

Press Release

Inter-American Court of Human Rights
I/A Court H.R._PR-17/2022 English

Should you have any trouble viewing this message, please click [HERE](#)



I/A Court H.R. Protecting Rights

THE INTER-AMERICAN COURT VISITS THE PROVINCE OF DARIÉN, PANAMA, TO MONITOR IMPLEMENTATION OF PROVISIONAL MEASURES



San José, Costa Rica, March 18, 2022. On March 17 and 18, a delegation from the Inter-American Court and its Secretariat visited the province of Darién and held a private hearing in Panama City, to obtain information to monitor the execution of the Provisional Measures ordered in the Case of Vélez Lloor, and assess the request made by Panama regarding their lifting. The delegation was made up of the President of the Court, Judge Ricardo C. Pérez Manrique, Vice President, Judge Humberto Antonio Sierra Porto, and Judge Nancy Hernández López. The Court's delegation also included the Court Secretary, Pablo Saavedra Alessandri, the Deputy Secretary Romina I. Sijniensky and Bruno Rodríguez Reveggino, Advisor to the Presidency.

The President of the Court thanked the State of Panama for all its support and the organization to carry out these proceedings in its territory.

Through orders of [July 29, 2020](#) and [June 24, 2021](#), the Inter-American Court adopted Provisional Measures to protect the rights to health, humane treatment and life of people in three Immigration Reception Centers -La Peñita¹, Lajas Blancas and San Vicente-, as well as in the host community of Bajo Chiquito, all in the Darién Province. Additionally, it required the State to

Ensure immediate and effective access to essential health services without discrimination, for all persons at the [aforementioned] Migration Reception Centers [...], including early detection and treatment of COVID-19.

In the 2021 order, the Court assessed that the State "has taken important steps to implement the provisional measures ordered by this Court, which certainly reflect the improvements made in conditions at the migration centers to address the risks of the spread of COVID-19." However, the Court maintained the measures in force due to the persistence of risk factors, some generated by the ongoing pandemic, and the need to obtain more precise information on some material conditions. The Court indicated that it would subsequently assess whether the conditions for maintaining these measures still exist. Finally, the Court reiterated the need for regional solutions to the migration crisis:

the difficulties of the current context require synergy and solidarity between States, international organizations and civil society, in order to provide an effective regional and global response to the challenges arising from the pandemic that are faced by persons in a situation of human mobility. In light of the principle of shared responsibility, and mindful of the complex and cross-border dimensions of the migratory phenomenon aggravated by the pandemic, the Court deems it pertinent to recall the importance of promoting dialogue at the national, bilateral and regional levels to create conditions that allow for a safe, orderly and regular transit, in which the rights of persons in a situation of mobility are effectively guaranteed.

I. Visit to Migration Reception Centers and the host community of Bajo Chiquito in the province of Darién

On March 17, 2022, the Inter-American Court delegation visited the province of Darién, in order to directly verify, on the ground, the level of implementation of the Provisional Measures.

A large State delegation participated, including senior officials from different ministries and public institutions relevant to the implementation of the measures. Among those who participated were: the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Public Safety, the Minister of Health, the Advisor to the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Director and Deputy Director of International Legal Affairs and Treaties of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Director of the National Border Service, the Director of the National Immigration Service, the National Director of International Affairs and Technical Cooperation of the Ministry of Health, and the First Prosecutor against Organized Crime. A lawyer from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Secretariat and lawyers from CEJIL, also participated, representing the beneficiaries. Additionally, in application of Article 27(8) of the Court's Rules of Procedure, the participation of the Panamanian Ombudsman's Office was requested, as "another source of information", other than that provided by the State as a party.

The Court's delegation toured:

1. The host community of Bajo Chiquito, one of the arrival points for people in a situation of mobility who enter Panama after the great difficulties of crossing the Darién jungle on the Colombian-Panamanian border.

¹ Through the aforementioned order of June 2021, the Court declared that the Provisional Measures at the La Peñita Immigration Reception Centre were no longer relevant because the State closed said establishment.

2. The Lajas Blancas Migration Reception Center which, during the time these measures have been in force, was reconditioned by the State to house people infected or suspected of being infected with COVID-19, in separate areas.

3. The San Vicente Migration Reception Center, inaugurated by the State under these measures to house part of the migrant population that enters Panama through the Darién region.

During the tours, the Court's delegation also asked the questions it considered necessary, and interviewed people in a situation of mobility, of different nationalities.

Furthermore, the delegation witnessed the fundamental work and cooperation provided in the area by United Nations agencies such as IOM, UNICEF and UNHCR, and international organizations such as the ICRC, among others.

On-site proceedings of this type have the advantage of allowing the Court to be brought closer to the beneficiaries of the measures and their reality, as well as to hear explanations directly from the state officials and authorities in charge of implementing the provisional measures, as well as understanding the circumstances surrounding their fulfillment.

II. Private hearing held in Panama City



On Friday, March 18, from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., a private hearing was held so that the State, the beneficiaries' representatives, the Commission and the Ombudsman of Panama could supplement and review the information received during the previous day's visit.

The information received during the visit and the hearing will be brought to the attention of the Court, so that it can subsequently assess it through an order.

III. Meetings with State authorities



On March 16, 2022, the Court's delegation made an official visit to the Supreme Court of Justice, where it met with the Court's President, Magistrate María Eugenia López Arias, its Vice President, Judge Olmedo Arrocha Osorio, and Judge Carlos Alberto Vásquez Reyes, President of the Third Chamber for Administrative and Labor Litigation.



On March 18, 2022, the Court's delegation met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Erika Mouynes, and the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Marta Elida Gordón

This press release was produced by the Secretariat of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, which is the only responsible for its content.

For the latest information please visit the website of the Inter-American Court, <http://www.corteidh.or.cr/index-en.cfm>, or send an email to Pablo Saavedra Alessandri, Secretary, at corteidh@corteidh.or.cr. For press inquiries please contact Matías Ponce at prensa@corteidh.or.cr.

You can subscribe to the information services of the Court [here](#). You can sign up for updates from the Court here or unsubscribe sending an email to comunicaciones@corteidh.or.cr. You can also follow the activities of the Court on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) (@CorteIDH for the Spanish account and @IACourTHR for the English account), [Instagram](#), [Flickr](#), [Vimeo](#) and [Soundcloud](#).

[Inter-American Court of Human Rights. 2022.](#) 

Esta obra está bajo una [Licencia Creative Commons Atribución-NoComercial-SinDerivadas 3.0 Unported](#)

Avenida 10, Calles 45 y 47 Los Yoses, San Pedro, San José, Costa Rica.



www.corteidh.or.cr
corteidh@corteidh.or.cr



(506) 2527-1600



10th Av, between street 45
and street 47, Los Yoses, San
Pedro, San Jose, Costa Rica.

Follow us:

