

DPU launches Observatory on Violence Against Women

On Thursday 7 March 2024, the Federal Public Defenders' Office (DPU) launched the Observatory on Violence Against Women. The Observatory will develop strategies to improve the DPU's actions in relation to all forms of violence and to promote human rights. Also, it will soon be possible to submit complaints through this DPU channel.



The launch ceremony took place the day before International Women's Day (8 March), a date created to provide visibility to the various forms of violence, such as the pay gap, unequal access to education and discrimination in the workplace.

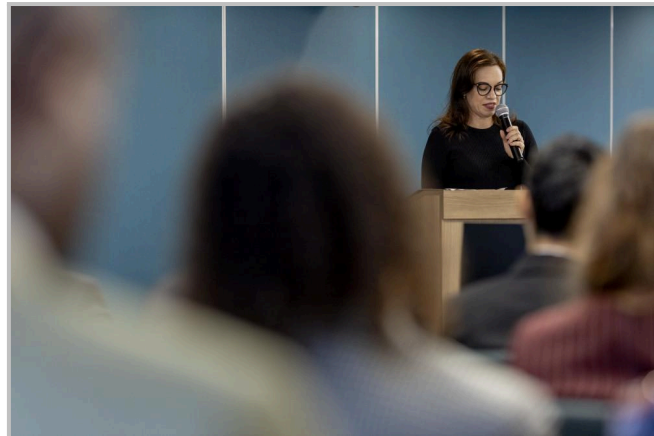
The Federal Public Defender-General, Leonardo Cardoso de Magalhães, emphasized the importance of policies that enable women to participate in positions of power. "I signed the Ordinance establishing the Observatory on Violence Against Women at the DPU and reinforced the DPU's policy, led by our Women's Working Group, to strengthen initiatives and activities in favour of women's rights," he said.



The federal public defender and coordinator of the Observatory, Rafaella Mikos Passos, explained that a woman who has been a victim of violence can often come into contact with

the DPU because, for example, she has a social security or welfare claim, a health claim, or in some itinerant action to assist the migrant population. And, at that moment, it is important that the DPU can inform these women of their rights.

"It's very important that the person in charge of the service at the DPU has also been trained to properly assist this woman. And it's also very important that the DPU is integrated into the protection network for victims of violence so that, if necessary, they can be referred to correctly and quickly," said the coordinator of the Observatory.



Rafaella Mikos Passos also drew attention to the alarming data from the Brazilian Public Security Forum, which revealed that in 2023 a total of 1,463 women were victims of femicide in Brazil. "In order to achieve the Observatory's objectives, we are going to work on a channel for receiving and processing complaints, training programs on human rights education for the public and the DPU's team, as well as improving integration and partnerships with the government network and civil society."

The national Law No. 13.104, of March 9, 2015, qualified the crime of femicide when it is committed against a woman for reasons of her condition as a female. It is considered a crime for reasons of the female sex when the crime involves domestic and family violence and contempt for or discrimination against women. The Observatory team will work on the system to establish a channel for receiving, processing and forwarding reports of violence against women within the DPU.

The Observatory

The Observatory will act in defense of women victims of all types of violence and will have the following purposes:

- Produce and analyze reports based on the data obtained by the Observatory;
- Plan, coordinate and implement strategic and structural actions aimed at defending women victims of violence;

- Promote training and rights education for the DPU's internal and external public on the subject of violence against women;
- Articulation with other institutions, civil society and spheres of government with a view to promoting human rights and defending the fundamental rights of women victims of violence, as well as networking;

Launch ceremony

The observatory was launched at the headquarters of the Federal Public Defender's Office in Brasilia. The Executive Secretary of the Ministry of Women, Maria Helena Guarezi, attended the event and congratulated the DPU on the initiative. She stressed the importance of society and public bodies looking at violence that is often made invisible, such as not occupying spaces of power. "It took us a long time to understand that a lot of violence didn't even exist because we thought it was normal, such as the lack of female representation in the Federal Executive and Legislative branches," she said.



Ireland's first ambassador to Brazil, Fiona Flood, recalled that violence against women has been described by the World Health Organization (WHO) as devastating and spoke about the statistics in the European country. The ambassador stressed the need for institutions that defend human rights, such as the DPU, to talk to other countries in order to exchange experiences and find a common solution.



The main speakers at the launch ceremony were the DPU's Secretary General for Institutional Articulation (SGAI), Charlene Borges; the representative of the DPU's Women's Working Group, Liana Pacheco Dani; the member of the DPU's Superior Council, Danielle Osório; and the president of the National Association of Federal Public Defenders (Anadef), Luciana Dytz.

Source: The Federal Public Defenders' Office, Brazil