Its visits to Guatemala and Honduras resulted in the publication of country reports. The IACHR continues to monitor the human rights situation in these countries. The SACROIs of Venezuela and Nicaragua were also deactivated. The human rights situation in these countries continues to receive priority attention from the IACHR through its special mechanisms: the [MESEVE](#) and [MESENI](#), respectively.

In contrast, the SACROIs for Brazil, Haiti, Chile and Bolivia—countries that the IACHR visited in 2018, 2019 and 2020, respectively and whose country reports are pending publication—continued their operations.

In the case of Bolivia, the IACHR signed an agreement with the Bolivian State in December 2019 to create an [Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts](#) (GIEI) to aid in the investigation into acts of violence and human rights violations in Bolivia that occurred between September 1 and December 31, 2019. The GIEI was officially announced on January 23 at a public event at IACHR Headquarters in Washington D.C., attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, along with other State and IACHR officials. In April 2020, [the strengthening of the GIEI and the tentative date of its installation were announced](#). The [GIEI was inaugurated on November 23, 2020](#) and it is currently in operation in Bolivia.

Finally, with the goal of continuing to enhance this work tool, in 2020 the IACHR defined a number of operational aspects of SACROIs: their composition, work methodology and operability.

P8: Integrated Information Analysis and Management Platform (PIAGI)

This platform was created to develop a standard methodology for the IACHR to collect, record, analyze, manage, and generate information. For better performance of duties with limited resources, the Commission continues to forge partnerships with universities and other important actors and to strengthen its monitoring capacity.

The IACHR continues working to secure resources for implementing the different components, both managerial and information technology-related, of PIAGI with the Technology Unit. In the methodological sphere, the Commission has developed common information classification criteria for the entry and systematization of information in its monitoring and follow-up systems. With regard to technology, the IACHR currently has software that enables it to record, classify, systematize, and analyze information according to established (thematic, geographic, structural) parameters and integrate it, facilitating

coordination among the different areas. It is currently the principal information management tool used by State and academic entities, civil society organizations, the media, international and other agencies, and by the Monitoring and Technical Cooperation areas and the IACHR's Special Rapporteurships. Through a methodology based on the integrated use of information, the Commission seeks to ensure rapid and strategic decision-making and the use thereof in the preparation of reports.

In addition, through the information platform, the IACHR presents the results of its analyses via periodic panels on the human rights picture and analysis of the human rights situation in the Americas. In 2020, it presented an analysis of the human rights situation in [Cuba](#), the situation of human rights defenders and social leaders in Colombia, and the visit to the [Venezuelan](#) border.

S03

Promote democracy, human dignity, equality, justice, and fundamental freedoms based on an active contribution to the strengthening of State institutions and public policies with a human rights approach in accordance with inter-American norms and standards and to the development of the capacities of social and academic organizations and networks to act in defense of human rights.

Achievements

- The IACHR built capacity of State institutions and civil society organizations in member states to adopt Inter-American human rights standards domestically and to strengthen institutions and public policies with a human rights approach through numerous training activities over 2020, which can be broken down as follows:
 - 21 training activities on the standards and mechanisms of the Inter-American Human Rights System.
 - 136 joint promotional activities with multilateral agencies in the region and globally.
 - 31 open webinars hosted by the SACROI COVID-19 reaching more than 15,000 participants and 10 webinars to train and update IACHR staff and the Executive Secretariat on the pandemic and human rights. Additionally, a timeline with measures taken by States to contain the COVID-19 pandemic was posted on the SACROI-COVID-19 micro-website.
 - 3 specific trainings for Nicaragua.
 - 1 training workshop for States' focal points to help them to learn to utilize the Inter-American SIMORE (to 70 public employees)
- The IACHR made progress in developing effective collaboration with the countries of the Caribbean and Central America to strengthen human rights and democratic institutions, which is evident in:

- Requests for cooperation and advisory services from public and academic institutions in Jamaica, St. Lucia, and Barbados.
 - Holding the 175th Session in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.
 - 5 training courses on Inter-American protection standards and 1 practitioner community follow-up work shop to build capacity in using the Inter-American human rights protection system (for total coverage of 130 people).
 - Training of public officials from Saint Lucia.
 - Progress in preparing a Work Plan for technical cooperation with Haiti.
 - Dialogue and meetings with civil society, meetings with State officials and members of civil society organizations, and promotional and training activities.
- Technical cooperation agreements entered into with member states to assist with the application of Inter-American standards and to promote human rights protection:
- Cooperation Agreement signed with Ecuador’s Ombudsman’s Office
 - Submitting the work plan for implementation of the Cooperation Agreement with the State of Colombia for assistance in applying and raising awareness of International human rights standards.
 - Series of conferences in the framework of the work plan for implementation of the cooperation agreement with the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation of Mexico.
 - Signing of 5 new inter-institutional agreements
- Other technical cooperation initiatives to assist in the application of Inter-American standards and to promote human rights:
- Survey of measures adopted by the States in the context of the pandemic.
 - Fourth Exchange Meeting on Best Practices for National Human Rights Institutions of the region.
 - Publishing the Compendium on Labor and Trade Union Rights.
 - Releasing the Compendium on States’ obligation to bring their domestic law in line with Inter-American standards.
 - Providing advisory services to member states on the pandemic, technical input for decision-making through 8 presentations at OAS political bodies and 8 bilateral meetings with member state representatives on how States can address the pandemic from a rights-based perspective.
- The IACHR expanded and strengthened its lines of collaboration and the mechanisms of participation with academia in IACHR activities:

- Civil society participation in social forums to discuss the effects of the pandemic.
- Implementing the SIMORE system, which enables civil society organizations to participate in monitoring compliance with IACHR recommendations.
- Receiving 26 nominations of universities and academic centers for creating the Specialized Academic Network in the IAHR

P9: Expanded Program for Training and Promotion of Human Rights Thinking and Culture

► Promotion and training on the IAHR

The purpose of the training activities is to build and strengthen the capacity of organizations and social and academic actors to act in defense of human rights, as well as to strengthen the capacity of State agents in this area. Among the 21 training activities conducted in 2020, the following are particularly noteworthy:

International Course on Public Human Rights Policies

The International Course on Public Human Rights Policies is a semi-in-person training activity, jointly offered by the IACHR and the MERCOSUR Institute for Public Policies on Human Rights (IPPDH). It consists of an initial 13-week distance-learning phase that began in July 2019 and a compulsory on-site week in Buenos Aires, Argentina, that was held from February 10-14, 2020. The International Course was designed to build and strengthen the capacities of important actors of the Americas in the human rights approach to public policies. From a perspective that recognizes the contributions and challenges of the regions, it offers a picture of current experiences and the challenges posed by the future of human rights for State institutions. Thus, in its 4th cycle, the on-site stage was the final phase of the training, with 70 participants in attendance.

Inter-American Senior Political Management Program, OAS School of Governance

The Inter-American Senior Political Management Program, taught by the OAS School of Governance and Centro Político LLC, offered a high-level course to promote the strengthening of management, leadership, governance, democracy, and political communication in Latin America for political leaders, officials from government offices, members of political parties, social leaders, political candidates, and professionals interested in political, institutional and campaign communication and campaigns. For the 2020 course, the School of Governance invited the IACHR to participate in training on the Inter-American Human Rights System. This training was held in Miami, Florida, from February 20 to 21. At these workshops, a group of experts from the Executive Secretariat spoke about the general features of the IAHR, as well as particular issues related to the

filing of complaints, requests for precautionary measures, and technical cooperation and public policy mechanisms.

Training Program for Nicaraguan Civil Society

The many activities for promoting and strengthening Nicaraguan civil society included 10 training activities on transitional justice attended by more than 150 people. Because of the travel challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and, therefore, the inability to conduct these training sessions in person, the IACHR carried out the training virtually in July and August. The training addressed issues such as transitions to democracy and impunity, justice, truth, reparations and guarantees of non-repetition. The targets of this program were social leaders, representatives of student groups, members of religious communities, and victims of the crisis-mainly political prisoners, activists, journalists, among others, from several departments of Nicaragua.

Project to Build capacity for the eradication of violence and discrimination against women and girls in Latin America and the Caribbean

In the framework of the aforementioned project, it is fitting to note that two sub regional seminars took place on September 22. One seminar targeted civil society of the Southern Cone and Andean Region and the second one was aimed at Mesoamerica and Mexico. The purpose of these seminars was to contribute to building knowledge about the Inter-American human rights system and Inter-American standards among key actors, who are engaged in protecting and defending the rights of women and girls in the region.

In addition, on September 23, an adolescents' forum was held with a view to capturing the views of this audience with regard to discrimination and human rights violations, discuss ways to prevent it and discuss the role of males in these processes. The forum was attended by teenagers from Guatemala and the Institutional Coordinator for Promotion of the Rights of Children (CIPRODENI) supported the event by issuing the invitations to the participants and sharing moderating duties of the discussions. 16 adolescents took part, 11 of whom were young girls.

Lastly, on September 24, two Working Meetings were held on best practices in implementing Inter-American standards on protection, comprehensive prevention and access to justice in the face of violence and discrimination against women and girls. The first meeting was targeted to States and was attended by 9 participants, six of whom were women, while 11 representatives of civil society organizations took part, 8 of whom were women. The purpose of the meeting was to engage in an exchange between participants on States' and civil society organizations' contributions to progress and best practices in this subject area.

► Promotional activities

In 2020, the IACHR carried out and/or was invited to participate in 136 promotional activities with a view to raising awareness about the standards of the IACHRS and to building the capacity of public servants, social and academic organizations and networks to act in defense of human rights, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of these activities were organized in partnership with other actors, securing collaboration with civil society organizations, regional and international institutions, and States in the region.

SACROI COVID-19 Webinar Series

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the IACHR decided to create a Rapid and Integrated Response Coordination Unit (SACROI) to address and monitor aspects of COVID-19 and its impact on human rights. Through this Unit, the Commission hosted a series of 10 webinars designed to increase knowledge about and strengthen the response of personnel working in the Executive Secretariat to the pandemic and its effects on human rights. This series ran from March 30 to April 3 and was attended by experts in different subject areas.

Furthermore, along that same line of work, through the SACROI COVID-19, the IACHR carried out activities to build the capacity of the States and civil society of the region so that responses to emerging situations resulting from the pandemic abide by people's human rights and that policies and practices conform to applicable Inter-American human rights standards for the protection of human rights. Thus, it launched a series of webinars that were open to the public, titled "Human Rights Challenges in times of Pandemic," which addressed specific action to take to protect groups and communities during the pandemic, as well as fundamental rights. A total of 31 webinars were held with more than 15000 people participating via Zoom Platform and through the IACHR Facebook Channel.

► Campaigns to raise awareness of the standards

The design and implementation of the campaigns to raise awareness of the standards were based on the reports prepared by the different areas of the Commission. Each of these campaigns included the design of a logo and the crafting of messages with strategic information on the rights discussed in the thematic reports.

During the reporting period, 7 information campaigns on the standards were implemented based on the reports produced by the IACHR. The campaigns were designed with content in Spanish, English and Portuguese:

1. [Violence and Discrimination against Women and Girls](#)" Report

Based on a compendium of the principal standards and recommendations on violence and discrimination against women, girls, and adolescents described in systematic fashion in the

Report, campaign materials were drawn up, including [8 factsheets](#), and a micro-website was completed, that provides easy access to the main conclusions and recommendations of the report.

2. [“Police Violence against Afro-descendants in the United States”](#) Report

This report was originally launched in the first half of 2019. As part of the effort to raise awareness of the findings and recommendations, an outreach campaign was designed and implemented. However, in response to the recent incidents of police violence against Afro-descendants in the United States, and considering the relevance of the results of the report on this issue, the IACHR decided to launch a new campaign to publicize its main recommendations and standards.

3. [Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Pan-Amazon Region Report](#)

Based on a compilation of the main standards and recommendations on the protection of indigenous and tribal peoples of the region, which is systematically laid out in the report, materials were prepared for an awareness raising campaign of the principal conclusions and recommendations of the report and the campaign was launched in August 2020.

4. [Resolution 1/2020 Pandemic and Human Rights](#)

To publicize the standards established in Res. 1/20, which seek to ensure that measures taken by States to address and contain the virus revolve around full respect for human rights, the IACHR developed and implemented an awareness raising campaign of the content of the Resolution over September, October and November 2020.

5. [Resolution 4/2020 Human Rights of Persons with COVID-19](#)

With a view to publicizing the content of this Resolution, whose objective is to establish Inter-American guidelines on the human rights of persons with COVID-19 to help address the pandemic and its effects on human rights in the Americas, the IACHR designed and implemented a campaign over the course of December 2020.

6. [Human Rights Defenders and Social Leaders in Colombia](#)

From May to June, a campaign was launched to publicize this report, which identifies in chapter 5 the Inter-American standards established in the framework of the obligations of the State on protection of human rights defenders.

7. [Report Corruption and Human rights](#)

In November, a campaign was conducted to publicize the acts and standards fleshed out in the report Corruption and Human Rights.

P10: Program for Assistance and Collaboration with Central American and the Caribbean

➤ Project on Democracy and Human Rights in the Northern Triangle

In the framework of implementation of the Regional Project “Human Rights and Democracy,” jointly executed with the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), a number of activities were carried out aimed at capacity building of key actors of the countries of the Northern Triangle of Central America: El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. This initiative is part of framework of public policies, regional and national civil society networks, government and international cooperation priorities and is aimed at strengthening the human rights promotion and protection systems. In 2020, the activities were to be adapted to using a virtual platform.

On July 1 and 17, a training workshop on Inter-American human rights standards in the area of migration and internal displacement, ESCE rights and labor rights was held, targeting State officials of the Guatemalan judiciary. A total of 23 State officials took part, seven of whom were women.

Additionally, on August 28, a workshop was held for Guatemalan civil society, which was attended by 15 people, 10 of whom were women. The purpose of the workshop was to contribute to strengthening knowledge on the Inter-American human rights system and on Inter-American standards among representatives responsible for protecting and defending human rights in Guatemala.

A training and capacity building workshop was also held on August 27 for Honduran civil society on IACHR work mechanisms and Inter-American human rights standards as applied to human mobility. 11 people participated, 4 of whom were women. The purpose of the workshop was to contribute to strengthening knowledge on the work mechanisms of the IACHR and serve as a forum for discussion on topical issues, exchange of experiences and discussion on human rights challenges, in particular, migration and internal displacement, in accordance with Inter-American standards. On August 28, a training and capacity building workshop was held on this same topic for civil society of El Salvador, which was attended by 14 people, 9 of whom were women.

Likewise, on August 31, the IACHR conducted a Workshop to Follow-Up on the Practitioner Community via Zoom. This activity was attended by representatives of civil society organization of the Northern Triangle countries of Central America, Mexico and Nicaragua, who participated in the 2017 and 2018 meetings. The workshop was billed as a space for dialogue to build capacity, empowerment through the use of the Inter-American human rights protection system; and in turn foster exchange of experiences, best practices and lessons learned. The purpose of the activity was to follow up on the topics that were discussed at the prior training activities; consider utilizing the system, as well as additional

training needs, with a view to contributing to strengthening capacity to use the mechanisms of the Inter-American human rights system.

In the context of this activity, the Report on Internal Displacement in the Northern Triangle of Central America– Guidelines for the Formulation of Public Policies, was launched and a presentation was given on the Inter-American SIMORE mechanism.

➤ **Project on Governance and Human Rights in the Northern Triangle and Nicaragua**

In 2020, the IACHR began executing the second phase of the Program for Strengthening Governance and the Protection of Human Rights with Emphasis on Populations in Conditions of Vulnerability in the Northern Triangle Countries and Nicaragua, financed by the Swiss Cooperation Agency (COSUDE). The purpose of this program is to contribute to greater respect for and protection of human rights and good governance of natural resources, with emphasis on the territories of indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants. Several activities were carried out in the different mechanisms of the IACHR under this program, which have been mentioned in other sections of this report.

➤ **Strengthening capacities in Transitional Justice**

The many promotional and strengthening activities for Nicaraguan civil society included 5 training activities on transitional justice, benefiting more than 100 people. These activities are described in another section of this report.

➤ **Collaboration with the Caribbean**

In order to further the activities under this program, the Secretariat hired a human rights specialist in Monitoring Section 3. Since that time, the IACHR has revised a comprehensive plan that is focused on three major goals: promote better communication and understanding, build capacities and forge partnerships. In this context, civil society organizations were invited to share useful information for issues of human rights in the countries of the Caribbean. These groups were also asked to share their reports. The information that was gathered will be used in the preparation of the IACHR Annual Report.

In addition, under this program in 2020, the following activities were carried out:

During the 175th Session in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, from March 2 to 8, 2020, the IACHR held an open meeting with more than 70 members of Haitian and Inter-American civil society groups and organizations, in which it received troubling information about a number of human rights situations in Haiti. The IACHR notes the participation and representation of civil society organizations, which enabled it to obtain a broad and detailed picture of the

human rights situation. Two promotional events were also held, which were open to participation of interested persons.

On August 12, 2020, the Webinar “dialogue between regional commissions working on human rights issues during the COVID pandemic” was held. The purpose of the webinar was to address international and Inter-American norms relating to the impact of the pandemic. The webinar was attended by one Trinidadian. As follow-up to this activity, a sub-regional seminar was held to provide continuity on the topics that were presented.

Additionally, meetings were convened between the IACHR Commissioners and Representatives of CARICOM on July 9, September 29 and December 7, 2020, during which information was exchanged on IACHR activities in the region in the framework of the Regular Session.

Likewise, bilateral talks were held to discuss the response to COVID challenges and best practices with Haiti on July 29 and with Surinam on October 13. At these meetings, the IACHR President, joined by the respective country rapporteurs and the relevant Executive Secretary staff, received information about the measures being taken by the authorities to protect the human rights of citizens during the pandemic. Areas of specific training for the two countries were explored, which will be followed up by the competent authorities of Surinam and Haiti. The Commission offered to host similar bilateral talks about human rights and COVID-19 with other CARICOM countries.

In addition, the IACHR has been updating on an ongoing basis the list of civil society organizations in the monitoring database and has established contact with several organizations. Aside from CSOs, contacts were also established with academia (University of the West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago, as well as with the Barbados campus of that university); and with Member States (Ministry of Foreign Relations in Barbados, and an independent senator in Trinidad and Tobago).

Between March and May, the IACHR received a request for technical cooperation to build capacity in human rights for public sector workers in Saint Lucia. In response, the State was offered a proposal and the first module was held on September 15 with 21 participants, and the agenda included an introduction to the Inter-American human rights system and the mechanisms of the IACHR. The purpose of this seminar was to present an overview of the legal foundation of the Inter-American human rights protection system and how it functions. In successive modules, specific topics agreed upon with the State would be addressed, such as children, gender, disability and non-discrimination.

The IACHR convened on September 16 a training session for CARICOM on the Inter-American System for Monitoring Recommendations (Inter-American SIMORE), a request

emanating from the July 9 meeting between the IACHR and representatives of the CARICOM missions. The event was attended by 24 participants of the region.

As part of the series of SACROI COVID-19 open webinars, on October 14 a webinar on “The human rights situation in the Caribbean during the pandemic” was held. The purpose of this event was to exchange information and reflect on the human rights situation in the Caribbean in light of the impacts of the pandemic in that region; and to examine the measures and initiatives taken by States and the impacts thereof. 138 people took part, 113 of whom were women. As a companion meeting to this event, on November 10 a dialogue was convened with different civil society organizations/non-governmental organizations of the Caribbean, which was attended by 19 entities. This dialogue enabled CSOs to report on their respective areas of work, establish lines of communication with the IACHR and discuss the impact of COVID on the human rights situation in the Caribbean.

Once again, on November 18, 2020, the Annual Human Rights Seminar for CARICOM countries was held. The seminar is a joint project of the IACHR and George Washington University Law School (GWULS). The seminar gave an overview of the main instruments and standards of the Inter-American human rights system to diplomatic staff and public officials and created a space of dialogue and cooperation between the IACHR and the countries of CARICOM, represented by 31 participants. In 2020, the topics focused on the human rights of migrants and refugees and recent developments and standards relating to the human rights of LGTBI persons. The event was virtually attended by 46 people, including 27 women.

Finally, the IACHR President held a working meeting with the Minister of Foreign Relations of Suriname, Ambassador Albert Ramdin, on December 18, to review the priorities of the new government of that country and the special focus the government would be putting on developing a national human rights plan. The discussion also focused on the possibility of the IACHR supporting institutional strengthening in the area of human rights. This includes developing mechanisms to ensure solid protection of the human rights of communities to develop sovereign funds (now that Suriname is about to become an oil producer). In this regard, Minister Ramdin invited the IACHR to visit Suriname in 2021.

P11: Technical Cooperation Program on Institutional Framework and Public Policies with a Human Rights Approach

► Technical Cooperation and Public Policies with States

Under this program, the IACHR made progress in a number of technical assistance initiatives for public policy makers, as well as reinforcing linkages to provide technical assistance and support the institutional strengthening strategies of the States and engage

in cooperation activities with other institutions, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As part of the ongoing monitoring of human rights institutions, a compendium of State responses and measures to deal with the pandemic, which is continually updated on a timeline and interactive map, was posted on the specialized SACROI COVID-19 micro-website. With this tool, the States' responses to the pandemic can be compared and differences can be identified. The measures identified in the compendium show similarities between countries and the different points in time when they were adopted. This makes it possible to examine how effective policy design and implementation have been in addressing the health crisis. Specifically, 8 different variables were identified in each of the 35 States of the hemisphere as common State response measures. It should be noted that the data were obtained from open and public sources, considering the information published through State media.

In addition to identifying the point at which each State responded in each category identified, this compendium of measures makes it possible to develop a timeline of events by country and geographic area and to analyze the extent of the response. In follow up to this initiative, on May 21, a high-level webinar was held on public policies with a human rights approach and on national measures to address the pandemic. The purpose of this webinar was to compare and reflect on public policies with a human rights approach and the relevant national measures and initiatives adopted by the States to contain the pandemic and share opportunities for regional cooperation. Representatives from Argentina, Costa Rica, Honduras, Mexico, Panama and Uruguay participated in this forum for information exchange.

In short, as a result of the initiatives to strengthen technical cooperation, there has been significant collaboration between the IACHR and government institutions, especially in mutual capacity building through activities during on-site visits, working visits, outreach, the systematization of information on the human rights situation, and the training of technical staff.

► **Technical Cooperation with National Human Rights Institutions**

The IACHR has continued to make progress in strengthening ties with the National Human Rights Institutions (NHRI) of the region. In this regard, on May 13, it hosted a high-level webinar on national human rights institutions and the pandemic to publicize the work and challenges of these institutions in promoting and protecting human rights in the face of the pandemic. The following entities participated in this webinar: the Ombudsman's Office of Costa Rica; the Ombudsman's Office of Colombia; the Human Rights Office of Guatemala; the Federal Ombudsman's Office of Brazil; the Ombudsman's Office of Ecuador; the Ombudsman's Office of Bolivia; and the Human Rights Defense Office of El Salvador.

This information exchange is one of the initiatives undertaken by the IACHR to forge closer ties with National Human Rights Institutions in order to improve information flow and offer the technical assistance required to strengthen the efforts made by the institutions to effectively enforce human rights in each country of the hemisphere. These initiatives include the Declaration of Commitment on technical cooperation signed in 2018, different bilateral cooperation strategies which were formalized by means of written agreements and, as of 2020, with the accession of the Ombudsman's Office of Peru, the total number of national human rights institutions that have joined the mechanism is eleven. As a result of these initiatives, the collaboration between the IACHR and the Institutions has been noteworthy, particularly in mutual capacity building between institutions. These activities include support in the context of on-site visits, working visits, outreach and systematization of information on the human rights situation and technical personnel training.

In the context of initiatives undertaken in this context, on September 24, 2020, the Fourth Meeting to Exchange Best Practices among NHRIs in the framework of the Regional Project was held. It was titled "Human Rights and Democracy" and was developed and implemented by the Pan-American Development Foundation (PADF). The purpose of this event was to create a space for dialogue and exchange of best practices, challenges and analysis of the current human rights situation. With this meeting, the IACHR made it a point to follow up on the Declaration of Commitment and address different joint cooperation initiatives with the Commission through its mechanisms. The meeting was attended by the IACHR Board of Officers, as well as representatives of 10 of the signatory NHRIs of the aforementioned Declaration: Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panama.

► **Signing Cooperation Agreements**

In 2020, the IACHR moved forward in signing 4 agreements, bringing the end-of-year total to 71 cooperation agreements entered into with different entities.

As for agreements with national human rights institutions, the IACHR signed an Agreement on Cooperation with the Ombudsman's Office of Ecuador and with the Ombudsman's Office of Peru, with a view to establishing a regulatory framework for cooperation mechanisms between parties to devise and implement joint activities in advisory services, information exchange, training, assistance and other activities within the purview of each entity; and to promote the use of the Inter-American human rights system and its standards through theoretical and practical tools.

With respect to cooperation with civil society, in 2020 the IACHR entered into 2 new agreements, one with the Fundación Directorio Legislativo and another with *Both Ends Believing*. Through these agreements, the IACHR seeks to establish collaboration and cooperation between the university community and the public in general, the use of the

IAHRS and its standards, as well as to promote Inter-American standards on the hemispheric human rights agenda.

As for implementation of the agreements, over this period, progress was made in the design of a proposed cooperation and technical assistance work plan for implementation of the cooperation agreement with the State of Colombia. Also noteworthy is the work plan with the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation of Mexico, in which the IACHR participated from August 27 to November 18 giving a series of public lectures on the Inter-American system and, specifically, on IACHR mechanisms.

► **Thematic compendiums**

It should be noted that on December 30, the IACHR published a Compendium on Labor and Trade Union Rights. This technical cooperation tool is intended to build capacity and the scope of the content of the right to work. Through systematization of the Inter-American standards, the compendium stands as a tool to enhance and strengthen legislation, practices and public policies that seek to promote labor rights with a human rights approach.

Likewise, the IACHR has moved forward in approving a compendium on States' obligation to bring domestic law in line with Inter-American human rights standards. It is the first time the IACHR has brought together and laid out in systematic fashion its positions on the subject matter through its different mechanisms, both monitoring and petitions and individual cases. Specifically, the compendium is a tool for technical cooperation to promote and facilitate fulfillment of the obligation of State authorities and officials at all levels of the public administration to abide by these standards, as well as a consultation and reference tool to be used by academia, civil society, and other relevant actors of the Inter-American system.

► **Guidance to member states on human rights**

During the period under examination, at the request of the Permanent Council, the IACHR gave important presentations to the political bodies of the OAS, which included a presentation of the IACHR's 2019 Annual Report to the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs (CAJP) (April 30); a presentation to the Permanent Council of the report on the IACHR's on-site visit to the Venezuelan border from February 5 to 7, 2020 (May 27); the Report to the Permanent Council on execution of the IACHR budget 2019 from the Regular Fund; the "Annual Report on the Implementation of the IACHR Strategic Plan 2017-2021, for 2019; and IACHR activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (June 24).

Furthermore, the following meetings were held to review the portfolio of cases with the following countries on the following dates: Argentina (February 20 and 21, April 17, June

02 and 03), Bolivia (February 20 and 21), Colombia (May 04), Ecuador (June 29), Mexico (May 26 and 27), Panama (February 5 and 7), Dominican Republic and Venezuela. These meetings provided the opportunity to review cases in the admissibility and merits, friendly settlement, precautionary measures stages, and to monitor compliance with recommendations.

It should be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has posed challenges and offered new opportunities for IACHR collaboration and dialogue with the States, shifting some priorities and presenting new hurdles to overcome and new lines of work. Here it is important to note the meetings held with different groups of countries to discuss issues related to the pandemic. They were held on April 7 (South America and Mexico), April 8 (Central American and the Dominican Republic, and separately CARICOM), and on April 9 (Canada and the United States). Considering the importance of maintaining an open channel for dialogue and obtaining accurate information on the measures adopted by the States in the midst of the pandemic, the IACHR sought to further this dialogue in bilateral meetings to discuss human rights measures and concerns expressed to the States in this new scenario, holding 8 meetings with national authorities of Mexico (May 13), Honduras (May 14), Haiti (May 19), Paraguay (May 19), Bolivia (May 20), Dominican Republic (June 01), Brazil (June 03) and El Salvador (June 15).

The States have often expressed at different meetings how important the input provided by the IACHR has been on the issue of the pandemic and there is continued interest on the part of the political bodies to hear the Commission. Moreover, the presentation of the IACHR 2019 Annual Report was, in general, well received by the States, who commented on the Commission's ability to adapt to the new situation and the IACHR's contributions on how to deal with the pandemic while respecting human rights.

Finally, Panama and the Dominican Republic each created an account to access the Petition and Case System Portal.

P12: Program on Social Participation and Contribution to Capacity Building for Actions by Social and Academic Organizations and Networks in Defense of Human Rights

► Channels for periodic dialogue with civil society and academia

Over 2020, the IACHR continued expanding and intensifying civil society participation in its activities, which included public hearings, open meetings, consultations, social forums, etc.

At its 175th Regular Session, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, from March 2 to 8, it held an open meeting with Haitian and Inter-American civil society to obtain information on the human rights situation in the country and the region and to hear their demands. The meeting was attended by 70 representatives of these organizations.

The continued practice of holding sessions outside Headquarters has helped increase the access of civil society organizations to the IACHR, expanding the role of the actors involved in the Inter-American human rights system. Civil society organizations from Haiti and other countries of the region participated in the 19 public hearings held during the 175th Session on the human rights situation in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico and Venezuela, and on regional issues such as asylum and refugee systems in humanitarian crises and the economic, social, cultural and environmental rights of the LGBTI population in the Americas.

The IACHR held a consultation with experts for the preparation of the Practical Handbook on guidelines and recommendations for the development of plans for mitigating the risk to human rights defenders in the region. More than 40 people from different countries in the region participated in this meeting, including representatives from different groups of human rights defenders.

➤ **New strategies and forms of civil society participation**

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, within the framework of the activities carried out under the Work Plan of the SCAROI, which was created for this purpose, the IACHR has pursued a number of initiatives to maintain and broaden its channels for dialogue with civil society.

On this score, it held social forums with civil society organizations from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Panama, Peru and the United States. The purpose of these forums, which are opportunities for direct dialogue between the IACHR and civil society, was, among other things, to disseminate information about the IACHR's activities under SACROI; obtain updated information about the human rights situation in each of the countries; to monitor the action taken by the States to deal with the pandemic and its different impacts; and to monitor compliance with the recommendations of Resolution 1/2020.

Furthermore, it held virtual seminars on a range of issues related to the pandemic, such as the situation of indigenous peoples, LGBTI persons, human rights defenders, children and adolescents, Afro-descendants, persons deprived of liberty, and older persons, which included presentations by representatives of civil society.

Lastly, June 10 saw the launch of the [Inter-American SIMORE](#), an online information tool that systematizes the recommendations issued by the IACHR through its different mechanisms: friendly settlement agreements, Annual Reports (Chapter IV.B), Published Merits Reports, Country Reports, Thematic Reports, and precautionary measures granted. This tool enables users of the Inter-American human rights system—including civil society—to submit information on the steps taken by the States to comply with these recommendations.

➤ **Academic network specializing in the Inter-American System**

On July 22, 2020, the IACHR issued a public announcement (press release No. 172/20 to universities and academic centers specialized in human rights to form the Specialized Academic network in Cooperation with the IACHR, with a view to provide technical support to the efforts pursued by the Commission and, specifically, through the work of the 13 Thematic and Special Rapporteurships and the Recommendation Monitoring Section.

A total of 26 proposals were submitted, which all in all represented universities located in eight countries of the region. In early 2021, the final results of this process will be reported to the universities.

➤ **Associate Personnel Program at the IACHR**

The Secretariat has negotiated institutional agreements to enable the IACHR to receive fellows or associate personnel from institutions, universities or academic entities. This exchange contributes to raising the awareness of the mechanisms of the IAHRs and, at the same time, supports the work of the Executive Secretariat. Over the reporting period, 2 new professionals joined the Executive Secretariat under the Associate Personnel Program, with one of those professionals, who entered in 2019, continuing under contract into 2020.

Moreover, professionals joined the staff as fellows under Cooperation Agreements with academic institutions. In 2020, 10 new fellows joined the staff, while 9 entered in 2019 and continued in their positions in 2020.

SO4

Promote the universalization of the Inter-American Human Rights System through coordinated initiatives with the Inter-American Court, and cooperate with other international, regional, and sub-regional human rights agencies and mechanisms.

Achievements

- Strengthening and expanding coordination, cooperation, and complementarity with United Nations bodies and other agencies.
 - Expanding and strengthening collaboration with the United Nations through technical cooperation, activities, dialogues, and joint statements in press releases.
 - Expanding and strengthening coordination with the United Nations Human Rights Council through greater IACHR participation in Council sessions.
 - Strengthening Joint Action Mechanisms to contribute to the Protection of Human Rights Defenders in the Americas with OHCHR, through joint initiatives with its regional offices.
- Expanding and strengthening coordination with other regional organizations
 - Strengthening collaboration with other regional human rights commissions through cooperation, dialogue, and information exchange, resulting in the planning of joint activities to address the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

P13: Program on Cooperation and Coordination with the Universal Human Rights System and Other International Agencies

- **Expanding and strengthening collaboration with United Nations and other international agencies**

During the reporting period, the IACHR engaged in a series of joint activities with different bodies of the United Nations human rights system. In particular, there has been closer collaboration between the IACHR and Universal Human Rights System during the pandemic.

IACHR President, Commissioner Joel Hernández, took part in the high-level segment and Urgent Debate on current racially inspired human rights violations, systemic racism, and police brutality against people of African descent and violence against peaceful protests at the 43rd Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council on June 18. The IACHR also promoted a series of bilateral technical meetings and high-level political meetings, such as the meeting of focal points for issues of ESCE rights/Development with Special Rapporteur on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights Soledad García Muñoz, the meeting of Alán García Campos, Mission Coordinator of the UN Human Rights Mission in Bolivia, and Executive Secretary Paulo Abrão, the meeting of the United Nations Rapporteur for Human Rights Defenders and other United Nations Human Rights Defender focal points and President Joel Hernández, and the meeting of IACHR Executive Secretary Paulo Abrão and Jan Jarab, Representative of UN Human Rights – South America. In addition to those meetings, other noteworthy meetings included the meeting of Commissioner Arosemena and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Sale and Exploitation of Children, Mama Fatima Singhateh, the meeting of Commissioner Julissa Mantilla and Acting Executive Secretary Maria Claudia Pulido with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the meeting of Commissioners Arosemena, Macaulay and Mantilla with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Trafficking, especially in Women and Girls, as well as the meetings between Commissioner Joel Hernández and Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, Clément Voule, the meeting of Executive Secretary Paulo Abrão with OHCHR Representative for South America, Jan Jarab, and the meetings held by Commissioner Urrejola with representatives of the OHCHR in Colombia and Panama.

As a result of that outreach, Joint Declarations were also issued over the period, such as the [Joint Declaration on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Democratic Governance](#) of Commissioner Hernández and IACHR Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression Pedro Vaca with Rapporteur Clément Voule of the OHCHR and with the Honorable Rémy Ngoy Lumbu, Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and Focal Point on Reprisals in Africa of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the joint press release on the constituent assembly process in Chile titled "[IACHR and OHCHR Welcome Approval of Measures that Promote the Participation of Indigenous Peoples and People with Disabilities, and Ask to Ensure the Participation of the Tribal People of African Descent](#)"

Another highlight of the year was the unprecedented meeting between the IACHR plenary and the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the meeting of the ESCR/Development focal points of the OHCHR with Soledad García Muñoz, IACHR Special Rapporteur on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights.

Another result of that closer collaboration is the joint event with UNHCR titled "*Comparative Experiences on Internal Displacement: Latin American Regional Exchange*"

Session: Regional exchange on the prevention of and the response to internal displacement (IACHR and UNHCR)” (June 25), with the participation of Commissioner Julissa Mantilla, and the unprecedented partnership with the United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, which gave rise to two webinars: “Exchange on the protection of human rights and the prevention of genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity: the responsibility to protect,” with the participation of IACHR President Joel Hernández and Special Advisor of the United Nations Secretary General on the Responsibility to Protect, Karen Smith (July 28) and the “Workshop on risk analysis / theoretical segment – displaced population in Central America,” with the participation of Commissioner Julissa Mantilla (July 29).

At the technical level, the existing cooperation has continued and intensified, especially with respect to human rights defenders and participation by IACHR technical staff in the meetings with Brazilian civil society hosted by OHCHR on human rights and COVID-19, OHCHR participation in the IACHR Social Forums, and the continuous exchange of information on international *lis pendens* and the contribution to the UPR of the countries of the hemisphere. In addition, the 43rd, 44th and 45th Sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Council have been closely followed and existing cooperation with that body has continued and intensified, particularly with regard to cooperation on human rights defenders (as described in the next section of this report), which held its focal point meetings (July 14). Another highlight of the year was participation at the technical level in the event “The rule of law after COVID: Recover better for a more just world” by invitation of the UNODC.

Additionally, progress has been made in the dialogue with the International Committee of the Red Cross, with planning of a joint event in 2021.

Joint Activities during the period

N ^a	Body / Agency	Activity	Purpose	Place	Date
1	United Nations Human Rights Council	Speech of Commissioner Joel Hernández to the High Level Segment	Share the IACHR point of view with the Council	Geneva	February 25, 2020
2	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	Participation in the meeting with Brazilian civil society on human rights and COVID-19	Information gathering	Virtual	April 24, 2020
3	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – High Commissioner, Michelle Bachelet	Meeting between the IACHR plenary and the High Commissioner for Human Rights	Exchange of information on the pandemic	Virtual	May 11, 2020

4	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – Rapporteurship on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Rapporteur Francisco Cali	Meeting between Commissioner Antonia Urrejola and Rapporteur Francisco Cali	Points of overlap and common concerns between mandates, potential cooperation	Virtual	June 03, 2020
5	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – Representative in South America, Jan Jarab; Representative in Colombia, Alberto Brunori; Coordinator in Bolivia, Alán García	Amazon indigenous Joint Statement by the Representatives and the IACHR Executive Secretary, entitled “Urgency of protecting peoples against COVID-19”	Report on the threat to the health of indigenous peoples	Virtual	June 04, 2020
6	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	Participation in the meeting with Brazilian civil society on human rights and COVID-19	Information gathering	Virtual	June 05, 2020
7	International Committee of the Red Cross	Meeting between Commissioner Joel Hernández and ICRC.	Points of overlap and common concerns, potential for cooperation	Virtual	June 05, 2020
8	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	Meeting with Commissioner Mantilla on human trafficking	Points of agreement and common concerns, potential for cooperation	Virtual	June 08, 2020
9	United Nations Human Rights Council	Urgent Debate on current racially inspired human rights violations, systemic racism, police brutality against people of African descent and violence against peaceful protests	Remarks of Commissioner Joel Hernández in the discussion, presenting the IACHR’s contribution	Geneva	June 17, 2020
10	United Nations Human Rights Council	Participation at the 44 th Session of the UN Human Rights Council	Information exchange and gathering	Virtual	June 30 – July 20, 2020
11	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – Coordinator in Bolivia, Alán García	Meeting of Executive Secretary Paulo Abrão and OHCHR Coordinator in Bolivia	Information exchange and potential cooperation	Virtual	June 30, 2020
12	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	Meeting of Ombudsman Mechanism focal points	Points of overlapping and common concern, intensify cooperation	Virtual	July 14,s 2020
13	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – United Nations Rapporteur for Human Rights Defenders Mary Lawlor	Meeting of UN Rapporteur for HR Defenders and other Human Rights Defender focal points.	Cooperation	Virtual	July 16, 2020

14	Pan American Health Organization	Meeting of PAHO and Commissioner Julissa Mantilla on Older Persons	Discussion on the Inter-American Convention on the Convention of the Rights of Older Persons	Virtual	July 24, 2020
15	United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect – Special Advisor Karen Smith	Webinar “Exchange on human rights protection and prevention of genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity: the responsibility to protect” with the participation of Commissioner Joel Hernández	Raise awareness about the topic and explore potential for cooperation	Virtual	July 28, 2020
16	United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect	Webinar “Workshop on risk analysis / theoretical segment – displaced population in Central America” with the participation Commissioner Julissa Mantilla	Raise awareness about the topic and explore potential for cooperation	Virtual	July 29, 2020
17	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – Representative in South America, Jan Jarab	Meeting of the Representative and Executive Secretary Paulo Abrão	Points of overlap and common concerns, potential cooperation	Virtual	August 11, 2020
18	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	177 th Session of the IACHR	Participation and follow-up by the OHCHR in the IACHR Session	Virtual	September 28 – October 09, 2020
19	United Nations Human Rights Council	Participation in the 45 th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council	Information exchange and gathering	Virtual	September 14 - October 07, 2020
20	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – Representative for Panama, Alberto Brunori	Meeting of Commissioner Antonia Urrejola and the Representative	Points of overlap and common concerns, potential cooperation	Virtual	September 22, 2020
21	United Nations Human Rights Council	Speech of Commissioner Joel Hernández at the Interactive Dialogue with the Fact Finding mission on Venezuela	Information exchange and gathering	Virtual	September 23, 2020
22	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – Special Rapporteur on Sale and Sexual Exploitation of Children, Mama Fatima Singhateh	Meeting of Commissioner Esmeralda Arosemena and the Special Rapporteur	Points of overlap and common concerns, potential cooperation	Virtual	November 04, 2020

23	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	Participation of OHCHR at the Social Forum at the invitation of the IACHR	Information exchange and gathering	Virtual	November 06, 2020
24	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	Participation of the IACHR in the Annual Meeting of Human Rights Focal Points	Information exchange and gathering	Virtual	November 09, 2020
25	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	First meeting of the IACHR Plenary and the SPT Plenary	Points of overlap and common concerns, potential cooperation	Virtual	November 11, 2020
26	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Meeting of Commissioner Julissa Mantilla and Acting Executive Secretary Maria Claudia Pulido	Points of overlap and common concerns, potential cooperation	Virtual	November 12, 2020
27	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	Participation in UN Brazil meeting with threatened journalists	Information exchange and gathering	Virtual	November 13, 2020
28	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – Representative for Colombia, Juliette de Rivero	Meeting of Commissioner Antonia Urrejola and the Representative	Points of overlap and common concerns, potential cooperation	Virtual	December 16, 2020
29	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Girls, Siobhan Mullally	Meeting with Commissioners Esmeralda Arosemena, Margarete Macaulay and Julissa Mantilla and the Rapporteur	Points of overlap and common concerns, potential cooperation	Virtual	December 17, 2020
30	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – Special Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association, Clément Voule	Meeting of Commissioner Joel Hernández and the Rapporteur	Points of overlap and common concerns, potential cooperation	Virtual	December 17, 2020

Lastly, during this period, six press releases or joint declarations with the United Nations were issued: In the first of these, [published on June 4](#), the two organizations warned of the serious risks of the COVID-19 pandemic to the indigenous peoples of the Amazon. In the second one, published on June 8, they condemned the use of force against reporters covering the protests in the United States. The third one was published on September 16 ([OHCHR and IACHR express their concern over the situation of persons deprived of liberty in Honduras](#)), the fourth one on December 09 ([Joint Declaration on the Right to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Democratic Governance](#)), the fifth on December 17 ([Migrants must be included in all COVID-19 recovery plans—UN and regional experts](#)) and the sixth on December 30 ([Constitutional Process in Chile: IACHR and OHCHR Welcome Approval of](#)

Measures that Promote the Participation of Indigenous Peoples and People with Disabilities, and Ask to Ensure the Participation of Tribal Peoples of African Descent).

► **Expanding and strengthening coordination with the United Nations Human Rights Council**

Since 2018, the IACHR has been participating on a more systematic basis in the sessions of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. In 2020, it used this mode of collaboration more frequently. For the second time, the IACHR participated in the High-level Segment of the sessions, held on February 25; in addition, at that same 43rd Session of the Council, which resumed in June due to the pandemic, IACHR President, Commissioner Joel Hernández gave remarks at the “Urgent Debate on current racially inspired human rights violations, systemic racism, police brutality against people of African descent and violence against peaceful protests.”

On June 17, he gave a presentation to the United Nations Human Rights Council on current racially motivated human rights violations, systemic racism, police brutality, and violence against peaceful protesters.

Highlights of participation in the 43rd, 44th, and 45th sessions of the Human Rights Council include the remarks of Commissioner Joel Hernández at the “Interactive Dialogue with the Fact Finding Mission on Venezuela” on September 23.

P14: Program of Coordination and Complementarity with Regional Systems and Sub-regional Mechanisms in the Area of Human Rights

► **Expanding and strengthening coordination with other regional organizations**

The pandemic has posed new challenges for regional and sub-regional human rights organizations, forcing them to revisit their planning. Notwithstanding, cooperation and dialogue with the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, the Arab Commission on Human Rights, and the European Court of Human Rights have resumed, and information exchange with the MERCOSUR Institute for Public Policies on Human Rights has continued.

As a result, an historic and unprecedented meeting of the IACHR and the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights and the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights took place through the webinar “Dialogue Between Commissions in the Pandemic,” a seminar on the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to human rights bodies.

In addition, on April 17, a meeting was held between the IACHR and EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Eamon Gilmore, to discuss the pandemic and human rights and to share information and experiences on the situation in their respective regions and the action taken by the two organizations, and on December 7, the IACHR took part in

the High-Level Political Dialogue between the European Union and the Organization of American States to discuss points of agreement and common concerns.

P15: Mechanism of Protection for Human Rights Defenders in the Americas (with the OHCHR)

► Progress in implementing the Mechanism

Over the course of 2020, the third year of implementation of the Joint Action Mechanism to Contribute to the Protection of Human Rights Defenders in the Americas continued, with OHCHR.

Both organizations have been periodically exchanging information for joint analysis of issues and situations of special concern, as well as for actions to take in order to provide at-risk defenders with timely and effective protection. Specifically, information was shared about the situation of defenders in Colombia, Honduras and Guatemala, as well as in other situations of particular concern.

In the framework of this mechanism, a meeting was held in January between the IACHR and the OHCHR-South America, while in February 2020, a meeting was held with Rapporteur Hernández, the Americas Section and the focal point in Geneva. In addition, Rapporteur Hernández met with the acting OHCHR representative in Honduras, entering into an agreement to boost joint efforts under the mechanism.

One of the initiatives taken was an initial virtual meeting of the Joint - IACHR, national offices, and Geneva - on May 15, 2020, along with national protection mechanisms to share information about their successes and challenges in protecting human rights defenders in the context of COVID-19. The participants in the meeting, which was chaired by Commissioner Joel Hernández, were the national protection mechanisms of Colombia, Brazil, Honduras and the judiciary of Peru. Guatemala's COPREDEH also participated as an observer.

In July, a meeting was held between the Mechanism and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, Mary Lawlor, to present the mechanism and potential joint activities.

Additionally, a technical meeting was held in November of the Mechanism with civil society organizations with a view to organizing a virtual meeting with the Mechanism focal points and several civil society organizations and explore potential activities with the organizations. The meeting will be held in March 2021.

These meetings have often culminated in joint statements on different topics.

P16: Program for the Universalization and Coordination of the IAHRs with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights

► **Promoting Universal Ratification of the IAHRs and Institutional Cooperation with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights**

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, both the IACHR and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights have been conducting virtual seminars to promote human rights in the region. In the series of IACHR-hosted Webinars on “Human Rights Challenges in times of Pandemic,” Vice-President of the Inter-American Court of HR, Judge Patricio Pazmiño, participated in the webinar “The Right to Health from a Standpoint of indivisibility and interdependence,” on May 15, 2020. During the Inter-American Lecture Series of the IA Court of HR, the IACHR Special Rapporteur on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights participated in the Seminar “Economic and social impact of COVID-19: Challenges for promoting the enjoyment and effective protection of human rights,” on June 12, 2020. Likewise, Commissioner Julissa Mantilla, Rapporteur on the Rights of Older Persons, participated in a virtual meeting of experts, that was hosted by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on the “Impact of COVID-19 on Groups in Conditions of Vulnerability,” on June 26, 2020. Activities in this program are expected to be strengthened in 2021.

S05

Guarantee the human resources, infrastructure, technology, and budget necessary for full implementation of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights' mandate and functions by means of results-based institutional management for efficient, effective, and measurable institutional development.

Achievements

- ▶ **Expanding the public presence of the IACHR in the countries of the region, up until March 2020. Greater presence through digital media by holding virtual Sessions.**
- ▶ Strengthening communications capacity by expanding outreach on social media, broadcast TV, and social forums via online platforms.
- ▶ Implementing work environment improvement plan.
- ▶ Expanding the geographic representation within the IACHR Executive Secretariat staff.
- ▶ Executing financial sustainability plan. The IACHR had the necessary funds for its 2020 activities. The targets of the financial resiliency plan are being satisfactorily met.
- ▶ Increasing the budget from the Regular Fund and specific funds.
- ▶ Implementing technological innovation, with the launch of two systems (EVOTE and Inter-American SIMORE).
- ▶ Enhancing user services by creating the Center for Attention to Users of the System and improving information management.

The IACHR has been successful at sustaining the results it achieved in 2019 in the area of institutional management into 2020, as well as making strides in the area of institutional communication and strengthening. Even though incremental results have been attained in technology and systems, additional resources must be mobilized to meet the objectives of Program 18.

The doubling of the budget from the 2017 level was not fully achieved. However, an 88.33% increase enabled the IACHR to continue strengthening the administrative structure and building capacity.

P17: Institutional Management and Development Program

► Accountability

Over 2020, the IACHR ES prepared and delivered in a timely fashion 34 intermediate or final narrative reports to the following 15 donors: UNHCR (1), ARCUS (1), Canada (2), Spanish Fund (6); United States (4), Netherlands PE (1); Netherlands MESEVE, Ireland (1), Balearic Islands (1), USA-CSO Meseni (2), PADF TN (4 quarterly); PADF Nicaragua; European Commission, European Union MESENI (1), Italy –MESENI (2); Switzerland (5 reports, final, mid-year and bimonthly). In turn, the IACHR Executive Secretariat prepared and sent 47 financial reports (interim or final) or official requests for information to the following 16 donors: UNHCR, ARCUS, Canada, European Commission, Ecuador, United States, Spanish Fund for the OAS, France, Ford Foundation, Netherlands, Ireland, Balearic Islands, Italy, Mexico, PADF and Switzerland.

Additionally, the Executive Secretariat prepared 8 contingency plan projects for donors on account of pandemic containment measures taken, for projects funded by: Arcus, Canada, European Commission, United States /CSO, Spanish Fund, PADF, Foundation for the Americas /Wellspring, and Switzerland.

► Strengthening the organizational structure

In 2020, the competitive selection processes continued to fill vacancies, that were created when the IACHR approved the organizational structure, such as selection of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression, the Executive Secretary in keeping with the procedures set forth in Article 11 of the IACHR Rules of Procedure and another three vacant positions of specialists under the regular fund. The process of reclassifying positions also began in order to make them conform to the structure, and were audited from March to April, 2020 although, as of the closing date of this report, the positions are still in the process of approval by the SG/OAS. The IACHR was further assisted by 47 interns and 19 fellows, thanks to the support of education institutions in the region, and it welcomed 3 employees of other human rights institutions under the associate staff program.

► Collectively preparing and implementing the plan for improving the workplace environment.

Based on the ES/IACHR initiative, in May, the Department of Human Resources launched the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). All OAS staff, including consultants, fellows and interns, have access to EAP services, as do the members of their households.

As part of workplace environment assistance, at the initiative of the IACHR, a consulting firm was hired to assess the current work environment situation at the ES/IACHR with a view to implementing joint actions and successfully building a healthy, safe, participatory and transparent work setting for everyone.

In addition, the “Open Door Policy” to listen to the needs and interests of the IACHR staff members remained in effect and the meetings of the Workplace Environment Committee continued to be held. The Subcommittee on Diversity, which is under the Workplace Environment Committee, held a workshop in December on promoting diversity and preventing discrimination in the workplace.

Another achievement during the period was the steady increase in diversity in terms of the representation of nationalities on the IACHR Executive Secretariat Staff. In 2017, it had personnel from 18 different countries, while in June 2020, 24 countries were represented.

Current Nationality	Women	Men	Total	%
Antigua and Barbuda		1	1	1%
Argentina	5	4	9	6%
Barbados		1	1	1%
Bolivia	4		4	3%
Brazil/Brasil	11	8	19	12%
Canadá/Canada	2		2	1%
Chile	3	3	6	4%
Colombia	15	2	17	14%
Costa Rica	1		1	1%
Ecuador		2	2	1%
El Salvador	1	2	3	2%
Guatemala		3	3	2%
Honduras	2		2	1%
Mexico/México	3	6	9	7%
Panama/Panamá		2	2	1%
Paraguay	1	1	2	1%
Peru/Peru	2	7	9	6%
Portugal	1		1	1%
Saint Lucia/Santa Lucia	1		1	1%
Spain/España		1	1	1%
Trinidad and Tobago/Trinidad y Tobago	1		1	1%
Uruguay	5	3	8	5%
USA	24	7	31	22%
Venezuela	5		5	4%
Total	87	53	140	100%

► **Expanding IACHR public presence in the region through roving and virtual sessions.**

From March 2 to 8, 2020, the IACHR held its 175th Session in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Over the years of the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan, the IACHR has held sessions in 11 different countries. The Sessions held outside headquarters have significantly expanded the presence of the Commission in the region, brought it closer to the victims and the peoples for whom it works; and enables the democratization of access to the Inter-American human rights system.

Due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic, the IACHR fulfilled its mandate by holding the 176th, 177th and 178th sessions virtually. During the IACHR’s Sessions, while meeting in internal sessions, it examined issues relating to the processing of petitions, cases and precautionary measures, as well as monitoring of human rights situations, especially, in terms of the impact of COVID-19 on the protection it strives to provide. Likewise, it held working meetings on precautionary measures, friendly settlements and follow-up to recommendations, meetings with States and with civil society, as well as bilateral meetings, to ensure that every effort is made for the Commission to continue to fully discharge its duties.

Session	Location	Date	Number of Public Hearings	Working Meetings
175	Puerto Príncipe, Haiti	March 2-8, 2020	19	28
176	Virtual	July 6-10	-	34
177	Virtual	Sept. 25 – October 9	27	29
178	Virtual	December 3-15, 2020	19	13



► **Institutional communication to strengthen Inter-American human rights standards. Building IACHR communication capacity**

The IACHR conducted different activities to raise awareness and disseminate the information it produces through campaigns, statements on social networks, press management and continual updating of its webpage, as well as developing micro-websites and crafting communication instruments to guide the workings of its mechanisms and its strategies.

The main achievements are listed hereunder:

- **Campaigns**

The IACHR crafts and carries out information and awareness-raising campaigns in order to convey concrete messages on the human rights standards contained in its reports and mechanisms. These campaigns use communication resources with language aimed at a wider audience in general. Thus far, the campaigns are conducted via the official social media accounts and groups and distribution lists on WhatsApp with journalists and civil society organizations. The scope of the campaigns is gauged through the statistics generated on the social media platforms in terms of the total number of times each publication is shared, as well as the number of ‘likes’ and other available digital features.

- As for Communication Policy, in 2020, 13 information dissemination and awareness-raising campaigns on human rights standards were implemented over social networks with a total number of 66.3 million views and 365,400 reactions. On the web site, 314 press releases were posted in Spanish and English and were viewed by 49,442 users. It is fitting to note the historic rise in website views in 2020, which grew by 50,497 visits as compared to an average of 10 thousand per year over the past five years.
- **Expanding the reach of the Web Portal**

The IACHR web portal is a communication tool containing all information relating to its work, everything from country and thematic reports to petitions and cases, precautionary measures, and the like. As of the close of the year, the website had 3.4 million views in its different sections. 314 press releases were posted in Spanish and English and viewed by 49,442 users. It is fitting to note the historic rise in website visits in 2020, which grew by 50,497 visits as compared to an average of 10 thousand per year over the past five years.

The coverage of the web portal is measured by the number of times users access the different sections, that is, website views.

Year	Total Views / Access
2016	568,585
2017	3,082,831
2018	3,483,209
2019	3,484,586
2020	3,535,083
Growth	50,497

In 2020, new sections and micro-sites were added to the IACHR website with a view to making its activities and actions more widely known and contributing to greater access to information and transparency. The sections created in 2020 are the [Sacroi COVID-19](#), the Rapporteurship on the Rights of Older Persons, the Special Mechanisms for [Nicaragua](#) and [Venezuela](#) and the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts for [Bolivia](#). Additionally, an internal webpage [Attention to Users](#) Section was added.

Micro-sites were also developed and posted for the report [on Violence and Discrimination against Women and Girls](#) and for the report [Persons Deprived of Liberty in Nicaragua](#) , in Spanish and in English.

1,797 [Precautionary Measures](#) and reports on [petitions and cases](#) were also updated and posted on the website.

- **Reach of the sections and webpages**

Sections created in 2020	Total Views
SACROI Covid-19	31,592
Rapporteurship on the Rights of Older Persons	4,606
MESENI	4,118
MESEVE	1,881
Attention to Users	1,160
Reach of webpages of the portal	Total Views
Internal webpages / Mandate	830,660
Internal webpages / Press	735,737
Internal webpages / Cases and PM	435,880
Press releases	Total Views
IACHR adopts Resolution on Pandemic and Human Rights in the Americas April 10	32,311
The IACHR urges States to guarantee the health and integrity of persons deprived of liberty and their families in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic March 31	21,565
IACHR Invites Human Rights Defenders to Take Part in Course on Strategic Use of Inter-American System of Human Rights . April 16	16,718

Software tools were also developed to extract data from reports and migrate content to new data bases, in order to automate the uploading of data and its replication on different pages of the website. The new design of the pages facilitates searches and generates graphics of the results.

- **Social Network Management**

The IACHR uses the social networks as a strategic communication tool. The use of digital media to officially disseminate information has become the norm in the world of communication, thus making these media essential and, in the case of the IACHR, enable it to disseminate information on its work in defending human rights and on the Inter-American human rights system (IAHRS), thus fulfilling the Commission’s responsibility to provide transparency and access to public information.

The IACHR keeps all of its accounts active and up-to-date on the different social network platforms (Facebook, Flickr, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube).

In 2020, the IACHR was able to increase the number of followers on its Twitter account by 91 thousand; on Facebook, by 31 thousand; on Instagram, by 5,500 and LinkedIn, where the account was opened in early 2000, by 2,500 followers, bringing the total number of new followers, as of the close of the year, to 10,100.

Total number of Followers on Social Networks						
Platform	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Growth 2019-2020
Facebook	352,000	405,307	525,606	571,000	608,093	37,093
Twitter	179,000	470,693	525,993	550,993	641,000	90,007
Instagram	-	-	-	2,361	7,954	5,593
YouTube	-	-	-	10,600	13,800	3,200
Mail chimp	15,444	20,147	21,155	22,116	24,225	2,109
LinkedIn	-	-	-	-	12,634	-
Total	546,444	896,147	1,082,754	1,157,070	1,295,072	138,002


The [@CIDH](#) account on the Twitter platform received **66.3** million impressions in 2020, which refers to the number of times content published by the IACHR was viewed on the platform and covers the total number of all posts over the year. Additionally, **157,900** accounts of individuals and institutions on Twitter shared IACHR posts. Another element that helps to gauge the reach of social media posts is the number of “likes”, which in 2020 totaled **207,500** of all posted information (statements, press releases, awareness-raising campaigns, videos, information dissemination activities).

Reach of IACR Twitter Account			
Time frame	Impressions	Shares	Likes
January / March	12,700,000	39,800	40,900
April / June	21,300,000	46,400	61,200
July / September	13,900,000	38,000	50,800
October / December	18,400,000	33,700	54,600
Total	66,300,000	157,900	207,500

The average monthly reach of IACHR’s [Facebook](#) account was 393,100 views of all its posts over the year. In addition, these posts were shared 125 times on average per month over 2020 and the average number of “likes” was 313. While on LinkedIn, total annual impressions were 811,154, shared content through other accounts totaled 3,227 times, and 14,853 ‘likes’ were posted. These data are for all IACHR posts for the reporting period.

The results of IACHR reach on social media show steady growth and the importance of planning a public information strategy on these platforms to contribute to raising awareness of and promoting human rights standards.

Highlighted below is some of the most-viewed content on the two social network platforms with the most followers, Twitter and Facebook.

Tweet	Posting date	# replies
Copa Airlines prevented the #CIDH delegation from boarding the plane in Panama. Everyone with boarding pass in hand. They were informed that they received instructions from the #Venezuela regime that they were not authorized to enter the country. pic.twitter.com/a4CQ1z3vTu	February 4	749,000
@CIDH publishes Res. 1/20 Pandemic and Human Rights with standards and recommendations on the conviction that measures adopted by States in response to the pandemic must be centered on full respect for #DDHH . #CIDH #COVID-19  Press release: https://bit.ly/2xk3pV6 pic.twitter.com/kLXuOOJRYW	April 10	236,000
#Ecuador 🇪🇨 The @CIDH views with deep dismay the difficulties reported in #Guayaquil to transfer, cremate and bury the bodies of the persons who have died during the pandemic of #COVID-19 #CIDH #DDHH	April 03	154,000
#Peru 🇵🇪 The @CIDH condemns the death of 2 people el #14Nov during acts of State repression of mass protests over the political crisis triggered by the presidential vacancy, and demands an immediate investigation into the events and that responsibility be established. #DDHH	November 15	325,481
#TrinidadTobago 🇹🇩 The @CIDH expresses its concern over the deportation, on #22Nov , of 16 Venezuelan migrant children and adolescents #NiñasNiñosAdolescentes , some of whom were unaccompanied. According to public information, these persons were on high sea and their whereabouts are unknown	November 23	811,317

The **Facebook** Fan Page has 608,093 followers. Releases, campaigns and videos of the IACHR Channel are available on the page.

Post	Date	# Persons reached
Registration open for virtual internships #Pasantías virtuales at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos  Registration period: January 25 to February 23, 2020.  Internship periods: June 4 to August 14, 2020 More info:  http://www.oas.org/es/cidh/empleos/pasantias.asp #CIDH #Pasantías #DDHH https://bit.ly/2YCu894	February 28	274,814
The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (IACHR) publishes Res. 1/20 Pandemic and Human Rights with standards and recommendations with the conviction that measures adopted by States in response to the pandemic must be centered on full respect for human rights #DDHH . #CIDH #COVID-19  Press Release: https://bit.ly/2xk3pV6	April 04	77,059

[#PortalCIDH] The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights invites you to see the Fact Sheet on how to request a Precautionary Measure #MedidaCautelar and the relevant information that must be included. 📌 More information: bit.ly/2zoegY 📌	June 12	92,915
[#PasantíasCIDH] The invitation to apply to the Internship Program of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights is still open. Applications will be made virtually. More info http://bit.ly/1uWYUTt	September 18	17,265

The IACHR's [YouTube Channel](#) is a communication tool that aims to raise the profile of its work and impact, chiefly among human rights defenders and victims. The Channel houses videos and reporting on different issues relating to human rights standards and violations.

In 2020, the Channel posted [27 audiovisual pieces](#) and 3 [feature reports](#), which bear witness to Friendly Settlements, the results of working and country visits, in addition to audiovisual pieces with messaging on the rights that must be guaranteed in times of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Channel has a section on the IACHR website that replays all audiovisual content found on the YouTube account [YouTube](#), and has 13,905 subscribers.

The year 2020 was marked by the COVID-19 pandemic and, accordingly, the IACHR adapted its activities to the virtual format, with the Channel also becoming an audiovisual repository. Thus, in 2020, 159 videos were published including audiovisual thematic pieces and reporting, as well as recordings of webinars and public hearings of the respective Sessions. It is noteworthy that these videos were viewed 175,974 times.

The public repository of images of all the work of the IACHR is located on the [Flickr](#) platform, which has 507 photographs published in 2020, of the different activities that were held. This platform received 450,000 views over the reporting period.

- **Communication protocols**

The IACHR has developed a series of instruments to guide and record its communication efforts and improve the internal and external flows of its communications mechanisms, such as the internal flow for preparation, approval, and publication of press releases; the classification and standardization of messages for the Twitter account; and the announcement of press releases.

- **Improvement of the IACHR Channel**

The [IACHR Channel](#), which debuted in 2019, is a strategic tool that utilizes new technologies and interacts with the arts to shed light on people who fight for their rights and bring about change in the place where they live, through inspiring stories told through reporting and interviews.

The Channel boasts 14 interviews on the subjects of landmark cases, such as [María da Penha de Brasil](#); more than 50 videos on IACHR visits to different countries up to February 2020, including [Venezuela](#); and more than 10 videos to raise awareness about different issues such as [poverty](#). The Channel also provides a [Map of the Precautionary Measures](#) granted by the IACHR since 2013.

- **Managing the press**

Another focus of IACHR communications is press management with a view to raising awareness among journalists of the region about issues related to human rights and, thereby, through their reporting and coverage, place issues relating to human rights standards on the media agenda of the region.

Over 2020, at least 20 interviews of IACHR commission members and the head of the Executive Secretariat were conducted with mass media and independent journalists. In parallel, press releases were dispatched via IACHR digital bulletins (mail chimp) to journalists of the region, in addition to a distribution list of 150 journalists from the countries of the region, who receive all press releases and statements issued by the IACHR via WhatsApp.

In 2020, different digital media, radio, television and print outlets published more than 250 news items on topics related to the work of the institution in Spanish and 60 in English. More than 30 stories with interviews of IACHR commission members were published. It should be noted that publications in general reflect and examine the subjects with a human rights approach based on the IACHR mechanisms.

The main sources used by journalists to report news items mentioning the IACHR are interviews of Commissioners, press releases, precautionary measures, cases before the IA Court of HR, country and thematic reports, on-site and working visits. Frequent subjects include: indigenous peoples, women, democratic institutions, human rights defenders, persons deprived of liberty, LGBTI persons, migrants, death penalty, pandemic and human rights, independence of the IACHR.

Summary of Publications in the Media				
Media	Subject	Country	Format	Source
BBC London	Afrodescendants	US	Story	Commissioner interviewed
Perfil	Pandemic and Human Rights	Region	Interview	Commissioner interviewed
RCN Radio	Indigenous peoples/children	Colombia	News item	Statement
BBC	Persons deprived of liberty	Nicaragua	Interview	Commissioner interviewed
Efe	Memory, Truth and Justice	El Salvador	News item	Press release

AFP	LGBTI	Panama	Interview	Commissioner interviewed
NY Caribbean	Death penalty	Caribbean	News item	Press release
Washington Post	Persons deprived of liberty	Region	Opinion	Reports and releases
La Razón	DDHH Human rights	Bolivia	Interview	Commissioner interviewed
Deutsche Welle	Human rights	Cuba	News item	Country report
Infobae	Persons deprived of liberty	Region	News item	Press release
La Jornada	Institutions of the IACHR	-	News item	Press release
El País	Democratic Institutionalility	Peru	Story	Commissioner interviewed
AP-English	Democratic institutionalility	Guatemala	Story	Statement
Reuters - English	Migrants	Venezuela	Story	Statement
New York Times	Death Penalty	US	Opinion	Precautionary Measure
UOL-Portuguese	Indigenous Peoples	Brazil	Opinion	Precautionary Measure
Reuters - English	Indigenous Peoples	Brazil	News item	Precautionary Measure
El País - Portuguese	Pandemic and Human Rights	Region	Interview	Commissioner interviewed
EFE	Women	United States	News item	Statement

P18: Program to Apply Technological Innovation to Human Rights

► Addressing system needs

The IACHR Executive Secretariat provided support for research, testing, creating real scenarios through different platforms and configurations, operating and using a series of internal and external webinars that were given by the Commission over the time of the pandemic both to SACROI COVID-19 and to the rest of the theme areas that require remote meetings, training and seminars. Assistance was provided to more than 140 panelists, human rights experts at 23 virtual thematic seminars which were attended by more than 1 million participants.

Support tools were created to manage and follow up on the functionality of the virtual meeting room. Manuals and check lists were created and shared so that virtual meetings would go off without a hitch.

► **Implementing technological innovation**

Holding the 176th, 177th and 178th Regular Sessions virtually marked an historic and unprecedented milestone with all meetings and hearings being conducted remotely. This was a watershed moment for the Commission, putting its versatility and adaptability on full display in devising ways to meet the expectations of the users of the IAHRs. Care was taken so that hearings were properly and efficiently outfitted with simultaneous interpreting in several languages and with live closed-captioning and live streaming on several platforms at the same time to ensure it reached the highest number of our users possible. Thanks to the virtual modality, 202,024 people were able to attend 46 hearings during the Sessions. Live closed captioning was added in order to include persons with disabilities, thus expanding the coverage and accessibility of our online seminars and hearings to those who connect to follow us in the fulfillment of our mandates.

This feature was put into operation in several languages at a time for all hearings of the 178th Session, thus marking an unprecedented event in the history of Commission and coinciding with the commemoration of the International Day of Persons with Disability. A digital stopwatch was created and implemented to keep the time allotted to the parties by the Commission during hearings. It should be noted that, at the 178th Regular Session, an interpretation channel was set up for the indigenous language Náhuatl for the hearing on “Case 13.425 - Ernestina Ascencio Rosario et al v. Mexico,” where we witnessed the first ever hearing interpreted live in this language, expanding coverage to include the members of this community through these means. Setting up this interpretation channel sets the stage for future hearings or meetings that require this native language and thus affords greater accessibility.

The Electronic Voting System (E-Vote) was successfully implemented to help the Executive Secretariat engage in consultations with the Executive Secretariat. E-Vote has automatized and optimized communication for consultations and decision-making of our Commission. Prior to implementation of the system, voting was done through multiple rounds of email exchanges and recording and monitoring of the votes cast was manual. The new system automatically tallies votes in each consultation, monitors and issues alerts of deadlines, automated notifications, advanced searches, electronically generates smart reports, which leads to greater transparency and efficiency for the Commission. With the implementation of this automated system, the Commission makes better use of information technology solutions and increases productivity and efficiency in voting.

The Inter-American System to Monitor Recommendations (SIMORE) was also implemented this year, and is fully operational for all our users, member States and civil society. The system features the recommendations issued by the Commission through the different mechanisms, such as Friendly Settlements, Chapter IV.B of the Annual Report, Published Reports on the Merits, Country Reports, and Resolutions. Users can search for the

information they wish and download it in a variety of formats. Now, States and civil society individuals or organizations each have their own account and thus are able to more readily submit information linked to follow-up on recommendations issued by the Commission. The SIMORE helps to simplify the process of organizing the recommendations the Commission issues to the States through merits and thematic reports, hearings at sessions, press releases, etc., thus enabling follow up on the IACHR's decisions and recommendations and optimizing the IAHRs. Once implementation was completed, Member States and civil society were given training on how to use the SIMORE, were briefed on the information security system and on how to create and activate accounts, and were given important tips on how to use it and were explained the advantages and features of the system. This system represents an historical milestone for the Commission and will be of great help to all our users, member States and civil society.

Along these same lines of technological innovation, licenses were purchased for a tool that facilitates the management and use of different data categories, filters and reports. This tool enables the Executive Secretariat teams to work with new technologies in a smoother and more efficient way. One of the most striking benefits of implementing the tool is that it provides the opportunity for collaboration, as you can exchange input in multimedia and text formats, information files of different types, photos and other things. The Executive Secretariat staff received training on the use of the collaborative tool.

► **Implementing updates and enhancements to existing tools**

We continue to make progress in developing the project to redefine the central systems of the Commission. Information gathering, analysis and consolidation has moved forward. With this information, we will continue working on charting the inputs and continuing to advance in the design and development of the system. The project will enhance the staff's experience when they engage with the system, as well as stepping up the pace of information filing, streamlining the processing of internal information and providing information to our external users, the focus being to stabilize and improve automated functions.

In 2020, 4,355 new accounts were registered on the Individual Petition System Portal. 2,308 of the new accounts are active. Additionally, 5,000 user questions were sent to the Portal System mailbox and were answered over the year. It is essential to serve our users and we continue the job of providing technical assistance and follow up to the functioning and use of the Portal. We also support the campaign to promote the use of the Portal, especially in light of current circumstances, to automate more processes and respond to our users promptly and effectively. Two new States, Panama and the Dominican Republic, have signed up, which helps to make direct and automated communication between States, petitioners and the Commission better.

Five training courses on the different central systems of the commission and technological resources were held and were attended by 65 users, including employees, consultants,

fellows and interns. In the trainings, participants were provided additional protocols and usage manuals, over and above the training materials.

P19: Financial Sustainability Plan

In 2020, the General Assembly approved a budget of \$10,627,900 for the IACHR, \$7,741,200 of which is for staffing expenditures and \$2,886,700 for operational expenditures. The budget increase for 2020 marks the culmination of the last stage in the doubling of the Regular Fund budget following the decision of the OAS General Assembly held in Cancun in 2017.

As of 31 December 2020, the allocation corresponding to the regular fund budget was USD 9,119,200. In relation to the raising of specific funds, as a result of the resource mobilization strategy and thanks to the trust placed in the IACHR, it was possible to raise USD 6,831,300 in 2020. These two sources of funding totaled USD 15,950,500.

Thanks to the support of the members states, progress was made in doubling the budget which, though not fully achieved, resulted in an 88.33% increase over the 2017 budget, enabling the IACHR to continue consolidating the administrative structure and strengthening its capacities. Despite this increase, the General Secretariat did not authorize access to nearly USD \$1.5 million budgeted for personnel outlays.

The budget approved for the 2021 ES/IACHR budget was USD \$10,081,900. The 2021 Program-Budget of the Organization was approved by the General Assembly at the 50th Regular Session of October 2020 in AG/RES.2957 (L-O/20).

► Resource Mobilization Committee up and running

The Resource Mobilization Committee has been operating remotely. Following the recommendations of January 14, 2020, a donor roundtable was held to request support for implementing the GIEI Bolivia. Representatives from 14 OAS observer countries attended: France, Italy, Spain, Holy See; Sweden; Switzerland, the Netherlands, Japan, Ireland, Germany, Romania, Ukraine, Latvia, and the European Union, as well as representatives of 11 OAS member countries: Canada, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the United States and Venezuela.

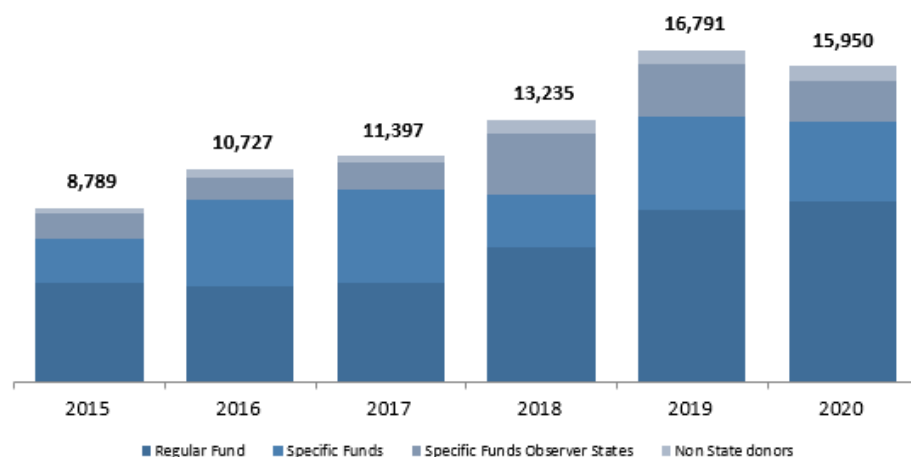
► Financial Sustainability Plan and prospects for diversification of sources

The ES/IACHR continued implementing the different components of the financial sustainability plan, particularly improvements in the communication strategy and, as previously mentioned, reporting to donors.

Additionally, the ES/IACHR continued to fundraise under the funding diversification strategy for execution in 2020 and 2021. In this regard, over the course of 2020, the Executive Secretariat prepared **16** project financing proposals to present to donors:

Foundations of Transitional Justice in Nicaragua, submitted to the PADF for the amount of USD \$260,000 (approved); Project to Strengthen the Rapporteurship on the Rights of LGBTI Persons with the Foundation for the Americas, submitted to WellSpring for USD \$450,000 (approved); Strengthening of International Protection for Migrants, Displaced Persons and Refugees in Countries of Origin, Transit, Destination, and Return in the Americas, submitted to UNHCR, for the amount of USD \$80,000 (approved); Implementation of MESEVE, submitted to the Netherlands (USD \$217,000 approved); Implementation of the GIEI Bolivia presented to the donor roundtable; Proposal to Strengthen IACHR Capacity for the Protection of Human Rights in Times of Crisis, submitted to Canada; Proposal on COVID-19 and Human Rights potentially for donor roundtable (yet to be submitted); two proposals to the Spanish Fund for the OAS on Racial Discrimination (approved) and MESENI (approved); Proposal to Expand and Add Resources by USD \$5 million to the Project to Boost the Efficiency of the Work of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights 2018-2022 (approved); Proposal for the Report on Labor Rights in Cuba to the PADF for USD \$470,000 (approved); Proposal to Reduce Procedural Backlog submitted to Ireland (150,000) (first year approved); Preparation of Joint Initiative Project – ILO, FAO, IOM with IACHR Assistance to Promote Rights of Migrants Affected by COVID (\$120,000) and Proposal for Activities and Expansion of the Project Strengthening Democracy and Human Rights in the Northern Triangle - PADF (2021 and 2022) for \$287,000 (approved); Rewriting of the Proposal for the Project with the Government of the Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands “Promoting and Training on the Inter-American Human Rights System and Making Public Policy with a Human Rights Approach in the Americas. The project was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Funding received by the IACHR by financing source (in thousands of USD)



(*) Figure of 2020 no yet audited

Specific Funds Received (in thousands of USD)

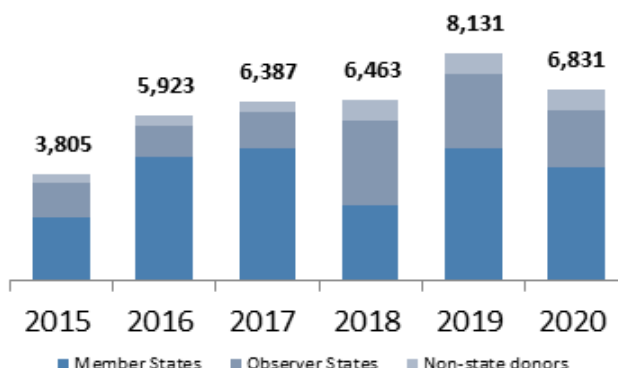


Table of Specific Funds received by Donor in 2020

Member States	Amount (USD)	Project/Use
Brazil	10,000	MESEVE
Chile	20,000	“Support to 2017-2021 IACHR Strategic Plan”
Canada	509,641	● “Promoting compliance with recommendations and decisions on the rights of women and girls issued by the IACHR in the Member States of Latin America and the Caribbean.”
	6,589	● Freedom of Expression in the Americas
Costa Rica	13,966	● “Support for the 2017-2021 IACHR Strategic Plan”
	3,342	● Support for the Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression
United States	3,041,283	● “Increasing the effectiveness of the work of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights over 2018-2021”
	190,319	● Implementation of the MESENI Mechanism in Nicaragua
Mexico	200,000	● “Support for the 2017-2021 IACHR Strategic Plan” ● GIEI Mexico
Panama	50,070	● “Support for the 2017-2021 IACHR Strategic Plan”
Peru	8,807	● “Support for the 2017-2021 IACHR Strategic Plan”
Dominican Republic	21,813	“2019 Session”
Subtotal Member States	4,069,242	
Permanent Observers		
European Commission	355,925	● Access to International Justice through individual petitions filed with the IACHR by alleged victims of human rights violations in the hemisphere
Spain	39,502	● “Promotion and protection of economic, social and cultural rights in the Inter-American Human Rights System - Phase II (Emphasis on the topic of human rights and business)” (FEPO)
	39,502	● “Improving available tools that enhance protection of the right to life and physical integrity of human rights defenders in Latin America” (FEPO)
	14,325	● “Implementation of MESENI-Nicaragua” (FEPO)

France	21,692	“Support for the activities of the IACHR Executive Secretariat and the REDESCA”
Ireland	60,425	“Reducing procedural backlog at the admissibility stage”
Netherlands	259,980 29,410 108,480	“Support for implementation of the 2017-2021 IACHR Strategic Plan” Implementation of MESEVE
Norway	185,878	Promotion and protection of economic, social, cultural and environmental rights in the Inter-American Human Rights System
Switzerland	879,975 6,589	“Strengthening Governance and Human Rights in Central America” Support for the Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression
Subtotal Permanent Observers	2,001,684	
Institutions and Others		
United Nations High Commissioner	72,761	“Fellowship on International Protection and Internal Displacement and Support for Institution Building”
CEJA	6,000	Support for the REDESCA
CESR	20,000	Support for the REDESCA
ARCUS Foundation	50,000	“Protection and Promotion of the Rights of LGTBI persons”
Google	60,000	Freedom of Expression in the Americas
Ford Foundation	175,000 118,250	“Strengthening Freedom of Expression in the Americas” “GESP” Digital Rights in the Americas
Pan American Development Foundation	227,722	“Promoting and protecting human rights in the Northern Triangle of Central America.”
OSI Foundation	25,000	Support for the REDESCA
Subtotal Institutions and Others	754,733	
Total Specific Funds	6,831,300	

(*) preliminary information still unconfirmed by OAS Department of Finances.

P20: Center for Attention to Users of the System

In 2020, due to the special situation stemming from COVID-19, the ES/IACHR redoubled its efforts to ensure proper communication and standardized information flow aimed at making the Commission’s data, procedures and mechanisms more transparent. The ES/IACHR tailored its strategies to make communication and interaction with its users efficient and satisfactory. Over the reporting year, users of the system continually expressed (through different means) their gratitude to the IACHR for the notable improvement in meeting their needs and the improved rapport it has fostered. Despite the modality of remote work and the pandemic-imposed restrictions, the ES/IACHR designed a way to work that ensured it was able to discharge all duties assigned to it.

► **Creating the SCAGI microsite**

Creating the microsite enabled system users to find a specific area to assist them and access important information. As a complement to this effort, the ES/IACHR prepared a compendium of frequent user questions. This document is expected to be available to users sometime in the early months of 2021.

► **Electronic Document Management Protocol**

In 2020, implementation of the Electronic Document Management Protocol began. Thus, efficient, coordinated and timely response flows have been set in motion by the IACHR.

► **Document Recording and Control Protocol**

This protocol establishes a standardized procedure to record and control IACHR documents. This procedure includes the documents approved by the IACHR for publication, such as resolutions, decisions on petitions and cases, annual, country and thematic reports, and internal working documents. It will be applied to all sections involved with approval, registry, and notification, locating and accessing IACHR documents. This protocol is pending approval of the Acting Executive Secretary.

► **Timely assistance and response to users through different means**

- In 2020, the telephone dial-in service answered 2,062 phone calls,¹⁵ using a comprehensive and intersectional approach.
- Despite the physical offices of the IACHR being closed, the ES/IACHR continued to use virtual platforms to reply to requests for appointments or meetings. In 2020, 64 meetings with petitioners and/or alleged victims were held. 34 of these meetings were held via virtual platforms such as Webex, Skype or by telephone and 30 were in-person.¹⁶
- In 2020, the IACHR received, screened and forwarded 41,625 electronic communications through the CIDHDenuncias@oas.org account. In addition, more than 1,081 requests or queries made by users were answered through email.

► **Registering petitions and precautionary measures**

Petitions continued to take a maximum of four¹⁷ days to be registered and precautionary measures, two¹⁸ days. In 2020, a total of 2,529¹⁹ petitions and 1,168²⁰ request for precautionary measures were registered.

¹⁵ Calls are answered in partial shifts during business hours.

¹⁶ Prior to the closure of the office due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹⁷ Not including holidays and days off for weather events or system failures.

¹⁸ This period is mainly due to weekends, except for the situations listed in the previous footnote.

¹⁹ Canceled registrations are not included. This count includes registrations in 2020 regardless of the year it was supposed to be.

²⁰ Ibid.

In addition, when petitions and precautionary measures were registered, *per saltum* criteria and COVID-19 related matters were identified in the system. In this way, the SCAGI aided other sections in identifying matters that require priority treatment by the ES/IACHR.

Likewise, an alert system continues to be implemented to bring to the attention of the Secretariat for Petitions and Cases and the Precautionary and Provisional Measures Section, matters that need to be dealt with as soon as possible, because of their urgent nature.

➤ Document management

In 2020, 83,424 files with information on petitions, cases and precautionary measures were entered into the Document Management System (DMS). A total of 36,824 files were entered through the Individual Petition System Portal. 46,600 files were received and entered through other means.²¹ The steady influx of documents into the system has guaranteed that, in the context of telework, ²² the different sections of the IACHR have sufficient input to be able to continue discharging their duties.

The IACHR received and examined **3,615** forms that were submitted through the Individual Petition System Portal. Lastly, as for management of documents submitted to the IACHR through regular mail, more than **800** packets of information were classified and digitized and more than **60** forms were sent to users who requested them, for the most part, persons deprived of liberty.

➤ Promoting the use of the Portal and new users

The section continues its significant efforts to publicize and promote the use of the Portal. In this regard, the ES/IACHR staff has seized on every opportunity for interaction with users to inform them about the advantages of the Portal and steer them towards using it. In 2020, 4,326 new users registered for the Portal, 1,310 more registered users than the previous year.

²¹ Regular mail and email.

²² The IACHR implemented teleworking as of March 13, 2020.

P21

Special Program to Monitor IACHR Recommendations

Achievements

- Public launch and awareness-raising of [Inter-American SIMORE](#):
 - Classifying and systematizing more than 4,700 recommendations from Published Merits Reports, Friendly Settlement Agreements, Country Reports, Chapter IV.B of annual reports, thematic reports and resolutions of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights;
- Progress in the implementation of 23 recommendations: full compliance with 4 measures; substantial partial compliance with 6 measures; and partial compliance with 13 measures. The progress report was included in the IACHR Annual Report. The progress was also reported in [Press Release No. 095/2020](#);
- Holding 16 working meetings during the 175th, 176th, 177th and 178th Sessions on 20 cases with published merits reports, four of which were convened *ex officio*, regarding 6 cases; a significant number of bilateral in-person meetings or videoconferences with petitioners, victims and representatives of the State regarding different cases; and 5 meeting to review portfolios at the stage of follow-up with the States of Argentina, Canada, Chile, Ecuador and Mexico;
- Supervising compliance in 100% of the 105 cases with published Merits Report since 2000, sending letters of request for information both to member states and petitioners, in cases whose follow-up is included in the Annual Report. In response to the communications on follow-up to these cases, in 2020, the IACHR received information from both parties in 49.5% of the cases and from at least one party in 41% of the cases;
- Monitoring and making progress in the investigation into the impact of the IACHR on human rights protection in the Northern Triangle countries;
- In the new stage of the Follow-up Mechanism (MESA), representation before the Presidential Commission on Truth and Justice in the Ayotzinapa Case (COVAJ); reinstatement of the GIEI, and approval of the Work Plan of the Technical Support Group for the Ayotzinapa Case (MESA-GAT);
- Monitoring the human rights situation in Nicaragua and the recommendations of the Special Monitoring Mechanism for Nicaragua (MESENI) to the Nicaraguan State;

- Providing technical assistance for the development of indicators on recommendation follow-up to the 2019 Report Human Rights Situation in Honduras, under the Special Technical Advisory Group on compliance with the IACHR's human rights recommendations (MESAT), with 1 Technical Opinion being issued in follow-up to that report;
- Ongoing outreach to victims and civil society organizations and conducting an on-site visit to the Colombian-Venezuelan border, with publication of the respective preliminary observations and recommendations to the Venezuelan State under the Special Monitoring Mechanism for Venezuela (MESEVE);
- Issuing 53 press releases.²³

A description of the most significant achievements is provided below.

➤ **Inter-American SIMORE**

In 2020, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights launched the [Inter-American SIMORE](#) as an online strategic tool to make the Inter-American human rights system more effective. This tool systematically lists the recommendations issued by the Commission through the different mechanisms. On the one hand, it opens the door to participation of the different IACHRS actors in the procedures to monitor recommendations and compliance with international human rights obligations. On the other hand, it buttresses supervision of the monitoring of these recommendations and aids in identifying progress and challenges in ensuring and protecting human rights in the region.

The Inter-American SIMORE currently systematizes and integrates 6 data bases with recommendations from published Merits Reports, Friendly Settlement Agreements, Country Reports, Chapter IV.B of the Annual Report, and thematic reports and resolutions. Together, these databases contain some **4700** recommendations classified according to predefined categories. The systematization and classification of these databases has gone hand and hand with the development of sound methodology in defining the categories.

To explain the use of the Inter-American SIMORE, in 2020, documents about the platform were prepared and approved. These documents have been posted and can be freely accessed by users and include the [Methodological Annex](#), the **Account Creation Policy and Terms and Conditions** of use of the system. In addition to these documents, three [video tutorials](#) on the display and utilization of the virtual platform and user account creation and activation were also produced.

On June 10, 2020, the IACHR **publicly launched the SIMORE through a [virtual seminar](#)** attended by some 380 people.

Since its launch, the IACHR Executive Secretariat implemented a **strategy to publicize the Inter-American SIMORE** to raise awareness of the system's features, beginning with an

²³ 1 press release on monitoring of the recommendations for cases with published Merits Reports; 1 press release on the launch of the Inter-American SIMORE; 15 press releases on MESEVE; 13 press releases on MESENI; 4 press releases on MESA.

announcement of the launch in a [press release](#), No. 132/20, using social media and dialogues and meetings with different relevant stakeholders, such as representatives of Member States, case victims and petitioners, civil society and academia. Likewise, the Commission sent around 370 invitations to use the tool to civil society organizations and, also to the OAS Member States, announcing the launch and features of the platform.

In addition, the Executive Secretariat designed and implemented the **SIMORE Training Plan** to give workshops to both representatives of the Member States and civil society organizations. In 2020, the Commission held three virtual training sessions providing instruction to a total of 113 public officials: the first session with 54 representatives of 14 Spanish-speaking member States and of the State of Brazil; the second one with 21 representatives of 6 English-speaking member States; and the third one with 38 officials of National Human Rights Institutions from Spanish-speaking countries. The trainings were taught by staff of the IACHR and of the Ministry of Foreign Relations of Paraguay. The Commission also designed a training strategy for civil society, scheduling progressive sessions by invitation to some 750 organizations of civil society and academia, to be implemented in 2021.

It should be noted that the SIMORE outreach strategy and training plan yielded positive results in 2020. Over the year, 78 accounts were activated: 19 accounts for representatives of 5 member States; 42 accounts for representatives of civil society; and 17 accounts for representatives of national human rights institutes of the region. With respect to uploaded information on follow-up, as of the close of 2020, 13 follow-up reports were published by the State of Honduras on measures of compliance with 10 recommendations from its 2019 country report. The Commission plans to continue its efforts to strengthen use of this tool as an important mechanism to monitor compliance with international human rights obligations in the region.

➤ **Follow-up activities under the SACROI COVID-19**

With regard to monitoring activities under the [SACROI COVID-19](#), following the approval of [Resolution 1/2020](#), “Pandemic and Human Rights,” approved by the IACHR on April 10, 2020, and Resolution No. 4/2020, “Human Rights of Persons with COVID-19,” approved on July 27, 2020, the IACHR monitored the impact of the recommendations issued in these resolutions. Furthermore, it systematized the **media and press impact of Resolution 1/2020 in a database**, along with the different measures and resolutions adopted by the different authorities and branches of the government of the States of the region, including judiciaries that reference the IACHR recommendations in Res.1-2020

Moreover, the IACHR has enabled the **Inter-American SIMORE** to receive information from States and civil society on action taken by the States of the region to comply with the **recommendation 1/2020**. The Commission sent approximately 370 letters to civil society organizations of the region, inviting them to follow-up on the recommendations of that resolution through the Inter-American SIMORE. It should also be noted that, in order to make monitoring and follow-up on the activities of this SACROI more accessible, the SACROI multimedia microsite will be updated on an ongoing basis.

The IACHR also supported the efforts of civil society organizations in **Argentina**, within the framework of the Social Forum set up for that country, to develop a Monitoring Group on the recommendations of Resolution 1/2020, whose first meeting was held on April 24, 2020.

We can also highlight the preparation of news bulletins, that were distributed through the social networks and multimedia websites; the holding of bilateral talks with States; virtual seminars and social forums, as well as the publication of more than 50 press releases relating to the situation of human rights and COVID-19 and numerous statements through the social networks. The seminars and social forums held over 2020 were meant to expand lines of communication with civil society, raise awareness of IACHR activities under the SACROI; receive up-to-date information about the human rights situation in each country; monitor actions taken by the States to confront the pandemic and its different impacts; and follow up on the recommendations issued in Resolution 1/2020, for which it invited organizations from countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, United States, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic and Uruguay.

➤ **Monitoring IACHR Recommendations**

Since January 2020, the IACHR made progress in the **development and implementation of innovative methodologies** and products for monitoring recommendations. By way of example, we can cite:

- Conceptual and methodological parameters for the report **Domestic systems for the Implementation of IACHR Decisions**
- Compilation and systematization of answers to the questionnaire on **Domestic Systems for the Implementation of IACHR Decisions: good practice guide.**
- **Study on the Consequences of Full Implementation of Structural Recommendations** in cases of Publish Merits Reports.
- Preparation of a work proposal for the **IACHR Impact Observatory.**
- **Collaboration and Technical Assistance to the Secretariat for Human Rights of Honduras** under the procedure for monitoring the recommendations of the Country Report issued by the IACHR in 2019.
- Release and distribution of the Report on the Impacts of Recommendations aimed combating discrimination and violence against women and girls, and conceptual parameters and methodologies on a **manual of good practices for public officials in implementing these recommendations.**

➤ **Monitoring cases with published Merits Reports (Art. 51)**

In 2020, the Commission published [Chapter II.E: Status of Compliance with the Merits Reports Published pursuant to Article 51 of the 2019 Annual Report](#), including the preparation of individual monitoring sheets for each case, where the IACHR continued to classify the degree of compliance with each recommendation and noted the individual and structural outcomes reported by the parties. This report examined the information submitted by the parties on compliance with the recommendations issued in cases with

public merits reports (Article 51), with respect to 103 cases at the recommendation follow-up stage.

With regard to the [2019 Annual Report](#), it is important to highlight the following outcomes and progress, which were also announced in [Press Release No. 95/2020](#):

- The States made progress in compliance with 23 recommendations: full compliance was declared for 4 measures; substantial partial compliance was declared for 6 measures and partial compliance was declared for 13 measures.
- With 18 of the 23 recommendations, the adoption of structural measures was reported —mostly, the enactment and amendment of legislation or regulations— and with 5 of the recommendations, individual measures were reported.
- Progress was reported in the following cases: Cases of Gilberto Jiménez Hernández “La Grandeza” ([Case 11.564, Report No. 51/16, Mexico](#)), and Maya Community of the Toledo District ([Case 12.053, Report No. 40/04, Belize](#)) moved toward partial compliance. Additionally, Colombia and Jamaica adopted measures leading to full compliance with the recommendations in the cases of Marta Lucía Álvarez Giraldo ([Case 11.656, Report No. 122/18, Colombia](#)); Leroy Lamey, Kevin Mykoo, Milton Montique and Dalton Daley (Cases [11.826, 11.843, 11.846, and 11.847, Report No. 49/01, Jamaica](#)), as well as Denton Aitken ([Case 12.275, Report No. 58/02, Jamaica](#)).
- Durante el 2019, the response rate of victims’ representatives remained similar to that of the previous year, around 57% in cases subject to monitoring. This rate is deemed positive, considering that the response levels increased by 200% over 2018.
- In addition, the Annual Report reflected significant progress in compliance with the recommendations of published Merits Reports for the Caribbean. The efforts of Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Grenada, Jamaica, Mexico and the United States to implement the recommendations included in the published Merits Reports were also appreciated.

Furthermore, in 2020, the IACHR prepared Chapter II.E: Status of Compliance with the Merits Reports Published pursuant to Article 51 of the 2020 Annual Report, which will be published in 2021. This Chapter will include individual monitoring sheets, which were prepared in 2020 for a total 105 cases at the follow-up stage with published merits reports, two of which were first included in this annual report because their merits reports were published in 2019. It must be noted that, for the preparation of this report, the Commission sent communications to both the member States and to the petitioners involved in the 105 cases with specific questions pertaining to the particular levels of compliance in each case. In 2020, the IACHR received follow-up information in response to these communications from both parties in 49.5% of the cases, while at least one party responded in 41% of the

cases. Thus, in 2020, States' response rate to follow-up on communications about this portfolio of cases posted a 10% increase.

Additionally, in 2020, the IACHR:

- Held **16 working meetings** to follow up on published merits reports (art. 51) at the 175th, 176th, 177th and 178th Sessions (4 of these meetings were convened *ex officio* with respect to 6 cases). Also, with respect to the working meetings, the IACHR implemented a strategy of sending follow-up letters to monitor compliance with the commitments acquired, when appropriate.
- Held **5 portfolio meetings** with the States of Argentina, Canada, Chile, Ecuador and Mexico;
- Sent a total of **210 additional communications** (105 to States and 105 to petitioners) posing specific follow-up questions based on the particular details of each case and in the context of the drafting of the 2020 Annual Report;
- **2 press releases** prepared by the Recommendation and Impact Follow-up Section (SSRI);²⁴
- Prepared **2 case memoranda**: the first one on the determination of payments for damages based on Inter-American standards, and the second one, the examination of a request to reopen a case.
- Also, 6 other cases had merits reports published in 2020 and, therefore, were added to the recommendation follow-up portfolio.²⁵

Important statistics and indicators:

- **105 cases** with published merits reports under monitoring, which will be included in the 2020 Annual Report of the Commission
- **22 countries** with merits reports under monitoring

The table below shows monitoring indicators based on degree of compliance as decided by the Commission in the 2019 Annual Report, which was published in 2020. These degrees may change as a consequence of decisions taken by the Commission in the 2020 Annual Report, which will be published in 2021.

²⁴ [Press Release No. 95/2020](#) and [Press Release No. 132/20](#).

²⁵ Case No. 12.332 (Margarida Maria Alves – Brazil); Case No. 12.780 (Carlos Arturo Betancourt - Colombia); Case No. 12.545 (Isamu Carlos Shibiyama et al); Case No. 12.759 (Nvwtohiyada Idehesi Sequoyah – United States); Case No. 12.719 (Orlando Cordia Hall – United States); Case No. 12.875 (Djamel Ameziane – United States).

- Degree of compliance of published Merits Reports:

Degree of compliance with published Merits Reports – 2019 Annual Report		
Categories	Number of Cases	Degree of compliance
Full compliance	9	8%
Partial compliance	85	75.2%
Pending compliance	19	16.8%
TOTAL	103	100%

- With regard to the degree of compliance with recommendations:

Degrees of compliance with recommendations in published Merits Reports – 2019 Annual Report		
Categories	Number of Recommendations	Degree of compliance
Full compliance	88	19.6%
Substantial partial compliance	24	5.4%
Partial compliance	115	25.7%
Pending compliance	209	46.6%
Non-compliance	12	2.7%
TOTAL	448	100%

► Monitoring activities with respect to the Northern Triangle Countries

The IACHR held at least 4 meetings in the context of the pandemic with the States of Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador.

The IACHR also held a number of Social Forums with at least 90 civil society organizations from El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala with a view to monitoring the human rights situation and to follow up on compliance with its recommendations in terms of the pandemic and human rights.

Likewise, progress was made in laying out the methodological and conceptual roadmaps for monitoring of recommendations to the countries of the Northern Triangle. In this regard, it advanced in drafting a concept and methodological note for the preparation of the report on this monitoring, and in the collection of information on compliance and the impact of the recommendations to be examined in each country.

With regard to working meetings on recommendation monitoring:

Working meetings on monitoring – January 1 to December 31, 2020			
Session	Mechanism/Theme	Country	Case Name
175 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	Brazil	Case 12.213 Aristeu Guida da Silva Case 12.318 Manoel Leal Oliveira
175 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	Colombia	Case 10.455 Valentín Basto Calderón Case 10.916 James Zapata
175 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	Guatemala	Case 9.559 Jorge Hiram García Case 9.961 José María García Portillo
176 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	Mexico	Case 11.565 González Pérez Brothers
176 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	Mexico	Case 12.551 Paloma Angélica Escobar
176 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	Brazil	Case 12.001 Simone André Diniz
176 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	United States	Case 12.254 Víctor Saldaño
177 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	Guatemala	Case 9.961 José María García Portillo
177 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	Peru	Press Release 1193 CA
177 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	El Salvador	Case 11.781 Monseigneur Óscar Arnulfo Romero
177 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	Brazil	Case 12.051 Maria da Penha
177 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	Argentina	Case 12.632 Adriana Beatriz Gallo, Ana María Careaga and Silvia Maluf Christin
177 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	Belize	Case 12.053 Mayan Communities of the Toledo District
178 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	Chile	Case 12.249 Margarita Barbería Miranda
178 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	United States	Case 12.254 Víctor Saldaño
178 th	Published merits reports (Art. 51)	United States	Case 13.356 Nelson Iván Serrano

Special Follow-Up Mechanisms:

► Follow-Up Mechanism to the Ayotzinapa Matter – MESA – Mexico

The Technical Support Group ([GAT](#)) for the Ayotzinapa case **attended** 4 meetings **on a regular basis of the Presidential Commission for Truth and Justice in the Ayotzinapa Matter (COVAJ)** in order to monitor progress in the case investigation. The GAT team took part in a total of 14 meetings over 2020.

The IACHR also worked in conjunction with former members of the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts (GIEI), victims' representatives, the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, and other State actors on the final version of the International Agreement for the [reinstatement of the GIEI](#). The Agreement was finalized and signed on May 6, 2020. In October 2020, the GIEI released a new investigation report supporting its case findings.

The IACHR also renewed the **MESA-GAT Work Plan** for 2020. The purpose of the renewal of that plan was to verify and technically assist compliance with the recommendations issued by the GIEI and the MESA, in relation to PM 409-14, with regard to search, investigation, victim assistance, and structural measures of non-repetition, as well as to provide technical assistance and support capacity building in the areas of the disappearance of and search for persons, investigation, victim assistance, full reparation, and any other human rights-related subject areas for which its assistance is required.

2020 saw the following progress and achievements relating to the investigation and search for the missing students and activities relating to the guarantee of non-repetition:

- Progress relating to the investigation and search for the missing students:

The GAT documented that arrest warrants were issued for individuals who had taken part in the disappearance of the students and former public officials involved in construction of the “historical truth.” It also documented the investigative search efforts in the state of Guerrero, and locating of the skeletal remains, which forensic experts will examine and the clerical work of the Prosecutor’s Office to put together the investigation files to be submitted to the courts for subsequent prosecutions.

The simultaneous work of the GIEI and the MESA has enabled the IACHR to conduct the intensive follow-up that the case warrants. It can, on the one hand, aid and participate in the investigation being conducted by the GIEI while, on the other hand, monitor compliance with the precautionary measure in a timely fashion due to the ongoing presence of the MESA in Mexico.

Progress has been made in the investigation, with forensic identification of the student Christian Rodríguez,²⁶ establishing responsibility and carrying on with the search (press releases dated July 2,²⁷ September 26, 2020²⁸).

- Progress related to guarantees of non-repetition:

Extraordinary Forensic Identification Mechanism (MEIF): The MESA has attended working meetings of the monitoring group for installation of the Extraordinary Forensic Identification Mechanism, on December 16, 2020.²⁹

Standardized Search Protocol (PHB): The MESA attended two meetings of the National Search System, participated in working meetings to create the Standardized Search Protocol (PHB from the Spanish *Protocolo Homologado de Búsqueda*) and training for its implementation with the different actors who take part in the search for the disappeared.

► **Special Monitoring Mechanism for Nicaragua (MESENI)**

As a result of the monitoring and follow-up carried out by the Special Monitoring Mechanism for Nicaragua (MESENI), in March 2020, the Inter-American Commission included Nicaragua, as it had done in its 2018 Annual Report, in [Chapter IV B of its 2019 Annual Report](#). This report recounted the persistent human rights crisis in the country. Then, on November 30, the IACHR published its Report Persons [Deprived of Liberty in Nicaragua in Connection with the Human Rights Crisis](#) that Began on April 18, 2018. It also announced the launching of the [multimedia website](#) with the main findings and recommendations issued to the State of Nicaragua in the Report.

In the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the almost total lack of cooperation from the State of Nicaragua, MESENI has had to do its job without any working visits or in-person meetings and has deployed through digital tools and through remote contacts, mostly with local and in-exile civil society. In that context, over the course the year, **4 letters of request for information to the State of Nicaragua** were sent, pursuant to Article 41 of the American Convention on Human Rights; **65 meetings with civil society** were held via video conference; **118 testimonies** of victims or family members of victims of human rights violations were taken; and **5 hearings on the human rights situation** in the country were carried out. Additionally, **223 people have been trained**, including students, defenders, journalists, peasant movement representatives, and persons in exile, at **8 training workshops**, on topics relating to human rights protection systems and transitional

²⁶ IACHR, <https://twitter.com/cidh/status/1280670469960667138>

²⁷ IACHR, IACHR [Welcomes Progress on Investigation on Ayotzinapa Case](#), July 2, 2020.

²⁸ IACHR, [Six Years On, the IACHR Acknowledges Progress in the Investigation and the Search for 43 Missing Students from Ayotzinapa and Stresses Its Commitment to the Students' Families](#), September 26, 2020.

²⁹ IACHR, [IACHR Welcomes Progress Made by Mexican State in Implementing Extraordinary Forensic Identification Mechanism](#), December 16, 2020.

justice, which were designed in coordination with local organizations in terms of both format and content.

In the area of communication, MESENI has periodically issued press releases on the human rights situation in the country; in 2020, [twenty-one IACHR press releases](#) on the subject. In the same vein, MESENI continues to put out [monthly newsletters](#) reporting important facts about the human rights situation in the country and the work of the Mechanism. Likewise, the MESENI remains active on the [social networks](#) of the Commission, addressing situations that require immediate statements on the country's current events, within the framework of its mandate.

Specifically, two years out since the human rights crisis in the country began, the Commission recognized in a [press release](#) of April 18, the deployment of the fifth stage of repression, which was characterized by the most intense and systematic attack on public freedoms since the crisis began. Likewise, as the March of the Mothers of April commemorated its two year anniversary, on May 30, the IACHR recalled in [a press release](#) the victims at that event who died and their family members. In addition, on June 24, the two year anniversary of the installation of MESENI, as part of its conventional tasks of monitoring, follow-up and protection, the IACHR recalled in another [press release](#) the obligations of the State of Nicaragua still pending compliance in relation to the recommendations it issued and reported on the work conducted by the Mechanism.

As for protection mechanisms, in 2020, the Commission granted **10 precautionary measures** to protect the lives and safety, and other seriously threatened rights, of people who endured the state repression in the context of the human rights crisis affecting the country. It should be noted that a precautionary measure was granted on November 2, 2020, on behalf of 41 persons deprived of liberty in the context of arbitrary and illegal detentions and proceedings lacking the due process protections enshrined under the Convention, allegedly as retaliation for acts protest or for being identified as opposition members. In granting this precautionary measure, the Commission also considered that prison conditions and basic characteristics of persons deprived of liberty, such as age or health conditions, place those persons at particular risk of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

► **Special Technical Advisory Group for Honduras (MESAT)**

The Special Technical Advisory Group for Honduras (MESAT) is the product of a cooperation initiative that is part of the IACHR's efforts to monitor and follow-up on the human rights situation in that country.

In 2020, we can point to the following progress:

- Reaching an agreement on collaboration and technical assistance to the Secretariat for Human Rights under the procedure for monitoring the recommendations issued in the Country Report "Situation of Human Rights in Honduras," published in 2019.

- A technical assistance note was sent to the State authorities with a view to strengthening follow-up on the recommendations issued by the Commission to the State of Honduras in the country report of 2019.
- Preparing a report to follow-up on the recommendations of the country report, which was included in Chapter V of the Annual Report. These actions are expected to improve implementation of the recommendations and help the State report on that implementation, so that the IACHR, in turn, can produce a better analysis of compliance.
- Registering the recommendations of the country report “Situation of Human Rights in Honduras,” published in 2019 in the Inter-American SIMORE. Systematization of these recommendations in the SIMORE means that the State of Honduras and civil society organizations can feed information on the implementation of these recommendations into the system.
- Holding a training workshop on how to use the Inter-American SIMORE, which was attended by representatives of the Honduran State, with a view to promote the use of the tool. It is important to point out that the first information on compliance with recommendations uploaded into the Inter-American SIMORE was done by representatives of the State of Honduras, in order to update measures, it took with respect to report approved in 2019.

► **Special Monitoring Mechanism for Venezuela (MESEVE)**

To strengthen its monitoring activities in Venezuela and rapidly respond to the new challenges posed by the serious human rights crisis in that country, in October 2019 the Commission established the Special Monitoring Mission for Venezuela (MESEVE). Since its creation, the MESEVE has been constantly monitoring the human rights situation in Venezuela, making efforts to engage with victims and civil society organizations on the ground.

From February 4 to 8, the MESEVE conducted an on-site visit to the Colombian-Venezuelan border to monitor the human rights situation in Venezuela. The visit was initially scheduled for the cities of Caracas and Maracaibo. However, due to the fact that Venezuelan authorities denied permission to board the airplane that flies from Panama City to Caracas, the IACHR delegation instantly changed plans and traveled to the Colombian cities of Bogotá and Cucuta.

During its on-site visit to the Colombian-Venezuelan border, the IACHR held numerous meetings with deputies, exiled journalists, and victims’ groups living in Colombia who had fled Venezuela, especially from the states of Táchira and Zulia. The Commission also held working meetings with international organizations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM),

the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Likewise, in the city of Cucuta, a team from the Commission collected documentation, audiovisual material, and testimonies from some **70 people** reporting human rights violations in Venezuela; in addition to **the virtual testimony of 130 people** taken from the Commission Headquarters.

On Saturday February 8, 2020, the IACHR continued its monitoring efforts and holding meetings with organizations that defend the rights of migrant girls and women and have documented the differential gender impact of the complex humanitarian crisis that Venezuela is going through.

Following the on-site visit, the MESEVE prepared a report with preliminary observations and **45 recommendations** to the State. On May 8, it presented the report during a virtual seminar with 347 viewers. The preliminary observations were also presented to the OAS Permanent Council on May 27.

In terms of strategic communication, MESEVE has made a significant effort to make the human rights situation in Venezuela more widely known on the IACHR's social networks and, in the framework of its monitoring activities. The Mechanism published at least 115 Twitter threads, some of which were aimed at exposing the human rights situation of different groups of people, such as persons with disabilities, journalists, migrants, women, persons deprived of liberty, persons with chronic illness, among others. Furthermore, in the context of the human rights situation in 2020, [26 press releases](#) were published, 14 of which were related to the granting or expanding of precautionary measures. In 2020, the MESEVE conducted an exercise to spotlight the human rights situation of various groups in conditions of vulnerability in different regions of Venezuela, through coordinated efforts with the Commission's different Rapporteurships, including the Special Rapporteurship on Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights and the Special Rapporteurship for Freedom of Expression. The MESEVE issued statements on, among other topics, the situation of journalists, persons deprived of liberty, human rights defenders, and representatives of the National Assembly, as well as on the human rights situation in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Mechanism also held 18 virtual sessions to take 186 testimonies. In addition to enable the documenting of human rights violations, these testimonies helped to identify areas of special concern and to follow up on them.

It should also be noted that in September 2020 the MESEVE launched its [micro-website](#), where information relating to the IACHR's activities, reports and precautionary measures with respect to Venezuela can be found. Additionally, in 2020 the Mechanism completed the preparation of Chapter IV.B on Venezuela for the Commission's 2020 Annual Report.

Conclusions

The progress described in this Report reflects significant results under each strategic objective, providing continuity to the structural advances achieved over the first years of the 2017-2021 IACHR Strategic Plan, with some programs performing at record levels. It is important to note that the outcomes obtained by the IACHR during the pandemic evince the Commission's and its staff's commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and the prevention of potential violations in the Americas.

With respect to **Strategic Objective 1 (SO1)** the results reported lead to the conclusion that the IACHR has made substantial progress in strengthening the Petition and Case system and Precautionary Measures, thereby increasing victims' access to Inter-American justice. The Commission is aware that this process of overcoming procedural backlog must continue and that in order to address and remedy this chronic backlog it must continue to deepen and strengthen the measures adopted by it, learn from the lessons this process has taught it, and take decisive additional measures to be able to achieve a more effective, timely and comprehensive Inter-American justice.

As for Program 1 on procedural backlog reduction, we can state that great strides forward were made in 2020. Despite the havoc that the pandemic could have wreaked on the Petitions and Case System, the IACHR was able to reinvent itself and adapt to ensure that its work was not unnecessarily delayed. It did so by adopting the modality of remote work with monthly planning, digitizing case files and was able to carry on in virtual mode.

The commitment of the IACHR's staff ensured that the positive outcomes attained since implementation of the Strategic Plan began were not undone; and thus, results during the pandemic reflect no setbacks, except in the number of cases referred to the Court, because this body did not meet from March to May. A total of 5,231 petitions at the initial review stage were examined and 260 petitions were reexamined pursuant to Resolution 1/19, making 2020 the first time review of all petitions was up to date and, therefore, in 2021 petitions are being examined from the current year. 502 Admissibility Reports were prepared; 67 Merits Reports were approved; and 23 cases were referred to the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

With respect to Friendly Settlements, the Commission approved [Resolution 3/2020](#) on differentiated actions to address the procedural backlog in this mechanism to prevent potential delays that would keep the bodies of the Inter-American human rights system from handing down timely decisions in the processing of the petitions and cases before it. In turn, it took initiatives to raise awareness of the mechanism and set up a website to facilitate follow-up on friendly settlement agreements. Other achievements are approval of 25 friendly settlement agreements and the corroboration of progress in the

implementation of 148 reparation measures, demonstrating the willingness of the States to implement the measures included in the friendly settlement process and building trust through compliance with the terms of the agreements.

With respect to precautionary measures, the IACHR has guaranteed the efficiency and timely response of the mechanism and made decisions with great alacrity, focusing efforts and available resources on the examination of matters of at-risk persons who need such a measure to safeguard their rights. In the context of COVID-19, the IACHR has prioritized the review of requests alleging risk of the disease. In 2020, a total of 58 precautionary measures were granted and expanded, and 1170 registered requests were updated.

The access to information policy is in development and will soon be released. In the meantime, the IACHR is continuing to institute information transparency processes, such as the publication of Annual Reports and Progress Reports that provide information on the Commission's work and use of resources. In addition, it has responded to 35 requests for information and entered into agreements to ensure access to information in processes of memory and truth in Colombia.

Based on the foregoing, it is safe to say that highly satisfactory results were attained under Strategic Objective 1 in 2020.

As regards **Strategic Objective 2 (SO2)**, geographic and thematic monitoring yielded lasting results, which have raised report standards and output. The IACHR has advanced the development of international human rights by setting Inter-American standards on novel subject matter and under Resolutions 1/20; 2/20; 3/20 and 4/20. The Commission also continues to regard the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of expression and to economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights as fundamental for the establishment and consolidation of democratic rule of law. The SACROI functioning as a mechanism of timely response to human rights violations has made it possible to react immediately to crises, especially those related to COVID-19 and social crises (Chile, Colombia, Peru and the United States). Even though the COVID-19 pandemic made it impossible to carry out several on-site activities, the IACHR did not cease to discharge its duties fulfilling its mandate through virtual platforms, and successfully reaching more people in the many virtual seminars and monitoring and promotion activities it conducted. Lastly, defining and adopting the PIAGI platform will improve actions and reports by consolidating and systematizing information sources for situational monitoring. These achievements demonstrate the IACHR's increased capacity to act in strategic areas, enabling it to be more effective in preventive measures that address the factors giving rise to human rights violations in the region.

Under **Strategic Objective 3 (SO3)**, the IACHR has continued to progress in the promotion of human rights-centered thinking and culture in the region through numerous trainings, promotion activities and media campaigns, cooperation and technical assistance to member States and by strengthening relations with civil society, contributing to

strengthening State institutions and public policies with a human rights approach and building the capacity of social and academic organizations to act in defense of human rights.

In the context of the IACHR's response to the pandemic, we can highlight training and promotion activities to build the capacity of States and civil society of the region through webinars that were open to the public and reached more than 15000 participants, among other activities. In addition, a timeline and a compendium of measures taken by the States to contain the COVID-19 pandemic posted on the SACROI-COVID-19 website has been a tool of reference, monitoring and a source of good practices for States and civil society organizations.

The IACHR also made significant progress in developing effective collaboration with the countries of the Caribbean and Central America to strengthen human rights and democratic institutions, which is evident in requests for cooperation and advisory services, training events on Inter-American protection standards and talks and meetings with civil society organizations on the subject matter.

It should also be mentioned that technical cooperation continued to be strengthened with the countries of the region, through new agreements, and implementation of activities under existing agreements, as well as through inter-institutional agreements.

Lastly, we can cite advisory services to Member States on the pandemic, which provided technical input for decision-making through presentations at the political bodies of the OAS and bilateral meetings with representatives of Member States on how States can address the pandemic with a human rights perspective.

Concerning **Strategic Objective 4 (SO4)**, despite the situation imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the IACHR continued to strengthen its relations with United Nations and other international human rights agencies, increasing technical cooperation activities, dialogue and joint statements and the Commission's participation in the sessions of the Human Rights Council. In addition, the Joint Mechanism with the OHCHR for the protection of Human Rights Defenders in the Americas continued to be strengthened through dialogue and information exchange between its members, joint declarations and by defining potential joint frameworks for action.

It also made progress in coordinating with regional and sub-regional human rights mechanisms to collaborate and cooperate in joint actions to confront the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With respect to **Strategic Objective 5 (SO5)**, the important structural progress of recent years continues to be reinforced and the challenges of the pandemic have been successfully addressed.

With the implementation of the third stage of the staggered increase in the budget of the Regular Fund, the IACHR has been able to increase its basic staff and operational expenditures. Additionally, the financial sustainability plan has continued to yield the

results seen from the start of its implementation, increasing donor number and diversity. In order to continue to strengthen the IACHR, the joint effort of every corner of the Inter-American system, and fundamentally from the Member States, is needed. One important reason for the positive results obtained thus far is the doubling of the regular budget that the States granted the Inter-American human rights system in 2017, as well as contributions to specific funds from OAS States parties, observers and other civil society and international organizations. The Commission recognizes the contributions and support of civil society as a structural pillar of the Inter-American system, without whose support this progress would not have been possible.

Over the course of the year, the technological tool SIMORE, [the Inter-American System to Monitor Recommendations](#), was completed, launched, implemented and is now fully up and running for all our users, States and civil society. The SIMORE houses an automated data base of recommendations issued by the IACHR in its reports, facilitates data management, and provides easy access to information for IACHR users.

The Commission also continued the practice of roving sessions throughout the region, holding the 175th Session in Haiti, but COVID-19 pandemic restrictions forced it to seek a virtual alternative to ensure continuity of sessions over the rest of the year. The fully virtualized 176th, 177th and 178th Sessions were historic and unprecedented, marking a special moment for the Commission as it held all meetings and hearings remotely.

We should also highlight the progress resulting from the creation of the Center for Attention to Users and enhanced information management, which has helped to provide more transparent, timely and suitable assistance to users of the system.

Finally, we note the progress in the area of communication over the period. Reaching a larger audience through broadcast channels, particularly its social network accounts, stands as proof of the success of the outreach strategy the Commission laid out for itself. This has contributed to wider dissemination of information about and promotion of human rights standards.

With respect to **Special Program 21 (P21)**, the IACHR made significant progress in developing and enhancing methodologies for the monitoring and examination of the degree of compliance with recommendations.

In this regard, we highlight the launching of [the Inter-American System to Monitor Recommendations \(SIMORE\)](#) as an online tool and one of several strategic efforts to make the Inter-American human rights system more effective. The SIMORE helps to strengthen supervision of compliance measures taken, and to identify progress and challenges with respect to the guarantee and protection of human rights in the region. Likewise, a strategy has been pursued to raise awareness of the Inter-American SIMORE, to make the system's features more widely known, including a Training Plan on the system.

Under the [SACROI COVID-19](#), the IACHR monitored and tracked the impact of the recommendations issued in that resolution, noting that several authorities and branches of government of the States of the region have adopted decisions and resolutions in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic that reference the IACHR's recommendations in this resolution.

The IACHR has also been monitoring the recommendations of Resolution No. 4/2020, on Human Rights of Persons with COVID-19 (07/27/2020), registering its impact on the decisions of the States.

A significant achievement during the period was the [reinstatement of the GIEI](#), a product of a joint effort between the IACHR, victims' representatives, former members of the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts (GIEI), the Secretariat for Foreign Affairs, and other State actors. Under the terms and conditions of the new Agreement signed, in 2020 the GIEI continued to provide support and technical assistance to the Mexican State for the investigation into the Ayotzinapa case. Furthermore, in October 2020, the GIEI released a new investigation report on its case findings.

The IACHR continued its efforts to consolidate and strengthen the Special Monitoring Mechanisms and we can highlight as one important result of this the publication of the report "Persons Deprived of Liberty in Nicaragua in Connection with the Human Rights Crisis that Began on April 18, 2018" a product of the monitoring and follow-up efforts of the MESENI, describing the persistent human rights crisis in the country. Also, under MESAT, an agreement was struck for collaboration and technical assistance to the Secretariat of Human Rights under the process of follow-up on the recommendations issued in the Country Report "Situation of Human Rights in Honduras," published in 2019, which included a note for technical assistance to State authorities.