UNDP LAC PDS Nº. 49
Protests, human rights and conflict prevention.
Proposals to rethink the models of state response to social mobilization.

Emanuele Sapienza, Gloria Manzotti and Luqman Patel
Acknowledgements

This policy note has been prepared by the Governance Team of the Regional Hub for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Programme, led by Jairo Acuña-Alfaro. The research and writing were carried out by Emanuele Sapienza together with Gloria Manzotti and Luqman Patel, based on inputs prepared by Pablo Lumerman, Gonzalo Frei and Veronica Burneo. The development process included a series of dialogues with multiple references in public institutions, civil society, different parts of the United Nations system and academia. The input received by the Regional Office for South America of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Development Coordination Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights are particularly appreciated.

Disclaimer:

Protests, human rights and conflict prevention: Proposals to rethink the models of state response to social mobilization.

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in nearly 170 countries and territories, we offer a global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.

Copyright © UNDP 2023 All rights reserved Published in the United States of America
United Nations Development Programme | One United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA

The views, designations, and recommendations that are presented in this report do not necessarily reflect the official position of UNDP.
1. Introduction

Social protest—when occurring through nonviolent means—is a key manifestation of human rights recognized and protected by international right, such as the right to freedom of expression, the right to freedom of peaceful gathering and the right to freedom of association. As such, protest allows people to exercise their autonomy through a bond of solidarity with others. At the same time, the possibility of joining protest movements is a critical condition for the realization of the right to participate in the conduct of public affairs. Therefore, the protection of this possibility is an essential element for the existence and consolidation of democratic societies.

Thus, protest management based on the principles of protection of human rights and promotion of dialogue is fundamental to support the legitimacy of state institutions. Furthermore, protests play a key role in the inclusive, participatory and peaceful resolution of differences. However, in practice the causes are often confused with the symptoms and attempts are made to prevent protests instead of addressing the tensions that have generated them. As the Secretary General of the United Nations observes in the document “The Highest Aspiration. A Call to Action for Human Rights”:

Society is stronger and more resilient when women and men can participate actively in political, economic, and social life and contribute to the creation of the policies that affect their lives, especially when they have the possibility to Access information, dialogue, express their disagreement and unite to express their opinions [...].

However, in too many places, the space allocated for this participation is shrinking. There are more and more repressive laws, that impose greater restrictions on freedoms of expression, participation, assembly and association (United Nations, 2020a, p. 9).

Latin America and the Caribbean is currently facing the exacerbation of several sources of conflict, due in part to temporary factors (such as the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic) and in part to the intensification of long-term structural tensions related to problems of sustainability and inclusion resulting from prevalent development models. One of the manifestations of this process has been the accelerated increase of various forms of social protest. For example, it is worth mentioning the social eruptions that took place starting in 2019 in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Paraguay and Peru, among other countries.

The intensification of protest movements presents great challenges for States. On one hand, the protests are based on rights that should be respected, protected and guaranteed by institutions based on the provisions of the ratified international treaties, as well as constitutions and national laws. On the other hand, there are profound differences in public opinion about what can be considered “reasonable” disruption of public order, as well as the appropriate way to respond to protest movements, especially in the contexts characterized by high polarization.

---

1 Monthly protest tracking data documented by The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) indicates that the global trend of increasing protest movements is also observed in Latin America and the Caribbean. The data collected in the monthly monitoring series of protests between 2019 and 2021 indicate that in that period the rate of increase in protests was 12%, going from 17,744 protests in 2019 to 19,839 in 2020; In addition, there was an interannual growth of 24% between 2020 and 2021, and a total of 24,580 protests were registered in 2021. The average number of monthly protests increased from 739 protests per month in 2019 to 1,851 protests per month in 2021. If the month of January 2022 is taken as a reference, it is observed that 88% of the protests were concentrated in 10 countries in the region (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela). It is also observed that Brazil, Mexico and Venezuela amounted to 50% of the total protests in the region.
In light of this complexity, the waves of social movement of recent years have shown several weaknesses in the region –normative, as well as institutional, social and cultural– of traditional protest response models, as well as the limited capacity of authorities to respond non-violently and constructively to different social demands. In this context, several types of highly problematic responses have been observed, both with regard to protection of human rights, as well as with regard to the mediation and peaceful transformation of conflicts. In particular, in many places the improper use of public force provoked an escalation of violence with grave consequences, and in some cases caused the loss of human life.

The guide titled “United Nations Guidance Note on the Protection and Promotion of Civic Space” calls for the different parts of the United Nations system to redouble their actions in order to achieve, among others, the following objectives:

- Promote the effective participation of different groups in national decision-making and identify and address the gaps in participation with the outcome of guaranteeing that groups at risk of not being heard participate in the debates that affect their lives.

- Elaborate strategies to expand civic spaces, address gaps online and offline, and contribute to the construction of broad coalitions in civic space.

- Provide policy advice, support capacity development, provide technical assistance and provide financial support with a vision to increase public participation, improving laws and policies relevant to online and offline civic space, and strengthening national mechanisms for protection.

- Demonstrate against restrictions that, in online and offline civic space, affect the freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly and association, particularly in the context of attempts to censor and criminalize expression, if these are incompatible with international human rights standards.

- In the context of peaceful assembly, support the right to peaceful assembly and the right of journalism to cover protests safely, and at the same time allow for addressing the profound causes of the protest manifestations (United Nations, 2020c, p. 13 y 14).

Within the framework of these objectives, this policy note identifies some possible reforms to strengthen state response models in the face of social protest phenomena, based on a human rights and conflict prevention approach. The note is based on the guiding principles established within the framework of international law to ensure the realization of the rights that converge in social protest, as well as good practices to increase institutional capacities for peaceful listening and processing of social demands.
2. International and regional normative framework on the management of protests

2.1. Protest as a right

Although the right to protest is not expressly established in the catalogue of rights contemplated in the different international human rights treaties, there is a series of rights recognized by both international and regional regulatory frameworks—especially the rights of freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly— that, in conjunction, configure what can effectively be considered the right to protest (table 1). This right, in turn, is closely linked with the realization of the right to participate in public affairs, as well as with the fulfillment of various other rights, such as economic, cultural, social and environmental rights.

Table 1. International normative on the rights to freedom of expression and to peaceful assembly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Articles</th>
<th>International human rights instruments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Convention on Human Rights (Pact of San Jose)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 19</td>
<td>“Every individual has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; This right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference, to seek and receive information and opinions, and to disseminate them, regardless of frontiers, through any means of expression”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 20 (1)</td>
<td>“Every individual has the right to freedom of assembly and of peaceful association”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 19 (2)</td>
<td>“Everyone has the right to freedom of expression; This right includes the freedom to seek, receive and disseminate information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, whether orally, in writing or in printed or artistic form, or by any other method of their choosing”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 21</td>
<td>“The right to peaceful assembly is recognized. The exercise of such right may only be subject to such restrictions as are provided for by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, public safety or public order, or to protect public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article IV</td>
<td>“Everyone has the right to freedom of research, opinion and expression and dissemination of thought by any means”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article XXI</td>
<td>“Everyone has the right to peacefully assemble with others, in public demonstration or temporary assembly in relation to their common interests of any kind”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 13 (1)</td>
<td>“Everyone has the right to freedom of thought and expression. This right includes the freedom to seek, receive and disseminate information and ideas of all kinds, without regard of frontiers, whether orally, in writing or in printed or artistic form, or by any other method of their choosing”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article 15</td>
<td>“The right to peaceful assembly without weapons is recognized. The exercise of such right may only be subject to such restrictions as are provided by law, which are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, public safety or order, or to protect public health or morals or the rights or freedoms of others”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration based on consultation of various international human rights instruments.
The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) is clear with respect to the recognition of this point in the section entitled "The right to protest: definitions and modalities" from the report Protest and human rights, in which it is affirmed that:

The IACHR recognizes that protest plays a fundamental role in the development and strengthening of democratic systems, is protected by inter-American instruments on human rights and plays a fundamental role in enabling citizen participation in elections and referendums. Likewise, [protests] can contribute to the full enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights (IACHR, 2019, p. 7, para. 14).

The recognition of protest as a right generates the responsibility of public authorities to respect, protect and facilitate the exercise of this right as long as it is carried out through non-violent activities and in accordance with the legitimate restrictions provided for by international law.

### 2.2. Protest as a form of assembly

Protest movements can be defined as dynamic meetings, organized or spontaneous, aimed at expressing some form of dissent, opposition, denunciation or demand in order to influence the sphere of public discussion or deliberation. Among other things, protests may have the objective of formulating claims, communicating collective aspirations, affirming values or making identities visible. Protests are carried out through actions that take place in public spaces, in person or virtually. As such, they must be managed by public authorities in accordance with international regulations on the right to freedom of peaceful assembly.

In consideration of the key role of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly in the context of protest movements, the remainder of this section examines the scope, nature and restrictions of this right based on the provisions of the General Comment No. 37 of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, the body that oversees compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

#### 2.2.1. When can assembly be considered “violent”?

The protection established in article 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and in other international human rights instruments, corresponds only to peaceful assembly and therefore excludes violent assembly. In this context, violence implies, by participants, the use of physical force against other people, which can cause injuries, deaths or serious damage to property. However, in General Comment No. 37, The United Nations Human Rights Committee points out that neither pushing nor interrupting vehicle or pedestrian traffic or daily activities is considered violence (United Nations, 2020b, para. 15). The Human Rights Committee also maintains that the scale or nature of peaceful gatherings “may cause disruption, for example, to the movement of vehicles or pedestrians or [to] economic activity. These consequences, intended or not, do not call into question the protection enjoyed by these assemblies.” When an event may create disruption or risks, these must be managed within the framework of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (United Nations, 2020b, para. 7).

It is difficult, in practice, to make a clear distinction between peaceful and violent assemblies. However, there is a presumption in international law in favour of considering gatherings to be peaceful (United Nations, 2016, para. 18). Consequently, the authorities cannot take action simply by judging by appearance. A protest or demonstration cannot, for example, be characterized as violent because participants carry objects that  

---

2 In this document the generic masculine is sometimes used to refer to both men and women, in order to lighten the text.
would be considered weapons or protective equipment (for example, masks or helmets). Rather, to consider an assembly to be violent, it is necessary to present credible evidence that, before or during the gathering, the use of violence has been incited, and it is necessary to demonstrate that such actions are likely to cause violence, or that there are violent intentions and plans to act accordingly, or that violence is imminent. (United Nations, 2020b, para. 19).

It is important to highlight that the violent behaviour of some people does not allow us to establish that the meeting as a whole is not peaceful, since this behaviour cannot be attributed to other people. Likewise, in the event that an assembly turns violent, the loss of the protection guaranteed by the right to freedom of peaceful assembly does not imply the disappearance of the State’s duty to guarantee the protection of other rights. In this regard, the special rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association and the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions maintain that, although “the participants in an assembly do not act peacefully and, as a result, they lose the right of peaceful assembly, they retain all other rights, subject to normal limitations. Therefore, no assembly should be considered unprotected.” (United Nations, 2016, par. 9).

2.2.3. States’ obligations with respect to peaceful assembly

Within the framework of what is established in article 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, it is the duty of the State not only to respect but also to guarantee and facilitate the realization of those rights of those who participate in a peaceful assembly. Tables 2, 3 and 4 summarize some of the main obligations of the authorities with respect to the right of peaceful assembly, together with some key principles for the facilitation of this right and a detail of the institutional capacities required.

Table 2. States’ duties with respect to the right to peaceful assembly according to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duties of the State</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duty to respect</td>
<td>States may not “prohibit, restrict, block, disperse or disrupt peaceful assemblies without compelling justification or sanction participants or organizers without legitimate cause.” (General Comment No. 37, para. 23).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty to facilitate</td>
<td>“States must promote an environment conducive to the exercise of the right to peaceful assembly,” and this may sometimes require them to adopt specific measures such as diverting traffic or closing streets. (General Comment No. 37, para. 24).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty to protect</td>
<td>States also have the responsibility to protect those who participate in meetings against abuse or violence that other people could exert, especially on groups of women and the most vulnerable communities (General Comment No. 37, para. 24). Protection outside the scope of the assembly The right to peaceful assembly not only protects the participants during the assembly, but the protection also includes, among other aspects, the process of resource mobilization by participants or organizers, meeting planning and dissemination, event preparation, and travel to and from the meeting. No one may be harassed or suffer reprisals for their presence at or adhering to a peaceful assembly (General Comment No. 37, para. 33). Protection in the digital sphere “Many of the related activities are carried out online or based on digital services. [...] States parties should not, for example, block or hinder Internet connections in relation to peaceful assembly [and] should ensure that the activities of Internet service providers and intermediaries do not unduly restrict assembly or the intimacy of [its] participants” (General Comment No. 37, para. 34).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration based on information consulted in the United Nations, General Comment No. 37 (2020), relating to the right of peaceful assembly (article 21), CCPR/C/GC/37, United Nations Human Rights Committee, September 17, 2020.

3 Both table 2 and the observations presented in this section on the obligations of States with respect to the right of peaceful assembly were prepared based on the guidelines set forth by the United Nations Human Rights Committee in General Comment No. 37 (United Nations, 2020b), as well as based on the consultation of other duly cited reports.
Table 3. Key principles for the facilitation of the right to peaceful assembly according to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key principles</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neutral focus</td>
<td>The protection of the right to freedom of assembly is independent of the expressive content of the assembly (except for the restrictions on freedom of expression provided for in articles 19 and 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights). Therefore, the State must have a neutral approach regarding the content of the demonstrations (General Comment No. 37, para. 22).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No discrimination</td>
<td>States must ensure that legislation, its interpretation and its application do not lead to any discrimination with regard to the enjoyment of the right of peaceful assembly. This includes ensuring the facilitation and protection of the right of peaceful assembly of groups or minorities that experience or have experienced discrimination or who have difficulties participating in assembly (General Comment No. 37, para. 25).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visibility</td>
<td>Even if under certain conditions place and time restrictions may be legitimate, generally those restrictions must allow participants to assemble in any place they consider appropriate to fulfil their purpose and to be seen or heard by their addressees (doctrine of sight and sound) (General Comment No. 37, para. 53).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitation of simultaneous assemblies</td>
<td>There is the obligation of the state to facilitate and protect the holding of simultaneous assemblies in order to guarantee the right to counterdemonstration, but without this implying the undue interruption of the meetings. In the event that simultaneous assemblies are held, both must be allowed to be seen and heard by those participating in the assemblies to which they oppose. Violence on the part of the citizens is not sufficient reason to prohibit or restrict the assembly (General Comment No. 37, para. 26 y 27).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration based on information consulted in the United Nations, General Comment No. 37 (2020), relating to the right of peaceful assembly (article 21), CCPR/C/GC/37, United Nations Human Rights Committee, September 17, 2020.

Table 4. Key institutional capacities for the realization of the right of peaceful assembly according to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key institutional capacities</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adequate regulatory and institutional framework</td>
<td>It is essential that countries have regulatory and institutional regulations that ensure respect for and facilitation of peaceful assembly, along with appropriate implementation protocols. These regulatory frameworks must recognize the right to peaceful assembly, clearly establish the duties and responsibilities of public officials in this regard, be in line with relevant international standards and be accessible to the population (General Comment No. 37, para. 28).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of relevant officials</td>
<td>In order to fulfil the obligation to respect and guarantee the right to peaceful assembly, States must provide adequate training and resources to officials in all levels of government that participate in making decisions related to assembly management (General Comment No. 37, para. 35).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent and transparent oversight and surveillance</td>
<td>“States parties should ensure independent and transparent oversight of all bodies involved in peaceful assembly, in particular through timely Access to effective remedies, including judicial remedies, or to national human rights institutions” (General Comment No. 37, para. 29) The protection and full access of journalists, human rights defenders, electoral observers and other actors who ensure surveillance of the acts of State agents must also be guaranteed (General Comment No. 37, para. 30).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration based on information consulted in the United Nations, General Comment no. 37 (2020), regarding the right to peaceful assembly (article 21), CCPR/C/GC/37, United Nations Human Rights Committee, September 17, 2020.
2.2.3. Restrictions on the right of peaceful assembly

Article 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights establishes the possibility of restricting the right of peaceful assembly “in the interests of national security, public safety or public order, or to protect public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others” (United Nations, 1966, art. 21). However, to be legitimate under international law, such restrictions must meet the requirements of legality, necessity and proportionality.

The Siracusa Principles, adopted by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in 1984, describe in detail the criteria that should govern the limitation and derogation of the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and therefore represent an indispensable source of guidance for defining the restrictions that may be considered admissible with respect to the exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly (United Nations, 1984).

The objective of the decisions made by the authorities must always be to facilitate—not hinder—the realization of the right. For this reason, it is important to highlight that, even if the imposition of restrictions is necessary, authorities should always try to apply the least intrusive measures first. In particular, prohibition should be considered a measure of last resort.

No limitation can be applied in a discriminatory manner and as explicitly mentioned in General Comment No. 37, all restrictions on participation in peaceful assembly must be based on “a differentiated or individualized evaluation of the conduct of the participants and the assembly in question”, so it can be presumed that the general prohibition of all forms of peaceful assembly represents a disproportionate measure (United Nations, 2020b, para. 38).

It is also worth remembering that there are rights that do not allow derogation under any conditions and as such cannot be suspended even in exceptional situations. These include some rights directly related to the management of protests, such as the right to life; the right not to be subjected to torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; the right not to be sentenced to a more severe penalty under retroactive criminal legislation; the right to be recognized as a person before the law, and the right to freedom of thought conscience and religion.

The guidance provided by General Comment No. 37 regarding the conditions under which the right to peaceful assembly may be legitimately restricted and describes the legitimate scope of the restrictions (Tables 5 and 6).

---

4 Both table 5 and the observations presented in this section on restrictions on the right of peaceful assembly were prepared based on the guidelines set forth by the United Nations Human Rights Committee in General Comment No. 37 (United Nations, 2020b, para. 8), as well as based on the consultation of other duly cited reports.

5 Additionally, certain restrictions on freedom of expression can be legitimately implemented according to the provisions of Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which states that all propaganda “in favour of war shall be prohibited by law” and any advocacy “of national, racial, or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence Will be prohibited by law” (United Nations, 1966, art. 20).
### Table 5. Legitimate restrictions on the right to peaceful assembly under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legitimate restrictions</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National security reasons</td>
<td>Restrictions may be justified based on the State’s need to protect the nation’s existence, territorial integrity, or political independence when there is “a credible threat or use of force.” (General Comment No. 37, para. 42).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public safety reasons</td>
<td>Restrictions for reasons of public safety may be legitimate as long as it is established that there is “a real and significant risk to the safety of persons […] or a similar risk of serious damage to property” (General Comment No. 37, para. 43).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public order reasons</td>
<td>Public order is understood as “the set of rules that ensure the functioning of society.” Even if certain restrictions based on reasons of public order may in principle be legitimate, such restrictions cannot be based on a vague or overly broad definition of public order (General Comment No. 37, para. 44).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public health reasons</td>
<td>“Protection of ‘public health’ may exceptionally allow restrictions to be imposed, for example, when there is an outbreak of an infectious disease and gatherings are dangerous. “This can also be applied in extreme cases when the health situation during a meeting presents a significant risk to the health of the population or the participants themselves.” (General Comment No. 37, para. 45).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public moral reasons</td>
<td>Very exceptionally, it is possible to restrict peaceful assembly for moral reasons, but these restrictions must not be based on a specific legal, religious or philosophical tradition nor can they be imposed “in opposition to expressions of sexual orientation or gender identity” of the participants. The application of the principle of non-discrimination is key in this context (General Comment No. 37, para. 46).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons relating to the protection of rights and freedoms of other people</td>
<td>Assemblies by their very nature may cause disruption and disrupt normality, but this in itself is not a sufficient reason to restrict them, “unless they impose a disproportionate burden on other people,” in which case authorities should be able to justify the restrictions in detail” (General Comment No. 37, para. 47).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Own elaboration based on information consulted in the United Nations, General Comment No. 37 (2020), relating to the right of peaceful assembly (article 21), CCPR/C/GC/37, United Nations Human Rights Committee, September 17, 2020.
Table 6. Legitimate scope of restrictions on the right of peaceful assembly according to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legitimate scope of restrictions</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Any restrictions should, in principle, be content-neutral and therefore unrelated to the message conveyed by the assembly. Therefore, “restrictions on peaceful assembly should not be used, explicitly or implicitly, to repress the expression of political opposition to a government.” However, the peaceful assemblies cannot be used for the purposes of propaganda for war or as an excuse for national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement or discrimination, hostility or violence (General Comment No. 37, para. 4850).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>“With regard to [relative] restrictions to the time of holding assemblies, participants should have sufficient opportunities to express their opinions or seek to achieve their other purposes effectively. […] Meetings should not be limited solely by their frequency […] However, the cumulative impact of meetings held can be weighed in an assessment of the proportionality of a restriction. For example, some gatherings that often take place at night in residential areas could have a significant effect on those who live nearby” (General Comment No. 37, para. 54).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place</td>
<td>According to the doctrine of sight and sound (which refers to the right of participants to be seen and heard), peaceful assemblies “should not be relegated to remote areas where they cannot effectively capture the attention or the addressees or the general public” (General Comment No. 37, para. 55). Furthermore, in general “designation of the perimeters of places such as courts, parliament, places of historical importance or other official buildings as areas where meetings cannot be held should be avoided, among other reasons, because they are public spaces. Any restrictions on gatherings in and around such places must be specifically justified and strictly restricted” (General Comment No. 37, para. 56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>“In general, States […] should not limit the number of participants in assemblies. Any such restriction can only be accepted if there is a clear relationship with one of the legitimate reasons for restrictions set out in Article 21, for example when due to public safety considerations a maximum capacity is imposed on a stadium or bridge or due to public health considerations, physical distancing is imposed” (General Comment No. 37, para. 59).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form</td>
<td>“With regard to restrictions on the form of peaceful assembly, participants should be left to decide whether they wish to use equipment such as signs, megaphones, musical instruments or other technical means, such as projection equipment to convey their message. Meetings may involve the temporary erection of structures, including sound systems, to reach their audience or otherwise achieve their purpose” (General Comment No. 37, para. 58).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration based on information consulted in the United Nations, General Comment No. 37 (2020), relating to the right of peaceful assembly (article 21), CCPR/C/GC/37, United Nations Human Rights Committee, September 17, 2020.

2.2.4. Law enforcement duties regarding the management of peaceful assemblies

The focus of authorities and citizen security policies regarding the management of peaceful assemblies must focus on guaranteeing and facilitating the realization of the rights that are materialized in such assemblies. It is essential, then, that security forces play this guarantee and facilitation role in accordance with the principles established by international law, including the principles set out in the previous sections.

Military forces should not be used to monitor meetings except in exceptional and temporary situations. It is also important to highlight that, in the event that agents of the armed forces are deployed in support of the management of assemblies, the representatives of said forces must be adequately trained according to the standards that established by human rights and must comply with the same international rules and norms as the security officials.

As highlighted in General Comment No. 37, the State is responsible for the actions of law enforcement. Therefore, the accountability of officials regarding their actions in peaceful assemblies must be promoted.

---

6 Both table 7 and the observations presented in this section on the duties and powers of law enforcement were prepared based on the guidelines set forth by the United Nations Human Rights Committee in General Comment No. 37 (United Nations, 2020b), as well as based on the consultation of other duly cited reports.
This implies an obligation for States to investigate any allegations of improper use of force or other abuses promptly, effectively and impartially (such as sexual or gender-based violence) perpetrated by law enforcement officials. It is also recommended to record all actions that involve the use of force and record them in transparent reports, which identify details of the situations, mention cases of injuries or damage, and present the reasons that determined the use of force.

Below are some of the main responsibilities of law enforcement in relation to the management of peaceful assemblies, based on the guidance provided in General Comment No. 37 (table 7).

**Table 7. Responsibilities of law enforcement in relation to the right of peaceful assembly under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Law Enforcement Responsibilities</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan surveillance activities</td>
<td>Where law enforcement surveillance activities are required, these activities should be carefully planned to reduce the potential for harm to persons and property (General Comment No. 37, para. 76).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare contingency plans</td>
<td>Relevant law enforcement agencies are responsible for developing contingency plans that establish clear command structures as well as protocols for recording and documenting events, identifying officers, and reporting use of force (General Comment No. 37, para. 76).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue and communication</td>
<td>Law enforcement agencies have the responsibility of establishing, before and during assemblies, appropriate channels of communication and dialogue with those who participate in them, in order to alleviate tensions and resolve controversies to the extent possible (General Comment No. 37, para. 75).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitation of the use of force</td>
<td>Law enforcement officers have the obligation to exhaust non-violent means and to provide prior warning in the event that the use of force is necessary. Furthermore, any use of force “must conform to the fundamental principles of legality, necessity, proportionality, precaution and non-discrimination” (paras. 78 and 79).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceptional use of less-lethal weapons</td>
<td>When using powerful less-lethal weapons (such as tear gas and water cannons) it is necessary to take all reasonable precautions to limit the risks, such as causing stampedes or injuring bystanders (General Comment No. 37, para. 87).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum restriction on the use of firearms</td>
<td>Firearms are not appropriate tools for policing gatherings and should never be used to disperse participants. Its use “by law enforcement officials in the context of gatherings should be limited to specific individuals in circumstances where it is strictly necessary to address an imminent threat of death or serious injury. Given the threat to life that these weapons pose, this minimum threshold should also apply to rubber-coated metal bullets.” (General Comment No. 37, para. 88).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitation of control measures</td>
<td>Except in exceptional cases, preventative detention to prevent people from participating in an assembly represents an arbitrary deprivation of Liberty and as such is incompatible with international law. Indiscriminate mass arrests of participants in assemblies are arbitrary and therefore illegal (General Comment No. 37, para. 82). The procedures “stop-and-search” or “stop-and-frisk” are only admissible if they are based on “reasonable suspicion of the commission or threat of the commission of a serious crime and should not be used in a discriminatory manner” (General Comment No. 37, para. 83). Containment of protesters (or “encapsulation”) should only be used if absolutely necessary, and the measure should be applied in a proportionate and time-limited manner to address violence or an imminent threat from a specific group (General Comment No. 37, para. 84). Dispersion can be used only in exceptional cases when the assembly itself is no longer peaceful or in the face of imminent serious violence that cannot be addressed with other measures. To disperse, the use of force must be avoided, and when this is not possible “only the minimum necessary force can be used” (General Comment No. 37, paras. 85 and 86).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Protection of anonymity and privacy

Participants in assemblies have the right to anonymity and to utilize disguises or cover their faces to protect their privacy or avoid possible reprisals, "unless their conduct offers reasonable grounds for their arrest or there are other equally compelling reasons" (General Comment No. 37, para. 60).

"Any collection of information, by public or private entities, in particular through surveillance or interception of communications, and the manner in which data is collected, shared, retained and accessed, must strictly comply with the applicable international standards, especially on the right to privacy, and can never be intended to intimidate or harass participants or potential participants in assemblies (General Comment No. 37, para. 61).

The right to privacy can be violated using facial recognition technologies or by "surveillance of social media to collect information about participation in peaceful gatherings. There should be independent and transparent review and monitoring of the decision to collect information and personal data from participants in peaceful assemblies and their sharing or retention, with a view to ensuring the compatibility of such measures with the Covenant" (General Comment No. 37, para. 62).

Source: Own elaboration based on information consulted in the United Nations, General Comment No. 37 (2020), relating to the right of peaceful assembly (article 21), CCPR/C/GC/37, United Nations Human Rights Committee, September 17, 2020.

3. The panorama of protest in Latin America and the Caribbean

3.1. Understanding the diversity of protest movements

The first step to an adequate analysis of protest movements is to recognize that protests can take many forms and present very different characteristics. Without attempting to create an exhaustive typology, this section presents some key distinctions that have been identified as a result of an analysis of the literature, as well as the conduct of workshops and interviews with specialists in the region. These distinctions can contribute not only to a better understanding of the trends of recent years, but also to a more precise assessment of the relationship between different forms of protest and different types of state response. 7

The proposed analytical framework is articulated in three dimensions: i) the fields of conflict in which protests arise; ii) the structural elements that characterize the different movements, and iii) the links with some key actors. Tables 8, 9 and 10 describe the main components of each dimension. It is important, however, to highlight that protests rarely unfold in a single field of conflict, but rather represent the confluence of factors that have to be understood and recognized. Furthermore, protests are dynamic and can evolve both in terms of the main focus of their demands and in terms of their other characteristics.

---

7 It is important to highlight that the proposed classification criteria are understood exclusively as heuristic strategies for the interpretation of a complex phenomenon such as protest. These distinctions do not imply normative evaluations and are in no way intended to justify undue restrictions based on a typology of protests.
Table 8. Examples of fields of conflict within the framework of which protests take place

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fields of conflict</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fundamental fields of conflict (observed in all societies)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political conflict</td>
<td>This field includes demands and conflicts related to the governance system, and even includes questioning the order, the current political systems and their legacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic conflict</td>
<td>This field includes conflicts related to the production and distribution of material resources and covers issues such as economic inequality and access to public services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social conflict</td>
<td>This field refers to tensions that generate the breakdown of the social fabric, and includes contestations related to identity issues, as well as the loss of trust between members of society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emerging fields of conflict (result of specific circumstances)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict for gender equality</td>
<td>This field refers to the manifestations related to the demands for social, cultural and institutional transformations aimed at guaranteeing rights and achieving gender equality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Territorial and environmental conflict</td>
<td>This field includes different types of conflict related to disagreements over the modalities of use of the territory and natural resources and covers claims that question the management and impact of extractive activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migration conflict</td>
<td>This field refers to the crises generated by migration in different countries in the region, which, among other causes, is the result of scenarios of instability, economic crisis and citizen and climate insecurity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict over organised crime</td>
<td>This field refers to the conflict related to the actions of groups that act outside the law, such as criminal gangs and local gang networks, both urban and rural that affect the security of national and cross-border areas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration.
Note: This table presents a non-exhaustive list of examples of possible fields of conflict within which protests arise.
### Table 9. Structural characteristics of different protest movements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Range of variation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Range</strong></td>
<td>International - national - local</td>
<td>Often protests that take place in large cities or in multiple locations are massive protests that raise demands on a national scale and possibly have greater impact in the event of state violence. On the other hand, at subnational or local sectors, the demands tend to be more specific, and the eventual violation of rights may have less visibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planning</strong></td>
<td>Planned - spontaneous</td>
<td>Some protests may be the result of a very structured planning process (which may extend for a period more or less long). Others may result from a more organic process of spontaneous mobilization (which can sometimes develop very quickly).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spaces</strong></td>
<td>Sensitive - marginal</td>
<td>Some protests manage to affect sensitive spaces, for example, due to their centrality or their symbolic load. Others, due to regulatory limitations or for other reasons, are confined to marginal spaces. Although protests have traditionally taken place in physical spaces, the digital public sphere has increasingly become a potential space for expression and collective vindication, with its own dynamics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical - digital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objectives</strong></td>
<td>Specific or generalised demands</td>
<td>A protest can have a very specific agenda, which includes very defined and specific demands –such as, for example, the modification of a specific sectoral or territorial policy, namely: the opposition to the development of an investment project due to its socio-environmental impacts–. Alternatively, a protest can be the expression of a set of generalised demands –for example, to demand changes in the institutional, political or economic system– or can express the claim of an identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Composition</strong></td>
<td>Homogeneous - heterogeneous</td>
<td>Una protesta puede tener una composición homogénea en términos de participación cuando es la expresión de un grupo que comparte una identidad común (basada, por ejemplo, en ciertas características sociales compartidas, o en la participación en un sector productivo dado, o en el sentido de comunidad que aporta a un grupo de habitantes el compartir un territorio). En contraste, las protestas que se caracterizan por una composición heterogénea incluyen participantes con una diversidad significativa de procedencias identitarias, políticas y sociales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low or high representation of marginalised groups</td>
<td>In certain cases, protests can be the expression of groups that occupy a dominant position in society and that for this reason tend to enjoy greater protection and visibility. In other cases, protests can be the expression of historically discriminated and marginalised groups, a condition that often implies additional vulnerabilities that affect their participation in social mobilization processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Representation</strong></td>
<td>Structured - fluid</td>
<td>Protests can have established representation structures and assigned responsibilities (based, for example, on the structure of political, social or union organisations), or they can be more fluid (this is the case, for example, of spontaneous protests) and therefore both not having a specific convening organisation or centralised coordination and representation mechanisms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Own elaboration.
Table 10. Relationship of protests with political parties and media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>Variation range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political parties</td>
<td>Direct link – no link</td>
<td>In some cases, protests have an explicit and direct link with certain political actors (for example, when a political party is the organisation or one of the organising organisations). In other cases, this type of link does not exist (for example, when the protest is carried out by movements that specifically want to protect their independence from political actors). When there is indeed a link with a political actor, the dynamics of the protest naturally be different depending on whether the link has been established with representatives of the ruling party or the opposition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Officialism - opposition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>Low or high coverage</td>
<td>Some protest movements have a very high level of media visibility, either due to the demand they express, their size or their location, among other reasons. Others may receive very low media coverage and consequently become almost “invisible” beyond the specific context in which they take place. When there is media coverage, said coverage can be predominantly positive, predominantly negative or mixed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive or negative coverage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own elaboration.

3.2. Trends related to protest movements in Latin America and the Caribbean

The Latin America and Caribbean region have experienced chronic and multidimensional conflict for decades. However, this conflict has worsened significantly in the last ten years. In this regard, in a work prepared by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) entitled “Governance, democracy and development in Latin America and the Caribbean”, the following is stated:

The precariousness and economic vulnerability have deepened a feeling of economic exclusion that, together with a hardening of citizen opinions on corruption and the perception of a culture of privilege rooted in political elites, and in those who profit excessively from the State, it has translated into a feeling of citizen anger. One of the faces of this anger is representative disaffection with representative democratic institutions, especially political parties and parliaments (UNDP and International IDEA, p. 6).

In this scenario a significant increase of social protests in the region are observed. In particular, data from The Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) reveals that the number of protests in the region has been increasing since the first quarter of 2018 (the first period for which data is available), and that number has increased at a much faster rate after the first quarter of 2020 (start of the COVID-19 pandemic), almost doubling the initial level and reaching its peak in the second quarter of 2021 (graph 1).
Graph 1. Number of protests in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2018-2022

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the number of protests doubled between 2018 and 2021
The data presents quarterly figures for each year

Protests include not only "intensive" protests (characterized by high intensity and medium to low frequency, with a higher probability of achieving institutional responses), but also "extensive" protests (characterized by lower intensity and high frequency, and less likely to receive media attention and develop mechanisms to address the demands that drive them) (López-Calva, 2022).

It is important to highlight that in recent years there has been not only a quantitative increase in protests, but also a series of qualitative changes. In the last ten years, the heterogeneity of participants and demands has increased, as Fernando Calderón Gutiérrez has also observed, Latin American societies “are increasingly pluri-centric and are experiencing changes that increase their complexity, both in terms of its sociocultural differentiation as well as the multiplication and at the same time fragmentation of conflicts” (Calderón Gutiérrez, 2017, p. 399).

Consequently, the capacity of traditional collective actors, such as civil society organisations or unions, to bring together social movements and serve as formal interlocutors of public institutions has diminished.

Meanwhile, in certain segments of public opinion there is a growing tolerance towards violence as an instrument of social transformation. For example, the results of a survey carried out in Chile by the Espacio Público study centre show that in 2019, 48% of the population agreed or strongly agreed with the phrase that “every process of change requires some degree of violence” (Espacio Público and Ipsos, 2021).

Finally, the growing importance of digital spaces as places of Exchange has given rise to a whole series of new and extremely complex dynamics. One the one hand, a facilitation of social mobilization is observed; on
the other, new vulnerabilities have emerged, for example, with respect to the spread of disinformation and hate speech, or in relation to the protection of privacy.

In this context, the quality of the response of State institutions to protest movements assumes fundamental importance. As Luis Felipe López-Calva observes:

Social mobilizations, when they are not violent, are a legitimate mechanism for citizens to express their concerns in participatory democracies. In this sense, protests can be a symptom of healthy democratic institutions and citizen participation. If institutional mechanisms exist to process demands that encourage citizen mobilization, these can consolidate horizontal accountability mechanisms (where systems of checks and balances are effectively institutionalised within the government). However, when these mobilizations do not find the institutional mechanisms to process their demands, they can result in greater frustrations and discontent and, potentially, violence (López-Calva, 2022).

3.3. Problematic responses to social protest from the international rights perspective

Despite several reform attempts focused on a conception of social protest as a method of expression and transformation (and not only as a disturbance of public order), many elements of the institutional response models that are observed in the region remain highly problematic, both in terms of the protection of human rights, as well as in terms of the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Below we examine some practices that are considered contrary to international law and counterproductive from the point of view of the peaceful mediation of social tensions. These practices have been identified through a review of the literature and thanks to a series of individual and group interviews carried out during the preparation of this document with references on the subject, social groups and representatives of various institutions.

3.3.1 Regulatory tools to discourage protest, including through criminalisation

In many countries in the region, the existence and application of regulations that entail arbitrary and disproportionate restrictions on the ability of citizens to carry out social protests are confirmed.

These regulations often establish requirements contrary to international law, such as the application of permits (i.e., the implementation of protest authorisation regimes or notification regimes that function in practice as authorisation regimes), the establishment of unjustified restrictions regarding the place and time of protests, and the prohibition of using elements such as masks or costumes that protect the anonymity of protesters.

Additionally, several countries have adopted regulations that de facto criminalise participation in protest movements. These regulations include disproportionate penalties for violations such as the closure of roads or the occupation of property (public or private), as well as provisions that allow leaders and participants of protest movements to be charged with not only administrative but also criminal offenses, and even of subversion, sabotage and terrorism.

At the level of jurisprudence, the restrictive interpretation by the Judiciary of norms relating to issues such as illegal occupation and usurpation of public (or private) land, contempt for authority or disturbance of public peace is also observed, and even significantly more serious crimes such as, for example, the crime of extortion or terrorism.
3.3.2. Repression and improper use of force

Often, in recent years, a type of repressive response to social protests has been observed, which frequently involves illegitimate, excessive or arbitrary use of force.

Based on a logic that considers protest solely as a matter of public order (and sometimes based on narratives that represent protesters as “enemies within”), these responses have in many cases led to serious violations of the integrity of the participants as well as arbitrary and indiscriminate deprivation of Liberty.

Repressive responses are typically framed within a normative and procedural framework that provides for excessive discretion and insufficient regulation of the conduct of law enforcement agencies —for example (but not only) with respect to the use of force (lethal or not)—, and that at the same time entails a flexibility of the normal procedural guarantees in the context of the management of protests —for example, with respect to arrests or surveillance activities—.

In particular, it is important to highlight the activation of states of emergency as a resource increasingly used to control conflict and citizen mobilization, which is often accompanied by the deployment of armed forces, often without the necessary mechanisms to ensure that said deployment takes place under the control of civil authority.

Added to this is the lack of training processes on human rights aimed at representatives of law enforcement and the absence of mechanisms and capacities to facilitate dialogue and negotiation between said forces and protesters (even highlighting the lack of training of security agents in relation to crowd management techniques).

There is also the growing naturalisation of the use of less lethal weapons, such as fire trucks, various chemical gases or kinetic impact munitions, whose use is not in line with what is established in international human rights standards.

Finally, the weakness of the regulatory and institutional agreements established to guarantee both the effective supervision of the actions of law enforcement forces in the framework of the management of protests, as well as access to justice and accountability in the event that they produce irregularities or abuses.

3.3.3. Sabotage tactics: indiscriminate surveillance, infiltration and political use of counterdemonstration

In several contexts, excessive discretion is observed in the conduct of surveillance activities carried out by law enforcement, which is combined with insufficient supervision of said activities by the Judiciary and civil authority. In these situations, indiscriminate surveillance can be used for intimidation purposes, as well as to identify and profile political opponents.

A practice repeatedly mentioned in the interviews conducted for the preparation of this document is the infiltration of protest movements by security force agents, without legitimate cause or without the necessary procedural guarantees. In many cases this practice is carried out for surveillance purposes. Furthermore, in extreme cases, infiltration can be used to carry out or incite violent acts in order to justify the use of force against protesters.
Another form of problematic response is the use, by the actors of the ruling party, of the counterdemonstration as an instrument of political struggle (in extreme cases, agreements are established with violent groups that act with the complicity of the forces of order, which constitutes a collusion). In this scenario, what is sought is to regulate (and limit) social mobilization through counter-mobilization instead of establishing appropriate dialogue mechanisms. The result is often the deepening of conflicts and the deterioration of social cohesion.

3.3.4 The digitalization of repression

Increasingly in recent years, protest movements have used the digital sphere, including social platforms, to mobilise participants and communicate their demands to the public. However, in response to this phenomenon, there has also been an increase in the use of digital tools to discourage, block or make different types of protests invisible.

Internet shutdowns, bandwidth limitations (throttling), and the suspension of mobile phone services have become relatively common responses to protest movements (especially those with large participation), along with the suspension of access to specific websites and platforms, and even social networks. These restrictions are aimed at hindering communication between protesters and limiting their ability to share information in real time about the actions of law enforcement.

Digital technologies have opened up new possibilities for surveillance activities, such as monitoring online communication flows, tracking the movements of protesters during an assembly, and using images and videos to create vast databases that can be used in combination with facial recognition techniques. Although several of these activities may be legitimate under certain conditions, the risk of violating the right to privacy (and other rights) increases in contexts characterized by insufficient regulation and supervision.

Social networks can also be used to promote misinformation and hate speech, make personal attacks and disclose private information for intimidating purposes.

3.3.5 Attacks against human rights defenders and journalists

Many of the problematic responses to protest movements take place in a context characterised by increasingly frequent attack against human rights defenders, that is, all those who act, individually or collectively, to promote and pursue the protection and realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels.

There is evidence that human rights defenders are being attacked and criminalised, and face increasing legal and administrative restrictions in all regions of the world, including in Latin America and the Caribbean. Furthermore, the emergence of narratives that classify many human rights defenders as terrorists, enemies of the State, promoters of foreign values and opponents of development is observed. These attacks are sometimes carried out by public institutions themselves and other times they are carried out by non-state actors without the State acting adequately to provide the necessary protection. Of particular concern is the situation of women human rights defenders who face an even higher level of hostility.

Despite the importance of journalistic coverage to ensure the dissemination of reliable information about protest movements, as well as accountability on the part of both protesters and law enforcement, the frequent adoption of measures that restrict the access of media representatives to assemblies is noted. Acts of intimidation and violence against journalists and other media operators have also been recorded, along with the confiscation of journalistic material without legitimate cause or due process. These trends have become more acute as a result of a growing rhetoric of stigmatization and dehumanization of journalism.
4. Recommendations for addressing social protest from a human rights and conflict prevention perspective

Based on international standards and the contextual elements articulated in the preceding sections, this section aims to recommend some possible directions of reform with a view to strengthening models of response to social protest from a perspective focused on human rights and conflict prevention. To this end, the recommendations have been classified into three categories: i) recommendations to promote a regulatory framework for managing social protest based on human rights; ii) recommendations to promote protest management modalities based on the principle of collaborative facilitation, and iii) recommendations for the development of mechanisms aimed at strengthening the training and accountability of relevant state actors.

Before presenting the recommendations, however, a point needs to be made. There is no doubt that the constructive and responsible handling of protests is a necessary condition for the realisation of human rights and the solution of social conflicts, but at the same time it is undeniable that it is not a sufficient condition. For this reason, it is recommended that actions aimed at transforming the models of response to social protests do not remain isolated, but rather are framed within a broader framework of reform of governance systems based on the principles of commitment to society, inclusion and accountability. Although the analysis of said reform is outside the scope of this document, it is worth highlighting that the reform of governance systems is an essential component of the comprehensive approach to issues such as participation, representation and the quality of democracy, which underlie protest management.

i) Promoting normative frameworks for the management of social protests based on human rights.

- A clear and complete regulatory framework, which extends to all relevant levels (legislation, policy, administrative rules, internal protocols) is key so that all actors clearly know what their rights and obligations are. This regulatory framework should also define the institutional architecture, including the relevant coordination and oversight mechanisms, that apply to the management of protest movements.

- The regulatory framework must be fully informed by international human rights standards, related not only to the freedom of peaceful assembly, but also to the freedoms of opinion, expression and association, as well as the right to participate in the governance of public affairs; the right to integrity (which includes the rights to security, to freedom from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and to life); the right to dignity; the right to privacy, and the right to have an effective remedy to address human rights violations.

- It is important, at the same time, that the process for establishing this regulatory framework promotes the participation of all relevant actors (including various civil society actors and representatives of historically marginalised population groups) so that they contribute to its definition.

- The regulatory framework should establish a positive presumption in favour of peaceful assembly and clearly state that the facilitation of gatherings, including protests and other expressions of dissent, is a key objective of law enforcement in line with their obligation to protect and promote human rights.
Box 1. Conducive environment for the exercise of the right to freedom of assembly

“Many States employ a restrictive, command and control approach to freedom of peaceful assembly. On the contrary, States must adopt a facilitative approach.”

Source: United Nations, Joint statement on the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and democratic governance by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and its Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression, the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders of the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR) and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), December 9, 2020, paragraph 2 (b).

- Freedom of peaceful assembly is a right, not a privilege, and as such should not be subject to prior authorisation from state authorities. Where a notification system exists, its objective should be to enable the authorities to take the necessary measures to facilitate the exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly while protecting the rights and freedoms of others, as well as public safety and public order, in accordance with international law.

- Appropriate safeguards must be in place to ensure that the body responsible for receiving and responding to notifications does not act on the basis of political interests and is independent of undue influence.

Box 2. Notification regimes

The way notification regimes are structured can have a very significant impact on the exercise of freedom of peaceful assembly. It is important, therefore, that notification systems are not used as a tool to repress legitimate citizen mobilization or become de facto authorisation regimes. General Comment No. 37 of the United Nations Human Rights Committee and international human rights jurisprudence provide detailed guidance on how a reporting system should be structured to comply with human rights standards.

Source: Own elaboration.

- Failure to provide notice does not in itself make an assembly illegal. Therefore, appropriate safeguards must be in place to ensure that the right to participate in peaceful assembly is also protected in the absence of notification.

- The regulatory framework must support the principle of individual responsibility. As such, it should establish effective safeguards against collective punishment of assembly participants and clarify that the organisers (while retaining responsibility for encouraging peaceful conduct and compliance with relevant rules by assembly participants) cannot be held responsible for the actions of other people. Guarantees must also be established against the use of unjustified or disproportionate administrative and criminal sanctions as a strategy to silence dissent.
Box 3. The right to freedom of peaceful assembly general principles

“The protection of health, safety and public order is not incompatible with the exercise of the right of peaceful assembly [and the development of citizen mobilization and complaint processes]. Crisis situations, including public health emergencies, should not be used as a pretext to infringe rights and impose undue restrictions on public freedoms. In particular, blanket ban son gatherings are likely to constitute an unnecessary and disproportionate infringement of the law, even in emergency situations”.

Source: United Nations, Joint statement on the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and democratic governance by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (ICHR) and its Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression, the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders of the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights (ACHPR) and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), December 9, 2020, paragraph 1 (f).

- The regulatory framework should establish clear limits on the restrictions that authorities can impose in the context of assemblies and contain effective safeguards against excessive discretion in the interpretation of rules related to management of assemblies. Effective safeguards must also be put in place against the unjustified adoption of emergency powers in response to demonstrations.

- Based on the recognition that the various rights that are manifested in the exercise of the right to protest apply online and offline, it is recommended to promote a participatory process of conceptual definition and normative development to identify the measures necessary to respect, protect and promote those rights in the digital sphere.

Box 4. Human rights and management of assembly in digital spaces

The publication “Guide on Digitally-Mediated Assemblies and How to Monitor Them,” developed by the European Centre for Non-Profit Law (ECNL), provides an insight into how key concepts of the management of assemblies in a human rights framework apply to the context of assemblies mediated by digital technologies.

Source: Own elaboration.

- The effective implementation of any normative framework depends on the underlying ideologies. For this reason, it is essential that political leaders publicly and firmly commit to a culture of valuing and protecting dissent.
Box 5. Government communication and prevention of abuses: the role of public spokespersons

On many occasions, the violation of the rights of participants in protest movements is preceded or accompanied by stigmatizing statements made by public officials. However, as stated in the report Inter-American Legal Framework on the Right to Freedom of Expression of the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), public officials must refrain from making statement that criminalise the expression of dissent and social mobilization. Likewise, it must ensure that its expressions do not constitute “forms of direct or indirect interference or harmful pressure on the rights of those who seek to contribute to public deliberation through the expression and dissemination of their thoughts” (IACHR, 2010, para 156). In this sense, the role of public spokespersons is especially key in their capacity as official expression of the position of State institutions.

Source: Own elaboration based on information consulted in the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (ICHR), Inter-American legal framework on the right to freedom of expression, OEA/Ser.L/V/II-CIDH/RELE/INF/IACHR, Organization of American States (OAS), 2010.

• Likewise, it is necessary to promote a greater appreciation of human rights among citizens in general as well as a culture of peace and dialogue through, for example, civic education initiatives (which could be developed both in the school environment and outside). ii) Promote protest management modalities based on the principle of collaborative facilitation.

Box 6. An institutional ecosystem for the management of protests based on human rights

It is important to highlight that the peaceful and constructive management of social protests requires a complex institutional ecosystem that goes far beyond the security and justice sectors. In this sense, the following actions stand out for their relevance:

• Strengthen coordination mechanisms between the different components of the Executive Branch in order to ensure that the responses provided to protests are coherent and systematically based on human rights.

• Strengthen national human rights institutions, especially with respect to their capacity to provide guidance on the application of human rights standards related to the exercise of the right to protest.

• Recognize the key role that local authorities play as the first line of response to protest movements and take the necessary measures to empower and support them in carrying out this role.

• Establish appropriate mechanisms for monitoring social conflict (including through the use of early warning systems) and promoting dialogue with a focus on inclusion.

• Establish appropriate mechanisms for the resolution of conflicts and the promotion of dialogue that are based on the principle of inclusive participation and that have the capacity to influence the structural factors that are at the base of the protests.

• Protect and promote civic space to support the capacity of civil society organisations to bring together social movements, mediate conflicts and contribute effectively to dialogue processes.

Source: Own elaboration.
Box 7. Ten principles for the correct management of assemblies

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association developed “10 principles for the proper management of assemblies” (United Nations, 2020d), a step-by-step checklist to monitor the implementation of the practical recommendations on the management of meetings included in the report on the proper management of demonstrations that the aforementioned rapporteur prepared together with the United Nations special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions (United Nations, 2016). This checklist can be useful as a starting point for the conversation about reform needs related to assembly management.

Source: Own elaboration.

ii) Promoting protest management modalities based on the principle of collaborative facilitation.

- It is critical to ensure that assembly management protocols recognise that the way law enforcement presence and actions are perceived and understood by assembly participants impacts the dynamics of the assembly itself.

- The principles of non-escalation and de-escalation should be incorporated as key objectives of all aspects of assembly management protocols. Additionally, assembly management protocols should include appropriate mechanisms to promote communication and dialogue between assembly attendees and law enforcement.

- It is important that meeting management protocols adequately regulate law enforcement practices that may be deployed in a provocative or intimidating manner, such as the mobilization of a disproportionate number of security personnel or the display of weapons and crowd-control equipment.

- Model Protocol for Law Enforcement Officials to Promote and Protect Human Rights in the Context of Peaceful Demonstrations, prepared by the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. This protocol has a set of practical tools, which is based on international human rights legislation, standards and good practices, to improve the capacity of law enforcement institutions to fulfil their duty to promote and protect human rights in the context of peaceful protests.

Box 8. Mechanisms to promote dialogue between security forces and people who participate in assemblies

Having appropriately trained officials to facilitate dialogue can be an effective mechanism for promoting constructive engagement. Arranging preparatory meetings between assembly organisers and security forces to clarify expectations and protocols can also go a long way toward preventing violence. However, the refusal of assembly organisers to participate in such gatherings should be considered legitimate and should not be used to spread the assumption that the assembly Will be violent, nor as a justification for retaliatory measures against assembly participants.

Source: Own elaboration.
Appropriate safeguards must be established to ensure that powers of arrest are exercised in a manner consistent with international human rights standards, including those related to the right to privacy, the right to Liberty and the right to due process. Administrative detention (that which does not provide for prosecution on a criminal charge), in particular, should be strictly regulated and resorted to only in the most exceptional circumstances.

Appropriate safeguards must be put in place to ensure that force is not used in response to gatherings unless absolutely necessary and that, if force is applied, it is in accordance with international human rights law. This includes ensuring that the use of force is guided by the principles of legality, precaution, necessity, proportionality and non-discrimination.

**Box 9. Key references on the use of force**


Source: Own elaboration.

**Box 10. The principle of protection of life**

“The principle of ‘protection of life’ requires that lethal force not be intentionally used solely to protect public order or other similar interests (for example, it may not be used solely to suppress protests [...] or to safeguard other interests such as a property). The main objective should be to save a life. In practice, this means that only the protection of life can meet the requirement of proportionality when lethal force is used intentionally, and only the protection of life can be a legitimate objective for using such force.”


The principle of differentiation should be promoted in the management of assemblies. Therefore, it is essential to establish protocols that regulate practices that in themselves risk being indiscriminate. This includes practices such as restraint, mass arrest, or the use of certain crowd control methods, such as tear gas and water cannons.
**Box 11. Peaceful gatherings and public space**

“Gatherings are as legitimate a use of public space as commercial activities or vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Any use of public space requires some measure of coordination to protect different interests, but there are many legitimate ways in which citizens can use public spaces. A certain level of disruption to daily life due to gatherings, such as traffic disruption and disruption or even damage to commercial activities, must be tolerated so that the right is not deprived of its essence”.


- Clear guidelines should be developed on the dispersion of assemblies: stipulate the circumstances justifying the dispersion, establish all steps that must be taken before making a decision (including steps to reduce tension), and define who has the authority to determine that an assembly should be dispersed, that is, who will be responsible for the decision made.

- The competent institutions must guarantee the review of the equipment used in the management of the assemblies to verify its compliance with international standards. This process must include an independent evaluation aimed at establishing the real effect that the equipment can have on people. In particular, the equipment’s accuracy, reliability, and ability to minimize physical and psychological harm must be evaluated.

- Appropriate regulation of surveillance tactics must be established to ensure that they are compatible with human rights. These tactics include, among others, the deployment of digital technology for surveillance purposes and covert infiltration of security forces, as well as the collection, retention and use of personal information.

- As a general rule, the deployment of armed forces in the context of managing assemblies should be prohibited. If, in exceptional circumstances, such deployment becomes necessary, representatives of the armed forces must be subject to civilian control and must follow the same principles and standards applicable to law enforcement officials.
Box 12. Standards on the use of armed forces for the control of public order

In the ruling Alvarado Espinoza and others vs. Mexico, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights establishes that the participation of the armed forces in public order control activities must be:

“a) Extraordinary, so that any intervention is justified and exceptional, temporary and restricted to what is strictly necessary in the circumstances of the case;

b) Subordinate and complementary to the work of civil corporations, without their work being able to extend to the powers of the institutions of law enforcement or judicial or ministerial police;

c) Regulated, through legal mechanisms and protocols on the use of force, under the principles of exceptionality, proportionality and absolute necessity and in accordance with the respective training on the matter, and

d) Supervised by competent, independent and technically capable civil bodies.”

Source: Own elaboration based on information consulted in the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Case of Alvarado Espinoza and Others vs. Mexico, Official Summary Emitted by the Inter-American Court, November 28, 2018 Sentence (Merits, Reparations and Costs), 2018, page 3.

- The deployment of non-state actors in the context of assembly management, which includes—but is not limited to—surveillance and private security services, must be regulated with special emphasis on preventing the deployment of said actors as a way of circumventing the human rights standards applicable to security forces and other State bodies.

- Appropriate measures must be implemented to ensure that companies fulfil their responsibility to respect human rights in the context of the protests. This requires taking the necessary measures to protect the freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly in privately owned spaces that are open to the public and fulfil functions similar to those of public spaces (sometimes called “privately owned public spaces”), as well as measures to protect organizers and participants of assemblies from civil lawsuits brought with the purpose of limiting public participation.
Box 13. Promote the principle of non-discrimination in protest management

A key aspect of human rights-based protest management is the application of the principle of non-discrimination. Some measures that can be adopted to ensure the realisation of this principle include:

i) Incorporate the principles of non-discrimination and equality in the design of protest management procedures and training of security forces, taking into account a gender and intercultural perspective.

ii) Incorporate an intersectionality perspective in the design of protocols and training activities, recognizing how the interaction of multiple forms of discrimination contributes to the deepening of dynamics of exclusion and vulnerability in the framework of participation in protest movements.

iii) Promote diversity in law enforcement recruitment and career progression so that they are more representative of the communities they serve and can have a Fuller appreciation of the different perspectives and experiences that exist in society.

iv) Recognize and address the histories of marginalization and abuse experienced by specific segments of the population and its impact on the trust of those groups in State bodies, including law enforcement.

v) Recognize how certain practices contribute to reinforcing deep-rooted feelings of mistrust and resentment (for example, intrusive preventative measures such as “stop and search”, especially if applied in a discriminatory manner).

vi) Promote long-term community engagement strategies aimed at building trust between law enforcement authorities and different communities, including segments of the population that have historically experienced marginalisation and discrimination.

Source: Own elaboration.

Box 14. Participation of women in protest movements

As Erica Chenoweth, Conor Seyle and Sahana Dharmapuri point out in the report titled, “Women’s Participation and the Fate of Nonviolent Campaigns,” there is clear evidence that higher levels of participation of women is associated with a lower probability of violence by protesters and with higher levels of incidence. However, the participation of women in protest movements has also been key to establishing that expressions of institutional violence and repression have a gender bias and represent an especially high danger for women and other groups. Various complaint processes and collective litigation have served to make the issue visible on the public agenda and promote the transformation of institutional practices in the security sector. In this context, a solid gender equality approach is key to the review of state models of response to protests from a human rights-based approach.

Source: Own elaboration.
iii) **Mechanisms for training and accountability of relevant state actors.**

- In the training provided to law enforcement personnel, and at the relevant stages of their career progression, a clear understanding of the facilitation responsibilities that law enforcement officials have during their performance in the context of protests must be ensured.

- Law enforcement personnel involved in protest management must be adequately trained with respect to principles and practices that comply with human rights (including practices based on the differentiated and proportionate use of force), and they must know appropriate communication strategies and non-escalation and de-escalation techniques.

- It is important that training provided to law enforcement in relation to protest management is based on up-to-date evidence produced in relevant fields of social science, such as, for example, social psychological research on crowd dynamics, studies on conflict management or negotiation theory.

- It is also important that the training processes of law enforcement agencies include the contributions of various representatives of civil society organizations with relevant experience both in the definition of content and in the delivery of training.

**Box 15. Practical recommendations for States**

“States should provide the necessary support to the authorities in charge of managing demonstrations and subject them to sufficient control, at all levels of government. This includes sufficient training and the necessary financial and human resources”.


- Protest management protocols should include measures to ensure the well-being of law enforcement officers, including measures to ensure that deployed officers receive sufficient rest.

- Measures should be taken to ensure that relevant legislation, policies and procedures on the management of assemblies are publicly available and easily accessible. This should include the criteria on which the notification authority may impose restrictions, the codes of conduct governing the oversight of assemblies, and the information on how to access accountability processes.

**Box 16. Meeting management statistics**

Statistics that could be considered for inclusion in public reports on assembly management include, among others: the number of assemblies that have taken place during the reporting period; the number of prohibited gatherings; the number of assemblies during which law enforcement officials resorted to the use of force; the number of dispersed gatherings; and information on the use of force, including key demographic information of those affected or injured and the number of people injured or killed due to the use of force during assemblies.

*Source:* Own elaboration.
• Protest management protocols should stipulate a clear chain of command and establish well-defined responsibilities and transparent procedures for recording decisions made in response to assemblies, as a basis for effective accountability.

• It is important that mechanisms and protocols be established to ensure that law enforcement officers deployed to manage assemblies have body cameras in order to facilitate accountability, while taking into account the need to ensure the right to privacy in relation to the recording and storage of data obtained through said cameras.

• Internal oversight of security forces can be strengthened not only by strengthening mechanisms to ensure that specific cases of abuse (including misuse of force) are addressed effectively, but also by creating mechanisms for comprehensive review of assembly management practice with a view to identifying areas of strength as well as any systematic deficiencies.

• It is also key to ensure adequate external oversight of security forces, which requires establishing appropriate reporting mechanisms and providing relevant bodies with the necessary independence and authority to initiate investigations and order reparations.

---

**Box 17. Guidance on police accountability, oversight and integrity**

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Handbook on Police Accountability, Oversight and Integrity provides a comprehensive overview of internal checks and balances and external standards that must be established to ensure that police and other law enforcement agencies carry out their functions properly and are held accountable if they fail to do so (UNODC, 2011). The manual includes a roadmap to drive effective accountability and promote integrity, as well as an overview of international instruments relevant to policing.

*Source:* Own elaboration.

**Box 18. Control mechanisms**

"Control mechanisms [...] constitute a democratic mode of security governance, which must generate the real expectation of accountability and attribution of responsibilities of various types. By generating an expectation of accountability, control tools allow the actions of security forces to be modelled based on democratic standards compatible with international human rights law”.

• It is necessary to establish mechanisms to guarantee the surveillance of purchases related to the digital control of protests, as well as supervise the use of supplies acquired by institutional counterparts, who must have the appropriate capabilities and knowledge.

• National human rights institutions and other relevant independent oversight bodies, including torture prevention bodies, should have the necessary Access to monitor all phases of an assembly and appropriate powers to promote accountability of state authorities in relation to relevant human rights.

• All necessary measures must be taken to promote and protect journalistic activity (including the activity of influential citizens without formal media credentials who sometimes perform journalistic functions) and monitoring of assemblies by independent actors must be encouraged. Measures must also be taken to protect the right to record a protest, including recording the operations of law enforcement authorities. The confiscation, seizure or destruction of notes, telephones or recording equipment without judicial authorisation should be prohibited.

Box 19. Guarantee the safety of journalists in the context of assemblies

The document “Safety of journalists covering protests”, prepared in 2020 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as part of the Global Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development Series, is a useful source of guidance on the necessary steps to ensure the security of journalistic activity in the context of assemblies. After reviewing key trends and main areas of interest, the document outlines a series of recommended steps to be considered by authorities based on relevant international standards and good practices (UNESCO, 2020).

Source: Own elaboration.

• It is essential to take the necessary measures to guarantee that people and groups who are victims of abuses and violations of their fundamental rights in the exercise of protest can effectively Access justice. This implies the duty of the responsible institutions to undertake the necessary investigations with due diligence and within a reasonable period of time.

• To complete accountability processes, it is essential to establish appropriate restorative mechanisms based on the right to reparation for damage, in the event that human rights violations have occurred in the context of a protest. The payment of compensation for moral or property damage, as well as Access to psychological assistance and medical benefits for health or medication, constitute some examples of reparation. However, measures such as the establishment of truth commissions or the development of symbolic reparatory processes such as public memorials, where relevant, can also play an important role.
Box 20. Basic principles on the right to reparation

In 2005, the United Nations General Assembly adopted by consensus the “Basic principles and guidelines on the right of victims of gross violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law to remedy and obtain reparations.” These principles provide detailed guidance on the implementation of the right to reparation and are addressed as such to representatives of the Executive Branch, particularly law enforcement officials, military and security forces, legislative bodies, the Judiciary, victims and their representatives, human rights defenders and lawyers, the media and the general public (United Nations, 2006).

Source: Own elaboration.

5. Conclusions

The resilience of democratic societies requires respect for fundamental rights such as the right to freedom of expression and the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, which are manifested in non-violent social protest. However, in a context characterized by the exacerbation of various dynamics of social conflict, in the last decade highly problematic responses to protest movements have been observed in the region. These responses have had very significant negative consequences not only with regard to the protection of fundamental freedoms, but also with regard to peaceful resolution of conflicts.

The objective of this note has been to provide all actors involved directly and indirectly in the management of protest movements with a series of recommendations aimed at strengthening models of state response to protest based on the norms established by international law and in the commitments that the States of Latin America and the Caribbean have assumed through the ratification of various international human rights instruments. Through the recommendations offered in this document, it is expected to contribute to the development of new management models for social mobilization, which are based on the recognition of protest as a legitimate mechanism for the expression of citizen demands and on the consolidation of horizontal mechanisms of accountability.
Bibliography


UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 1
Constantino Hevia and Andy Neumeyer

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 2
Suggestions for the emergency
Santiago Levy

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 3
The economic impact of COVID-19 on Venezuela: the urgency of external financing
Daniel Barráez and Ana María Chirinos-Leañez

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 4
Social and economic impact of the COVID-19 and policy options in Honduras
Andrés Ham

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 5
COVID-19 and external shock: Economic impacts and policy options in Peru
Miguel Jaramillo and Hugo Ñopo

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 6
Social and Economic Impact of COVID-19 and Policy Options in Argentina
Maria Laura Alzúa and Paula Gosis

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 7
International financial cooperation in the face of Latin America's economic crisis
José Antonio Ocampo

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 8
COVID-19 and social protection of poor and vulnerable groups in Latin America: a conceptual framework
Nora Lustig and Mariano Tommasi

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 9
Social and economic impact of the COVID-19 and policy options in Jamaica
Manuel Mera

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 10
Social and economic impact of COVID-19 and policy options in Uruguay
Alfonso Capurro, Germán Deagosto, Sebastián Ithurralde and Gabriel Oddone

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 11
Coronavirus in Colombia: vulnerability and policy options
Andrés Álvarez, Diana León, María Medellín, Andrés Zambrano and Hernando Zuleta

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 12
COVID-19 and vulnerability: a multidimensional poverty perspective in El Salvador
Rodrigo Barraza, Rafael Barrientos, Xenia Díaz, Rafael Pleitez and Víctor Tablas. UNDP country office El Salvador

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 13
Development challenges in the face of COVID-19 in Mexico. Socio-economic overview
UNDP country office Mexico

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 14 A
Lessons from COVID-19 for a Sustainability Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean
Diana Carolina León and Juan Camilo Cárdenas

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 14 B
Latin America and the Caribbean: Natural Wealth and Environmental Degradation in the XXI Century
Diana Carolina León and Juan Camilo Cárdenas

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 15
Social and Economic Impacts of the COVID-19 and Policy Option in the Dominican Republic
Sócrates Barinas and Mariana Viollaz

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 16
The Bahamas Country Note: Impact of COVID-19 and policy options
Manuel Mera

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 17
UNDP country office Paraguay

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 18
The Coronavirus and the challenges for women’s work in Latin America
Diana Gutiérrez, Guillermina Martin, Hugo Ñopo

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 19
COVID-19 and primary and secondary education: the impact of the crisis and public policy implications for Latin America and the Caribbean
Arachu Castro

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 20
Challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic in the health of women, children, and adolescents in Latin America and the Caribbean
Arachu Castro

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 21
Planning a Sustainable Post-Pandemic Recovery in Latin America and the Caribbean
Mauricio Cárdenas and Juan José Guzmán Ayala

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 22
COVID-19 in Bolivia: On the path to recovering development
UNDP Bolivia Office

UNDP LAC C19 PDS Nº. 23
Do we Need to Rethink Debt Policy in Latam?
Federico Sturzenegger