

**Ministerial Meeting of High-Level  
Gender Authorities in the region:  
Challenges, implications and the role  
of Mechanisms for the Advancement  
of Women in the face of the COVID-19  
pandemic**

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Development Bank

**The CIM/OAS and the IDB held a meeting with the Ministers of Women of the region to address the challenges from COVID-19**

*Washington DC. April 2, 2020.* – The Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) virtually brought together the Ministers of Women and High Gender Authorities of the continent to address the challenges generated by the COVID-19 crisis. The Ministers shared the struggles and the specific experiences of each country regarding the pandemic; the need to face the increase of violence against women due to confinement; the importance of designing mitigation measures with a gender focus; and the need for an equitable sharing of responsibilities in the home.

In line with supporting the Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women in this context, the CIM/OAS highlighted the importance of developing a repository of good practices, continuing political dialogue to strengthen the role of the Ministers, and promoting the design of public policies with a gender focus. In terms of violence against women, the CIM and the Follow-up Mechanism of the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) will develop strategic lines to help minimize the differential impact that women experience and reduce the effects of COVID-19, in addition to establish general principles for the guarantee of the human rights of women and girls within the framework of sanitary measures. Finally, the IDB offered technical assistance, dissemination of communication material to address violence against women, and strategic advice to give visibility to the needs of women and girls to the authorities.

*"We are joining collective efforts to offer robust and immediate support to face the differentiated needs of women in the context of this pandemic,"* said CIM/OAS President and Minister of Women of the Dominican Republic, Janet Camilo. In this sense, Alejandra Mora Mora, Executive Secretary of the CIM/OAS, pointed out that *"in COVID-19 times, the private world is the strategic unit that sustains life, work, care, health, education and coexistence. It is essential to attend with public policies that aim to promote the co-*

*responsibility of care, the integral health of women and guarantee their right to live free of violence.”*

For her part, Maria Caridad Araujo, Chief of the IDB's Gender and Diversity Division stated that *“we cannot lose sight of the fact that the effects of this crisis are going to be distributed unevenly in our communities and will disproportionately affect women. Our public policy responses must take this reality into account.”* Likewise, it was agreed to identify concrete actions and demands of the Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women to prevent and address the potential increase in the number of cases and the frequency and intensity of violence against women in Latin America and the Caribbean in the context of COVID-19.

The virtual event also had the participation of Luis Almagro, Secretary General of the OAS, who highlighted the importance of multilateralism and collective work to facilitate and contribute to the member states of the inter-American system on an issue as relevant as the situation of women in the Americas, who require affirmative actions capable of guaranteeing their human rights in the times of COVID-19. The meeting also had the participation of Marcelo Cabrol, Manager of the IDB Social Sector, representatives of the OAS Member States, technical teams of the Ministries, among others.

#### **About the CIM/OAS**

The [Inter-American Commission of Women](#) (CIM/OAS) is the region's main political forum for the recognition of women's human rights and gender equality. Since its creation in 1928, the CIM has played a predominant and strategic role in promoting women's rights in the hemisphere.

#### **About the IDB**

The [Inter-American Development Bank](#) (IDB) has the mission is to improve lives. Founded in 1959, the IDB is one of the main sources of long-term financing for the economic, social, and institutional development of Latin America and the Caribbean. The IDB also conducts cutting-edge research projects and offers policy advice, technical assistance, and training to public and private clients throughout the region.