

Juana Azurduy de Padilla of Bolivia Joins the OAS Gallery of Heroines and Heroes of the Americas

- *The portrait was donated by the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar and unveiled at a ceremony with OAS authorities and representatives of Member States.*
- *Her inclusion brings to eleven the number of women honoured in the Gallery, which highlights the transformative role of women throughout the history of the Americas.*

Washington, D.C., July 23, 2025. The portrait of Juana Azurduy de Padilla, colonel of the Liberation Army and a symbol of the South American struggle for independence, was unveiled today at the Gallery of Heroines and Heroes of the Americas of the Organization of American States (OAS), during a ceremony held in the Marcus Garvey Hall of Culture at the Organization's main building.

The ceremony was attended by OAS Secretary General Albert R. Ramdin; Assistant Secretary General Laura Gil; Permanent Representative of Bolivia to the OAS, Ambassador Héctor Arce Zaconeta; Rector of the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, Dr. José Luis Gutiérrez Sardán; Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM), Alejandra Mora Mora; as well as Permanent Representatives of many of the OAS Member States.

The painting, donated by the Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar, is a tribute by the Plurinational State of Bolivia to one of its greatest national heroines, who devoted her life to the emancipation of the peoples of the former Viceroyalty of Río de la Plata.

During the event, Ambassador Arce emphasized that "it is a great honor for Bolivia to present the portrait of the most important heroine our nation has had in the struggle for liberty, justice, and independence, a struggle for the very existence of the Republic."

OAS Secretary General Albert R. Ramdin underscored the enduring relevance of Azurduy's legacy. "Her remarkable history of resistance, courage, and determination remains just as meaningful today as it was 200 years ago. The principles and values upheld by those who fought for freedom continue to inspire us to build a more just and equal world, free from fear and repression," he stated.

Assistant Secretary General Laura Gil noted that "Juana Azurduy was a woman of freedom and conviction, whose courage and leadership are a powerful reminder of what women are capable of achieving. She was a wife and mother, but also a colonel —and posthumously, a general and marshal— at a time when women were excluded from nearly every public space. That is why, in this Gallery, women are not decorative, they are transformative."

CIM Executive Secretary Alejandra Mora Mora stated: “It is an honor to recognize a Bolivian woman who stood out in the deeply masculinized world of armed struggles for independence. She was a remarkable woman and we are proud to honour her legacy in the Gallery of Heroines and Heroes of the Americas. Her presence reinforces the collective vision of women's leadership across all spheres and throughout all eras.”

The Gallery of Heroines and Heroes of the Americas was officially named in March 2024 by decision of the OAS Permanent Council to recognize the fundamental contributions of women throughout hemispheric history.

The Gallery currently includes portraits of Eva Perón (Argentina); Maria da Penha Maia Fernandes (Brazil); Angela Acuña Braun (Costa Rica); Matilde Hidalgo de Procel (Ecuador); Dalia Xóchitl Sandoval López (El Salvador); Dolores Bedoya (Guatemala); Elvia Carrillo Puerto (Mexico); Clara González (Panama); Doris Stevens (United States); María Elena Moyano (Peru); and now, Juana Azurduy de Padilla (Bolivia).

***INFORMATION FOR JOURNALISTS**

About the CIM/OAS

The Inter-American Commission of Women (CIM) of the Organization of American States (OAS) is the primary hemispheric forum dedicated to promoting and protecting women's human rights and gender equality. Founded in 1928, the CIM has been a pioneer in identifying the barriers faced by women in the social, economic, and political spheres, and in formulating policies and programs to overcome those barriers. CIM collaborates with OAS Member States, civil society organizations, and other key actors to advance the gender equality agenda in the Americas.

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