

Press Release

Inter-American Court of Human Rights
I/A Court H.R._PR-34/2023 English

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I/A Court H.R.
Protecting Rights



HISTORICAL DIALOGUE ON CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND HUMAN RIGHTS HAS BEGUN IN MANAUS



Manaus, May 27, 2024 - The Public Hearings before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights commenced on Monday May 27, in the city of Manaus, with debates on democracy and mitigation measures for climate emergencies. Civil society organizations from all over the world are participating in this Public Hearing, which is part of the 167th Regular Session of the I/A Court H.R. that began in Brasilia (05/20).

The President of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Judge Nancy Hernández López, highlighted the importance of the Public Hearings of May 27. In total, 265 organizations from around the world were asked to participate in this advisory opinion.

According to Judge Nancy Hernández López the goal of the hearings is to determine the responsibilities of States regarding climate emergencies, derived from the American Convention on Human Rights, the international treaty established among the Member States of the Organization of American States (OAS).

"We feel very honored to be here in the Amazon, which is highly symbolic and significant for the issue we are discussing, since the Amazon Rainforest is known to be the lungs of our planet," she stated.

The Inter-American Court of Human Rights signed a Cooperation Agreement with the Court of Justice of Amazonas (Tribunal de Justiça do Amazonas, TJAM) that will promote academic and jurisprudential exchange. This measure will allow providing feedback to the courts and strengthening inter-American justice, as noted by the President, Judge Nancy Hernández López.

The Vice-President of the I/A Court H.R., Judge Rodrigo Mudrovitsch from Brazil, indicated that the Public Hearings in Brazil are very relevant, given that for the first time an international court is holding a hearing outside of the capital. "There is no topic more appropriate to address in Manaus than the obligations of States regarding climate emergencies. This subject unites us as Brazilians, and it unites all countries."

Judge Nélia Caminha Jorge drew attention to the strategic role of the agreement signed by the I/A Court H.R. and TJAM. "It is essential that we implement debates, panels and exchanges between officials and authorities of the judiciary. It will also allow us to discuss several ways to implement public policies to improve the environment, mainly regarding climate matters."

Mitigation

Policies to mitigate the effects of environmental imbalances and the need to protect the population vulnerable to climate emergencies were discussed during the first part of the presentations. In addition, there were debates by representatives of civil society organizations, legal clinics and universities.

Some organizations advocated broadening access to justice to children and adolescents. The idea is that member States should prioritize environmental policies that consider the rights of youth and future generations.

The adoption of mitigation and adaptation measures by States in a manner that guarantees the participation of the most vulnerable population in decision-making processes on environmental policies was also advised.

More than 15 participants presented their suggestions and recommendations to strengthen the fight against and prevention of climate emergencies. The fragility of democracy and ample freedom of expression of the press were other topics covered by the organizations. The need to create a public defense specialized in indigenous peoples was also proposed.

Regarding the protection of human rights in climate emergencies, some presenters mentioned the need to think of the shared responsibility of States. The weight of responsibility for each of the parties involved was also discussed.

The second part of the debates and hearings will continue today in Teatro Amazonas. Tomorrow the Court will hear approximately 30 human rights and environmental organizations.

The Court would like to thank the cooperation of Spain and Sweden, whose financial support is key to holding this Regular Session in Brazil.



This press release was drafted by the Registrar's Office of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights; it is solely responsible for this document.

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