

President of Bolivia receives visit of UN special rapporteur



La Paz, February 23 (RHC)-- With the aim of strengthening justice in Bolivia, President Luis Arce received the United Nations Special Rapporteur, Diego García-Sayán, who made observations on the judicial system in Bolivia during his visit.

"We received the visit of Diego García-Sayán, Special Rapporteur for the Independence of Judges and Lawyers of the United Nations, with the firm commitment to promote the transformation of the judicial system for the benefit of the people who demand justice," stressed the Bolivian head of state.

Starting with the program initiated on February 15th and which included interviews with representatives of various sectors related to this issue, Diego García-Sayán inspected in La Paz, Sucre and Santa Cruz elements of the judiciary, as well as the prosecutorial sector and representatives of the legal profession.

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers insisted on nine aspects observed during his visit to Bolivia. The observations are related to access to justice for individuals, women and justice and related to guarantees for the indigenous community.

Other remarks focused on issues related to the deprivation of liberty; structure and management of the Judiciary; judicial career and transitional judges; Public Prosecutor's Office; serious human rights violations in the last quarter of 2019 and constitutional and institutional reforms.

"One of the most heard phrases, from many people with whom I met, is that justice does not exist for the poor. Victims and family members told me that they encounter obstacles in accessing justice, including having to provide evidence for the investigation, having to bear expenses or make payments for their cases to move forward and lack of access to information about their files and how their cases are progressing," said the report presented by the UN rapporteur.

Another of the points presented as challenges for the Bolivian justice system is related to femicides. The report presents as a concern the fact that there are 869 cases between 2013 and October 2021, an average of one every three and a half days.

"Only 31 percent of the cases have obtained a sentence. According to data from the State Attorney General's Office, as of the date of this report in 2022 until February 17, 15 femicides have already been registered and two are under investigation to determine if it was a femicide," the document indicated.

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