

Indigenous women in Argentina call for an end to sexual violence against girls



The participants of the meeting announced a march for June 3 to demand the State to put an end to the rape of girls. | Photo: agenciapresentes.org

Buenos Aires, May 27 (RHC)-- Indigenous women's organizations from several Latin American countries held a meeting in Argentina this week in which they demanded that the practice of sexual violence known as "chineo" be declared a hate crime.

The Third Parliament of Indigenous Women and Diversities, held in the town of Chicoana, province of Salta, agreed -- as an urgent action -- to demand next June 3rd that the Argentinean State put an end to the rape of girls, women and indigenous diversities.

The slogan of the march on Friday, June 3rd, will be "Against violence and to say enough to the 'chineo'", which is defined as the rape of indigenous minors by Creoles, a practice that began with colonialism and is still in force and unpunished in the north of Argentina and in several parts of Latin America.

The organizer of the three-day meeting, Movimiento de Mujeres Indígenas por el Buen Vivir (Indigenous Women's Movement for Good Living), indicated that there were days of exchange of experiences in order to raise awareness and make visible the "chineo", which is so named because the Spaniards and later the Creoles called indigenous girls "chinas" because of their slanted eyes.

Among the testimonies that were given, the following stand out: "In our group we were 25 women and there were 15 cases of abuse reported"; "we talk about many direct cases that affected the spiritual health of the territories, the community and the family."

"Sometimes it is also uncles, grandparents, brothers and fathers who are rapists." "It happened with the complicity of police and schools. Tourism can also worsen these problems of sexual violence and we also know of cases of rape by priests and pastors."

The meeting was attended by more than 250 women and people of gender diversity from 21 indigenous peoples-nations from Argentina, Chile, Bolivia and Mexico, among others.

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