

Press Release

Inter-American Court of Human Rights

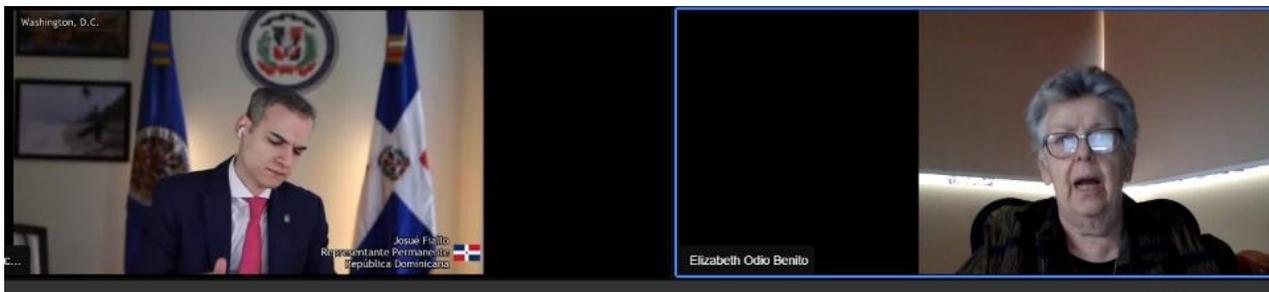
I/A Court H.R._PR-26/2021 English

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I/A Court H.R. Protecting Rights

INTER-AMERICAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS PRESENTED ITS 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



San José, Costa Rica, April 16, 2021. The President of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Judge Elizabeth Odio Benito, has presented the Inter-American Court's 2020 Annual Report to the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs of the Organization of American States. The report is available [here](#).

The President underlined the work carried out by the Court in the context of the pandemic. She indicated that "2020 had brought great uncertainty and the need to take immediate decisions. As the human rights court of the Americas, we had to adapt rapidly to the situation. It has not been easy. I have to acknowledge that exercising leadership in these circumstances was a complex task. However, as President, our goal was always clear. We must continue the Court's work, contributing – within the framework of our functions and competences – to the protection of the human rights of the individual in the context of the pandemic. We have also sought to protect the health of all the Court's staff, adopting teleworking methods and the necessary biosecurity measures."

The President indicated that "although the year has signified major challenges for our Court, it was also a year where a great deal of work was done, and we were able to achieve our goals. The average time for processing cases decreased to 19 months, which is less than during the two previous years. Regarding the production of case law, we delivered 19 judgments on merits, and 4 on interpretation, and issued 43 orders on Monitoring Compliance with Judgment, 14 on Provisional Measures, and 6 on orders Provisional Measures and Monitoring Compliance with Judgment."

And, she added that, "in recent years, the Court has been increasing its work of Monitoring Compliance, a function of great importance for this Court because it allows it to ensure that the reparations ordered in its Judgments are executed and, thus, materialize inter-American justice. In addition, the Court is currently monitoring 24 Provisional Measures, and also processing three requests for an Advisory Opinion on issues of great relevance and that are intended to respond to current challenges to human rights by interpreting the meaning and scope of obligations contained in the American Convention and other international treaties. Lastly, 23 new contentious cases have been submitted to the Court's consideration."

Among other activities, the Inter-American Court issued Advisory Opinion OC-26/20 on "Obligations in matters of human rights of a State that has denounced the American Convention on Human Rights and the Charter of the Organization of American States."

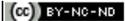
The President highlighted that, during 2020, the Court had continued to develop its Case Law on issues such as: the denunciation of the American Convention on Human Rights and the OAS Charter and the effects on a State's human rights obligations; the rights of girls to a life free of sexual violence, particularly in educational settings; the prohibition of child labor; prejudice-based violence against the LGBTI community; the use of stereotyping in arrests and racial profiling; access to justice for people in a situation of human mobility; the guarantee of tenure for prosecutors appointed on a provisional basis; freedom of expression of judges and the factor of internal independence; the Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights of Indigenous Peoples, particularly the right to a healthy environment, to adequate food, to water, and to participate in cultural life, and the standards for the permissible limitation of political rights for elected officials.

Referring to the challenges arising from the pandemic, the President indicated that it had "shone a light on the deep divisions in our social and economic fabric. However, it should provide an opportunity to reinforce the historic commitment of Latin America to the full exercise and enjoyment of the human rights of women and men, girls and boys. Democracy, justice and the peaceful existence of every human being clearly depends on the full exercise and enjoyment of such rights." She added that "today more than ever, we must seek regional and multilateral solutions, leaving to one side nationalisms, xenophobia, racism and any kind of discrimination.

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