

**Sixth Consultation on the Situation of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
United States and Canada
ESCR Unit, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights
IACHR Headquarters, Washington DC
January 27, 2016**

The [Economic and Social Rights Unit](#) of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights recently held their 6th and final civil society consultation with stakeholders from the United States and Canada, concluding a series of country-level consultations that included Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Brazil, and Costa Rica. The Commission has closely followed regional priorities regarding the respect and guarantee of economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) in the Americas through its various mechanisms. In 2012, the Commission established the ESCR Unit, currently led by Commissioner Paulo Vannuchi.

Coordinated by RED DESC (ESCR NET) and the Due Process of Law Foundation (DPLF), the January 27th meeting in Washington D.C. brought together civil society, labor unions, and social movements to discuss economic policy, increasing inequality, and systemic patterns of ESCR violations in the region. Many speakers emphasized the need to evaluate the impacts of U.S. foreign policy on other countries in the region, and the importance of applying consistent ESCR definitions and standards in court proceedings.

CWGL joined a panel that included ESCR-NET, the [Kairos Center for Religions, Rights and Social Justice](#) and the Northeastern University School of Law's [Program on Human Rights and the Global Economy](#). Rachael Wyant, Program Coordinator for Economic and Social Rights, presented the impacts of austerity and the 2008 financial crisis on women's right to an adequate standard of living. Drawing attention to extreme inequality in the United States, particularly the situation of women, people of color, domestic workers, and migrant workers, the presentation outlined macro-economic trends, policies and legislation that perpetuate discrimination in the work force and fail to regulate and protect workers' rights.

Participants urged the Commission to increase its visibility in the United States and Canada, and develop more widely accessible tools and resources for civil society and advocacy groups. They commended the series of consultations as the first step in ensuring that civil society is actively engaged in holding governments and third-parties accountable to human rights violations, and recommended future field visits and local data collection to highlight systemic violations and discrimination.