



A historic ruling on incestuous sexual violence: The Inter-American Court issues its verdict in the ground-breaking De Angulo Losada Vs. Bolivia case

After more than 20 years waiting for justice, the Inter-American Court issued its judgment in favour of Brisa De Angulo, related to the incestuous violence she suffered at the hands of an adult family member when she was an adolescent, and the subsequent ill-treatment the State subjected her throughout the criminal investigation and trials.

Brisa first attempted to seek justice within the Bolivian judicial system, but instead faced an harrowing encounter with the Bolivian State, where she was subjected to, in what the Court rebuked today as “various revictimizing acts,” that effectively turned the State into a “second aggressor.” After three trials and numerous appeals, Bolivia failed Brisa’s right to justice.

Brisa, who throughout the grueling years continued her work to bring justice and protection to children through A Breeze of Hope, became a neuropsychologist and human rights attorney, advanced her case through the Inter-American system starting with the Commission. **Today, the Court found Bolivia responsible for breaching several of Brisa’s human rights in relation to their conduct in investigating and prosecuting her case.**

The Court took this opportunity to advance the protection of children and stand against gendered violence through this powerful judgment. This ruling reflects a striking dialogue among the world’s major human rights tribunals (ECtHR) and human rights protection bodies, setting **Brisa’s judgement as the springboard for global action on combatting sexual violence** against children.

Through this landmark case, the Court has set a blazing precedent on situations of incestuous violence, access to justice for child victims of sexual violence, due diligence standards on the State, legislative and policy reforms, educational reforms and public campaigns.

The Court seized Brisa’s case to take a **long-awaited stand on the role of consent-based paradigms for sex crimes** and called on Bolivia to rid its legal system of the criminal provisions that are incompatible with its obligations under the American Convention of Human Rights.

In what will also have a **monumental impact on child victims** in Bolivia, and elsewhere, the Court was firm in its verdict that the revictimizing encounters that Brisa was subjected to with the State, that represent the experience of hundreds of thousands of other child victims, which consisted of the **pervasive use of gendered stereotypes** by state officials and justice system actors during criminal proceedings, **constitute institutional forms of violence** that are profoundly incompatible with the states obligation to not submit its citizens to cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment.

The Court followed this forceful stand on the protections victims are entitled to, **by siding with all of Brisa's 11 requests** in their reparations, which cover legal, policy, institutional reforms, educational programs for prevention and justice for both institutional actor and children, and services for victims and non-offending family for healing. These changes stand to **transform Bolivia and dozens of countries across the region** who are under the obligation to assess the compliance of their legal and administrative system with the American Convention and the Court's judicial interpretations.

In its entirety this is a **judgement that strongly rebukes the ongoing tolerance of impunity** for aggressors **and State complicity and secondary victimizations** by ratcheting up regional standards, ultimately standing as an unflinching victory in the global struggle to bring overdue justice and protection to millions of children across the world.

A Breeze of Hope could not be prouder to have at the helm of our efforts to bring justice and healing to victims, our brave, tenacious and unwavering co-founder and leader who never lost sight of the end goal: no child is left behind. **A ruling from the Court in Brisa's favour, is a ruling in favour of all children.**