

# *Violence against children discussed in Colombia*

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## **Poverty Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean 2024**

By María Josefina Arce

Recently, Colombia has been an intense protagonist at the international level. Within days of each other, the South American country hosted two important events: the UN Biodiversity Summit and the First Global Ministerial Conference to End Violence against Children.

The recently concluded meeting on children, held in the capital city of Bogota aimed to contribute to this important segment of the population, which is the future of the planet.

Violence has serious consequences for the health of children and their communities. Experts warn that it is linked to a decline in social, emotional and cognitive development, as well as the adoption of high-risk behaviors.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), nearly three out of four children between the ages of two and four, or some 300 million children worldwide, are regularly subjected to corporal punishment or psychological violence by their parents or caregivers.

In Latin America, although specialists point out that this problem has become more visible, it still affects the region severely.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), estimates that this scourge is also linked to factors such as inequality, insecurity, migration and humanitarian crises.

In his speech at the meeting, Colombian President Gustavo Petro said that hunger, climate collapse, war and migration are the worst violators of children's rights. He warned that world power is leading to an enormous genocide of humanity, starting with children.

Hence the importance of the meeting in Bogota, where important agreements were reached to put an end to the aggressions against children and to make this deplorable situation even more visible.

The launch of the first global movement for the prevention of violence against children, led by children, adolescents and young people, was a landmark event.

The event will enable progress to be made towards achieving target 16.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which aims to eliminate abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children.

Colombia led the discussions and reflections on the urgency of adopting concrete measures at the international level to protect and prevent violence against children, an unacceptable reality in today's world.

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