



OAS | CIM

Remarks by Mayra Jimenez

President of the Inter-American Commission of Women of the OAS 2019-2022

**Fourth Plenary Session of the
Fiftieth Regular Session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States**

October 21st 2020, 4:00pm
Virtual

Excellencies, Ministers, Ambassadors, Representatives of civil society and the private sector,

It is an honor for me to address you as President of the Inter-American Commission of Women in order to present the reports of the CIM, the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belem do Para Convention, and the Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Human Rights of the Women and Gender Equity and Equality, twenty years after its approval.

In the Annual Report CIM that you have at your disposal, you can see some results in the areas of:

- **Women's political rights to strengthen democracy**, where we have developed courses for women candidates to elected office, courses on electoral governance, and the preparation of the Model Law and the Model Protocol to eradicate political violence against women.
- Similarly, in the area of **Women's economic rights for their integral development**, the CIM has also worked to strengthen the legal framework and give value to the unpaid work of women. Likewise, we have identified the issue of care as a fundamental accelerator and a necessary precondition for gender equality
- **Institutionalizing the gender, diversity and rights approach** has been another of our priorities.

The report on the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women was prepared in the context of the conclusion of the Follow-up Phase of the Third Multilateral Evaluation Round. Twenty States of the region have responded to this Mechanism through of its System of Progress Indicators on the status of implementation of the recommendations issued in the Third Hemispheric Report and the National Reports published in 2017.

This year, we celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality, the IAP. The report that you have at your disposal not only highlights the progress and challenges over 20 years, but also recognizes that our reality has changed substantially and permanently. The IAP provides us with a powerful mandate to mainstream gender in all the work of the OAS and its Member States. Through the sustained work carried out by the Executive Secretariat and its technical team led by Alejandra Mora Mora, the CIM has been working on a robust and ambitious agenda to place women's issues at the highest level of political debate throughout the region.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CIM has worked tirelessly to give visibility to the differentiated impacts of this pandemic on the lives of women. COVID-19 has specific and differentiated impacts on the lives of women, it is deepening existing gender inequalities, and it has revealed an imminent risk of setbacks in rights already achieved. Faced with this challenge, we have produced a series of documents on the impact of COVID-19 on the lives of women. Among these documents, we highlight:

- Violence against women and new patterns;
- Reasons for recognizing differentiated impacts;
- The global care emergency; and also
- Specific reports on rural women and women in unions.

The CIM has launched a campaign on leadership in times of COVID and we have also held dozens of meetings to mobilize the funds needed to bolster our limited budget, which currently only represents 2% of the OAS budget.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CIM has been supporting States in the formulation and implementation of more effective policies to address the disproportionate effect of the pandemic on their physical and mental health, economic, political and social participation and the well-being of women and girls.

To this end, the CIM has been generating knowledge and spaces for exchange and capacity-building, from which it is worth highlighting:

- Women are on the front lines of care during the pandemic, but we are absent from the front lines of decision-making on the actions to be implemented to confront this crisis;
- Women face the pandemic from a situation of economic disadvantage compared to men. COVID-19 has had a particular impact on all sectors where women are concentrated: the informal economy, the service sector, tourism, and domestic work, and women have less access to resources such as social security to be able to mitigate the effects of this crisis;
- The global care emergency, which refers to the unpaid domestic work performed mainly by women. Although it existed before the pandemic, the care crisis has deepened with the relocation of multiple aspects of life to the household, such as teleworking, distance education and the new needs of dependent people;
- Violence against women, which has increased due to confinement and isolation, as well as a reduction in the offer of services to deal with this violence effectively.

COVID-19 also represents an opportunity to advance women's agenda, to build with equality considering the distribution of time, roles and tasks, to re-think education and the way we teach our children, to rethink the definition of work and include the full role of women.

We will not tire of repeating that the incorporation of the gender perspective in all institutional work is a condition for applying effective and sustainable policies

Finally, I am sure that the Inter-American Commission of Women will be able to count on the support of all of you to continue in the struggle to make the Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality a reality.

Thank you.