



## **Committee of Experts expresses its concern over anti-rights speeches that classify gender as an ideology**

In the framework of the 2018 General Assembly of the Organization of American States ([OAS](#)), held in Washington DC on June 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, the Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism to the [Belém do Pará Convention \(MESECVI\)](#) expresses its deep concern over the presence of conservative sectors that refer contemptuously to the analytical category "gender" as an ideology. This was evidenced both in the dialogue with civil society - where speeches against sexual and reproductive rights and LGBTI rights took up most of the time, as in the efforts to establish a lobby with the States to eliminate language on "sexual and reproductive health" that had already been agreed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This Committee of Experts is emphatic in pointing out that these arguments, based mainly on moral judgments about life and hate speech, not only deepen machismo and misogyny, but also reinforce and perpetuate discriminatory stereotypes and gender roles that mainly affect women and girls, foster a culture of intolerance that affects democratic culture and peaceful coexistence, and legitimize violence against women.

In light of this serious situation, the Committee adopted the [Declaration on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment for the Good of Humanity](#), where it points out that discrimination and violence against women constitute violations of human rights, therefore, justifications based on religious or cultural beliefs or values are not admissible. Similarly, it explains that gender is an analytical category established by the social sciences and a methodological instrument to examine and reveal the historical relations of inequality between men and women and their concrete impacts on the lives of both.

In this context, the Committee reinforces the call for States to guarantee and protect the right to gender equality, advance the right of all women to live free from violence, encourage the deepening and dissemination of knowledge, cultural and artistic production from a gender perspective, and strengthen the Secular State. Lastly, the Committee reiterates the importance of adapting the commitments set forth in the Belém do Pará Convention, an international instrument signed and ratified by 32 States in the region.

*The [Committee of Experts](#) is the technical body of the [MESECVI](#) responsible for the analysis and evaluation of the implementation process of the Belém do Pará Convention. It is composed of independent experts, appointed by each of the States Parties among its nationals, who exercise their functions in a personal capacity.*

