**Bolivia Must Allow the Truth Be Revealed About Human Rights Violations**

Joint statement from Human Rights organizations about the Bolivian government’s veto of two members of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights’ Independent Experts Group

On Friday, February 21, Bolivia’s acting minister of justice, Alvaro Coimbra, announced that his government was vetoing two members of the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts (GIEI), Patricia Tappatá Valdez y Juan Méndez, who are high-level technical professionals with respected track records defending human rights.

The GIEI was created on December 18, 2019, by an [agreement between the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Bolivian government](https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2019/328.asp), after a Commission visit [confirmed the existence of human rights violations](https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2019/321.asp). The mission of the Interdisciplinary Group is to support national institutions to investigate sanction, and provide reparations for victims of these violations, which occurred between September 1 and December 31, 2019, in the country. The first point of the agreement establishes that the GIEI will be “composed of four people appointed by the IACHR.”

This was not the first time that the Commission enacted this mechanism. The first GIEI was created in 2014 to support investigations into missing students from Ayotzinapa, Mexico. In 2018, a new GIEI collaborated in the investigation of acts of violence that occurred between April and May of that year, in Nicaragua. As in the current Bolivian case, both Interdisciplinary Groups arose from agreements between the Commission and host governments. The GIEI has been a fundamental tool in the region to respond to gross human rights violations when, for different reasons, the State is unable to ensure the right to the truth, justice, and reparation of the direct victims and society.

The Bolivian government's move, [a month after the formal announcement](https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2020/013.asp) of the expert groups’ members, is inappropriate and fails to recognize the Inter-American Commission’s autonomy as an independent oversight body. If successful, it can result in the obstruction, postponement or impediment of the start of the group's work, in violation of the good faith agreement signed with the IACHR. Finally, it reveals a lack of commitment to the victims of serious human rights violations and clarification of the facts.

1. Abogadas y Abogados para la Justicia y los Derechos Humanos, A.C. de Mexico
2. Andean Information Network (Bolivia)
3. Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos – APRPDEH (Perú)
4. Asociación de Familiares Detenidos Desaparecidos y Mártires por la Liberación Nacional – ASOFAMD (Bolivia)
5. Bolivia.Plurinacional.CH (Suiza)
6. Centro de Documentación en Derechos Humanos “Segundo Montes Mozo S.J.” (Ecuador)
7. Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales – CELS (Argentina)
8. Centro por la Justicia y el Derecho Internacional - CEJIL
9. Centro de Políticas Públicas y Derechos Humanos - Perú EQUIDAD
10. Centro Regional de Derechos Humanos y Justica de Género: Corporación Humanas (Chile)
11. Colectivo de Abogados José Alvear Restrepo (Colombia)
12. Colectivo de Derechos Humanos Nicaragua Nunca Más
13. Comisión Colombiana de Juristas
14. Comisión Ecuménica de Derechos Humanos (Ecuador)
15. Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos
16. Comité de América Latina y El Caribe para la Defensa de los Derechos de las Mujeres, CLADEM
17. Comité de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos en Honduras
18. Conectas Direitos Humanos (Brasil)
19. Convergencia por los Derechos Humanos - CAFCA, CALDH, CIIDH, ECAP, ICCPG, ODHAG, SEDEM, UDEFEGUA, UNAMG (Guatemala)
20. Corporación Jurídica Libertad (Colombia)
21. Centro de Investigación Drogas y Derechos Humanos (Perú)
22. Defensa de Niñas y Niños – Internacional - DNI Costa Rica
23. Equipo de Reflexión, Investigación y Comunicación - Compañía de Jesús en Honduras
24. EarthRights International
25. FUNDAR Centro de Análisis e Investigación (México)
26. INSGENAR, Instituto de Genero, Derecho y Desarrollo de Rosario (Argentina)
27. Instituto Vladimir Herzog (Brasil)
28. International Institute on Race, Equality and Human Rights (Estados Unidos)
29. Intercambios Asociación Civil (Argentina)
30. International Human Rights Clinic at Harvard Law School (Estados Unidos)
31. Observatorio Ciudadano (Chile)
32. Organización Mundial Contra la Tortura (OMCT)
33. Paz y Esperanza (Perú)
34. Proyecto de Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales - ProDESC (México)
35. Proyecto sobre Organización, Desarrollo, Educación e Investigación – PODER (México)
36. Red en Defensa de los Derechos Digitales - R3D (México)
37. Red por los Derechos de la Infancia en México – REDIM
38. Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights (Estados Unidos)
39. Terra de Direitos (Brasil)
40. Washington Office on Latin America – WOLA (Estados Unidos)

**Former members of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights:**

1. Carlos Ayala Corao

Former President, IACHR

1. Florentín Meléndez

Former President, IACHR

Former Rapporteur of the IACHR on Bolivia

1. James Cavallaro

Former President, IACHR

1. Robert Goldman

Former President, IACHR

1. Tracy Robinson

Former President, IACHR

1. Paulo Vannuchi

Former Commissioner, IACHR

1. Rosa María Ortiz

Former Commissioner, IACHR

1. Victor Abramovich

Former Commissioner, IACHR