# Questionnaire for the preparation of the third regional report on the situation of human rights defenders in the Americas

# The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) will prepare a third report on the human rights situation of human rights defenders in the Americas. The objective of this third report is to present the current situation under which human rights defenders operate regionally and in an intersectional way, identifying the main risks and threats they face stemming from their defense activities, as well as the challenges presented for their effective protection.

# Eleven years after the publication of the [Second Report on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders in the Americas](https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/defenders/docs/pdf/defenders2011.pdf), the IACHR considers it relevant to have an update on the current challenges faced by these groups in comparison to what was observed before. In particular, the report aims to address the dynamics of violence and the contexts affecting the effective performance of their work, the most affected geographical areas, and defense groups, under an intersectional approach in a region that is increasingly polarized and tumultuous. The report also seeks to identify possible advances made by States in the region to guarantee the human rights of these collectives.

# In this context, the Commission invites States, civil society organizations, human rights defenders, academic institutions, and interested individuals to submit information on the following topics:

# Regarding forms of violence against human rights defenders:

# 1. Main groups at risk due to their defense work and the main risk situations they face;

# 2. Types of identified aggressions against human rights defenders (including threats, murders, criminalization, defamation, etc.). Breakdown of figures by type of aggression, activity of the attacked human rights defender, gender, geographical area, and possible perpetrators;

# 3. Main risk factors, origins, and possible perpetrators of acts of violence against human rights defenders. Existing contexts or structural situations in countries that have influenced the persistence of situations that put them at risk;

# 4. Particular impacts identified on women human rights defenders and defenders of the rights of the LGBTI community;

# 5. Advances and/or challenges identified to prevent and protect human rights defenders in the Americas in situations of risk;

# 6. Advances and challenges in the fight against impunity for crimes committed against human rights defenders. In particular, detailed information on the status of investigations and identified specific challenges;

# Regarding obstacles that prevent the free exercise of the right to defend human rights:

# 7. Advances and/or challenges identified to avoid the issuance of stigmatizing speeches or defamation campaigns against human rights defenders;

# 8. Main factors that promote the criminalization of human rights defenders and criminal and/or civil charges employed. If aware of specific cases, please indicate;

# 9. Advances and/or challenges identified for the free exercise of the freedom of association and assembly. In particular, legislative or administrative measures that are being implemented and that could restrict the right of association of defending organizations.

# Regarding measures implemented by states to fulfill their obligations concerning the protection and guarantee of the rights of human rights defenders:

# 10. Measures being implemented by states to promote the recognition of the right to defend human rights and the importance of human rights defenders;

# 11. For states with national protection programs: a) indicate progress made by protection mechanisms in risk mitigation for human rights defenders; b) identify the main challenges for the proper implementation of effective national protection programs.

# 12. Advances and/or challenges in the effective compliance with precautionary measures granted by the IACHR in favor of human rights defenders;

# 13. Measures being implemented by states to guarantee access to justice for human rights defenders who are victims of a crime.

# The questionnaire can be answered partially or in its entirety, depending on the available information; prepared and/or published investigations, reports, and other relevant documents can be submitted. The IACHR appreciates in advance the contributions received as inputs for the preparation of this report.

# The IACHR will receive the requested information from today until midnight on December 11, 2023 (Washington, D.C. time) via email: cidhmonitoreo@oas.org. The information can be sent in Spanish, English, French, and/or Portuguese. The information to be submitted should be concise, objective, with verifiable sources, and related to events that have occurred in the last 5 years.

# The IACHR is a principal and autonomous organ of the Organization of American States (OAS), whose mandate arises from the OAS Charter and the American Convention on Human Rights. The Inter-American Commission has the mandate to promote the observance and defense of human rights in the region and acts as an advisory body to the OAS in this matter. The IACHR is composed of seven independent members who are elected by the OAS General Assembly on a personal basis and do not represent their countries of origin or residence.