

www.rindhca.org



2024

RINDHCA

Red de Instituciones Nacionales para la Promoción y Protección de los Derechos Humanos del Continente Americano

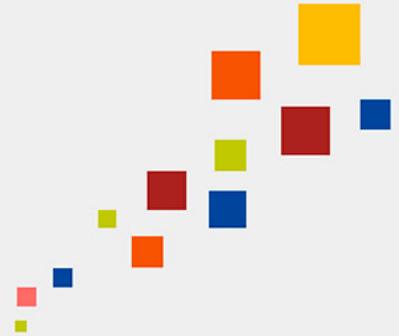


JANUARY - DECEMBER

REPORT



TECNICAL SECRETARY



Cofinanciado por la Unión Europea



Introduction

After a 2023 marked by transformation within the framework of Phase III of the NHRI.EU project, 2024 has been a period of consolidation for RINDHCA. This year, the network has focused its efforts on strengthening key processes, enhancing its operational capacity for regional impact, and solidifying its position as a key actor in the promotion and protection of human rights across the continent.

First, at the organizational level, RINDHCA has reinforced its internal governance mechanisms, promoting efficient and transparent management in accounting, financial, legal, and contractual areas. Additionally, the institutionalization of assemblies and regular meetings of the Coordination Committee has fostered ongoing dialogue among the National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) that make up the network. This process has particularly strengthened the six thematic working groups established in 2023, enriching the exchange of experiences and best practices among NHRIs and enhancing their capacity for joint action by equipping them with greater technical skills and practical tools for their daily work.

Second, RINDHCA has consolidated strategic alliances with civil society organizations and international agencies within the United Nations system, while also beginning to play a decisive role within the Inter-American Human Rights System. These collaborations have been centered around the priority thematic areas established by the NHRIs and working groups within the network, fostering more coordinated and effective cooperation.

Finally, the strengthening of NHRIs has been a significant advancement in 2024, in line with the commitments made under Phase III of the NHRI.EU project. This effort has increased the capacity of NHRIs to protect and promote human rights in key areas, such as sustainable development, the defense of human rights defenders and civic space, and the protection of NHRIs under threat—aligned with the 2018 Marrakech Declaration, to name just a few examples. Additionally, RINDHCA's active participation as a permanent observer before the Subcommittee on Accreditation (SCA) has facilitated support and accompaniment mechanisms, strengthening accreditation processes and aiding the establishment and consolidation of NHRIs that meet the Paris Principles.

In this way, RINDHCA has achieved its goal of positioning itself as an effective platform for mutual learning, inter-institutional cooperation, and the promotion and protection of human rights in the region. This has been accomplished through strengthened collaboration, structured and prioritized knowledge management, an active communication model, and capacity-building efforts. This focus on solid processes will remain a priority in 2025 to consolidate the achievements made and expand the network's impact at regional and international levels.

This report highlights RINDHCA's activities and achievements throughout 2024, detailing the institutional, collaborative, and decision-making processes that have made these advances possible. In particular, it emphasizes the importance of strategic planning, alliance-building, and the creation of spaces for inter-institutional cooperation—key

elements in strengthening the NHRI network and building capacities within each of its members.

Background and General Considerations

The Network of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Americas (RINDHCA) was established on November 15, 2000, with the support of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), formerly the International Coordinating Committee (ICC), and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Later, through Public Deed No. 6,605, dated June 19, 2019, from the First Notary Office of the Circuit of Panama, legal personality was granted to RINDHCA's Permanent Technical Secretariat. The deed was registered in Panama's Public Registry on July 8, 2019.

The creation of RINDHCA was driven by the need to coordinate regional efforts in the promotion and protection of human rights and to strengthen the capacities of NHRIs to address common challenges in the region. This initial step toward consolidating a regional NHRI network was influenced by the growing recognition of the fundamental role that NHRIs began to play in defending human rights, particularly after the end of dictatorial regimes in Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s.

In its early years, RINDHCA focused on strengthening the capacities of NHRIs, ensuring their independence, and promoting the adoption of international human rights standards by states. This included ensuring that each country had an NHRI that complied with the Paris Principles. Over time, RINDHCA has played a key role in coordinating regional efforts to address common human rights challenges, such as the protection of human rights defenders, the eradication of gender-based violence, the fight against discrimination, the defense of the rights of Indigenous peoples and migrants, and environmental protection—all while seeking to strengthen the rule of law.

Thus, RINDHCA has become a key actor in strengthening NHRIs across the Americas, promoting the creation of new institutions and consolidating existing ones, forming collaboration networks, advocating for the protection of human rights defenders, and providing technical assistance to its members to address human rights challenges in their respective countries.

Objectives of RINDHCA

According to Articles 4 and 5 of its [Bylaws](#), RINDHCA's objective is to cooperate directly with GANHRI and OHCHR in the following areas:

- Establishing, maintaining, and promoting a culture of respect for human rights in the region;
- Strengthening the recognition and implementation by regional governments of international commitments and standards on human rights;
- Contributing to the democratic development of countries in the region by helping

to consolidate state policies on human rights;

- Promoting joint efforts to individually and collectively strengthen the National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) in the Americas that have been established in accordance with the Paris Principles; and
- Supporting the creation and development of NHRIs in other countries within the region.

In summary, RINDHCA seeks to consolidate a regional network that drives the defense of human rights in the Americas through cooperation and institutional strengthening.

The Paris Principles

The Paris Principles are essential for understanding how National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) should operate independently, effectively, and legitimately in their mission to promote and protect human rights. Adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993, these principles are not only a normative framework but also a practical guide that sets clear criteria to ensure that NHRIs are credible actors in the defense of human rights.

The Paris Principles are fundamental to ensuring that NHRIs act with legitimacy and effectiveness. When an institution aligns with these principles, it strengthens public and international trust in its ability to defend human rights, even in challenging contexts.

Key Elements of the Paris Principles

- **Broad mandate:** NHRIs must be legally or constitutionally authorized to protect and promote all human rights;
- **Independence:** NHRIs must be functionally and financially independent from the government to ensure impartiality;
- **Pluralism:** The composition of NHRIs should reflect the diversity of society and include participation from various sectors, including civil society;
- **Adequate resources:** NHRIs must have sufficient financial and human resources to fulfill their mandate;
- **Wide-ranging functions:** NHRIs should have the capacity to investigate human rights violations, provide recommendations, and educate on human rights;
- **International cooperation:** NHRIs must collaborate with international bodies and participate in global human rights mechanisms.

International Instruments Supporting the Paris Principles

The endorsement of the Paris Principles is reflected in various key instruments and declarations that reinforce them, including:

- [UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/48/134 \(1993\)](#): Supports the Paris

Principles and recommends that Member States establish NHRIs that comply with these standards.

- [Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action \(1993\)](#): Reinforces the importance of NHRIs and calls on States to establish or strengthen their NHRIs in accordance with the Paris Principles.
- [UN Human Rights Council Resolution 5/1 \(2007\)](#): Recognizes the role of NHRIs and their relationship with the Council, promoting their active participation.
- [UN Human Rights Council Resolution 33/15 \(2016\)](#): Establishes the importance of strengthening NHRIs and their participation in the UN system.
- [UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/74/156 \(2019\)](#): Urges States to establish and strengthen NHRIs at the national level and calls on all levels of the UN system to consider NHRIs in their work.

Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda

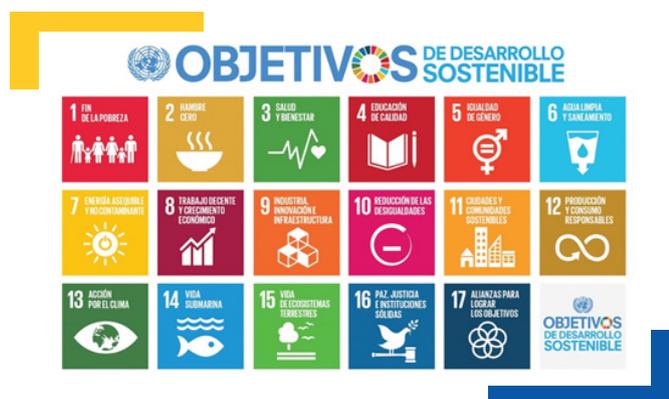
The Paris Principles are deeply connected to Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, which aims to build inclusive societies and promote access to justice for all, with institutions that are effective, accountable, and transparent at all levels. The link between the Paris Principles and SDG 16 lies in their shared commitment to justice, peace, and accountability.

National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) that operate in accordance with the Paris Principles play a key role in strengthening the rule of law and protecting the rights of individuals, particularly those in vulnerable situations. By ensuring their independence and operational capacity, NHRIs directly contribute to the following SDG 16 targets:

1. **16.3 - Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all:** NHRIs, acting in accordance with the Paris Principles, monitor judicial and administrative systems to ensure they respect human rights and advocate for reforms when necessary.
2. **16.6 - Develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels:** The Paris Principles require NHRIs to operate with autonomy and accountability, ensuring they serve as models of effective and accessible governance.
3. **16.7 - Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels:** NHRIs act as a bridge between the state and civil society, fostering dialogue and the participation of diverse groups in decision-making processes.

Thus, NHRIs aligned with the Paris Principles are not only guardians of human rights but also agents of change for achieving the targets of SDG 16. Strengthening their role contributes to building more equitable societies, where no one is left behind, and where institutions reflect democratic values and human dignity.

Additionally, since NHRIs are explicitly mentioned as an indicator within SDG 16 of the 2030 Agenda, the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) adopted the [Mérida Declaration \(2015\)](#). This declaration outlines the activities that NHRIs can undertake to ensure that human rights serve as the foundation for implementing the 2030 Agenda.



NHRI.EU Project Phase 3

The NHRI.EU project of the European Union is the result of a cooperation effort between GANHRI, its regional networks, and the European Union, with the objective of strengthening the role of NHRIs worldwide in the following key aspects:

1. Strengthening the capacity of NHRIs to promote and protect human rights in their respective countries, aligning with the Paris Principles.
2. Improving international and regional cooperation among NHRIs, fostering the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and best practices through GANHRI and regional networks such as RINDHCA.
3. Promoting the participation of NHRIs in international forums and UN human rights mechanisms, ensuring that their voices are integrated into global debates and international policies.
4. Encouraging the implementation of human rights at the national level, helping governments respect, protect, and fulfill their human rights obligations.
5. Supporting NHRIs in complex and challenging contexts, such as crisis or conflict situations, ensuring that they can continue to effectively fulfill their role.

The project seeks to create a stronger and more operational environment for NHRIs, improving their independence, effectiveness, and legitimacy, and ensuring that they can better fulfill their mandate of promoting and protecting human rights. Additionally, it is expected to have a greater impact on the implementation of human rights policies at both local and international levels.

The NHRI.EU Project, in its first two phases, concluded at the end of 2022 and executed through the Danish Institute for Human Rights, provided essential technical cooperation for the strengthening of RINDHCA. As a result, the legal recognition of RINDHCA was achieved. Additionally, tax and fiscal registrations were secured before the Directorate General of Revenues of Panama, with the Unique Taxpayer Registry No.25040267-3-2019 DV 30 approved in August of that year.

The year 2023 marked the beginning of phase 3 of the NHRI.EU Project for RINDHCA, whose main objective is the institutional strengthening of NHRIs. The funds from phase 3 of the NHRI.EU Project have allowed, during 2024, concrete and effective progress towards the strengthening of RINDHCA and the consolidation and expansion of the network, as mentioned in this document. These funds are the main source of financing for RINDHCA. This funding has been extended until September 2025.

RINDHCA in 2024

The following section presents an assessment of RINDHCA's activities and achievements during 2024, structured from the perspective of key processes that have guided the network's work. First, it highlights the process of strengthening and improving RINDHCA's good governance, which has consolidated more inclusive and efficient internal structures, as well as participatory mechanisms that reinforce transparency and decision-making. Second, it addresses the process of strengthening and expanding strategic cooperation, which has enabled the establishment of key alliances with regional and international actors, expanding the network's impact on critical human rights issues. Finally, it analyses the process of strengthening NHRIs, focused on supporting their technical and operational capacity to implement the Paris Principles and other relevant international frameworks.

The section concludes with an analysis of trends and opportunities, identifying emerging challenges and strategic areas of action for RINDHCA in the coming years. Likewise, conclusions are presented that integrate lessons learned and goals achieved, outlining a roadmap that reaffirms the network's commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights in the Americas.

I. Processes of Strengthening and Improving RINDHCA's Good Governance

RINDHCA Members

According to RINDHCA's Statutes, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) from the American continent that are established in accordance with the Paris Principles, duly accredited by GANHRI, and express interest in supporting RINDHCA's objectives may become part of the network, regardless of their specific designation in each country. Within the network, the following types of associated institutions exist (Article 22 of the Bylaws):

- With Status A, as full members of RINDHCA, regardless of their designation in each country, NHRIs from the American continent that are established in accordance with the Paris Principles and have obtained GANHRI accreditation.
- With Status B, as observers, NHRIs from the American continent that are established in accordance with the Paris Principles and are in the process of obtaining GANHRI accreditation.

Currently, RINDHCA has 18 members: 15 with Status A, having met the Paris Principles requirements, and 3 with Status B.

- **Status A:** Argentina, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay.
- **Status B:** Nicaragua, Panama, and Venezuela.



Juan José Böckel
Ombudsman of the People of Argentina



Pedro Callisaya Aro
Ombudsman of the People of Bolivia



Charlotte-Anne Malischewski
Deputy Chief Commissioner



Iris Marín Ortiz
Ombudsman of the People of Colombia



Angie Cruickshank Lambert
Ombudsman of the Inhabitants of Costa Rica



César Marcel Córdova Valverde
Ombudsman of the People of Ecuador



Consuelo Contreras Largo
Director of INDH Chile



Raquel Caballero de Guevara
Procurator DD.HH El Salvador



José Alejandro Córdova
Procurator DD.HH Guatemala



Jean Wilner Morin
Protector del Ciudadano de Haití



Blanca Izaguirre
Ombudsperson of the People of Honduras



María del Rosario Piedra Ibarra
Human Rights Commissioner Mexico



Darling Ríos
Procurator DD.HH Nicaragua



Eduardo Leblanc González
Ombudsperson of the People of Panamá



Rafael Ávila
Ombudsperson of the People of Paraguay



Josué Gutiérrez Córdor
Ombudsperson of the People of Perú



Carmen Rodríguez Núñez
Ombudsperson of the People of Uruguay



Alfredo José Ruiz Angulo
Ombudsperson of the People of Venezuela

Organs and Functioning of RINDHCA

RINDHCA operates in a coordinated manner through two key groups—governing bodies and a support body—to ensure effective governance and fulfill its objectives in promoting and protecting human rights in the region. Additionally, it guarantees active participation in GANHRI’s governance structures.

Governing Bodies

- **General Assembly:** The supreme decision-making body, composed of all NHRI

members. It defines general policies and establishes the network's strategies.

- **Coordination Committee:** Responsible for implementing the General Assembly's decisions and coordinating RINDHCA's actions. It is composed of representatives from different geographical areas.
- **General Secretariat:** Represents RINDHCA in international relations and leads the work of the Coordination Committee.

Support Body

- **Permanent Technical Secretariat:** Responsible for managing operational activities and providing technical and logistical support to the network.

1.1 General Assembly

On April 8 and 9, the RINDHCA Annual Meeting was held in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia. This event hosted RINDHCA's annual assembly and the international seminar-workshop on "Access to Justice in Environmental Matters", where various actors from academia, civil society, and NHRIs from across the Americas engaged in discussions. Additionally, on Monday, May 6, 2024, in Geneva, Switzerland, RINDHCA held a working meeting with the NHRIs of the Americas within the framework of the GANHRI 2024 Annual Meeting.

According to Article 10 of the RINDHCA Statutes, the Ordinary Assembly must meet at least once a year when a simple majority (half plus one) of its members are present. Extraordinary Assemblies may be convened when deemed necessary by the General Secretariat, when agreed upon by the Coordination Committee, or when requested in writing by one-third of the members.

1.2 Coordination Committee and General Secretary

As the term of the 2021–2023 Coordination Committee came to an end, on Monday, April 10, 2023, the NHRIs that make up RINDHCA's General Assembly held an Extraordinary Session, during which they elected the new [Coordination Committee for the 2023–2025 period](#), in accordance with the RINDHCA Statutes.

On April 12, 2023, the newly elected Coordination Committee, in compliance with the RINDHCA Statutes, unanimously appointed its new General Secretary for the aforementioned period. Throughout 2024, multiple coordination and dialogue meetings were held with the Coordination Committee, leveraging opportunities such as the GANHRI Annual Meeting (March 2024) and the [XXIX Assembly and XXVIII Annual Congress of the Ibero-American Federation of Ombudspersons \(FIO\)](#), held in Asunción, Paraguay, from October 29 to 31, 2024.

Current Composition of the Coordination Committee and General Secretariat

General Secretary and Representative of the Andean Region

Mr. Pedro Francisco Callisaya Aro
Ombudsman of the Plurinational State of Bolivia

North America

Ms. Charlotte-Anne Malischewski
Interim Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission

Central America

Mr. José Alejandro Córdova
Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Guatemala

Southern Region

Mr. Juan José Böckel
Deputy General Secretary (Acting)



It is important to note that the Coordination Committee is composed of four NHRIs that hold full membership status within the network and maintain “A” status before GANHRI. These institutions represent the four subregions of the Americas: North America, Central America, the Andean Region, and the Southern Region.

The appointment and ratification of RINDHCA’s Coordination Committee for a two-year term is duly registered in the Public Registry of Panama. This official record was formalized through Public Deed No. 14565, dated June 22, 2023, issued by the Twelfth Notary of the Circuit of Panama.

Similarly, the nomination and election of the Ombudsman of the Plurinational State of Bolivia as General Secretary of RINDHCA for a two-year term is also duly registered in the Public Registry of Panama. This official record was formalized through Public Deed No. 15919, dated July 7, 2023, issued by the Twelfth Notary of the Circuit of Panama.

1.3 Designation of NHRIs in GANHRI Governance Bodies

RINDHCA participates and holds positions in the following governing bodies of GANHRI:

- **Finance Committee:** During the Extraordinary Session of the RINDHCA General

Assembly on April 10, 2023, the Office for the Defense of Human Rights of El Salvador was designated as the representative of the Americas region in this committee for a three-year term.

- **Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA):** In the Extraordinary Session of the General Assembly on October 3, 2022, the National Commissioner for Human Rights of Honduras was elected as RINDHCA's representative before the GANHRI Sub-Committee on Accreditation. As Alternate Representative, the National Human Rights Commission of Mexico was chosen. Both institutions will hold their positions from 2022 to 2025.

1.4 Technical Secretariat

Since January 2023, the Technical Secretariat of RINDHCA has been composed of:

- Consuelo Olvera Treviño – Permanent Technical Secretary
- Augusto Rey Hernández de Agüero – Senior Human Rights Officer
- Ana Vallarino – Administrative Officer

This team was introduced to RINDHCA member NHRIs by Raquel Caballero, in her role as General Secretary, through Communiqué 01/2023 on February 1, 2023. Furthermore, during an Extraordinary Session of the RINDHCA General Assembly on February 21, 2023, the appointment of Consuelo Olvera Treviño as Permanent Technical Secretary of RINDHCA, along with the confirmation of the other members of the Technical Secretariat, was officially validated.

Based on this decision, the Coordination Committee, composed of the NHRIs of El Salvador, Canada, Colombia, and Argentina, formally ratified the appointment of Consuelo Olvera Treviño as Permanent Technical Secretary of RINDHCA and authorized its protocolization and registration in the Public Registry of Panama.

The appointment and ratification of Consuelo Olvera Treviño as Permanent Technical Secretary of RINDHCA is duly registered in the Public Registry of Panama. This protocolization was completed through Public Deed No. 7476, dated March 31, 2023, issued by the Twelfth Notary of the Circuit of Panama.

RINDHCA Action Plan

As part of the NHRI.EU Phase 3 project, during an Extraordinary Session of the RINDHCA General Assembly on February 21, 2023, the first RINDHCA Action Plan was unanimously approved. This plan, designed to run until 2024, focuses primarily on capacity development and strengthening NHRIs across the region.

The Action Plan was the result of a consultative process conducted between February and March 2022, followed by an update in July 2022. In its development, the GANHRI Action Plan was taken into consideration. The 2024 activities of RINDHCA have been guided by this Action Plan.

First Annual RINDHCA Meeting

As part of the efforts to strengthen governance and consolidate the identity of the network, in 2024, the first Annual Meeting of RINDHCA was organized. This event took place in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, on April 8 and 9, bringing together the RINDHCA General Assembly and the international seminar-workshop on “Access to Justice in Environmental Matters.” It also included key exchanges with strategic actors such as OHCHR, UNDP, the IACHR, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

This meeting was one of the most significant achievements of the year, as it allowed different actors that give life to the network, such as NHRIs, academia, international and regional organizations, and civil society, to come together. It was a key space for generating synergies, sharing experiences, and evaluating the progress made in consolidating RINDHCA.



Encuentro anual RINDHCA 2024

Seminario taller internacional Acceso a la Justicia en Asuntos Ambientales

Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, 8 y 9 de abril



Furthermore, the event served as a platform to reaffirm the network’s commitment to addressing emerging human rights issues, such as access to environmental justice, the protection and defense of human rights defenders, the prevention of torture, and the protection of migrants’ rights.



Due Diligence Process for the Good Governance of RINDHCA

1.1. The due diligence processes initiated in 2023 to ensure the proper legal functioning of the Technical Secretariat and the General Assembly of RINDHCA remained active. This process is carried out in consultation with the Illueca Law Firm.

1.2. The good practice of ensuring that the various contracts entered into by RINDHCA undergo legal review and validation by the Illueca Law Firm is maintained. In this regard, the following contracts have undergone evaluation during 2024:

- Professional services contract with Ramiro Rivadeneira as a consultant to prepare reports compiling best practices from RINDHCA working groups.
- Professional services contract with Laura Barrera as a Consultant for the redesign and update of the RINDHCA website.
- Professional services contract with Laura Barrera as a Consultant for the design and implementation of a communication campaign following the General Assembly.
- Professional services contract with Adriana Piquero as a Consultant for the preparation of a diagnosis on the express mandates of NHRIs in human rights related to political participation and a manual for NHRIs on accompanying and observing electoral processes.
- Professional services contract with Juan Carlos Arjona as a consultant for designing a protocol for the attention and protection of the rights of migrant or refugee populations.

1.3. As part of the due diligence process, a policy of constant and fluid dialogue is maintained between the Technical Secretariat and the governance bodies of RINDHCA. In this way, periodic meetings are held between the Technical Secretariat and the General Secretariat of RINDHCA to address various issues related to its functioning and good operation.

Strengthening the Network through Communications

The strengthening of RINDHCA through communications is essential for consolidating its role as an effective platform for the promotion and protection of human rights in the Americas. A solid communication strategy makes it possible to highlight the challenges and advances in human rights defense, foster the exchange of experiences and good practices among NHRIs, and amplify the impact of their initiatives at both regional and international levels.

Moreover, effective communication strengthens ties with strategic actors, facilitates influence on the public agenda, and reinforces transparency and accountability—essential pillars for building trust and legitimacy.

In this regard, in order to properly manage the RINDHCA website, social media, and communications, the network has a communication specialist, Diego Padrón, who assists the Technical Secretariat. Along with him and an international consultant who has contributed to specific campaigns, the Technical Secretariat has launched a communication strategy outlined below.

1.1 Website Management

Throughout 2024, maintenance has been carried out on the website: www.rindhca.org, which has been conceived as the space dedicated to the Ombudspersons, Human Rights Commissions, and NHRIs across the Americas, showcasing their national and regional efforts in service to, and the protection of, the fundamental rights of the most vulnerable populations.

1.2 Management of RINDHCA Social Media Profiles

X: Daily management of the X profile is maintained, with an increase in original content: <https://x.com/rindhca>

LinkedIn: Daily management of RINDHCA's institutional LinkedIn profile is maintained: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/rindhca-america>

YouTube: The YouTube channel shares recordings of webinars and audiovisual materials: <https://www.youtube.com/@RINDHCA>

1.3 RINDHCA Blog

Since 2023, RINDHCA has published a blog that, by 2024, has reached seventeen posts written by heads of NHRIs and specialists. This informative space has become a key tool for sharing in-depth analysis of current human rights issues at both the national and regional levels. Each article addresses urgent issues from technical and reflective perspectives, promoting an understanding of the challenges and opportunities in defending fundamental rights.

The blog not only broadens the reach of RINDHCA by connecting with a more diverse audience, but it also encourages dialogue on critical issues to build inclusive societies that respect human rights. It also serves as an expression platform for NHRIs, allowing them to highlight the topics they consider priority in their specific contexts, thus strengthening their regional and international influence.

The blog can be accessed via this link: <https://www.rindhca.org/blog-rindhca>

1.4 Creation and Publication of Monthly Newsletter

The [RINDHCA newsletter](#), launched in 2023, has become an essential communication and dissemination channel, reaching over one thousand subscribers. Published monthly, this newsletter provides updates on activities, events, and key projects related to human rights in the Americas. Its primary purpose is to keep NHRIs and other interested parties informed about progress and achievements in priority issues for the region.

Additionally, the newsletter includes reports, recommendations, and relevant analysis that facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the promotion and protection of human rights. This resource strengthens the exchange of information and dialogue among strategic actors, contributing to the impact and visibility

of RINDHCA’s work at the regional and international levels.

1.5 Design and Implementation of Communication Campaign

A social media campaign was designed to raise awareness and highlight the risks faced by human rights defenders in combating human rights violations. This campaign was launched under the name “¡Defendamos a quienes nos defienden!” (Let’s Defend Those Who Defend Us!).





A social media campaign was designed to raise awareness about the prevention of torture. Additionally, this campaign served to disseminate the publication “Prevention of Torture: Operational Guide for National Human Rights Institutions,” which provides a conceptual basis on torture and ill-treatment, an overview of international instruments on the matter, and scientific references supporting the work of NHRIs in their strategic planning.



A series of videos were published highlighting the work of NHRIs in the protection and promotion of human rights. This campaign was launched under the title “¡INDH en Acción!” (NHRIs in Action!).

In commemoration of Human Rights Week in December, RINDHCA launched the campaign “Human Rights in Action: 5 Days, 5 Virtual Tools,” an initiative to highlight and share five compendiums of good practices addressing human rights related to Afro-descendant populations, businesses, the environment, migration and refugee issues, and aging. Each day, from December 9 to 13, a compendium of good practices was presented.

With this plan, the aim was to promote knowledge, action, and collaboration around human rights, offering concrete tools to address current challenges.



II. Strengthening and Expansion of Strategic Cooperations

Consolidation of Alliances and Synergies Aimed at Results with United Nations System Organizations and Civil Society

One of the fundamental pillars of RINDHCA's work in 2024 has been the strengthening and expansion of its strategic cooperations. Throughout the year, key partnerships have been consolidated with various international organizations from the United Nations system and with civil society, aimed at achieving concrete results in priority areas.

Among the main alliances are:

- **Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT):** With APT, training sessions have been developed, and specific products focused on the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment have been generated. This work has been essential to strengthen the capacities of the NHRIs in the supervision of detention centers and the implementation of prevention protocols.
- **Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR):** In April 2024, an institutional collaboration agreement was signed with the IACHR. This alliance has allowed the NHRIs to better understand the work of the Court. Additionally, it generated an internship program at the Court for NHRI officials.
- **Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR):** Training sessions have been carried out for NHRI officials in collaboration with the IACHR, with a focus on the rights of older persons, the protection of the rights of refugees, and environmental justice. Cooperation with the IACHR and its special rapporteurships, such as the Special Rapporteurship on Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights (REDESCA), as well as the Special Rapporteurship on Older Persons, has been key in strengthening the NHRIs' capacity to defend these rights.
- **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):** Together with UNHCR, RINDHCA has participated in the formulation of the new Regional Migration Plan led by the Republic of Chile, within the framework of the Cartagena +40 process. This plan is crucial for the protection of the rights of refugees and migrants in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- **Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC):** The collaboration with ECLAC has focused on human rights and the environment, with special emphasis on the implementation of the Escazú Agreement, which promotes access to environmental justice and the protection of environmental human rights defenders.
- **Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID):** With AECID's support, training sessions on the protection of human rights defenders have been developed, and a sensitization program on the rights of Afro-descendant populations has been implemented.

- **Latin American Alliance of Environmental Law Clinics:** Foundations have been laid to promote joint actions linking academia with NHRIs, especially in the field of environmental justice, creating a bridge with academia.
- **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP):** Together with UNDP, RINDHCA is implementing a project focused on capacity-building for NHRIs in the field of human rights and business. This work is fundamental to promoting respect for human rights in business contexts.
- **Danish Institute for Human Rights:** Through this alliance, RINDHCA has received technical assistance to train NHRIs in the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
- **CERALC Project:** The Responsible Business Conduct in Latin America and the Caribbean (CERALC) Project of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has included RINDHCA and the NHRIs in the preparation of the IX United Nations Regional Forum on Business and Human Rights in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in Brazil in April 2025.
- **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR):** RINDHCA maintains a close collaboration and joint work relationship with the OHCHR on various thematic areas, including participation in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and treaty bodies to present independent reports on States, as well as collaboration in country visits by the Special Rapporteurs and other UN mechanisms.

In addition to these alliances, RINDHCA has signed new agreements with organizations such as:

- **Afro-Colombian Women's Association (AMUAFROC) and the Articulation for the Afrodescendant Decade (ALDA):** [This alliance has focused on the promotion of the rights of Afro-descendant people and the strengthening of cultural and intangible rights.](#)
- **Regional Center for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Latin America (CRESPIAL - UNESCO):** [This agreement has allowed for work on the protection and promotion of cultural rights in the region, particularly those related to Afro-descendant communities.](#)
- **Foundation Diverse Dialogue:** Efforts were made to sign an agreement formalizing the relationship that has already been established, laying the foundation to address the challenges faced by the LGTB+ population in migration and mobility situations.

Collaboration and Coordination with GANHRI

- Contributions to the NHRI-EU Phase 3 Annual Report. Detailed information was provided regarding initiatives, activities, and achievements during the first year of

the project. Actions taken by RINDHCA to advance the project’s objectives were reported, and comments were given on its final version.

- On Monday, May 6, 2024, in Geneva, Switzerland, during the GANHRI Annual Meeting 2024, Pedro Callisaya Aro, the Ombudsman of Bolivia and Secretary General of RINDHCA, [presented the Annual Report of our network to the GANHRI Bureau.](#)



- [On November 25 and 26, in Doha, Qatar, a strategic meeting took place between the Permanent Office of GANHRI in Geneva and the regional networks that make up this global alliance: Europe, Asia-Pacific, Americas, and Africa.](#) The main objective was to update the status of commitments made during the last GANHRI partner meeting and their regional networks, as well as to define the joint roadmap for 2025, preparing for collaboration with the European Union. The RINDHCA was represented by its Permanent Technical Secretary, Consuelo Olvera.



- On November 27, 2024, during the first session of the GANHRI Bureau meeting in Doha, Qatar, the [Secretary General of RINDHCA and Ombudsman of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Mr. Pedro Callisaya Aro, presented the RINDHCA Annual Report 2024](#). This report highlighted the progress made over the course of a year that consolidated the transformation initiated in 2023 under Phase III of the NHRI.EU project. As members of the Coordination Committee and, therefore, members of the GANHRI Bureau, Mr. Juan Carlos Mazzini and Mrs. Charlotte-Anne Malischewski, Interim Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission (virtual), also participated.



III. Process of Strengthening NHRIs

In 2024, RINDHCA has continued its efforts to strengthen NHRIs in the region, ensuring that they have the necessary capacities to fulfill their mandate of protecting and promoting human rights. This includes sustained support in key areas such as training, accreditation, and the implementation of good practices to enhance their effectiveness in defending human rights.

The support provided by RINDHCA has been crucial for NHRIs to face the challenges of an increasingly complex environment, where political pressures and threats to institutional independence may affect their performance. In this regard, particular emphasis has been placed on strengthening the internal processes of NHRIs, ensuring that they operate under the highest standards of transparency, pluralism, and autonomy, as well as specialized technical capacities, as established by the Paris Principles.

Thematic Working Groups: A Regional Collaboration Process

In June 2023, RINDHCA took a significant step toward consolidating its strategic priorities by establishing six thematic working groups. These groups were designed to address the most pressing human rights needs in the region and promote a platform for the exchange of experiences, best practices, and institutional strengthening among NHRIs.

The identification of the topics covered by the working groups was carried out through a consultative process involving all RINDHCA member NHRIs. This process began with a series of surveys and bilateral interviews that gathered input on the most relevant thematic areas for each institution. Subsequently, virtual meetings were held with representatives from each NHRI, where the survey results were discussed, and regional priorities were established.

The decision-making process for the creation of the working groups was structured in an inclusive and transparent manner, allowing NHRIs to contribute their local perspectives. At the end of this process, the creation of six thematic groups was agreed upon:

1. Migrant and refugee population
2. Business and human rights
3. Prevention of torture and ill-treatment
4. Afro-descendant population
5. Human rights and the environment
6. Human rights in old age

The working groups have been conceived not only as spaces for discussion but also as action mechanisms aimed at generating concrete outputs, such as reports, guidelines, and policy recommendations. In this regard, the working groups held quarterly meetings to discuss the progress of their activities and adjust their action plans based on the results obtained. These meetings also served as a space for identifying obstacles and seeking joint solutions. Additionally, each group was able to identify and systematize best practices within their respective areas of expertise.

Methodology and Strategic Approach of the Groups

Each working group has followed a methodological approach based on dialogue, continuous consultation, and the implementation of best practices. To ensure the effectiveness of the groups, clear criteria were established to define the roles and responsibilities of each participant, as well as the short- and long-term objectives and goals to be achieved.

The coordinators of each group were selected by consensus, with regional representativeness prioritized in the composition of each team. Additionally, a horizontal working dynamic has been promoted, ensuring that all participating NHRIs have a voice in decision-making. The working groups have been conceived not only as spaces for discussion but also as action mechanisms aimed at generating concrete outputs, such as reports, guidelines, and policy recommendations.

Working Group Sessions

2023:

- **Migrant and Refugee Population:** 5 sessions
- **Business and Human Rights:** 3 sessions
- **Afro-descendant Population:** 5 sessions
- **Human Rights and the Environment:** 5 sessions
- **Human Rights in Old Age and Aging:** 5 sessions
- **Prevention of Torture and Ill-Treatment:** 5 sessions

2024:

- **Migrant and Refugee Population:** 4 sessions
- **Business and Human Rights:** 3 sessions
- **Afro-descendant Population:** 3 sessions
- **Human Rights and the Environment:** 3 sessions
- **Human Rights in Old Age and Aging:** 3 sessions
- **Prevention of Torture and Ill-Treatment:** 3 sessions

Monitoring and Evaluation Processes: Mechanisms for Tracking the Working Groups

A rigorous approach has been implemented to monitor and evaluate the progress of the working groups, ensuring that the established objectives are efficiently met and that concrete and impactful outputs are generated. This process has been essential to maintaining cohesion and alignment among the various initiatives of the network.

Monitoring and Evaluation System

The RINDHCA Technical Secretariat established a monitoring and evaluation system to provide continuous oversight of the working groups. This system included the periodic collection of progress reports from each group and the organization of evaluation meetings with the coordinators. Additionally, a set of key performance indicators was developed to measure the impact of the groups' actions in terms of deliverables, participation, and regional collaboration.

Regular Meetings

The working groups held quarterly meetings to discuss the progress of their activities and adjust their action plans based on the results obtained. These meetings also served as a space for identifying obstacles and seeking joint solutions.

Working Group on Migrant and Refugee Population

Mission

The Working Group on Migrant and Refugee Population has the mission of reaffirming that the response to the situation of people who have been forcibly displaced from their countries of origin—whether in transit or residing in countries across the Americas—must be carried out under strict protection of their human rights and in alignment with the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda.

Oriented towards contributing to Objective 6 of the 2022-2024 Action Plan.

Key Activities

Organize training sessions and provide technical assistance to NHRIs.

Raise awareness about the situation of migrant and refugee populations from a human rights perspective.

Deepen the understanding of the role that NHRIs play in addressing this situation.

Members of the Working Group

NHRIs from North America
Mexico

NHRIs from Central America and the Caribbean
Costa Rica
El Salvador
Guatemala
Honduras
Panama

NHRIs from the Andean Region
Bolivia
Colombia
Ecuador

NHRIs from the Southern Region
Argentina
Paraguay
Uruguay

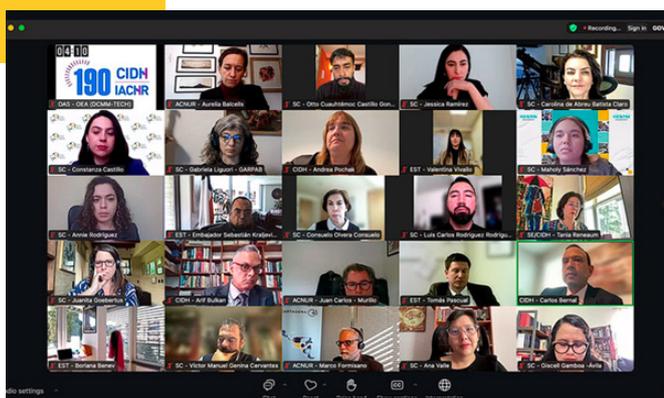
The Working Group on Migrant and Refugee Population has developed this focus area following an approach particularly centered on those in situations of vulnerability during their transit or stay in countries across the American continent.

Advocacy and Capacity Building in Human Rights and Migrant Population during 2024

- RINDHCA actively supported the Cartagena +40 Process, aimed at adopting the Declaration and Action Plan of Chile 2024-2034 on the protection of refugee rights, marking 40 years since the Cartagena Declaration. As part of this effort, it participated in thematic consultations held during 2024: April 4-5 – Mexico City; May 16-17 – Brasilia; and, June 19-20 – Bogotá. It is now expected that the Cartagena +40 Process Secretariat will include NHRIs as key actors in the tasks of the Follow-up Mechanism.



- On Tuesday, July 9, RINDHCA, represented by its Permanent Technical Secretary, Consuelo Olvera, participated in the CIDH public hearing on the protection of refugee rights, marking 40 years since the Cartagena Declaration. This hearing was part of the virtual ex officio public hearings during the 190th Period of Sessions, held from July 8 to 12, 2024.



- As a result, on Thursday, December 12, with RINDHCA's participation, the Ministerial Event of the Cartagena +40 Process concluded with the adoption of the Declaration and Action Plan of Chile 2024-2034. Countries from Latin America and the Caribbean reaffirmed their commitment to solidarity, protection, and

sustainable solutions for refugees, displaced persons, and stateless individuals.



- Supported Ecuador's NHRI in the publication and accessibility of the Migration Law Repository.
- With the assistance of an international consultant, the Technical Secretariat is designing a protocol for the protection and assistance of migrant and refugee populations, aiming to support the implementation of the new regional strategic plan being developed within the Cartagena +40 Process.
- In collaboration with the Working Group and with the support of an international consultant, a compendium of good practices on human rights and migrant populations was developed.

Working Group on Business and Human Rights

Mission

The Working Group on Human Rights and Business has the mission of reaffirming the role that businesses play in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda and protecting human rights. This involves aligning private sector actions with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and embracing the 2010 Edinburgh Declaration on the role of NHRIs in relation to business and human rights.

Oriented towards contributing to Objective 5 of the 2022-2024 Action Plan.

Key Activities

- Organize training sessions and provide technical assistance to NHRIs;
- Encourage NHRIs to promote the local adoption of National Action Plans on business and human rights;
- Facilitate dialogues between the public sector, private sector, and civil society to

promote sustainable development

Members of the Working Group

NHRIs from North America
Mexico
NHRIs from Central America and the Caribbean
Costa Rica
El Salvador
Guatemala
Honduras
Panama
NHRIs from the Andean Region
Bolivia
Colombia
Ecuador
Peru
NHRIs from the Southern Region
Argentina
Paraguay
Uruguay

The Business and Human Rights Working Group has focused its efforts on promoting the implementation of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in the region. The process followed by this group has been based on the training of NHRIs on topics related to corporate due diligence, as well as on the monitoring of corporate compliance with human rights obligations.

Advocacy and Capacity Building in Business and Human Rights during 2024

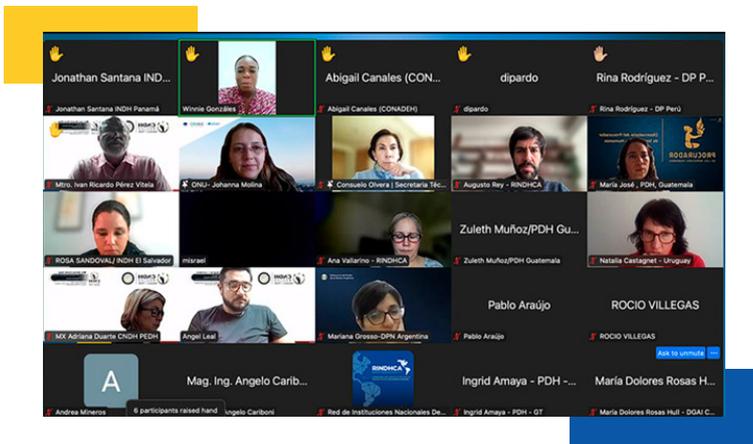
- Support and monitoring of the implementation of the GANHRI-UNDP-OHCHR Tripartite Partnership (TPP) continues. [On May 23 and 24, 2024, the TPP Annual Review Meeting was held in New York City, with RINDHCA represented by its Secretary-General and the network's Permanent Technical Secretariat.](#)



- During the 2024 GANHRI Annual Conference on May 8 in Geneva, Switzerland, RINDHCA and its member NHRIs actively participated in the session “The Role and Experiences of NHRIs in Addressing Business and Human Rights.”



- On Thursday, September 19, a session was held with the region’s NHRIs and OHCHR, within the framework of the CERALC Project, as part of the preparatory dialogues for the IX Regional Forum on Business and Human Rights in Latin America and the Caribbean, which will take place in Brazil in April 2025. These preparatory dialogues aim to foster discussion on the theme “Respect for Human Rights: Debates on the Role of Businesses and the State in Due Diligence with People and the Environment at the Center,” identifying priorities and challenges for designing Forum sessions.



- A compendium of best practices on business and human rights was developed in collaboration with the Working Group and with the support of an international consultant.

Working Group on Prevention of Torture and Ill-treatment

Mission

The Working Group on the Prevention of Torture and Ill-Treatment has the mission of reaffirming the role of NHRIs in the prevention of torture through concrete activities, including their function as National Preventive Mechanisms. The prohibition of torture is fundamental, and States have the obligation to adopt effective measures to prevent it and ensure compliance at the national level, as part of their international commitments.

Oriented towards contributing to Objective 8 of the 2022-2024 Action Plan.

Key Activities

- Organize training sessions and provide technical assistance to NHRIs;
- Explore various practical and effective ways in which NHRIs can utilize their broad mandates and extensive protection functions under the Paris Principles to uphold everyone's right to human dignity and to be free from torture and other ill-treatment;
- Strengthen the institutional capacities of National Preventive Mechanisms against Torture.

Members of the Working Group

NHRIs from North America
Canada
Mexico
NHRIs from Central America and the Caribbean
Costa Rica
Guatemala
Honduras
Panama
NHRIs from the Andean Region
Bolivia
Colombia
Ecuador
Peru
NHRIs from the Southern Region
Argentina
Paraguay
Uruguay

The Working Group on the Prevention of Torture and Ill-Treatment was created to strengthen the capacities of NHRIs in preventing torture and other cruel and inhuman

treatment in their respective countries. This process has been particularly relevant, as many NHRIs in the region play a key role as National Preventive Mechanisms against Torture (NPMs), as established by the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention against Torture.

The group's main achievement has been the creation of a common reference framework for the prevention of torture, which NHRIs can adapt to their national contexts. The compendium of best practices published has been widely disseminated and adopted as a key tool for strengthening NHRIs' capacities in their role as NPMs.

Advocacy and Capacity Building in Human Rights and Prevention of Torture and Ill-Treatment during 2024

- Improved coordination with organizations such as the Association for the Prevention of Torture (APT), facilitating the implementation of new joint initiatives, including the Guide for Monitoring in Immigration Detention Centers for National Preventive Mechanisms against Torture, developed in coordination with APT and OHCHR.
- Publication of the Spanish translation of the manual "Preventing Torture, An Operational Guide for National Human Rights Institutions", originally developed by APT and the Asia Pacific Forum.
- Implementation of a communications campaign aimed at raising awareness of the importance of torture prevention.

Working Group on Afro-descendant Population

Mission

The Working Group on Afro-descendant Populations has the mission of strengthening the actions of NHRIs for the protection and promotion of Afro-descendant populations in the region, joining efforts with strategic actors. This includes the study, analysis, and defense of their rights within the framework of the "International Decade for People of African Descent" (2015-2024), proclaimed by the UN to promote recognition, justice, and development.

Oriented towards contributing to Objective 8 of the 2022-2024 Action Plan.

Key Activities

- Organize training sessions and provide technical assistance to NHRIs;
- Support NHRIs in creating complaint registries for Afro-descendant populations and including the ethno-racial variable;
- Promote specialized areas within NHRIs to increase the visibility of Afro-descendant populations.

Members of the Working Group

NHRIs from North America
Mexico

NHRIs from Central America and the Caribbean
Costa Rica
El Salvador
Guatemala
Honduras
Panama

NHRIs from the Andean Region
Bolivia
Colombia
Ecuador

NHRIs from the Southern Region
Argentina
Paraguay
Uruguay

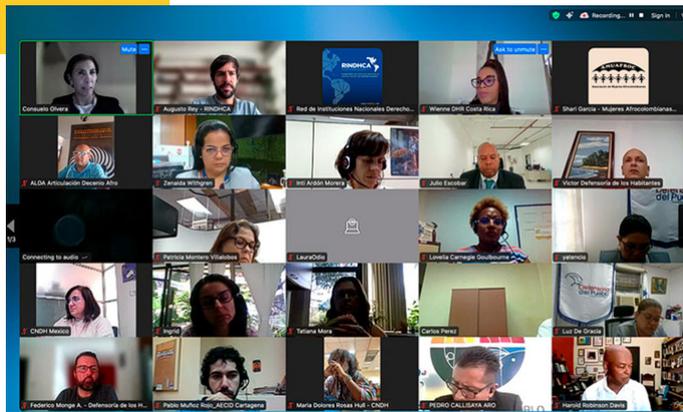
The creation of the Working Group on Afro-descendant Populations emerged in response to the demands of several NHRIs that identified the need to address the systemic discrimination faced by this population in the region. This group has operated within the framework of the “International Decade for People of African Descent,” proclaimed by the UN, and has focused on designing strategies to promote recognition, justice, and development for Afro-descendant communities in Latin America.

Advocacy and capacity building in human rights and Afro-descendant populations during 2024

- As part of the 2024 RINDHCA Annual Meeting, [AMUAFROC](#), [ALDA](#), and [RINDHCA](#) signed a memorandum of understanding aimed, among other objectives, at training NHRI staff and developing a regional report to highlight the situation of Afro-descendant communities in the region.



- Between September and October, every Wednesday, two-hour sessions were held as part of the [Awareness Program on the Rights of Afro-descendant People and Communities in Latin America for the region's NHRIs](#). This program was organized by RINDHCA, the Ombudsperson's Office of Costa Rica, AMUAFROC, and ALDA, with support from AECID. Approximately 90 officials from various NHRIs participated, focusing on the promotion and defense of the human rights of Afro-descendant people, communities, and peoples.



- On October 17, 2024, in commemoration of the International Day of Intangible Cultural Heritage, the Memorandum of Understanding between RINDHCA and CRESPIAL, a UNESCO body, was signed.



- In collaboration with the Working Group and with the support of an international consultant, a compendium of good practices on human rights and Afro-descendant populations was developed.

Working Group on Human Rights and the Environment

Mission

The Working Group on Human Rights and the Environment is committed to addressing the climate crisis through a human rights-based approach while advancing a just transition toward a carbon-free economy. This involves ensuring that climate change decisions are participatory, non-discriminatory, and accountable, and that the benefits and burdens of climate action are shared equitably.

Oriented towards contributing to Objective 8 of the 2022-2024 Action Plan.

Key Activities

- Organizing training sessions and providing technical assistance to NHRIs;
- Proposing strategies for States to ratify and implement human rights treaties, including supporting campaigns for the ratification of the Escazú Agreement;
- Supporting legal frameworks that promote sustainable management and inclusive environmental justice.

Members of the Working Group

NHRIs from North America
Mexico
NHRIs from Central America and the Caribbean
Costa Rica
El Salvador
Guatemala
Honduras
Panama
NHRIs from the Andean Region
Bolivia
Colombia
Ecuador
Peru
NHRIs from the Southern Region
Argentina
Paraguay
Uruguay

Climate change and environmental degradation have become increasingly pressing issues on the human rights agenda. The Working Group on Human Rights and the Environment was established to address the connection between the climate crisis

and human rights and to promote a just transition toward sustainable economies in the region.

The group's work has focused on integrating a human rights-based approach into the environmental policies of RINDHCA member countries. This approach ensures that climate change decisions are participatory and equitable and that the most vulnerable communities are protected from the negative impacts of climate change.

Advocacy and Capacity Building in Human Rights and the Environment During 2024

- On January 10, the Secretary-General of RINDHCA virtually participated in the seminar [Towards a New Approach to Thought and Public Policy on Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Rights \(DESCA\) in Latin America: A Gathering of Voices, Experiences, and Actors to Build Proposals for Change in the Face of Human Rights Challenges](#).
- On April 8 and 9, 2024, in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, RINDHCA organized the [international workshop seminar Access to Justice in Environmental Matters](#), which brought together representatives from RINDHCA's Working Group on Human Rights and the Environment, top authorities from national human rights institutions (NHRIs) across the Americas, as well as academics and civil society representatives.



- [On Thursday, July 4, 2024, a virtual webinar titled Human Rights, Environment, and the Escazú Agreement: NHRIs as Key Actors in Promoting Environmental Rights was held](#), bringing together more than 160 participants from across the continent.



- On Wednesday, August 28, RINDHCA, together with REDESCA (the Special Rapporteurship of the IACHR), [hosted a virtual workshop for RINDHCA's NHRIs on Climate Justice and Human Rights in Latin America](#).



- RINDHCA, represented by its Permanent Technical Secretary, Consuelo Olvera, [actively participated in the International Forum of National Human Rights Institutions on Environmental Defense, organized by the Human Rights Ombudsperson of El Salvador, Raquel Caballero de Guevara](#). This event took place in San Salvador on November 12-13 and gathered key actors in the defense of the right to a healthy and sustainable environment in Latin America.
- In collaboration with the Working Group and with the support of an international consultant, a compendium of best practices on human rights and the environment was developed.

Working Group on Human Rights in Old Age and Aging

Mission

The Working Group on Human Rights in Old Age and Aging has the mission of addressing the challenges faced by older persons by promoting inclusive policies and specific measures to tackle discrimination, poverty, violence, and abuse, ensuring their access to essential services and comprehensive protection.

Oriented towards contributing to Objective 8 of the 2022-2024 Action Plan.

Key Activities

- Organize training sessions for NHRIs to adopt policies and actions aimed at preventing, sanctioning, and eradicating practices that violate the human rights of older persons.
- Support the creation of strong national legal frameworks that promote elder care policies.
- Maintain a database on existing legislation and policies focused on elder care and the protection of their rights.
- Organize seminars or webinars that connect the international community for information exchange and joint action on aging and the rights of older persons.

Members of the Working Group

NHRIs from North America
Mexico

NHRIs from Central America and the Caribbean
Costa Rica
El Salvador
Guatemala
Honduras
Panama

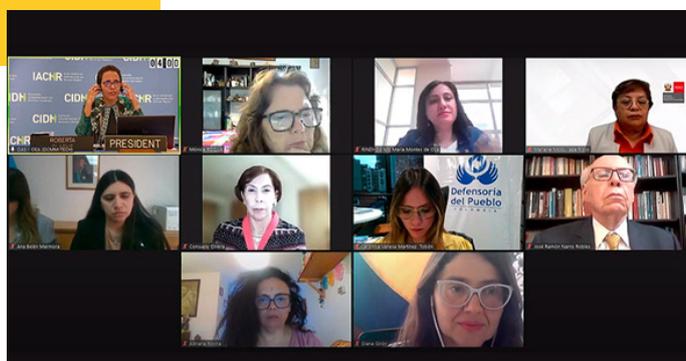
NHRIs from the Andean Region
Bolivia
Colombia
Ecuador
Peru

NHRIs from the Southern Region
Argentina
Paraguay
Uruguay

The Working Group on Human Rights in Old Age and Aging was established to address the challenges and issues faced by older persons in the region, promoting a human rights-based approach that ensures their dignity and protection. This group has worked to coordinate policies and practices that respond to the growing need for protection and support for this population, considering the discrimination, violence, and exclusion they often face.

Advocacy and Capacity Building in Human Rights and Aging during 2024

- On March 1, RINDHCA participated in the [189th Session of the IACHR at the Regional Public Hearing: Situation of the Human Rights of Older Persons](#).



- RINDHCA participated in and contributed to the [14th session of the United Nations Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing](#), which met in New York from May 20 to 22 and on May 24, to discuss trends and identify opportunities to further strengthen the protection of older persons' rights.



- On Thursday, June 6, RINDHCA held a session presenting the IACHR report titled [Human Rights of Older Persons and National Protection Systems in the Americas](#).
- On Tuesday, December 3, 2024, RINDHCA held a valuable virtual exchange with the [GANHRI Working Group on the Rights of Older Persons](#). This space brought together representatives from NHRIs in the Americas—such as Peru, Colombia,

Ecuador, Mexico, El Salvador, Paraguay, and Guatemala, which make up RINDHCA's Aging and Old Age Working Group—alongside NHRIs from South Korea and Poland, members of the GANHRI Working Group.

- In collaboration with the Working Group and with the support of an international consultant, a compendium of best practices on human rights and aging was developed.

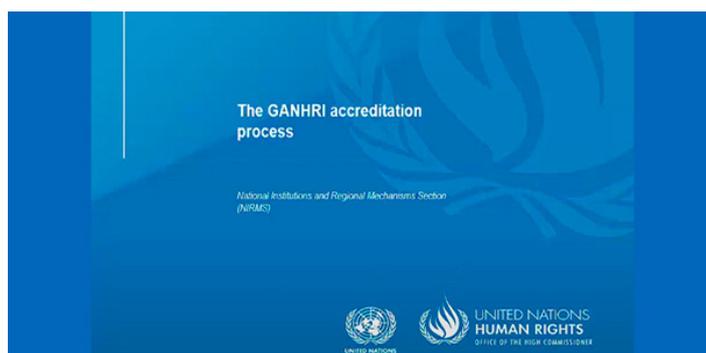
Training and Support for NHRI Accreditation Processes Before GANHRI's SCA in the Americas

GANHRI, through its Sub-Committee on Accreditation (SCA), is responsible for reviewing and accrediting National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) in accordance with the Paris Principles. These principles set internationally agreed minimum standards to ensure that NHRIs are effective in their work. Among the requirements, NHRIs must have their mandates established in the Constitution or national laws, ensuring their independence and autonomy. Additionally, they must have a broad human rights mandate, guarantee pluralism in their composition, possess adequate powers to fulfill their functions, have sufficient resources, implement cooperative methods to interact with other actors, and have the capacity to collaborate with international bodies.

NHRIs that fully comply with the Paris Principles receive "A status," allowing them to participate independently in the UN Human Rights Council, its subsidiary bodies, and some mechanisms of the General Assembly. They can also be full members of GANHRI, with voting rights and the ability to hold positions in its governance structure. On the other hand, those that partially comply with these principles receive "B status."

In this context, RINDHCA, through its Technical Secretariat, participates as an observer in the SCA sessions. Below are the main achievements and activities carried out in 2024 related to the SCA accreditation process:

- On Thursday, January 25, with the support of OHCHR, represented by the National Institutions and Regional Mechanisms Section (NIRMS), training was provided to NHRIs on the process before the SCA of GANHRI. Additionally, a meeting was organized between former and current ombudspersons for a productive exchange of experiences regarding reaccreditation processes.



- Throughout 2024, assistance and support were provided in the preparation process for initial accreditation and reaccreditations for the NHRIs of Bolivia, Costa Rica, Paraguay, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti.
- Over the year, at least three meetings were held with the European Union representation in Belize regarding the possible establishment of an NHRI in that country. Additionally, interactions were maintained with the Office of the General Defender of the Union of Brazil and the Federal Senate of that country to learn more about their work and discuss the possibilities of establishing an NHRI in Brazil under the Paris Principles. As part of this effort, the Permanent Technical Secretariat of RINDHCA participated in September in a series of in-person meetings in Brasília and Curitiba with high-level officials from the Office of the General Defender of the Union and the Federal Senate of Brazil to further understand their work and discuss the possibilities of establishing an NHRI under the Paris Principles.



- Between April 29 and May 3, the Permanent Technical Secretary of RINDHCA, Consuelo Olvera, in her capacity as an observer, participated in person in the first 2024 session of the SCA. During this five-day meeting, a series of NHRIs from the Asia-Pacific, Europe, Africa, and the Americas were reviewed.



- From October 14 to 18, 2024, also as an observer, the Permanent Technical Secretary of RINDHCA, Consuelo Olvera, attended the second session of the SCA. Additionally, on October 11 and 12, 2024, she participated in the SCA retreat.



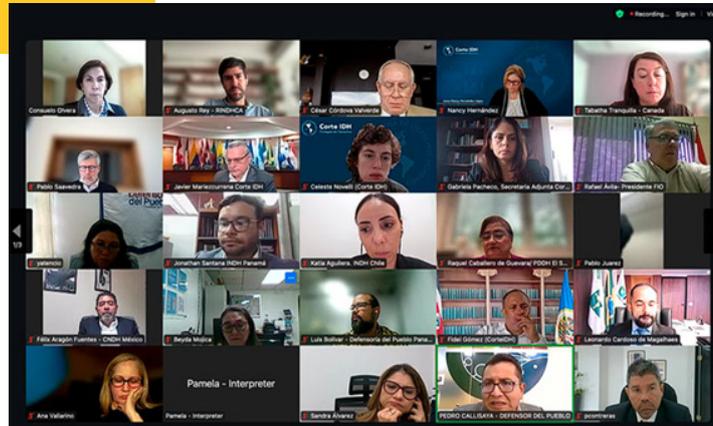
Organization and Participation in Events and Webinars for the Promotion of Issues of Interest for the Region

- On February 28, 2024, in collaboration with OHCHR for Central America, the virtual seminar titled [The Cooperation of NHRIs with Treaty Bodies was organized](#). This event was directed at members of various NHRIs across the Americas.
- On Wednesday, May 22, in New York City, Mr. Pedro Callisaya, Secretary General of RINDHCA and Ombudsman of Bolivia, participated in the high-level panel titled [Public Accessibility and Inclusivity: Developing Strategic Initiatives to Raise Awareness of the Role of Mediation Institutions and Ombudspersons in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, Good Governance, and the Rule of Law](#).



- On Tuesday, August 13, 2024, RINDHCA and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, together with regional NHRIs, organized a roundtable to discuss ways in which NHRIs can collaborate in the implementation of the Court's various actions,

resolutions, and decisions. Proposals and a roadmap were developed to enable joint efforts.



- On Thursday, August 22, RINDHCA held a webinar titled [The Implementation of Treaty Body Recommendations and Other Non-Conventional Mechanisms: The Role of NHRIs](#). This event was organized in coordination with the National Institutions and Regional Mechanisms Section in Geneva and the OHCHR Office in Panama.



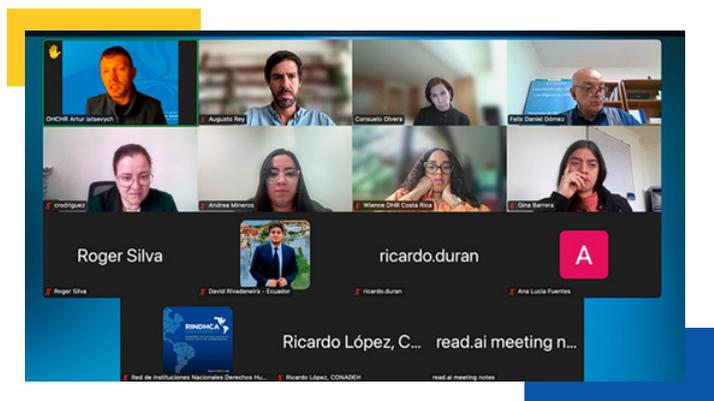
- RINDHCA, represented by its Permanent Technical Secretary, Consuelo Olvera, participated in the [First Global EDUDER Meeting, held from September 2 to 6 in Curitiba, Brazil](#). This event focused on promoting the right to equal access to university education for the most vulnerable groups. It also included participation from the Ibero-American Network on Human Rights Education, which brings together 26 universities from 17 countries and is affiliated with the Ibero-American Postgraduate University Association. Additionally, the Network of Universities Committed to Human Rights Education was present, consisting of 28 higher education institutions and seven associated members from 19 countries, with the support of the Organization of Ibero-American States.



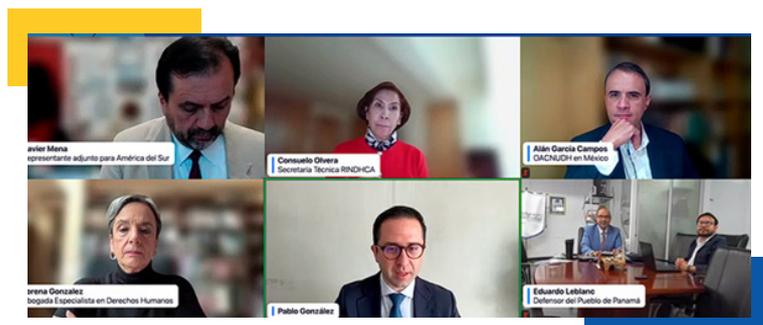
- RINDHCA, represented by its Permanent Technical Secretary, Consuelo Olvera, participated in the XXIX Assembly and XXVIII Annual Congress of the Ibero-American Federation of Ombudspersons (FIO). These significant meetings, held in Asunción, Paraguay, from October 29 to 31, 2024, brought together representatives from NHRIs across Ibero-America. The sessions addressed key regional issues and strengthened strategic alliances in support of human rights.



- On Monday, December 2, RINDHCA, in partnership with OHCHR in Panama, hosted a special presentation and training session for the NHRIs of Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, and Uruguay. The session focused on the use of the new virtual platform, the National Recommendations Tracking Database (NRTD), a tool designed to facilitate the monitoring of recommendations from treaty bodies. The training was led by Artur Latsevych, Human Rights Officer at the OHCHR office in Geneva.



- In commemoration of Human Rights Day, celebrated every December 10, RINDHCA organized a virtual discussion on Thursday, December 5, titled **Autonomy and Independence of NHRIs and the Paris Principles: Key Elements for the Protection of Human Rights**. This event, which gathered over 130 participants, brought together experts and NHRI representatives from the region to reflect on the challenges and strategies for ensuring their independence and strengthening their role in human rights protection.



Publications

RINDHCA continuously works to promote and protect human rights in the region, developing and disseminating resources that strengthen the capacities of NHRIs and other key actors. Below is a representative list of these materials:

- Protocol for the Defense of Human Rights Defenders and Civic Space, as a follow-up to the Marrakech Declaration** (available in English and Spanish).



- Model of National Reports on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders** (available in English and Spanish).



- [Spanish translation of the manual Preventing Torture: An Operational Guide for National Human Rights Institutions](#), originally developed by APT and the Asia Pacific Forum (APF).



- [Compendium of Best Practices on Human Rights and Afro-descendant Populations.](#)



- [Compendium of Best Practices in the Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.](#)



- [Compendium of Best Practices on Human Rights and Business.](#)



- [Compendium of Best Practices on Human Rights and the Environment.](#)



- [Compendium of Best Practices on Human Rights, Aging, and the Elderly.](#)



- [Compendium of Best Practices on Human Rights, Migration, and Refuge.](#)



Statements and Releases in 2024

- January 13, 2024. [Statement 1/2024](#) of the RINDHCA Coordinating Committee. The RINDHCA Coordinating Committee expresses its concern over the national crisis in Ecuador resulting from widespread violence classified as an internal armed conflict.
- April 9, 2024. [RINDHCA Statement 02/2024](#) from Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, on its role and contribution to the Cartagena +40 Refugee Process.
- June 26, 2024. [Release 3/2024](#) of the RINDHCA Coordinating Committee on the incursion of uniformed forces into the government headquarters of Bolivia.
- July 3, 2024. RINDHCA endorses the Statement of the Defensoría de los Habitantes of Costa Rica regarding an initial attempt to include the closure of the National Human Rights Institution in the proposed referendum.

- July 30, 2024. [Release 5/2024 of the RINDHCA Coordinating Committee on Venezuela.](#)
- August 15, 2024. [Release 6/2024 RINDHCA. On the attacks and criticisms directed at the NHRI of Chile following a lawsuit for malfeasance.](#)
- August 19, 2024. [Release 07/2024 RINDHCA. On the election of the Ombudsperson of Colombia.](#)
- October 25, 2024. [Release 08/2024 of the RINDHCA Coordinating Committee. On the appointment of the new president of the National Human Rights Institute and Ombudsperson of Uruguay.](#)
- October 31, 2024. [Release 09/2024 of the RINDHCA Coordinating Committee. On the situation of conflict in Bolivia.](#)
- November 4, 2024. [Release 10/2024 of the RINDHCA Coordinating Committee. On the ruling of the Supreme Court of Chile in favor of the National Human Rights Institute of that country.](#)
- November 19, 2024. [Release 11/2024 of the RINDHCA Coordinating Committee. On the irregular process in which the head of the Office for Citizen Protection of Haiti \(OPC\) was appointed and the raid on its physical facilities.](#)

IV Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities

Throughout 2024, RINDHCA has consolidated several significant advances but has also faced challenges and identified opportunities for the future. One of the most notable trends has been the increase in interinstitutional cooperation, which has allowed NHRI in the region not only to share best practices but also to strengthen their capacity to influence national and international political processes. This has been particularly evident in the work related to thematic working groups, such as those on migrant and refugee populations, business and human rights, Afro-descendant populations, human rights and the environment, human rights in aging and old age, and the prevention of torture and ill-treatment.

Regarding challenges, the autonomy of NHRI remains a recurring concern, especially in countries where governments attempt to limit their funding or influence. Additionally, increasing violence against human rights defenders and the deterioration of civic space in some countries have tested the NHRI's ability to fulfill their mandate. These institutions often find themselves under attack, both from political and social sectors, weakening their capacity to effectively protect human rights.

Looking ahead, RINDHCA must continue consolidating its achievements and proactively addressing the challenges it faces. First, it is crucial that NHRI in the region continue working to ensure their autonomy. This includes seeking mechanisms to secure their

political, administrative, and economic independence, as well as creating accountability mechanisms that strengthen their credibility and effectiveness. RINDHCA can play a key role in providing technical and legal support to NHRI facing threats to their independence.

Secondly, RINDHCA must continue promoting strategic alliances, both with international organizations and civil society, to maximize its impact. Joint work with actors such as OHCHR, UNHCR, UNDP, ECLAC, CERALC, the Inter-American Commission, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, among others, has proven effective in addressing complex issues such as forced migration, environmental rights, and the prevention of torture. These collaborations must be expanded and deepened.

Furthermore, it is essential that the internal capacities of NHRI continue to be strengthened, especially in emerging issues such as human rights and climate change, the rights of Afro-descendant and migrant populations, and human rights in business contexts. Continuous training, practical guides, and action protocols are essential for NHRI to effectively fulfill their mandate.

Finally, RINDHCA must continue promoting NHRI compliance with the recommendations of GANHRI's SCA, ensuring that the high standards established by the Paris Principles are upheld. The accreditation of new NHRI in the region, especially in countries where they do not yet exist, must remain a priority.

V. Conclusions

The year 2024 has been one of consolidation for RINDHCA, marked by significant progress in internal governance, interinstitutional collaboration, and the strengthening of NHRI. However, challenges persist, particularly concerning autonomy and the protection of civic space. The network has demonstrated its ability to adapt to changing contexts and address challenges by strengthening the capacities of NHRI and creating strategic alliances.

As RINDHCA moves toward 2025, its role as a platform for mutual learning and collaboration will remain essential to ensuring that NHRI in the region continue to promote and protect human rights in their full scope.

That said, let's recall that just a couple of years ago, the Final Evaluation of Phase II of the NHRI.EU project stated that "Compared to other regions, the Americas lag behind in establishing an effective regional focal point for NHRI in this region," and that "the evaluation raises more doubts than satisfactory answers to the question of whether the RINDHCA Secretariat is ready to assume its functions." We believe that RINDHCA made significant strides in 2023 to dispel these doubts and that in 2024, we have managed to consolidate a network that is not only highly functional but is also generating positive impacts in the region. Today, RINDHCA is regarded as a regional reference, and with a strategic vision—through an action plan aligned with GANHRI's plan—a roadmap has been set to further strengthen the capacities of NHRI across the Americas.