

Press Release 34/2025 English

INTER-AMERICAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS INAUGURATED ITS 176TH REGULAR SESSION IN GUATEMALA



Guatemala City, May 19, 2025.— On Monday, May 19, at the emblematic Palacio Nacional de la Cultura, the opening ceremony of the 176th Regular Session of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights was held, with the participation of high-level national and international authorities.

The opening ceremony was held at Patio de la Paz and was presided by Judge Nancy Hernández López, President of the I/A Court HR. At the main table were His Excellency Bernardo Arévalo, President of the Republic of Guatemala; His Excellency Ambassador Carlos Ramiro Martínez Alvarado, Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Arely Marisol Zea, Deputy Executive Director of the Presidential Commission for Peace and Human Rights (COPADEH).

The President of the Court, Judge Nancy Hernández López, began her speech by highlighting the importance of these spaces for dialogue as part of democratic strengthening:

“We are here to listen, discuss and contribute to the consolidation of a human rights culture. We know that a democratic State is not only measured by its institutional architecture but also how it responds to challenges, how it listens to those who were historically silenced, its willingness to transform structures that perpetuate inequality and its capacity to contribute to building bridges between the past and the future, international justice and domestic justice. Freedom is not decreed, it is built. And it can only be built where power is subject to the law, there is respect of human dignity, and the principles of democracy are embodied in public policies, strong and independent institutions and citizens who are discerning and informed”.

The President of the Republic, Bernardo Arévalo, expressed a firm commitment to the inter-American system for the protection of human rights and its value for the region:

"From Guatemala we make a call to all Member States of the Organization of American States to consolidate the inter-American system as a common regional asset. Cooperation, compliance with resolutions and accountability must not be an exception but rather the norm that guarantees justice and dignity for our people(s). The inter-American system is not an interference but a legitimate expression of the democratic will of our States. We created it as an instrument for protection and now, more than ever, we need to strengthen it as a living, efficient and necessary tool to protect democracy, justice, and human rights in the region".



The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Carlos Ramiro Martínez Alvarado, noted the State's openness to international mechanisms:

"After seven years we open our doors once again to international human rights mechanisms, allowing the international community to monitor compliance with our obligations and to recommend measures to remedy the violations found at the national level. Guatemala has transformed its role before multilateral bodies, evolving toward a more propositional and active participation, along with more openness to international mechanisms".

Lastly, Arely Marisol Zea, Deputy Executive Director of COPADEH, confirmed the fundamental role of human rights education:

“To receive the Court in our home is not only a protocolary gesture; it is an act of openness and learning. From COPADEH we believe and understand that education on human rights is not complementary but rather a key pillar for institutional and social transformation”.

Before the opening ceremony, a protocolary meeting was held between the President of the Republic and the judges of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights to speak about the country's current human rights situation and to promote the strengthening of institutional cooperation.



During this week, the I/A Court HR will hold three public hearings on contentious cases and five private hearings on monitoring compliance with judgment in cases regarding Guatemala. A roundtable on compliance with pecuniary reparation measures ordered by the Court in its judgments will also be held.

As part of the academic activities, the international seminar *“Lines of jurisprudence of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, their impact and control of conventionality”* will be held, with the participation of judges of the Court, COPADEH authorities and national professionals.

The event was broadcast live through the Court’s social media channels, marking the beginning of an intense work agenda of the 176th Regular Session.

Both the International Seminar and the public hearings can be watched live through the I/A Court HR’s official social media channels.

All information on the agenda and activities is available at the following link:
bit.ly/176POS-Gt

The Court would like to thank the cooperation of Sweden (ASDI), Spain (AECID) and Germany (BMZ/GIZ), whose support was key to holding this Regular Session in Guatemala.

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