

Executive Summary

**First Survey on the Prevalence of
Sexual Violence against women
in the context
of the Colombian
armed conflict
2001-2009**



UNION POR LA
VIGILANCIA Y LA JUSTICIA
NACIONAL DE LA VERDAD

Campaign
rape and other violence:
leave my body out of the war

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First Survey on the Prevalence of **Sexual Violence** against women in the context of the Colombian armed conflict 2001-2009

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Development Cooperation
Ministry of Foreign Affairs



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Campaign Rape and other Violence: Leave my Body Out of War.
Sexual Violence against Women in the context of the Colombian armed conflict 2001-2009
First Survey of Prevalence-Executive Summary

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The rate of sexual violence, for the period 2001-2009, in 407 municipalities with an active presence of the armed forces, paramilitaries, guerrillas, and other armed actors in Colombia was estimated at 17.58%; this means that during these nine years 489,687 women were victims of sexual violence. Between 2001 and 2009 every hour 6 women were victims of some type of sexual violence in the municipalities with the presence of these armed groups.

82.15% of the 489,678 women victims of some type of sexual violence, meaning 402,264 women, didn't report the abuses. 73.93% of the victims consider that the presence of armed actors in the municipalities is an obstacle to reporting sexual violence.

These statistics represent women's reality in the municipalities of the country where the armed conflict has been active for more than six decades.

Presentation

For more than six decades Colombia has endured one the longest armed conflicts in the world. Land concentration and usurpation, severe social inequalities, and the geostrategic control of territories for drug smuggling, among others, continue to be the main reasons for the initiation and continuation of the conflict. The armed confrontation between different actors: the armed forces, paramilitaries, and guerrillas, and the impacts on civil society have produced grave human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law, including sexual violence against women.

The different types of violence against women in Colombia continue and are exacerbated in the context of the armed conflict. Therefore, to know the magnitude of the different types of violence against women and their links to the armed conflict becomes an unavoidable challenge in seeking alternatives for its eradication. The present research therefore seeks to establish solid statistics, bring public attention to the plight of women victims of violence, and urge the Colombian government and the international community to take concrete and effective measures to prevent and eliminate this type of violence and overcome the high levels of impunity for this crime.

The results of this research, carried out between 2001-2009, show the high rate of sexual violence: 17.58% for the 407 municipalities that have an active presence of the armed forces, guerrillas and paramilitaries. This means that during the nine years in which the study was carried out, 489,687 women were victims of sexual violence. This is an average of 54,410 women per year, 149 per day, or 6 women every hour suffering sexual violence. Based on these numbers it can be inferred that sexual violence constitutes a habitual and frequent practice in the context of the armed conflict and therefore can be described as being "generalized" according to international humanitarian law.¹

According to the results of the survey, before being asked about the different types of sexual violence 4 of every 10 victims didn't recognize themselves as victims of sexual violence. This indicates a prioritization within the different types of sexual violence in which certain types are "normalized and naturalized" (**regulation of the social life, forced domestic labor, sexual harassment and forced sterilization**), while others are openly recognized as sexual violence (**rape and forced prostitution**). This naturalization contributes to the repetition of this criminal conduct, and the failure to find among the authorities and civil population attitudes of repudiation, prohibition and prosecution of these abuses; therefore these abuses are present in women's lives on several occasions.

The results of this research allowed us to make the link between the presence of armed actors and the increase in sexual violence, and the reasons behind why the victims do not report the abuses. 64.26% of women consider that the presence of armed actors in the municipalities increases sexual violence in public places, while 49.28% consider that the presence of armed actors increases sexual violence in private environments. In addition, 73.93% of women consider that the presence of armed actors constitutes an obstacle to reporting acts of sexual violence. Therefore, the continuing sexual violence against women is reflected in its occurrence in public places by "public" actors, including armed actors; and in private places by "private" actors, including their partners and other family members.

In conclusion, the prevalence of sexual violence in the Colombian municipalities with a presence of armed actors, the lack of knowledge on the victim's part of the different types of sexual violence, the continual occurrence, both in public and private places, by civil and armed perpetrators of sexual violence, and the obstacle that the presence of armed actors presents for women when reporting acts of sexual violence, contribute to this crime remaining invisible and unpunished in Colombia.

Introduction:

For Colombian women the armed conflict is an everyday reality. It is not an isolated event or incident, it has been part of their life for more than six decades. Violence against women in this context continues, it is redefined and acquires different characteristics. Facing these old and new realities is an unavoidable challenge in uncovering the magnitude of violence against women and finding alternatives that would allow its eradication; thus the need for and importance of this research in obtaining information on the prevalence of sexual violence against women in the context of the Colombian armed conflict.

The research seeks to answer questions such as: How frequent is sexual violence against women in the context of the Colombian armed conflict? What is the percentage of women that have been victims of sexual violence in the municipalities where there is presence of the armed forces, paramilitary, and guerrillas? What are the different types of sexual violence suffered by women? Who are the perpetrators? What are the ages, ethnicity, level of education, and economic conditions of the women victims of sexual violence? Do women consider sexual violence as a crime and a human rights violation? Do women denounce acts of sexual violence? If they do, to whom do they denounce the crimes? And if they don't, what are the reasons for not denouncing the crimes? Do women consider that the presence of the armed forces, paramilitaries and guerrilla members has increased sexual violence in the public and private spheres of their lives?

The research is able to establish a statistical base and bring to public attention the identities of women that have been victims of different types of violence; who from their diverse and multiple ethnicities, geographic locations, and socio-economic background, have had the courage, generosity and trust to open the doors of their homes and share their suffering. The surveyed women narrated horrid and painful experiences of violations committed against them. Once finalized the research, their experiences and knowledge are the driving force to continue demanding, proposing and denouncing sexual violence.

This research was carried out within the framework of the Campaign "Rape and other Violations: Leave my Body out of the War", supported by Oxfam in Colombia with: Asociación Mujeres y Madres Abriendo Caminos, Asociación Santa Rita para la Educación y Promoción-FUNSAREP, Casa de la Mujer, Centro Promoción y Cultura-CPC, Colectivo de Abogados José Alvear Restrepo, Corporación Vamos Mujer, Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres and

Sisma Mujer. The responsibility for the design and implementation of the research is that of Women's House organization. Throughout the entire process, Oxfam's team and the other participating organizations gave their feedback, including on the results.

Methodology:

In Colombia there are no clear statistics on cases of sexual violence and its possible link to the armed conflict. In order to respond to this reality this research seeks to establish the prevalence of sexual violence³ in the municipalities with a presence of the armed forces, paramilitaries and guerrillas; the research linked the information obtained regarding the age, ethnicity, economic background and geographic location of the surveyed women victims of sexual violence in the context of the Colombian armed conflict with the types of violence, places in which the violations occurred, perpetrators and frequency.

The research's scope constitutes women between the ages of 15 and 44³ living in the 407 municipalities that the Early Warning System from the Colombian Ombudsman Office indicated as having an active armed conflict⁴ for the period 2001-2009. A sample was selected from this population of women and the research was carried out in 15 municipalities⁵ of 11 departments. Three socio-economic strata were also established, taking into account the size of the individual municipalities.⁶

TABLE 1- DEPARTMENTS AND MUNICIPALITIES IN WHICH THE SURVEY ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE (SSV) WAS CARRIED OUT

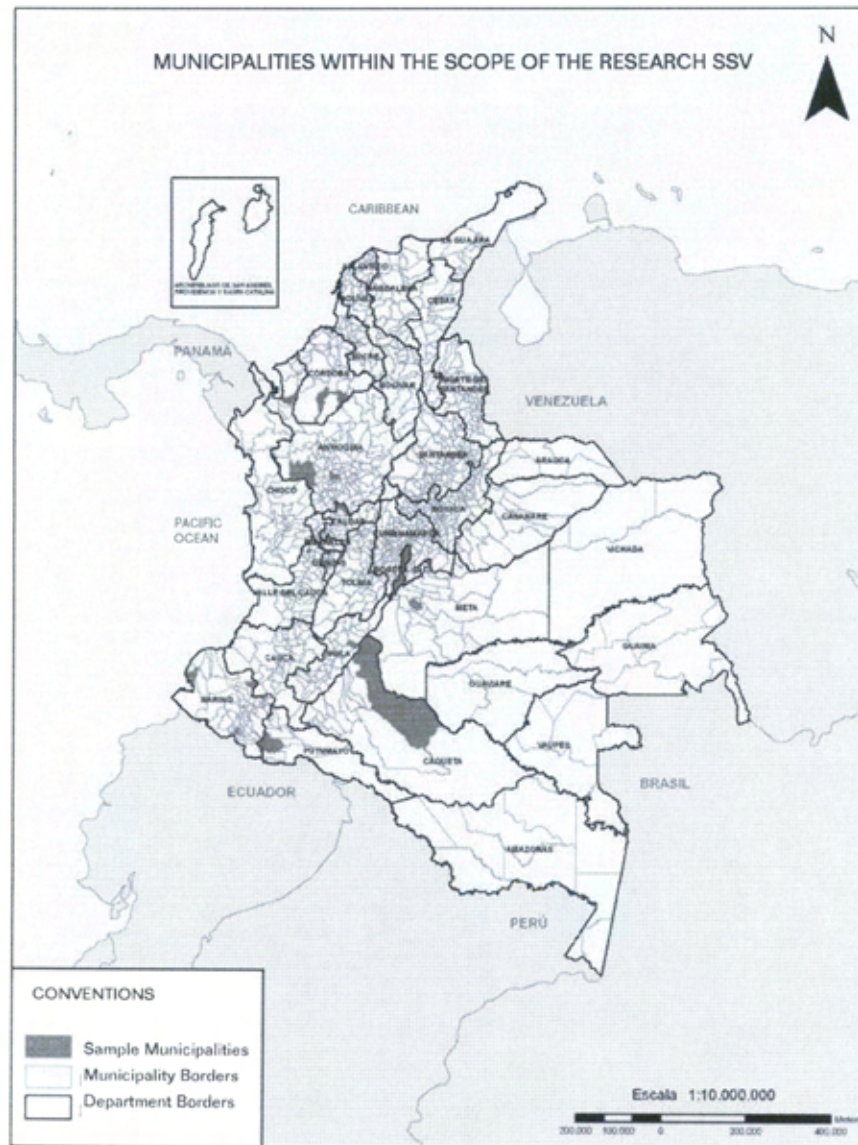
Department	Municipality	Department	Municipality
Antioquia	Medellín	Putumayo	Orito
	Urrao	Huila	Rivera
	Apartadó	Caquetá	San Vicente del
Nariño	Francisco Pizarro		Caguán
	Leiva	Córdoba	Montelibano
	Pupiales	Magdalena	Salamina
Caldas	Aguadas	Meta	Castillo
Valle	Argelia	Cundinamarca	Bogotá D.C

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009

The construction of the research tools included the preparation of a survey questionnaire⁷ and a field manual. The questionnaire was divided in four parts so that it would, in a progressive manner, approach the subject of sexual violence: 1) General aspects of basic identification. 2) Perceptions and knowledge of acts of violence against women in the studied municipalities 3) Cases in which the surveyed women have knowledge of acts of sexual violence, and 4) Acknowledgment of the surveyed women as victims of sexual violence.

The survey was conducted between June 1st and July 12th 2010, to a total of 2,693 women. According to the estimates produced by the prevalence survey, the total population of women between the ages of 15-44 in the 407 municipalities of the study is of 2,785,009. The conclusions of this study are statistically valid for this total population as it is highlighted in this report. The data obtained reflects the gravity and the high rate of sexual violence against women in the context of the armed conflict.

Map 1



Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009

The people responsible for conducting the survey were women that have participated in human rights formation workshops oriented towards demanding their rights to justice, truth, and reparation, and that have the eyesight, listening ability and willingness to pay attention and support the women whom participated in this research.

This is a descriptive study that did not seek to identify the motivations behind sexual violence against women. The research's importance is that it allows an estimation of the magnitude and distribution of sexual violence against women over time in the context of the armed conflict, its frequency, the places in which it occurs, the perpetrators and its different forms.

From a theoretical perspective the research worked within the framework of feminist theory,⁸ and therefore understood violence against women as an ongoing problem in their lives and not as unconnected expressions of anger and loss of control by men.⁹ Thus, sexual violence was considered in its various manifestations, and not only as rape or sexual harassment. This is why the spectrum of violations was broadened for the survey, in order to include violations that are established as crimes by the Colombian Penal Code and others that are not, such as the regulation of social life.

1. Estimates of sexual violence against women in the context of the Colombian armed conflict

Women's acknowledgment of sexual violence as a crime and a violation of their rights is a key element in the prevention and elimination of this form of violence and the overcoming of the high impunity levels for these crimes. In addition the level of intimidation and insecurity felt by women regarding their sexuality and the increase of sexual violence due to the presence of armed actors should be considered. For this reason the survey asked the women participants about sexual violence, human rights and security:

Women's Opinions about sexual violence, human rights and security

- ☞ From the total of 2,785,009 women between the ages of 15-44, 97.74% believe that violence against women constitutes a human rights violation.
- ☞ 99.55% of women believe that violence against them constitutes a crime.
- ☞ 6.74% of women have felt sexually intimidated by the presence of the armed forces, 10.47% by the presence of illegally armed groups.
- ☞ 49.28% of women consider that the presence of armed actors in the municipalities increases sexual violence within private places, while 64.26% of women consider that the presence of armed actors increases sexual violence in public places.

1.1. Victims, perpetrators, places and frequency of the different types of sexual violence against women in the context of the armed conflict

One of the purposes of the research was to estimate the total number of women between the ages of 15 and 44 that have been victims of sexual violence in the period 2001-2009 that reside in the municipalities where there is a presence of armed actors.¹⁰ These statistics indicate how women have been subjected to sexual violence in the context of the Colombian armed conflict.

The rate of sexual violence for the studied period (2001-2009) in the 407 municipalities with a presence of the armed forces, guerrillas, paramilitaries, and other armed actors, was estimated at 17.58%.¹¹ This means that during the period studied 489,687 women were victims of sexual violence. It also means that on average 54,410 women were victims of sexual violence per year, 149 per day, or 6 every hour.¹²

TABLE 2- TYPE OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE BY NUMBER OF WOMEN VICTIMS, PERCENTAGE BY VICTIMS AND PERCENTAGE BY TOTAL NUMBER OF WOMEN

Type of Sexual Violence	Estimated Number	% of total number of Victims	% of Total number of women
Rape	94,565	19.31	3.40
Forced Prostitution	7,754	1.58	0.28
Forced Pregnancy	26,353	5.38	0.95
Forced Abortion	27,058	5.53	0.97
Forced Sterilization	19,422	3.97	0.70
Sexual Harassment	175,873	35.92	6.31
Forced Domestic Labor	48,554	9.92	1.74
Regulation of Social Life	326,891	66.76	11.74
Total	489,687	100	17.58

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations.

It is estimated that during the nine years in which the investigation was carried 94,565 women were victims of rape, 19.31% of the total.

Although all women victims of rape and forced prostitution recognize themselves as victims of sexual violence, the same does not happen for other types of abuse included in the category of sexual violence.

From the estimated number of women victims of sexual violence, 489,678, only 181,452 acknowledge that they have been victims of sexual violence before being informed of the different types of sexual violence included in this research. This means that only 6.52% of women in these 407 municipalities consider themselves victims for the period 2001-2009 even though 17.58% have been victims of sexual violence.

Four of every ten women victims of sexual violence do not recognize themselves as victims of sexual violence.

According to the data, 18.84% of women that were victims of forced pregnancy do not recognize this act as sexual violence; 11.94% of women that were forced to have abortions do not recognize this practice as sexual violence, and 58.42% of women victims of forced sterilization do not consider this act as sexual violence. 44.24% of the victims of sexual harassment do not recognize it as sexual violence; and 46.28% of victims of forced domestic labor and 72.85% of victims of regulation of social life do not consider these acts as sexual violence.

TABLE 3- ESTIMATE OF VICTIMS, VICTIMS THAT DO NOT RECOGNIZE THEMSELVES AS VICTIMS, AND PERCENTAGE LACKING AWARENESS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Type of Sexual Violence	Estimate of Victims of Sexual Violence	Estimate of Victims that did not recognize themselves as such	% Lacking awareness of sexual violence
Rape	94,565	0	0
Forced Prostitution	7,754	0	0
Forced Pregnancy	26,353	4,965	18.84
Forced Abortion	27,058	3,232	11.94
Forced Sterilization	19,422	11,366	58.52
Sexual Harassment	175,873	77,803	44.24
Forced Domestic Labor	48,554	22,471	46.28
Regulation of Social Life	326,891	238,130	72.85

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations.

The estimates made based on the prevalence survey on sexual violence in conflict scenarios allows us to highlight some profiles of the characteristics of the different types of sexual violence, of the victims¹³ and perpetrators, and the places where these types of violence occurred.

1.1.1 Rape:

By rape we understand the act of forcing a person to have sexual relations or sexual contact by using violence or the threat of it. It is therefore the nonconsensual or forced sexual contact that can include vaginal or anal penetration, oral sex, or penetration with objects.

According to the prevalence survey it is estimated that 94,565 women between the ages of 15 and 44 in 407 municipalities of the country with armed conflict, equivalent to 3.4% of the estimated total female population, were victims of rape during the period 2001-2009.

TABLE 4- ESTIMATES OF RAPE VICTIMS BY AGE GROUP

Age Group				
Years	15-24	25-34	35-44	Total
Total	30,928	30,507	33,130	94,565
Percentage	32.71	32.26	35.03	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Of the total estimated victims of rape, 32.71% (30,928 women) are between the ages of 15 to 24; 32.26% (30,507 women) are from the age group of 25 to 34, and 35.03% (33,130 women) are between the ages of 35 and 44.

TABLE 5- ESTIMATES OF RAPE VICTIMS BY ETHNIC GROUP

Ethnic Group							
Ethnicity	Black	Indigenous	Mestizo	White	Other	None	Total
Total	11,507	7,140	20,914	32,399	2,732	19,973	94,565
Percentage	12.17	7.55	22.12	34.26	2.89	21.01	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Based on the same total estimate, 12.17% (11,507) of women identify themselves as black, 7.55% (7,140) as indigenous, 22.12% (20,914) as mestizo, and 34.26% (32,399) as white. 2.89% (2,732) identify themselves as belonging to other ethnic groups and 21.01% (19,873) do not acknowledge being part of any ethnic group.

TABLE 6- ESTIMATES OF RAPE VICTIMS BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRATA¹⁴

Socio-economic Stratum					
Stratum	One	Two	Three	Four +	Total
Total	45,894	31,183	17,488	0	94,565
Percentage	48.53	32.98	18.49	0	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

According to the strata distribution of the total estimated number of women victims of rape, 48.53% (45,894) live in households of socio-economic stratum one; 32.98% (31,183) in stratum two, and 18.49% (17,488) in stratum three.

Taking into account these estimates, with the level of education, we find that:

White or mestizo women between the ages of 15 and 34 with primary schooling or incomplete high school diploma, living in stratum one households are more prone to become victims of rape.

Perpetrators of rape against women

- ✎ It is estimated that 43,226 women (45.71% of rape victims), were raped by a family member,¹⁵ while 29,444 women (31.14%) were raped by an unknown person.
- ✎ 12,809 women (13.54%) were raped by illegally armed actors, and 1,970 (2.08%) were raped by members of the armed forces.¹⁶ Finally, it is estimated that 6,944 women (7.34%) were raped by an unknown actor.¹⁷

Places

It is estimated that 29,755 women (31.46% of rape victims) were raped in public places, while 67,817 women (71.72%) were raped in private places. It is also estimated that 3,007 women (3.18% of rape victims), were raped both in public and private places.

Frequency

It is estimated that 50,542 women (53.45% of rape victims) were raped on one occasion; 12,736 women (13.47%) were raped on two occasions and 31,287 women (33.09%) were raped on three or more occasions.

1.1.2 Forced Prostitution

Forced prostitution is considered to be the action or group of actions that involve imposed performance of sexual services through rape or other forms of sexual violence in exchange for which the victim or generally the person that controls the victims receives monetary remuneration.

According to the prevalence survey it is estimated that 7,754 women between the ages of 15 and 44 in 407 municipalities of the country with armed conflict, equivalent to 0.28% of the estimated total female population, were victims of forced prostitution during the period 2001-2009.

TABLE 7- ESTIMATES OF FORCED PROSTITUTION VICTIMS BY AGE

Age Group				
Years	15-24	25-34	35-44	Total
Total	161	987	6,606	7,754
Percentage	2.08	12.72	85.19	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Of the total estimated victims of forced prostitution, 2.08% (161) of women are between the ages of 15 to 24; 12.72% (987) of women are from the age group of 25 to 34, and 85.19% (6,606) of women are between the ages of 35 and 44.

TABLE 8- ESTIMATES OF FORCED PROSTITUTION VICTIMS BY ETHNIC GROUP

Ethnic Group							
Ethnicity	Black	Indigenous	Mestizo	White	Other	None	Total
Total	0	0	2,209	5,384	5,384	161	7,754
Percentage	0	0	28.48	69.43	69.43	2.08	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Based on the same total estimate, 28.49% (2,209) of women identify themselves as mestizo, 69.43% (5,384) as white, and 2.06% (161) do not identify themselves with any ethnic group.

TABLE 9- ESTIMATES OF FORCED PROSTITUTION VICTIMS BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRATA

Socio-economic Stratum					
Stratum	One	Two	Three	Four +	Total
Total	2,135	5,383	236	0	7,754
Percentage	27.53	69.43	3.04	0	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

According to the strata distribution of the total estimated number of women victims of forced prostitution, 27.53% (2,135) live in households of socio-economic stratum one; 69.43% (5,383) in stratum two and 3.04% (236) in stratum three.

Taking into account these estimates, with the level of education, we find that:

White women between the ages of 35 and 44 with a high school diploma living in stratum two households are more likely to become victims of forced prostitution.

Perpetrators of Forced Prostitution against women

- ✎ It is estimated that 4,205 women (55.24% of forced prostitution victims) were forced by a family member.
- ✎ 1,575 women (20.32% victims) of this crime were forced into prostitution by illegally armed groups, while 986 women (12.72% of victims) were forced into prostitution by members of the armed forces.
- ✎ It is estimated that 986 (12.72%) were victims of forced prostitution by an unknown actor.

Spaces

It is estimated that 6,370 women (82.15% of victims) of forced prostitution were forced in public spaces, while 1,384 (17.85%) were in private spaces.

Frequency

It is estimated that that 3,549 women (45.76% of the forced prostitution victims) were forced once; 3,808 women (49.11%) were forced twice, and 397 women (5.13%) were forced three or more times.

1.1.3 Forced Pregnancy

Forced pregnancy is understood to be the act of control over a pregnant woman, seeking to ensure the continuation of the pregnancy or the birth of the child against the will of the mother; forced pregnancy can on some occasions be the result of rape. In many instances this control includes confinement of the pregnant woman.

According to the survey it is estimated that 26,353 women between the ages of 15 and 44 in 407 municipalities of the country with armed conflict, equivalent to 0.95% of the estimated total female population, were victims of forced pregnancy during the period 2001-2009.

TABLE 10- ESTIMATES OF FORCED PREGNANCY VICTIMS BY AGE

Age Group				
Years	15-24	25-34	35-44	Total
Total	10,318	7,230	8,805	26,353
Percentage	39.15	27.43	33.41	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Of the total estimated victims of forced pregnancy 39.15% (10,318 women) are between the ages of 15 to 24; 27.43% (7,230 women) are from the age group of 25 to 34, and 33.41% (8,805 women) are between the ages of 35 and 44.

TABLE 11 ESTIMATES OF VICTIMS OF FORCED PREGNANCY BY ETHNIC GROUP

Ethnic Group							
Ethnicity	Black	Indigenous	Mestizo	White	Other	None	Total
Total	2,813	2,840	6,578	10,298	0	3,824	26,353
Percentage	10.67	10.78	24.96	39.08	0	2.08	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Based on this total estimate 10.67% (2,813 women) identify themselves as black; 10.78% (2,840) as indigenous; 24.96% (6,578) as mestizo; 39.08% (10,298) as white, and 14.51% (3,824 women) do not identify themselves with any ethnic group.

TABLE 12 ESTIMATES OF FORCED PREGNANCY BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRATA

Socio-economic Stratum					
Stratum	One	Two	Three	Four +	Total
Total	2,135	5,383	236	0	7,754
Percentage	27.53	69.43	3.04	0	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

According to the strata distribution of the total estimated number of women victims of forced pregnancy, 30.64% (8,073) live in households of socio-economic stratum one; 43.68% (11,511) in stratum two, and 25.69% (6,769) in stratum three.

Taking into account these estimates, with the level of education, we find that:

White women between the ages of 15 and 24 with an incomplete high school diploma living in stratum two households are more likely to experience forced pregnancies.

Perpetrators of forced pregnancies against women

- ✎ It is estimated that 13,318 women (50.54% of forced pregnancy victims) were forced by a family member, while 9,486 women (36%) were forced by an unknown person.
- ✎ 4,415 women (16.75% of the victims) were forced by illegally armed actors, while 987 women (3.74%) were forced by the armed forces.
- ✎ It is estimated that 987 (3.74%) were forced by an unknown actor.

Places

It is estimated that 11,089 women (42.74% of forced pregnancy victims) were forced in public places, while 17,928 women (68.03%) were forced in private places. This means that 2,830 women (10.77%) were forced both in private and public places.

Frequency

It is estimated that 20,912 women (79.35% of victims of forced pregnancy) were forced once; 294 women (1.11%) were forced twice, and 5,147 (19.53%) were victims of forced pregnancy three or more times.

1.1.4 Forced Abortion

Forced abortion is understood to be an action intended to interrupt a pregnancy against the pregnant women's will.

According to the prevalence survey it is estimated that 27,058 women between the ages of 15 and 44 in 407 municipalities of the country with armed conflict, equivalent to 0.97% of the estimated total female population, were victims of forced abortions during the period 2001-2009.

TABLE 13-ESTIMATES OF FORCED ABORTION VICTIMS BY AGE

Years	Age Group			Total
	15-24	25-34	35-44	
Total	2,612	3,741	20,705	27,058
Percentage	9.65	13.83	76.52	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Of the total estimated victims of forced abortions, 9.65% (2,612 women) are between the ages of 15 and 24 years; 13.83% (3,741 women) are from the age group of 25 to 34, and 76.52% (20,705) are between the ages of 35 and 44.

TABLE 14- ESTIMATES OF FORCED ABORTION VICTIMS BY ETHNIC GROUP

Ethnic Group						
Ethnicity	Black	Indigenous	Mestizo	White	Other	None
Total	702	0	14,423	10,015	0	1,918
Percentage	2.59	0	53.31	37.01	0	7.09
Total	27,058					
Percentage	100					

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Based on this total estimate 2.59% (702 women) identify themselves as black; 53.31% (14,423) as mestizo; 37.01% (10,015) as white, and 7.09% (1,918 women) do not identify themselves with any ethnic group.

TABLE 15- ESTIMATES OF FORCED ABORTION VICTIMS BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRATA

Socio-economic Stratum				
Stratum	One	Two	Three	Four +
Total	18,996	5,956	2,106	0
Percentage	70.21	22.01	7.78	0
Total	27,058			
Percentage	100			

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

According to the strata distribution of the total estimated number of victims of forced abortions, 70.21% (18,996) live in households of socio-economic stratum one; 22.01% (956) in stratum two, and 7.78% (2,106) in stratum three.

Taking into account these estimates, with the level of education, we find that:

Mestizo women between the ages of 35 and 44 with an incomplete high school level of education living in stratum one households are more liable to be exposed to forced abortions.

Perpetrators of forced abortions against women

- ✎ It is estimated that 12,885 women (47.62% of forced abortions victims) were forced by family members; while 10,389 women (38.4% of the victims of this crime) were forced by unknown persons.
- ✎ 1,810 women (6.69% of the victims of this crime) were forced by illegally armed actors; while 987 women (3.65% of the victims) were forced by members of the armed forces.
- ✎ Finally, it is estimated that 987 women (3.65%) were victims of forced abortions by an unknown actor.

Places

It is estimated that 6,370 women (23.54% of forced abortion victims) were forced to have abortions in public places, while 20,688 women (76.46%) were forced in private places.

Frequency

It is estimated that **23,973 women (88.6%) were victims of forced abortions once; 293 (1.08%) were victims twice; and 2,454 women (9.07%) were victims of this crime three or more times.**

1.1.5 Forced Sterilization

Forced sterilization is considered to be acts intended to impose restrictions and to force the prevention of reproduction against a woman's will.

According to the prevalence survey it is estimated that **19,422 women between the ages of 15 and 44 in 407 municipalities of the country with armed conflict, equivalent to 0.7% of the estimated total female population, were victims of forced sterilizations during the period 2001-2009.**

TABLE 16- ESTIMATES OF FORCED STERILIZATION VICTIMS BY AGE

Age Group				
Years	15-24	25-34	35-44	Total
Total	10,550	5,609	3,263	19,422
Percentage	54.32	28.88	16.8	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Of the total estimated victims of forced sterilizations, **54.32% (10,550 women) are between the ages of 15 and 24 years; 28.88% (5,609 women) are from the age group of 25 to 34, and 16.80% (3,263 women) are between the ages of 35 and 44.**

TABLE 17- ESTIMATES OF FORCED STERILIZATION VICTIMS BY ETHNIC GROUP

Ethnic Group							
Ethnicity	Black	Indigenous	Mestizo	White	Other	None	Total
Total	3,080	0	8,793	4,518	0	3,031	19,422
Percentage	15.86	0	45.28	23.26	0	15.61	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Based on this total estimate **15.86% (3,080 women) identify themselves as black; 45.28% (8,793) as mestizo; 23.26% (4,518) as white, and 15.61% (3,031 women) do not identify themselves with any ethnic group.** None of the women victims of forced sterilization identified themselves as either indigenous or being from another ethnic group.

TABLE 18- ESTIMATES OF FORCED STERILIZATION BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRATA

Socio-economic Stratum					
Stratum	One	Two	Three	Four +	Total
Total	12,763	6,092	567	0	19,422
Percentage	65.71	31.36	2.92	0	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

According to the strata distribution of the total estimated number of women victims of forced sterilizations, **65.71% (12,763) live in households of socio-economic stratum one; 31.36% (6,092) in stratum two, and 2.92% (567) in stratum three.**

Taking into account these estimates, with the level of education, we find that:

Mestizo women between the ages of 15 and 24 with some primary schooling living in stratum one households are more liable to be exposed to this type of sexual violence.

Perpetrators of forced sterilization against women

- ✎ It is estimated that **12,948 women (66.67% of forced sterilization victims) were forced by family members; while 3,579 women (18.43% of the victims of this crime) were forced by an unknown person.**
- ✎ None of the women victims of this crime were forced by illegally armed actors, while **987 women (5.08% of the victims)** were forced by members of the armed forces.
- ✎ Finally, it is estimated that **987 women (5.08%)** were victims of forced sterilizations by an unknown actor

Places

It is estimated that **1,993 women (10.26% of forced sterilization victims) were forced in public places, while 17,429 women (89.74%)** were forced in private places.

Frequency

It is estimated that **10,713 women (55.16%) were victims of forced sterilization one time; 1,652 (8.51%) were victims twice; and 7,057 women (36.33%)** were victims of this crime three or more times.

1.1.6 Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is understood to be any undesired sexual insinuation or pressure on a person to satisfy the sexual desires of the aggressor. It can happen through acts, proposals, offences, obscene gestures or sexual remarks. As such it is understood as the unsolicited and unwanted sexual intervention in the feelings, thoughts, conduct, places, times, energies and bodies of women and girls.¹⁸ The Colombian penal code describes the perpetrator of sexual harassment as "the person who, seeking their own benefit or that of a third party, takes advantage of their position of superiority or authority, power, age, or sex in their social, familiar, economic or work position to harass or besiege physically or verbally with sexual purposes and without consent another person(...)"¹⁹

According to the prevalence survey it is estimated that **175,873 women between the ages of 15 and 44 in 407 municipalities of the country with armed conflict, equivalent to 6.31% of the estimated total female population, were victims of sexual harassment during the period 2001-2009.**

TABLE 19- ESTIMATES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT VICTIMS BY AGE

Age Group				
Years	15-24	25-34	35-44	Total
Total	78,251	46,813	50,809	175,873
Percentage	44.49	26.62	28.89	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Of the total estimated victims of sexual harassment, 44.49% (78,251 women) are between the ages of 15 and 24 years; 26.62% (46,813 women) are from the age group of 25 to 34, and 28.29% (50,809) are between the ages of 35 and 44.

TABLE 20- ESTIMATES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT VICTIMS BY ETHNIC GROUP

Ethnic Group							
Ethnicity	Black	Indigenous	Mestizo	White	Other	None	Total
Total	17,123	7,480	35,321	45,210	4,810	65,929	175,873
Percentage	9.74	4.25	20.08	25.71	2.74	37.49	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Based on this total estimate 9.74% (17,123 women) identify themselves as black; 4.25% (7,480) as indigenous; 20.08% (35,321) as mestizo; 25.71% (45,210) as white, and 2.74% (4,810) as belonging to other ethnic groups; while 37.49% (65,929 women) do not identify themselves with any ethnic group.

TABLE 21- ESTIMATES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT VICTIMS BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRATA

Socio-economic Stratum					
Stratum	One	Two	Three	Four +	Total
Total	84,097	59,655	31,009	1,112	175,873
Percentage	47.82	33.92	17.63	0.63	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

According to the strata distribution of the total estimated number of women victims of sexual harassment, 47.82% (84,097) live in households of socio-economic stratum one; 33.92% (59,655) in stratum two; 17.63% (31,009) in stratum three, and 0.63% (1,112) live in stratum four or more households.

Taking into account these estimates, with the level of education, we find that:

Women between the ages of 15 and 24 who do not identify themselves with any ethnic group with an incomplete high school education living in stratum one households are more exposed to this type of sexual violence.

Perpetrators of sexual harassment against women

- It is estimated that 49,518 women (28.16% of sexual harassment victims) were harassed by family members; while 96,808 women (55.04% of the victims of this crime) were harassed by an unknown person.

8,166 women (4.64% of victims of sexual harassment) were forced by illegally armed actors, while 7,103 women (4.04% of the victims) were harassed by members of the armed forces.

Finally, it is estimated that 23,193 women (13.19%) were victims of harassment by an unknown actor

Places

It is estimated that 101,142 women (57.51% of sexual harassment victims) were harassed in public places, while 86,902 women (49.41%) were harassed in private places. This means that 13,601 women (7.73%) were harassed in both private and public places.

Frequency

It is estimated that 55,086 women (31.32%) were victims of sexual harassment one time; 21,468 (12.21%) were victims twice; and 98,336 women (55.93%) were victims of this crime three or more times. 0.54% of the victims did not identify the number of times they were harassed.

1.1.7 Forced Domestic Labor

Forced domestic labor is understood to be the group of actions through which a person, generally the actor that has power, forces another person or group of people to perform domestic labors that in some instances could transition to sexual acts. An example of this type of violence is when upon arrival at a civilian property an armed group demands that the members of its army are to be served by women, or when these groups temporarily kidnap persons with the purpose of making them part of their domestic labor force in their garrisons or camps.

According to the prevalence survey it is estimated that 48,544 women between the ages of 15 and 44 in 407 municipalities of the country with armed conflict, equivalent to 1.74% of the estimated total female population, were victims of forced domestic labor during the period 2001-2009.

TABLE 22- ESTIMATES OF FORCED DOMESTIC LABOR VICTIMS BY AGE

Years	Age Group			Total
	15-24	25-34	35-44	
Total	17,473	15,222	15,859	48,554
Percentage	35.99	31.95	32.66	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Of the total estimated victims of forced domestic labor, 35.99% (17,473 women) are between the ages of 15 and 24 years; 31.35% (15,222 women) are from the age group of 25 to 34, and 32.66% (15,859) are between the ages of 35 and 44.

TABLE 23- ESTIMATES OF FORCED DOMESTIC LABOR VICTIMS BY ETHNIC GROUP

Ethnicity	Ethnic Group						Total
	Black	Indigenous	Mestizo	White	Other	None	
Total	7,835	4,301	8,337	4,851	2,271	20,959	48,554
Percentage	16.14	8.86	17.17	9.99	4.68	43.17	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Based on this total estimate 16.14% (7,835 women) identify themselves as black; 8.86% (4,301) as indigenous; 17.17% (8,337) as mestizo; 9.99% (4,851) as white, and 4.68% (2,271) as belonging to other ethnic groups. 43.17% (20,959 women) do not identify themselves with any ethnic group.

TABLE 24 ESTIMATES OF FORCED DOMESTIC LABOR VICTIMS BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRATA

Socio-economic Stratum					
Stratum	One	Two	Three	Four +	Total
Total	27,859	11,499	9,196	0	48,554
Percentage	57.38	23.68	18.94	0	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

According to the strata distribution of the total estimated number of women victims of forced domestic labor, 57.38% (27,859) live in households of socio-economic stratum one; 23.68% (11,499) in stratum two, and 18.94% (9,196) in stratum three.

Taking into account these estimates, with the level of education, we find that:

Women between the ages of 15 and 24 who do not identify with any ethnic group with a high school diploma living in stratum one households are more exposed to this type of sexual violence.

Perpetrators of forced domestic labor against women

- ✎ It is estimated that 35,526 women (73.17% of forced domestic labor victims) were forced by family members; while 9,388 women (19.33% of the victims of this crime) were forced by an unknown person.
- ✎ 9,388 women (19.33% of victims of forced domestic labor) were forced by illegally armed actors, while 987 women (2.03% of the victims) were harassed by members of the armed forces.
- ✎ Finally, it is estimated that 3,466 women (7.14%) were victims of forced domestic labor by an unknown actor.

Places

It is estimated that 3,783 women (7.79% of forced domestic labor victims) were forced in public places, while 45,943 women (94.62%) were forced in private places. This means that 1,172 women (2.41%) were harassed in both private and public places.

Frequency

It is estimated that 5,185 women (10.68%) were victims of forced domestic labor one time; 3,912 women (9.4.62%) were victims twice; and 38,862 women (80.04%) were victims of this crime three or more times. 1.23% of the victims did not identify the number of times they were victims of this type of sexual violence.

1.1.8 Regulation of Social Life

Regulation of social life is understood to be the act or group of acts by which, through the use of force or threat thereof, the perpetrator seeks to establish social strictures for conduct and behavior. Among

these restrictions can be found the control of sexual life and regulation of relationships. Examples of this control include prohibiting women from dressing in a certain way, prohibiting women from assisting in certain public events, or from having certain relations under the threat of punishment, and establishing different forms of control over the lives of the victims with the objective of regulating, among others, their social relations and sexual behavior.

According to the prevalence survey it is estimated that women between the ages of 15 and 44 in 407 municipalities of the country with armed conflict, equivalent to 11.74% of the estimated total female population, were victims of regulation of their social life during the period 2001-2009.

TABLE 25- ESTIMATES OF SOCIAL LIFE REGULATION VICTIMS BY AGE

Age Group				
Years	15-24	25-34	35-44	Total
Total	108,841	101,390	116,660	326,891
Percentage	33.30	31.01	35.69	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Of the total estimated victims of regulation of their social life, 33.3% (108,841 women) are between the ages of 15 and 24 years; 31.02% (101,390 women) are from the age group of 25 to 34, and 35.69% (116,660) are between the ages of 35 and 44.

TABLE 26 ESTIMATES OF SOCIAL LIFE REGULATION BY ETHNIC GROUP

Ethnic Group							
Ethnicity	Black	Indigenous	Mestizo	White	Other	None	Total
Total	39,186	19,846	99,250	74,849	328	93,432	326,891
Percentage	11.98	6.07	30.36	22.9	0.1	28.58	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

Based on this total estimate 11.99% (39,186 women) identify themselves as black; 9.07% (19,846) as indigenous; 30.36% (99,250) as mestizo; 22.9% (74,849) as white, and 0.1% (328) as belonging to other ethnic groups. 28.58% (93,432 women) do not identify themselves with any ethnic group.

TABLE 27- ESTIMATES OF SOCIAL LIFE REGULATION BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRATA

Socio-economic Stratum					
Stratum	One	Two	Three	Four +	Total
Total	170,808	100,733	55,350	0	326,891
Percentage	52.25	30.82	16.93	0	100

Source: SSV Colombia 2001-2009, Research's Calculations

According to the strata distribution of the total estimated number of women victims of social life regulation, 52.25% (170,808) live in households of socio-economic stratum one; 30.82% (100,733) in stratum two, and 16.93% (55,350) in stratum three.

Taking into account these estimates, with the level of education, we find that:

Mestizo women between the ages of 35 and 44 with some level of high school education living in stratum one households are more exposed to this type of sexual violence.

Perpetrators of regulation of social life against women

- ✎ It is estimated that 213,166 women (65.21% of regulation of social life victims) were victimized by family members; while 95,560 women (29.23% of the victims of this crime) were forced by an unknown person.
- ✎ 35,535 women (11.18% of victims of regulation of social life) were victimized by illegally armed actors, while 7,029 women (2.15% of the victims) were victimized by members of the armed forces.
- ✎ Finally, it is estimated that 7,987 women (2.44%) were victimized by an unknown actor

Places

It is estimated that 67,420 women (20.62%) were victimized in public places, while 293,590 women (89.81%) were victimized in private places. This means that 34,363 women (10.51%) were victimized in both private and public places.

Frequency

It is estimated that from the 326,891 women that were victims of regulation of their social life, 58,086 women (17.77%) were victims one time; 14,446 women (4.42%) were victims twice; and 250,280 women (76.56%) were victims three or more times. 1.25% of the victims did not identify the number of times they were victims of this type of sexual violence.

1.2 The use of weapons by perpetrators in cases of sexual violence against women in the context of the Colombian armed conflict

It is estimated that 20.55% of women victims of some type of sexual violence, meaning 100,636 women, were assaulted and victimized using a weapon to threaten them. 79.33% of women (388,469) were not threatened with a weapon, and 0.12% did not respond to the question.

Taking into account the type of weapon that was used in acts of sexual violence, the survey finds that, 43.85% (44,143 women) were victimized with knives; 32.28% (33,493 women) were with firearms; 9.22% (9,274) were victimized with other weapons. 13.41% (13,492 women) were threatened both with a knife and a firearm; and 0.23%, corresponding to 234 women, were threatened with all types of weapons.

1.3 Denouncing the crimes by the women victims of sexual violence in the context of the Colombian armed conflict

The research estimates that 82.15% of the 489,678 women victims of sexual violence, meaning 402,264 women, did not report the abuses committed against them; while only 17.73% (88,841 women) reported any of the abuses of which they were victims. 0.23% did not respond to the question of whether or not they had reported the abuses.

With regards to the State agencies that the victims of sexual violence reported to, it is estimated that 34.50% (24,964 women) reported the abuses to the Attorney General's Office;²⁰ 31.74% (27,566 women) reported the abuses to a police station; 23.08% (20,041 women) reported the crimes to a family inspection unit.²¹ With less frequency are the 6.53% or 5,671 women who denounced the abuses in courts. 2.18% of women (1,894) denounced the abuses to the Institute of Family Welfare;²² 1.17% (1,016) to the local government representatives,²³ and finally 0.79% of women (689) denounced the abuses to the Ombudsman Office.²⁴

The most common reasons for not denouncing the crimes, according to the women that didn't report the abuses, are: "she rather left it as it was" 46.70% (187,846 women); had fear of retaliation, 28.46% (114,474); "did not know how to report the abuses" 8.54% (34,343); "don't believe in or trust the judicial system" 7.31% (29,422); and 5.87% (23,598) did not want their family members to find out.

With less frequency, 2.53%, 10,165 women felt ashamed and humiliated; 0.31% (1,255) stated that the place to report is far away from their residence; and 0.29% (1,161 women) didn't possess the economic means to denounce the abuses.

In addition, it is also estimated that 73.93% of the women from the 407 municipalities, meaning 2,059,001 women, consider that the presence of armed actors constitutes an obstacle for reporting cases of sexual violence in the municipalities.

By crossing the question of if you consider that the presence of armed groups is an obstacle when trying to report sexual violence with the data of women who declared themselves as being victims of sexual violence, the results show that:

68.59% of the women that did denounce the abuses (59,568) consider that the presence of armed groups constitute an obstacle to denouncing the acts of violence. 80.84% of the victims that didn't report the abuses believe that the presence of the armed actors is an obstacle that limits the possibility of denouncing the abuses.

As way of conclusion, the prevalence of sexual violence in the Colombian municipalities with a presence of armed actors, the victim's lack of knowledge of the different types of sexual violence, the continual abuse in both private and public places by both legally and illegally armed and civilian actors, and the obstacle that the presence of armed actors entails for women when trying to denounce cases of sexual violence, contribute to this crime remaining invisible and unpunished in Colombia.

Recommendations

Taking into account these realities and the commitments of the Colombian State at the national and international level, we recommended that:

The Colombian government and local authorities:

- ❖ Fully comply at both the national and regional level with the recommendations set forth by the International Human Rights System and the Inter-American Protection System regarding prevention, elimination, and prosecution of sexual violence cases against women in the context of the Colombian armed conflict
- ❖ Design and implement an access to justice public policy that seeks to remove the obstacles that women have to face when denouncing sexual violence cases. It should standardize the information systems; facilitate the effective, uniform and transparent investigation of the cases; guarantee technical, infrastructural and financial resources; create specialized investigation units within the framework of law 975 of 2005; strengthen disciplinary controls over all public officials from the judicial sector with a zero tolerance policy to any type of action that re-victimizes women; guarantees psychological support for the victims during the judicial processes and implements reparation measures that guarantee the reestablishment of the violated rights and the right of non repetition.
- ❖ That local authorities in their development programs include programs and allocate resources to carry out projects to prevent, eliminate, and prosecute sexual violence against women as it is stipulated in law 1257 of 2008.
- ❖ That the Attorney General's Office as well as the regional AGO's offices develop protocols for the investigation of sexual violence cases against women in the context of the Colombian armed conflict.
- ❖ That the Ombudsman Office strengthens the public defense that is offered to women victims by including legal advice and psychological support during the judicial proceedings.
- ❖ That the Colombian government and the Congress include within the victims law international standards for truth, justice and reparation for women victims of sexual violence.
- ❖ That the Colombian government promotes at the national and regional level care and protection mechanisms for women victims of sexual violence.
- ❖ That the Colombian government complies with the Constitutional Court recommendations

set forth in the Court Order 092 of 2008 relating to gender risks, and Sentence T-496 of 2008; and in general with the promotion of protection programs for victims and witnesses, where the risk assessment, the protection measures, and its monitoring include the particular situation of women victims of sexual violence.

- ⌘ That the national government and local authorities design and implement an educational campaign towards the recognition of the multiple types of sexual violence against women in the context of the armed conflict, and the need for a culture of zero tolerance against these violations.

The International Community:

- ⌘ That in bilateral relations with Colombia should include policies that guarantee the rule of law and zero tolerance against human rights violations, especially sexual crimes committed against women in the context of the armed conflict. This zero tolerance should include the request to investigate and prosecute those responsible, and to compensate women victims of this type of violence.
- ⌘ Strengthen their cooperation with organizations that defend human rights, women's organizations, and victims associations that offer support to the women victims of sexual violence in the context of the armed conflict; and work in the investigation and construction of public policy proposals for its prevention, elimination, and prosecution.
- ⌘ Make use of bilateral and multilateral diplomatic means to monitor and request accountability on the advances in complying with the recommendations directed to the Colombian government in the previous section.

Footnotes

1. Generalized can be defined as "massive, frequent, large scale action, carried out in a collective manner with considerable gravity and with a multiplicity of victims". Ad Hoc Tribunal for Rwanda. Case Akayesu. Sentence of September 2 1998, paragraph 580.
2. The prevalence can be defined as the number of women that share the same characteristic or a specific event (in this case being victims of sexual violence) at a specific moment of time. (HAUPT and Kane;2003).
3. The definition of the women's age range for the implementation of the survey took into account four different criteria. First, a quantitative criterion that responded to the fact that the majority of victims of sexual violence are between the ages of 5 and 45. The second criterion was operational; it had to attend to the need to carry out the survey in a personal and individual manner, which meant limiting the age to 15 in order to guarantee the reliability and validity of the answers. The third criterion included methodological considerations, as international studies on sexual violence against women set group ages between 15 and 49 or 22 and 44 years (ELLSBERG, et. al 2001:2). Finally, the fourth criterion took into account legal and ethical considerations: not only is it difficult to know about an act of sexual violence against a girl under the age of 15 and not report it to the authorities, but also legally speaking to not report it could be considered a crime. In addition, carrying out a survey with girls under the age of 15 implied designing a different methodology to the one used in the prevalence survey, and would also require the consent of the parents or legal guardians.
4. Ombudsman Office, 2007.
5. Within these municipalities the research was carried out in the central towns. As it was being conducted in municipalities with an active armed conflict, it was of a great difficulty to guarantee the security of the teams in rural areas.
6. This information was used within the adjustment of the sample's size that was calculated with a 95% reliance, 5% maximum permissible estimated error, a 20% no answer margin and a prevalence of the phenomenon of interest of 6% (PROFAMILIA;2005). According to these percentages the calculation for the size of the survey was 2177 women. It is important to clarify that the total number of surveyed women was 2,693 not 2,177. The variation in the number is due to the fact that the information gathering operations were designed to have in mind the number of women per square block in each of the municipalities of the sample, and the number of square blocks per municipality provided by the National Planning Department. However, when in the field the number of women did not coincide with the estimate based on the official data. As a result it was necessary to redefine the square blocks that were going to be surveyed. Thus when carrying out the survey for the total number of women in the selected square blocks, the number of surveys increased by 516 with regards to the sample.
7. The design of the survey's questionnaire was an exhaustive work that started with the discussion of how to reach out to the women, how to inquire and ask questions in a way that the surveyed women and the women surveyors became subjects of a learning process that had effects for them and other women. Difficulties also arose from conducting a door-to-door survey, which didn't guarantee privacy and environments that would motivate women to disclose their painful experiences. The survey's design sought to remedy this complex relationship by introducing the questions in a progressive manner.
8. This theory seeks to explain and interpret the different types of violence against women as an expression of the relations of oppression, subordination and social injustice that women are subjected to, and as a power mechanism that the socio-sexual patriarchy system utilizes to maintain, recreate and reproduce these relations.
9. (RADFORD and RUSEELL; 1992:34)
10. In the context of this research the category "illegally armed actors" refers to paramilitaries (including the groups that, after the demobilization process, are known as emerging bands) and guerrillas (FARC and ELN).
11. The statistic of prevalence is produced by dividing of the number of women within the age range that have been victims in the period 2001-2009 of some type of sexual violence, by the total number of women in the age range that could be victims of sexual violence during the same period of time. Taking into account that there are no official projections desegregated by sex, age group,

and geographic area (in this case for the central towns) for 2009, the probability sample allowed us to estimate the total number of women in the age range that reside in the 407 municipalities that are part of the scope of the study (in this case the population in the central towns) for 2010. This data was taken to calculate the prevalence, taking into account that it is reliable and very close to the year of interest.

12. In Colombia there are a series of studies that measure violence against women including: 1- The National Health and Demography Survey of 2005 carried out by ProFamily that inquired about rape within the life cycle of women, concluding that 6% of women were victims of rape by a person other than their partner or spouse, and 11.5% of women were raped by their partner or spouse. It is important to highlight that these percentages cannot be added because there are cases of women that were raped by an unknown person and by their partner or spouse, and adding them will distort the percentage. 2-The Sexual and Reproductive Health Survey in marginal zones of 2005 by ProFamily that inquired about rape in the vital cycle of women, concluding that 8.2% of women were victims of rape by persons other than their spouses or partners, and 13.2% by their partner or spouse. The data of the two surveys cannot be compared to the results produced by the SSV due to the fact that the SSV includes different types of sexual violence besides rape against women between ages 15 and 44 and covers the period 2001-2009.
13. The victim's description is made taking into consideration age, ethnicity, level of education, and socio-economic stratum. Although in the research the marital status, position within the household, and economic activities were also considered, these were not developed in this report.
14. The socio-economic stratum is a tool utilized by the Colombian State to classify households according to their level of poverty or wealth and access to public services (gas, electricity, water and sewage). This classification is made from 1 to 6, 1 being the stratum with the highest levels of poverty and lack of or poor access to public services.
15. Family member is understood to be a person that belongs to a group united by bonds of kinship, including the father, mother, sons and daughters, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, stepmother, stepfather, the spouse or partner.
16. According to the title VII Chapter Seven, Article 216 of the 1991 Constitution, armed forces include the national police, army, navy and the air forces.
17. The category of unknown actor was adopted in the survey to allow women to acknowledge that their aggressor was an armed organization even though they were not comfortable recognizing the direct responsibility of paramilitary groups or guerrillas. In addition this category allowed the grouping of unidentified armed actors such as criminal bands, gangs, drug bands, etc under one category.
18. WISE, Sue and STANLEY, Liz (1992). *El Acoso sexual en la vida cotidiana*, Mexico: Editorial Paidós. P.81
19. Law 1275 of 2008 (Article 29) established for the first time sexual harassment as a criminal conduct with the inclusion of Article 201A in the Colombian Penal Code.
20. The Attorney General's Office is an agency of the judicial branch with full administrative and budget autonomy, that is in charge of investigating crimes, establishing criminal responsibilities, and initiating legal court proceedings against the responsible parties. This can be done by its own initiative or by a third party denouncing a criminal conduct.
21. The Family Inspection Units are local agencies within cities, municipalities or territorial entities with an administrative and interdisciplinary character, that are part of the National Family Welfare System and whose mission is to prevent, guarantee, re-establish, and repair the rights of the members of a family group violated as a result of violent situations within the family structure.
22. The Colombian Family Welfare Institute is the agency in charge of directing the National Welfare System, and is in charge of providing attention and protection to minors and the family structure. Its functions include coordinating and implementing the State's public policy regarding family welfare, and guaranteeing children's rights and the strengthening of the family structure.
23. In Colombia the local government representatives are in charge of guarding and promoting human rights, as well as monitoring and protecting the public interest and the maintaining vigilance and observance of the conduct of public officials.
24. The Ombudsman Office was created by the Constitution of 1991 with the purpose of promoting and protecting human rights through actions of prevention, observance, protection, defense, promotion of human rights, and encouraging respect for international humanitarian law among the fighting parties.

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**VIOLACIONES
Y OTRAS VIOLENCIAS**
SAQUEN MI CUERPO DE LA GUERRA

They are part of the Campaign, within the framework of this publication:



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN COLOMBIA

The structural social patterns that foster discrimination, exclusion and subordination of women in Colombia place women in a situation of disadvantage that results, among other things, in high levels of violence against them, both in public and private spaces. Daily, women in Colombia are victims of physical, psychological, sexual, patrimonial, and economic violence in the family, community, work, educational, and healthcare spheres, as well as in other spaces. This situation is exacerbated by the internal armed conflict in Colombia, since it is in this context that women, aside from tackling the general danger that armed violence entails for the entire population, must face specific risks and vulnerabilities.

Despite the disturbing expressions of violence against women in the country and their acknowledgement, by several international instruments ratified by Colombia prior to the enactment of Law 1257 of 2008, as violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the various forms of violence against women did not enjoy express legal recognition, nor were there any measures for effective assistance, protection, and eradication. The only legal instrument that established measures in this direction was Law 294 of 1996 on intra-family violence, which, aside from granting women the same treatment as other people in the family nucleus, did not take into account other forms of violence against women, apart from the one taking place in the domestic arena.

On its part, Law 1257 of 2008 is intended to guarantee women a violence-free life in the public and private spheres. To that end, the law begins by defining violence against women and contemplates various modalities according to the characteristics or the arena in which it takes place.¹ It also acknowledges the ownership of certain rights by women victims of violence and lays out the obligation of national, departmental, and municipal State agencies to prevent and sanction violence against women and to protect and provide adequate and timely assistance to women victims.

According to reports by the National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences (hereinafter, Legal Medicine), in Colombia, women constitute the major part of the victims in the various contexts in which violence takes place and in all age groups. For the period between 2004 and 2008, Legal Medicine reports that out of the total number of cases of child abuse, close to 53% was directed towards girls, the main aggressors being paternal and/or male figures.² During that same period, 20,735 women and 22,859 men suffered physical aggressions by their partners.^{3, 4}

¹ Article 2 of Law 1257 defines violence against a woman as "any act or omission that may cause death, harm, or physical, sexual, psychological, economic or patrimonial suffering on account of her gender, as well as the threats of such acts, the constraint or deprivation of freedom, regardless of whether they take place in the public or the private sphere."

² Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences, *Forensis Mujeres: Datos para la vida 2004- 2008* [Forensic women: data for life 2004 – 2008], pp. 7 and 10.

³ The Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences defines physical aggression against a partner as "(...) any bodily harm caused by a man with which there has been an erotic-affective relation and the apparent motivations for violence derived from such relations."

⁴ Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences, *Forensis Mujeres: Datos para la vida 2004- 2008* [Forensic women: data for life 2004 – 2008], p. 11.

For the year 2009, Legal Medicine reports that the number of victims of violence in the family sphere rose to 93,862, with partner violence occupying the first place and women being the main victims with 88.6% of the total.⁵

As to the 2004-2008 five-year period, the Colombian Legal Medicine System assessed 87,360 victims, of which 73,395, or 84%, were women. Of these, 48,021, or 75%, were sex abuse cases; the rest were related to sexual assault. The highest rate for possible sexual offenses was found in girls from 10 to 14 years of age, where the indicator showed 256 cases per 100,000 girls. The aggressors linked to this type of violence were relatives in 36% of the cases; other known people, in 37%; unknown people, in 16%; and in 11% of the cases, there was no information on the perpetrator.

In 2009, Legal Medicine produced 21,288 expert reports on alleged sexual offenses in the country, in which 84.25% referred to women and only 15.75% to men. Of the total expert reports produced that year, Legal Medicine indicates that 85.67% were related to minors. This shows that sexual violence, despite being present in men and women, is a scourge that continues to affect mostly women, boys, girls, and teens.⁶

Finally, in regard to homicide of women in Colombia, 6,042 cases of women assassinated under different circumstances were reported. Although the causes associated with the death of women are unknown in 64% of cases, Legal Medicine reports that 12% were socio-political, 14% were impulsive common violence, and within the latter, 47 cases were identified as having a sexual offence associated to the homicide. Three percent of woman homicides resulted from robbery, and 437 women, representing 7%, were killed in the context of intra-family violence.

A total of 17,117 homicides were reported in 2009, of which men were victims in 16,155 cases and women in 1,523. The alleged perpetrators were legal and illegal armed actors in 7.9% (121) of the cases. Thus, 3.8% (58 women) died by military action; 1.6% (25 women) by guerrilla action, and 2% (31 women) in armed clashes.

In 2011, Legal Medicine begins to approach the quantification of femicide, defining it as *"the violent death of a woman, perpetrated by a man by factors associated to gender and that may take place in public or private spaces."*⁷ According to this definition, Legal Medicine explains that in order to measure femicide, it is necessary to have information available on the relation between the victim and the aggressor, the circumstances of the fact, the victim's occupation, the triggering factor, and the scenario of the deed.⁸ Of the total number of homicides in which the victim was a woman, in 2009, only 128 allowed the analysis by Legal Medicine, on account of being the only entity that recorded information in relation to the proposed variables.⁹ Legal Medicine found that, out of these 128 cases, 43 classified as intimate partner femicides¹⁰; 7, to intimate family homicides¹¹; 22, to femicides committed by other people known by the

⁵ Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences, in "Forensis Mujeres: Datos para la vida 2004-2008", p. 115.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 161- 169

⁷ Ibid., p. 25.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., p. 26

¹⁰ Legal Medicine classifies as intimate partner femicide that perpetrated by a "partner or ex-partner of the victim". Ibid., p. 26.

¹¹ Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences, in "Forensis 2009: Datos para la vida", p. 27.

victim¹²; and 66 could not be operationalized for lack of certainty as to the sex of the alleged aggressor¹³.

Despite the alarming figures recorded by the National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences on the various kinds of violence against women, the figures do not reflect the figures recorded by the Office of the Public Prosecutor (Fiscalía General de la Nación) regarding this kind of violence. Thus, for the year 2007, Legal Medicine recorded a total of 58,533 cases of partner violence, while, for that same year, the Public Prosecutor recorded a total of 18,601 cases of partner violence¹⁴. The figure for victims of offenses against freedom, integrity and reproductive health education recorded by the Public Prosecutor's Office is also significantly lower than the one reported by Legal Medicine. In 2007, Legal Medicine reported a total of 20,232 victims of sexual violence, of which 74.4% were women; on its part, in that same year, the Public Prosecutor reported a total of 16,742 victims, of which 90% were women.¹⁵ Concerning the information reported by the High Judicial Council (Consejo Superior de la Judicatura) on these types of violence, in 2007, 611 persons were sentenced for intra-family violence and 3,197 for sexual violence.¹⁶

The situations described above are experienced more critically by indigenous, Afro-descendant and lesbian women due to the double and triple discrimination exercised against them and their devaluation as subjects of rights. In addition to the above, the country has no information systems for accounting the violence suffered by said population groups, and public policies are not formulated and enforced through a differentiated approach.

The above confirms that most cases of violence against women in Colombia are not formally investigated, tried, and sanctioned by the justice administration system, and, therefore, there is a systematic pattern of impunity in the judicial acts and processing of these cases. As has been recognized nationally and internationally, impunity is both the cause and the consequence of violence against women.

OBSTACLES TO THE EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT FOR JUSTICE BY WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE IN COLOMBIA

A first obstacle faced by women in the access to the administration of justice systems is the lack of knowledge of their rights and the manner by which to access judicial instances, of how the judicial system operates, and of how they can contribute to the investigation and clarification of the facts. This obstacle is usually known as legal poverty or lack of awareness of their rights and is defined as "a person's incapacity to use regulations, State institutions and other alternative mechanisms as a suitable means

¹² Ibid., p. 28, Table 5.

¹³ Ibid., p. 29.

¹⁴ Office of the Attorney General of the Nation, "Situación de la violencia contra las mujeres. Ley 1257 of 2008" [Situation of sexual violence against women. Law 1257 of 2008] in "Procurando la Equidad", No. 4, July 2009, p. 12.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 13.

for exercising rights and solving conflicts.”¹⁷ This problem, which has gained little visibility and affects a large number of women in Colombia, is seen mainly as a consequence of the scarce resources assigned to informing men and women citizens of their rights, the low levels of female schooling, as well as the exclusion and subordination of women in public spaces.

Another obstacle is related to the difficulties faced by women in assuming the costs of legal proceedings. These include the initiation of the proceedings, their continuation, and possible delays. Added to the above, are expenses such as transportation, the decrease in work activities, and those related to legal counseling services and legal aid, the latter involving high costs that most women cannot assume. Generally, women are poorer than men. The United Nations has pointed out that most of the 1,500 million people who subsist on less than one dollar per day are women.¹⁸ Likewise, as the product of historical patriarchal family structures and modes of production, women depend materially and economically on the men in their families; even those who belong to wealthier classes have no access to economic resources independent of those of their parents, husbands or partners and cannot, therefore, file lawsuits, especially if the suit is against them.

Although the State provides some of these services free of cost, they have been traditionally dominated by masculine standards that bear upon the availability and quality of the services received by women. In Colombia, the Office of the Ombudsman (Defensoría del Pueblo) provides public defense services to people who are unable, economically or socially, to provide themselves with the defense of their rights. However, in regard to criminal law, the service has traditionally been geared exclusively to guaranteeing the technical defense of persons involved in the process as defendants, accused, or sentenced, and exclude the possibility that victims of an offense be able to resort to these services for the defense of their rights. This situation is reinforced by the establishment of a criminal law system of an accusatory nature. Legislative Act 02 of 2002, by which this system was introduced in the Political Constitution, establishes as a fundamental piece of its operation, the National Public Defenders System (Sistema Nacional de Defensoría Pública) under the coordination of the Office of the Ombudsman. In accordance with Law 906 of 2004, “*by which the Criminal Procedure Code is issued*”, it is the role of the National Public Defenders System to assign a lawyer to the defendant when he or she does not have a personal lawyer.¹⁹

The creation of this system in the country also established the right of all victims to be assisted by a lawyer during trial and integral reparation, and it was determined that, in cases where the victim lacked the sufficient resources for hiring a lawyer,²⁰ the Office of the Public Prosecutor would have to appoint an ex-officio lawyer.²¹

¹⁷ Instituto de Defensa legal (IDL) de Perú, Fundación Debido Proceso Legal (DPLF), *Obstáculos para el acceso a la justicia en las Américas* [Obstacles for accessing justice in the Americas], available at: <http://www.partnersglobal.org/20th-anniversary-1>

¹⁸ The Feminization of Poverty, in “*Mujer 2000, igualdad entre los géneros, paz para el siglo XXI*” [Woman 2000, equality between genders, peace for the 21st century], available at <http://www.un.org/spanish/conferences/Beijing/fs1.htm>

¹⁹ Law 906 of 2004, Article 118.

²⁰ Law 906 of 2004 “*by which the Criminal Procedure Code is issued*”, Article 11, Subparagraph h.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Article 137, Numeral 5.

Functionaries of the Office of the Public Prosecutor state that the designation of representatives to the victims of unfairness has become problematic because there are no lawyers offering this service,²² which is the reason why they usually resort to the students of the legal aid clinics of various universities. On its part, the National Public Defenders System²³, which guides the Office of the Ombudsman in criminal matters, is made up of law professionals with an experience of three years minimum, with a postgraduate degree in the subject, and who continually receive training and guidance.²⁴

The above demonstrates that, even though the present penal system guarantees the right to judicial technical assistance, both to victims of offenses and to those who acquire the status of defendants or accused in criminal proceedings, the service rendered to them is better qualified on account of being rendered by experienced, accredited, and trained professionals, while the victims are represented by persons who do not even hold a degree in Law. This situation, which affects the victims of any offense, turns out to be particularly worrisome in those cases where the offense constitutes any type of violence against women, since the official and unofficial invisibility of these types of conduct, their traditional underestimation by the judicial system and society in general, and the effects of these acts on the victims, require special services, among them, technical assistance or suitable and qualified free legal aid as a guarantee to accessing the administration of justice and as a condition to put an end to the systematic impunity of the acts and judicial proceedings of these cases.

Only recently, with the coming into force of Law 975 of 2005, better known as the “Ley de Justicia y Paz” (Law of Justice and Peace), was the service of free legal representation on the part of the Office of the Ombudsman made extensive to offenses committed by members of illegal armed groups who have demobilized and accepted the terms of the procedure established by Law 975 of 2005. Nevertheless, the service lacks qualified and trained personnel for the assistance and defense of the rights of women.

Likewise, Law 1257 of 2008 points out the duty of the State to guarantee guidance services, legal advice, and legal assistance to women victims of violence by the public defenders of the Office of the Ombudsman. However, two years later, the

²² Several staff members of the Office of the Public Prosecutor state that they have problems when it comes to representing victims because the lawyers registered in the Registro Nacional de Abogados (National Registry of Lawyers) refuse to render this service due to its gratuitous nature and the risk involved in the disciplinary investigations that could ensue for their actions in the process. Consequently, the entity has opted to sign agreements with different universities, so that legal representation services to the victims are performed by students of their legal aid clinics. Members of several units within the Public Prosecutor’s office state that they have created rosters of lawyers they trust, who in some cases have taken on the cases, yet in others have not always been willing or available to cooperate.

²³ Law 941 of 2005 “By which is the National Public Defenders System is organized”.

²⁴ The following are among the requirements for being a public defender: filling an application with information and supporting documents on their competence and suitability; a declaration stating that he or she is not involved in an inability or incompatibility cause to hire with official entities, in general and, in particular, with the Office of the Ombudsman; a specialization or post-graduate degree in the criminal area; and evidence of three years of experience as a lawyer in the role of public defender, or in the judicial branch or the Public Ministry, or in the private or public sector. The lack of specialization or post-graduate degree may be homologated by evidence of three additional years of specific experience. Additionally, Law 941 of 2005, “by which the National Public Defenders System is organized”, establishes that the duty of public defenders is to continue permanent training and determines that the National Public Defenders System shall foster their updating through the Training and Investigation Unit or institutions contracted by the System for the purpose of optimizing the quality and efficiency of the service.

implementation of this service does not evidence significant progress, since to date the number of lawyers assigned to this service is paltry in relation to the demand in the country's different regions and, additionally, the professionals lack the training required for rendering this service, due to the fact that the technical defense of boy, girl, and adolescent victims in the framework of Law 1098 of 2006²⁵ is assigned to those responsible, and, in some regions, to those who assume the defense of the perpetrators. Additionally, the service privileges the legal technical assistance to women victims of violence to the criminal field, while ignoring that the different expressions of violence against women may give rise to judicial proceedings in different areas and judiciary-administrative dealings with different authorities who are also required to give legal aid to the victim.

The Office of the Ombudsman also provides legal technical assistance in labor, civil, and contentious matters to the poor. Although the service does not adopt any criterion that allows to conclude that women are excluded as beneficiaries of the service, at present, the service does not adopt criteria for differentiated and gender-sensitive assistance, nor does it guarantee women victims of violence the protection or restoration of their rights, nor the legal representation in several judicial and administrative proceedings that must be exhausted.

Moreover, the underestimation by the justice system of violence against women in its various modes constitutes an additional obstacle that prevents actual and effective access to the system. In this sense, the cases of violence against women are considered non-priority as well as causes that prevent the swift and timely dealing of processes involving higher amounts. It is common, for the purpose of expediting conciliations, to resort to the application of the principle of opportunity and the signing of pre-agreements and deals between the Public Prosecutor and the defendant or accused, thus restricting the rights of women victims to truth, justice, and reparation. This situation is made evident in cases of violence against women in the family environment.

Although Law 1142 of 2007, "*by which Laws 906 of 2004, 599 of 2000, and 600 of 2000 are partially reformed, and measures are adopted for the prevention and repression of criminal activities specially impacting citizen coexistence and safety*", states that the offense of intra-family violence ceased to be complainable, the Office of the Public Prosecutor continues to apply conciliation in these cases, in the understanding that, in these events, ex officio investigation does not exclude the application, when necessary, of the effects of the complaint for the integral benefit and reparation of the crime.²⁶

Another obstacle preventing access to justice by women victims of violence is related to the existence of discriminatory socio-cultural patterns that have propitiated violence against women as a highly permissive conduct in Colombian society, a fact that is reflected in the attention given by authorities and the justice officials that deal with such cases. It is usual in Colombia, in cases of violence against women, to disqualify the victims and render little credibility to their allegations.

²⁵ Up to August 2010, the National Office of Public Defense of the Office of the Ombudsman had assigned 22 public defenders specialized in criminal matters for the defense of the interests of boy, girl, adolescent, and women victims.

²⁶ Office of the Public Prosecutor, "Manual sobre la Ley 1142 de 2007 (28 de junio). Reforma a las leyes 906 de 2004, 599 de 2000 y 600 de 2000", Bogotá, July, 2007.

The above is confirmed by the experience of women victims of violence when they turn to the authorities for protection. In these cases, the authorities undermine the victim's story and do not address their call in due time. Also, in those events where measures for their protection are approved, proper follow-up regarding the aggressor is not carried out, nor is the effectiveness of the measure assessed. Thus, the potential of the protective measures intended to prevent violence against women is curtailed. Frequently, there is a reliance on physical and testimonial evidence, and key tests for the clarification of the facts are not performed. This situation generates in the victims fear of re-victimization by the justice system and discourages the victims in their intention to turn to the judicial authorities.

It is also important to point out that these obstacles significantly affect indigenous and Afro-descendant women. In this regard, the report of Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (CIDH, by its acronym in Spanish) points out that *"the discrimination and difficulties in accessing justice differentially affect indigenous and Afro-descendant women, due to their being particularly exposed to the impairment of their rights on account of racism. Likewise, it has been established that the obstacles they face in accessing suitable and effective judicial remedies can be particularly critical because they are subject to various forms of combined discrimination by their gender, ethnic, or racial background and/or their socio-economic condition."*²⁷

Also, indigenous women in Colombia face additional obstacles because, in several communities, the subordination of women and the violence against them are approved as customary practices and, thus, women lack in protective measures in the face of possible violation of their rights and cannot rely on the indigenous jurisdiction for the judicialization of the acts. Likewise, the option of resorting to the services of the State and official justice for the prevention and sanction of violent acts against them diminishes considerably due to the ignorance of indigenous women about their rights and by the linguistic and cultural limitations that prevent them from going to the official authorities. Another negative factor playing a negative role in the access of indigenous women to the right for justice is the fact that their communities are located in isolated areas where State authorities are not present and, consequently, all cases of violence and discrimination against them are left to the discretion of their own judicial authorities, who generally underestimate and make invisible the violence against women. In the case of sanctions, the treatment given to violence against women is not adequate and restricts their rights to justice and the protection of their constitutional rights recognized by several international treaties that protect human rights.

Although the Constitutional Court has pronounced itself establishing limits to the jurisdictional power of indigenous authorities, the lack of coordination between the indigenous jurisdiction and the national judicial system and the absence of follow-up and control mechanisms concerning the autonomy of indigenous communities in regard to the determination of their judicial institutions and their trial system has had a negative effect on the indigenous women's access to justice, particularly in those cases where the victims of violence are members of their communities.

²⁷Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, "Acceso a la justicia para las mujeres víctimas de violencia en las Américas" [Access to justice for women victims of violence in the Americas], Washington, 2007.

Moreover, aside from the obstacles referred to above, it is important to bear in mind that acts of violence against women generate psychological and emotional consequences that make it difficult for the victim to resort to reporting to the authorities or seeking advice and support. The various expressions of violence against women are based on power relationships that place the victim in a situation of subordination and special subjection in face of their aggressor. This situation leads to fear of possible retaliation of the aggressor against her and her loved ones on the part of the victim. It is also frequent for women victims of violence to prefer to remain silent due to the negative expressions of rejection that their allegation may generate in their families and communities. Also, sexual violence, particularly, makes victims feel ashamed of what has happened and fearful of being blamed for the facts, as well as afraid of the negative reactions of people in their family and close circles, and, therefore, it occurs frequently that the victims decide not to resort to the judicial authorities, nor request guidance or advice.

15 women defenders victims of forced displacement claim justice

In the framework of the precautionary measures granted by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (hereafter CIDH, by its acronym in Spanish, or the Committee) in favor of 15 women victims of forced displacement, on 2 May 2010, the Colombian State submitted to this protection entity a report that accounts, among other things, for the criminal investigations made by the Office of the Public Prosecutor in regard to the threats and violent acts of which the beneficiaries of the measures have been victims.

Among the situations derived from the information collected by the State for the CIDH in relation to investigations for threats, harassment, persecutions and various expressions of violence against 12 women victims of displacement, the delays in obtaining evidence and the omission of the authorities in applying fundamental and suitable proofs for the clarification of the facts are particularly worrisome.

In addition to the above, the indifferent and hostile treatment towards them and the unawareness on the part of the functionaries in charge of their assistance as to their characteristics and special situation of vulnerability are cause for concern.

Unjustified delays in carrying out the necessary steps and delays in the application of proofs following the aggression: The information collected by the Office of the Public Prosecutor shows that, in cases related to threats, harassment, persecutions and violence against women leaders in a situation of displacement, there are delays in the proceedings and the application of the proofs required for the clarification of the facts.

Despite the promptness in the preparation of the methodology, in most cases, there are unjustified delays by the Police in preparing the Technical Study on the Level of Risk. In several cases, this situation has generated the consummation of the risk that threatens the life and personal safety of the victims. There are also delays in summoning victims and witnesses. Consequently, when the time comes to expand the allegation or render testimony, they have forgotten the time, mode, and place in which the acts occurred and the physical features of the aggressors, or they have lost essential information, such as the telephone numbers or email addresses from which they received the threats.

These delays prevent the collection of evidentiary material and physical evidence necessary for the identification of the offender and constitute one of the reasons why all the cases known by the Office of the Public Prosecutor have not advanced beyond the stage of preliminary investigation, despite having been denounced by the victims two, and even three, years back.

No fundamental proofs are applied for the proper clarification of the facts: In most of the cases known by the Office of the Public Prosecutor, basic proofs for the clarification of the facts have not been applied. In all the cases reported by the Office of the Public Prosecutor, the absence of physical, technical, and psychological proofs are absent, a situation that has generated a standstill in most processes. It has also been confirmed that there has been resort to privileging physical proof, while ignoring other types of proofs that could be crucial to the determination of the facts.

It has been confirmed, however, that most victims state having received emails or calls from mobile phones in which they are threatened and harassed to abandon their activities of promotion and defense of the rights of displaced persons, and that the Office of the Public Prosecutor has not ordered the proofs that allow identifying the email addresses or phones. It has also been confirmed that, in all cases, an interview to the victim has been taken as the only proof for the clarification of the facts. Although this proof contributes in some way to establishing the conditions of time, mode, and place in which the events occurred and provides elements for the identification of the perpetrators, it is not the only one to be kept in mind for these purposes, especially bearing in mind the difficulties presented in their application by reason of the characteristics and conditions of special vulnerability experienced by these women because of their condition of persons displaced by violence and the fear and distress entailed, by the nature of the facts of which they are victims, in calling the authorities.

Discriminatory practices on the part of the authorities: Women leaders in a situation of forced displacement report that, during the process, they have experienced abuse, indifference and hostility on the part of the functionaries in charge of receiving their allegations and applying proofs during the investigation. They also state that sometimes they are shamed and blamed for the facts of which they were victims. This situation discourages women victims of violence from denouncing new acts of violence, attending the requirements of the authorities to extend the allegations, and participating in the application of other proofs within the investigation.

In part, the above explains the reasons why in most of the cases presented by the Office of the Public Prosecutor, women have not heeded the call of the authorities when required to extend the allegation or render testimony for the threats, harassment, aggression or other types of violence against them.

Unawareness of the characteristics and special vulnerability of victims: By reason of the fact that most women have not heeded the calls of the investigating entity for extending the allegations, nor of the Police for a risk assessment, it is cause for concern that the Office of the Public Prosecutor cites as an obstacle the “*lack of participation, cooperation, and activity of the victim.*” This proves unawareness and insensitivity towards the victim’s characteristics and vulnerability.

Decision 092 of the Constitutional Court points out that displaced women face multiple obstacles that prevent them from vindicating their rights as victims of violence. Among them, are the following: *"fear of retaliation by their aggressors towards them or of their relatives, (ii) distrust in the justice system, (iii) ignorance about their rights and the mechanisms and procedures for making them effective, (iv) lack of State accompaniment and advice during the processes, (v) lack of training and sensitization of the functionaries in charge of administering justice in face of the delicate situation of displaced women as victims of violence and the offense, and (vi) generally, the absence of guarantees for them and their families in accessing justice, (...). Also contributing to this situation is (vii) the risk to which women who opt for getting organized and leading social and community processes of vindication of their rights, both before and after their displacement. Finally, (viii) the generalized official and unofficial invisibility extended over the violence and gender risks particular to the armed conflict, as well as the gender aspects of displacement and their very serious repercussions on the fundamental rights of the victims (...)."*

Aside from the obstacles identified by the Court, it should be added that due to the disadvantageous economic conditions of displaced women, they encounter mobilization and transport difficulties when heeding the call of the authorities to follow up on recent processes. Also, due to the level of risk experienced by the women victims of displacement who lead processes of vindication of rights, this population group tends to shift their place of residence and mobile phone numbers constantly. This poses a difficulty to the authorities concerning their location and acts of notification. Nevertheless, the above cannot be adduced as a reason by which the investigations do not progress, even less so when, as was already pointed out, the call of the authorities takes place long after the women have presented their allegations or the functionaries exhibit hostile behavior, abuse, and stigmatize the victims, a fact that discourages them from heeding their subpoenas.

PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND ACTIVISTS

On the basis of the initiative of human rights organizations, the Colombian State defined, in article 81 of Law 418 of 1997²⁸, a protection program assigned to the Ministry of the Interior and directed to persons in a situation of risk by reason of political or ideological violence or the internal armed conflict. Subsequently, this law underwent several modifications that resulted into what is known today as the Program for the Protection of Human Rights of the Ministry of Justice and the Interior (hereafter, the Program or PPDHMIJ), which was regulated by Decree 1740 of 19 May 2010.²⁹

Members of various population groups who are beneficiaries of the Program and various instances have stressed the deficiencies of the State protection strategy contained in Decree 1740. Thus, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human

²⁸ By which some instruments for the search for coexistence, the efficiency of justice, and other provisions are set out.

²⁹ By which Article 81 of Law 418 of 1997, modified and extended by Laws 548 of 1999, 782 of 2002, 1106 of 2006 is regulated, and other provisions are set out.

Rights stated the following in the most recent report on the human rights situation in Colombia:

“The office in Colombia appreciates the Human Rights Protection Program of the Ministry of Justice and the Interior. However, there continue to be concerns regarding risk studies, delays in the implementation of the measures, the absence of a differentiated approach, and the cession of protection schemes to private companies. Besides, the reforms introduced in May made difficult the implementation of protection measures. Generally, protection programs require a reform that allows greater flexibility and effectiveness and the inclusion of public functionaries, such as SAT staff or those involved in processes of land restitution.”³⁰

The offer regarding protection to women working for the vindication of human rights and women’s rights is a cause for special concern, since it lacks a differentiated approach that takes into account the risks and special needs for safety and protection of women defenders, by reason of being subjects of special constitutional protection.

The absence of a differentiated approach to specifically attend the extraordinary risks and burdens faced by women by reason of their activities in defending and promoting human rights exacerbates the risk factors to their health, integrity, and safety, while ignoring their right to a violence-free life and their right to participate in the country’s socio-political processes. This additionally generates a special impact on the participation and mobilization of women, which is especially serious in the case of Afro-Colombian, indigenous, peasant, and displaced women, who have historically suffered from discrimination, exclusion, and vulnerability.

In this sense, the Constitutional Court has pointed out that “The general problems experienced by women by reason of their gender in a society with the characteristic structures of Colombia, are seriously magnified by the unusually high vulnerability to which they are exposed in the armed conflict context, a circumstance that imposes upon the authorities the duty to undertake integral, rational, coordinated, and carefully designed actions for tackling directly the factors that generate the differentiated impact of violence displayed by the armed conflict on Colombian women.”³¹

Based on the analysis of the PPDHMIJ protection strategy for defenders of human rights, three problematical aspects are evidenced in regard to the protection of woman defenders. First, the participation of women in the formulation and execution of the Program; second, the prevention and protection measures contemplated by the program; and third, the procedures that must be exhausted before accessing protection from the State.

Participation of women in the formulation, execution and follow-up of the Program

Despite the recognition of various international instruments, ratified by Colombia, on the need to convoke the participation of women in taking decisions that affect them, the regulation of the PPDHMIJ did not rely on the actual and effective participation of

³⁰ United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, on the situation of human rights in Colombia, doc. A/HRC/16/22, 3 February 2011, paragraph 15.

³¹ Constitutional Court, Sentence T-496/08, M.P. Jaime Córdoba Triviño.

women groups and organizations, nor did decision-making in the program and the follow-up of its implementation guarantee their participation.

Despite the fact that Decree 1740 of 2010 determined a manifest decrease in the, already precarious, safety guarantees established by Decree 2816 of 2003, the defenders were not consulted regarding the identification of risks, nor the drafting of concrete protection measures and the procedures for accessing them. This momentous omission by the authorities in charge contributed, no doubt, to the fact that the Program did not incorporate a differentiated approach to attend the safety and protection needs of the defenders and activists who promote women's rights.

On the other hand, there are no guarantees for the defenders and activists of women's rights for participating in the implementation and follow-up of the Program. Basically, this is due to the fact that the defenders and others who work for human rights were not recognized as an independent group within the object population of the PPDHMIJ. Concerning the present operation of the Program, this implies that the defenders and activists devoted to the promotion of women's rights lack an independent Committee for Risk Regulation and Evaluation (CRER, by its acronym in Spanish) to guarantee their participation, evaluate the cases, issue safety recommendations, and perform the respective follow up, while taking into account their condition as subjects of special constitutional protection and the specific risks entailed by their activities in the framework of the armed conflict.

Prevention and protection measures for human rights defenders

In regard to current prevention and protection measures, the institutional offer does not satisfy effectively the need for security and protection of the defenders of human rights, nor of women's rights activists. There are two reasons for this: first, the institutional offer privileges physical protection measures, ignoring other types of measures that contribute positively to the alleviation of the risks of defenders and activists devoted to fostering women's rights; second, the physical protection measures do not incorporate a differentiated approach to address the need for security and protection of the defenders and other persons who work for the vindication of the women's rights.

In this sense, and in regard to the state of defender's rights, the Special Rapporteur points out that the risks and problems faced by defenders of human rights and others who devote themselves to women's rights "(...) cannot be conceived independently of political, social, economic, environmental and other systemic factors that produce and reproduce the conflicts, displacement, inequality, violence and patriarchal attitudes that cause these problems. The safety of the defenders is inextricably related to the safety of their communities, and may only be fully achieved in the context of a holistic approach that includes, among other things, the consolidation of democracy, the fight against impunity, the reduction of economic inequalities, and the fight for social and environmental justice."³²

³² Human Rights Council, "Informe de la Sra. Margaret Sekaggya, Relatora Especial sobre la situación de los defensores de los derechos humanos" [Report by Ms. Margaret Sekaggya, Special Relateur on the situation of human rights defenders] Geneva, 20 December 2010, United Nations document A/HRC/16/44, paragraph 103.

Consequently, the prevention and protection of the women's rights defenders and activists in the Colombian context should begin with the adoption of a series of political measures that include a negotiated solution to the armed conflict; the public acknowledgment of the legitimacy and importance of the work they perform towards the consolidation of a democratic and just society and the reconstruction and strengthening of the social fabric affected by the internal armed conflict³³. And, additionally, the redress of the attacks carried out against the work of the defenders and a ban on any type of targeting against them and their organizations by State officials.

On the other hand, it is of utmost importance that the institutional offer include, as an assumption for the mitigation of risks and the protection in face of the impact of the armed conflict on their lives, aside from physical protection, measures geared towards guaranteeing health, social security and welfare, and encompassing the psychological condition of women defenders and their close relatives.

Finally, in regard to the measures of physical protection contemplated by the present institutional offer, it should be noted that the measures do not include a differentiated approach that takes into account the specific risks and particular needs of safety and protection of the defenders and activists devoted to the promotion of women's rights. Furthermore, the offer disregards the principle of equality, the principle of rights, diversity, sustainability, and the adaptability of the measures.

Decree 1740 establishes a precise catalogue of protection measures³⁴ that are implemented without regard to the specific circumstances of the concrete case and the geographic, social, and cultural sphere in which the women at risk operate. The above, in open disregard of Law 1257 of 2008, which for the case of women victims of violence in spheres other than family, establishes the right of women to immediate protection "by means of prompt and special measures", among them, the transfer of the victim and her children to a location where she can find the guardianship of their life, integrity, and family group, and any other measures necessary to the enforcement of the purpose of the Law.³⁵

Even though several of the protection measures contemplated in the Decree turn out to be adequate and suitable for addressing the risks faced by women, the criteria for their adoption and the conditions under which they are enforced disregard their needs for protection, as well as the vulnerability of some of the women beneficiaries of the program.

Thus, for example, domestic air tickets are delivered only when, in a situation of risk, the beneficiary and her family group have to be relocated. This does not acknowledge the fact that women leaders of social, civic, and human rights organizations, and women leaders of displaced populations in performance of their duties must travel to various cities in the countries and air travel, precisely, is the most effective and safe means of transportation for guaranteeing their safety.

³³ Corte Constitucional. Auto 092/08, M.P. Manuel José Cepeda Espinoza.

³⁴ The physical protection measures are laid out in article 17 of Decree 1740. Concerning officers, leaders, representatives of displaced population, or persons at extraordinary or extreme risk, aside from these, the possibility of implementing the protection measures of the Protection Program of the National Police of article 18 of the Decree is foreseen.

³⁵ Law 1257 of 2008, art. 18, literals a and d.

Regarding the support to temporary relocation, the decrease in funds, from three minimum monthly wages (Decree 2816 of 2006) to one minimum monthly wage, is particularly detrimental for women, since they must relocate with their family group; in face of the situation, the amount is insufficient to cover the total cost of relocation.

On the other hand, the elimination of transportation assistance and its substitution for protection schemes that include common or armored vehicles, a driver and one or several bodyguards is a cause for concern. The reason for this is that for some at-risk women, particularly those who live in marginalized areas, the protection schemes can expose them to new or greater risks.

Furthermore, Decree 1740 does not contemplate special protection measures for the women beneficiaries of the Program for the Protection of Human Rights of the Ministry of Justice and the Interior (PPDHMIJ, by its acronym in Spanish) travelling to attend the particular risks resulting from their condition as women.

All of the above confirms the urgent need to reconsider the physical protection measures established by the PPDHMIJ. To that end, it is suggested that, concerning defenders and activists of women's rights, the institutional offer be made flexible with a view to adopting protection measures addressed to the circumstances of the specific case, the geographic environment, and the social and cultural context in which the risk exists. In any event, if the decision is to preserve a precise catalogue of protection measures, a consultation process must take place, with the participation of all women defenders groups, especially indigenous, Afro-Colombian, displaced persons defenders, and those who work for land restitution, who have traditionally been excluded from the on debate the decisions affecting them.

Procedures for accessing the protection program

Another problem faced by the current protection offer regarding the protection of defenders and activists who work on the defense and protection of women's rights is related to the procedures established for accessing protection by the State. Several of these problems are shared by the totality of the procedures that must be exhausted; others, instead, are related to specific paperwork.

Problems common to the totality of procedures. Common to the totality of the procedures and highlighted among the inconveniences in accessing protection by the State are the discriminatory practices and the disregard of all the public officials involved in the process of request for protection and its implementation, the specific risks, and the particular needs for safety and protection of the defenders and those who work for the promotion and defense of women's rights.

Usually, the functionaries of the entities responsible for attending allegations, requests for protection, and their implementation (Office of the Public Prosecutor, Ministry of Justice and the Interior, National Police, among others) are indifferent and hostile towards the defenders and activists who work for women's rights. It is also usual for them to blame and shame them for the acts of which they were victims, and to disqualify them and undermine the credibility their statements.

Moreover, the intervening authorities are negligent in processing the requests for protection and implementation of measures. The application to participate in the PPDHMIJ, the assessment of risks and security, the notification of results to the interested parties, the CRER sessions, and the decisions regarding protection and its implementation show unjustified delays that impair the rights of defenders and activists of women's rights. The pending character of the situation increases the uneasiness and fear of the women and their close relatives, particularly children, and gives rise to a situation of lack of protection that, in many cases, ends up harming their right to life or to personal integrity.

This situation has increased the distrust of women towards the authorities and has discouraged their participation in organizational processes of defense and protection of human rights. Therefore, it is recommended to carry out a process of training and awareness for the functionaries in charge of attending the risks and threats to which the defenders and activists devoted to foster women's rights in regard to the rights of this population, and the existing instruments, mechanisms and procedures for their protection. Additionally, the adoption of the necessary remedies to speed up the processing of requests and the implementation of protection measures, with a view to addressing the risks and threats faced by defenders and activists of women's rights in a smooth and timely fashion.

Problems evidenced in some of the procedures to be exhausted for access to protection by the State. In addition to the normal difficulties, certain procedures exhibit disadvantages that prevent the access of defenders and activists of women's rights to effective protection. The procedures that constitute an obstacle to the effective protection of women due to the amount of paperwork involved are the following: the application to enter the PPDHMIJ, the assessment of risk levels and security at the headquarters of the organization, the internal handling of the precautionary measures decreed by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (CIDH, by its acronym in Spanish), and the temporary protection measures granted by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

- Application for entering the PPDHMIJ: In regard to this application, there is a general unawareness, mainly in rural areas and on the part of indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and displaced women, about the possibility of requesting protection measures in the face of situations of extraordinary or extreme risk by reason of the exercise of their activities or political, public, social, or humanitarian roles. Thus, it is recommended to promote a campaign of information and divulgation of the PPDHMIJ, with a view to enabling women's rights defenders and activists to enter the program, especially those in marginalized areas of the Colombian geography.

Moreover, there is concern that the requirements for entering the PPDHMIJ include the submission to the respective organization of a copy of the allegation denouncing the acts that constitute a risk or threat and the accreditation of the position of the at-risk person in the organization in which she works.³⁶ This disregards the difficulties represented by the allegations of acts of violence, by reason of the fear and shame habitually experienced, such as the mistrust towards the competent authorities. In addition, the requirement of accrediting

³⁶In: www.mij.gov.co/eContent/newsdetailmore.asp?id=2827&idcompany=2&idmenucategory=142

the position within an organization violates the constitutional principle of good faith. Thus, it is proposed that the requirements for processing the application submitted to PPDHMIJ by women defenders and activists of human rights be made flexible.

- Risk assessment by the National Police: for several reasons, the evaluation of level of risk and security at the headquarters of the organizations is one of the procedures most questioned by human rights defenders and activists. In the first place, because the staff in charge of carrying it out is normally a male staff unaware of the risks and vulnerabilities faced by women and openly hostile and insensitive to the risks faced by women.

In the second place, because the evaluation criteria established by Decree 1740 of 2010 in article 24, are not consonant with the criteria determined by the Constitutional Court.³⁷ In the third place, because, in regard to risk evaluation, the National Police applies a matrix that disregards civil society. This situation has prevented the evaluation and verification of whether the Police included wide and sufficient criteria for assessing the risks faced by defenders, including the women leaders of displaced populations, indigenous and Afro-Colombian women, and those who work for land restitution. Finally, it is especially worrisome that no resources are provided for contesting the results of risk assessment studies.

All of the above is especially detrimental to women's rights defenders and activists, since the results of the risk assessment are the main input in the analysis and recommendation of protection measures³⁸. Therefore, it is recommended to train the staff of the National Police in charge of risk assessment of women's rights in the specific risks faced in the framework of the internal armed conflict and the particular needs for safety and protection. Also, that the assessment of the risks faced by women defenders and activists of women's rights be performed by the female staff of the National Police. Likewise is necessary a reconsideration of criteria for risk assessment and the incorporation of the criteria indicated by the Constitutional Court. Finally, the National Police must commit itself to allowing civil society to become acquainted with the matrix applied to the assessment of risks, in order to evaluate whether it incorporates objective and subjective factors related to the circumstances of women defenders, particularly victims of displacement, indigenous, and Afro-Colombian women defenders, and those who work on land restitution.

- The internal processing of precautionary measures issued by the CIDH and the temporary protection measures granted by the Inter-American Court on Human Rights; of special concern is the internal processing of the precautionary and

³⁷ Sentence T-134/10 of the Constitutional Court establishes that the competent authorities in charge of appreciating the facts on the basis of which protection from the State is sought, should rationally appraise objective as well as subjective factors with an end to determining the circumstances of the petitioner and establishing whether there are grounds for special protection. The Court points out the following as criteria for risk assessment: a) the reality of the threat; b) the individuality of the threat; c) the specific situation of the threatened person; d) the scenario of the threat; and e) the imminence of the danger.

³⁸ Decree 1740 of 2010, art. 25.

temporary measures issued respectively by the Inter-American Commission and the Inter-American Court.

The reason for the above is that, once the measures are granted by these entities, the Colombian State usually requires the beneficiaries to work out the processes and procedures established for entering the PPDHMIJ. Thus, they are required, among other things, to subject themselves to the risk assessment and follow the respective procedure before the CRER.

According to defenders and activists working in the defense and promotion of human rights, this situation completely distorts the nature and objectives of the measures, which are that the legal acts adopted by international entities devoted to the protection of fundamental rights and through which the respondent State is ordered to adopt, in the shortest time possible, all the necessary judicial and administrative measures to put an end a threat on a specific human right³⁹. It is also worth noting that "(...) given that the Colombian State is a party in the San José de Costa Rica Pact, the precautionary measure should be examined in good faith by the internal public authorities. Also, for their particular procedural characteristics and the ends intended to be reached, its binding force is coupled to the enforcement of the constitutional duties played by the role of Colombian public authorities in the terms of article 2 Superior⁴⁰.

It is therefore suggested that whenever this type of measure is adopted by the CIDH or the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in regard to risks or threats against defenders or activists who work on the defense and promotion of women's rights, they be assured about the character of the protection measure issued by the competent authority, with a view to not having to certify the risk or threat by means of other procedures and processes and that they be provided swiftly with all the necessary safety and protection measures. The above, in accordance with Article 21 of Law 1257 of 2008⁴¹.

Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the response about protection by the Colombian State to at-risk women defenders and activists of human rights, it is recommended that the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights:

1. In order to further the common purpose of guaranteeing the protection of defenders and activists, urge the Colombian State to:
 - a) Publicly recognize the legitimacy and importance of the work carried out by the defenders and activists who promote women's rights in the consolidation of a just and democratic society and in the reconstruction and consolidation of the social fabric affected by the internal armed conflict.

³⁹ Constitutional Court. Sentence T- 588/03, M.P. Clara Inés Vargas Hernández.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Article 21 of Law 1257 establishes that the situations of violence that lead to assistance to women and their sons and daughters will be accredited with the measure of protection issued by the competent authority, with no additional requirements imposed.

- b) Redress the attacks carried out against the work of the defenders and ban, under threat of sanctions, any kind of targeting by State officials against them and their organizations.
2. Order the Colombian State to reform the Ministry of the Interior's Program for the Protection of Human Rights, mainly by means of modifying Decree 1740 of 2010, with a view to guaranteeing the incorporation of a differentiated approach to attend the specific risks and particular needs for safety and protection of the defenders and activists who work on the defense and promotion of women's rights. As a minimum, a reform along these lines should:
 - a) Guarantee the effective participation of women in the design and implementation of policies on the subject of prevention and protection of women at risk as a consequence of their public, social, and humanitarian activities.
 - b) Make flexible the offer of physical measures of protection with a view to adopting measures that address the circumstances of the specific case, the geographical area, and the social and cultural context where the risk takes place.
 - c) Foresee measures geared to guarantee the health, social security, and welfare, including the psychological condition, of women defenders and their closest relatives.
 3. Warn the Colombian state about the need to make flexible to women defenders and activists of human rights the requirements for the processing of the application for entering the Program for the Protection of Human Rights. Specifically the requirements of allegations of the acts constituting a risk or threat and the accreditation of the position within an organization.
 4. Urge the Colombian State to carry forward a process of training and awareness of the State functionaries involved in attending situations of risks and threats to which the defenders and activists devoted to the promotion of women's rights are exposed in regard to the rights of this population and the existing instruments, mechanisms and procedures for their protection.
 5. Order the Colombian State to comply, in a timely, swift, and effective manner, with the precautionary measures and the temporary measures, issued respectively by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, specifically, in those cases in which the threat looms over the life, personal integrity and safety of women's rights defenders and activists by reasons related to socio-political violence, to refrain from demanding the totality of all the procedures required for access to protection, and to speed up the ones deemed indispensable.