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Leila Hamouie

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to continue to tackle gender stereotypes and structural discrimination in order to support this vulnerable population.

GENDER VIOLENCE AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN CUBA

*by Leila Hamouie**

Representatives from Red Defensora de los Asuntos de La Mujer (REDAMU), Cuba Independiente y Democrática (CID), and Juventud Activa Cuba Unida (JACU) explained that gender-based violence in Cuba is a product of a *macho* society based on gender stereotypes, unreliable government reporting, and a lack of independent reporting and civil society organizations.¹

The main cases of gender-based violence (“GBV”) in Cuba fell into five general categories: femicide, obstetric violence, domestic violence, sexual harassment, and violence against female human rights defenders at the hands of the Cuban authorities. The speakers emphasized that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated incidents of domestic violence, as many women are trapped in isolation with their abusers.

A representative from REDAMU and CID urged the Cuban government to collect official data on GBV, to enforce arrests and imprisonment of sexual and domestic abusers, to provide training on GBV for law enforcement and health personnel, and to desist arbitrary arrests and harassment of human rights defenders. Finally, the President of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IAHCR) recommended

* Leila Hamouie is a 1L at American University from Houston, TX. She received her B.A. in International Relations & Global Studies and Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Texas at Austin.

¹ *Gender violence and women's human rights in Cuba*, 177 Session Period Public Hearings, IACHR (October 1, 2020).

that activists in Cuba work within the existing government structures for women, namely the Ministry for Women, to bend the will of the government to combat GBV.

Many of the recommendations from REDAMU and CID members were predicated on Cuba becoming a democratic nation. Although a democratic Cuba would improve the human rights situation in the long-term, women in Cuba urgently need protection from GBV, especially in the context of the pandemic. Working within Cuba's existing government structures, as the President of IAHCR suggested, could offer a more productive short-term alternative.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN U.S. PROTESTS *by Abigail Rosenthal**

"There is no question in my mind that I was targeted, tackled, and arrested because I was reporting on the events around me, even though the First Amendment protects my right to do so."

Gustavo Martinez recounted his recent experience reporting on a protest in Asbury Park, New Jersey. Speaking before several NGOs and members of the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights (IACHR) at their October 7th session, Martinez detailed how law enforcement officers assaulted him despite the fact that he was clearly identified as a member of the press.¹ His story was one of many recent accounts of aggression against journalists covered in the session titled "Freedom of Expression and Journalism in United States Protests".

Along with these accounts, representatives from the Reporter's Committee for Freedom of the Press (RCFP) shared disturbing statistics regarding First Amendment violations. Since May 25th of this year, journalists reported over 850 press freedom incidents to the committee. These incidents range from journalists being falsely arrested to being blinded by rubber bullets. In comparison, just 152 such incidents were recorded in all of 2019. Disturbingly 85% of these recent aggressions were at the hands of law

* Abigail Rosenthal is a 1L J.D. candidate from Montclair, NJ. She received her B.A. in Sociocultural Anthropology from Amherst College and studied issues at the intersection of race, gender, and sexuality in Amsterdam, The Netherlands and Kandy, Sri Lanka. She is passionate about reproductive justice and international criminal law.

¹ Freedom of expression and journalism in United States protests, 177 Session Period Public Hearings, IACHR (October 7, 2020).