



## Communique **Committee of Experts**

### **Committee of Experts congratulates the appointment of the Presidential Secretariat for Women (SEPREM) in Guatemala**

*Washington DC, July 9, 2021.* The Committee of Experts of the Follow-up Mechanism of the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) welcomes the appointment of the entity's head, Ana Leticia Aguilar Theissen, as Presidential Secretary for Women in the country, since it was vacant for a long period and it will surely help to strengthen the promotion of the right to equality, and non-discrimination of women and a life free of violence, both in the public and private spheres.

The appointment was promoted by women's organizations and civil society, also supported by this Committee, which on February 20, 2020 issued a statement inviting the President to institutionalize and maintain the hierarchy of this important Secretariat, a recommendation reiterated in the Report of Country<sup>1</sup>, recently published by this Committee, and in which the need to strengthen the formulation and allocation of budgets with an equity approach in the public agenda and their respective labeling is mentioned in a complementary manner, considered essential by the CEVI for the advancement of the Secretariat in the fulfillment of its functions as advisor and coordinator of public policies to promote the integral development of women in the country, and within the framework of state obligations derived from arts. 7 and 8 of the Convention of Belém do Pará<sup>2</sup>.

The statement issued by the Guatemalan government on June 22 with the appointment, also expresses the commitment of the Secretariat to work for the institutional framework and the integral development of Mayan, Garifuna, Xinkas and Mestizo women, which accounts for the important inclusive work of recognition of rights for all women to be carried out by this Secretariat, as provided in Article 9 of the Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Punish, and Eradicate Violence against Women<sup>3</sup> and which is reported in the Third Follow-up Report on the CEVI Recommendations of Guatemala, where the important work that the Presidential Secretariat for Women has been promoting since 2016 is recognized, including an intersectoral approach to rights in order to make visible the situation and specific

condition of certain population groups and within those groups mainly to women and within them women with: disability, with HIV, migrants, indigenous women, among other groups<sup>4</sup>.

In this regard, the Committee welcomes the willingness of the State of Guatemala to reinforce the work to combat violence against women, and invites it to continue strengthening the institutional framework of SEPREM and the other women's institutions in Guatemala, which guarantee the adoption, by all appropriate means and without delay, of policies aimed at preventing, punishing and eradicating such violence<sup>5</sup>.

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The Committee of Experts is the technical body of the MESECVI responsible for the analysis and evaluation of the implementation process of the Convention of Belém do Pará. It is made up of independent experts, appointed by each of the States Parties from among their nationals, who exercise their functions in a personal capacity.

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1 MESECVI, Committee of Experts, 2020. Guatemala - THIRD FOLLOW-UP REPORT TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CEVI. Available at: <https://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/FinalReport2019-Guatemala.pdf>

2 See: <https://www.oas.org/juridico/spanish/tratados/a-61.html>

3 Art. 9 Convention of Belém do Pará: “(...) the States Parties shall take into account especially the situation of vulnerability to violence that women may suffer due to, among others, their race or ethnic condition, as a migrant, refugee or displaced. In the same sense, a woman who is the object of violence will be considered when she is pregnant, disabled, underage, elderly, or in an unfavorable socioeconomic situation or affected by situations of armed conflict or deprivation of her liberty”.