

Costa Rica

Costa Rica is a Member State of the Organization of American States (OAS) and of the United Nations (UN), and has human rights obligations at both the regional and universal levels.

Regional: Inter-American System



As a Member of the OAS, Costa Rica is held to the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man and its human rights policies and practices are monitored by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. The Commission may decide [complaints](#) against the State and may also hold [hearings](#) or issue [reports](#) on the human rights situation there. Costa Rica has accepted the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, which may issue binding [judgments](#) concerning alleged abuses.

Individuals and groups have submitted complaints of human rights violations committed by Costa Rica to the [Inter-American human rights system](#). For example, in *Artavia Murillo et al. v. Costa Rica*, the Court found that the ban on in vitro fertilization constituted an arbitrary interference with the rights to private and family life and the right to found a family. See I/A Court H.R., [Case of Artavia Murillo et al. v. Costa Rica](#). Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations and Costs. Judgment of November 28, 2012. Series C No. 257.

Additionally, the Commission and Court have issued [precautionary measures](#) and [provisional measures](#) to protect people in urgent situations of risk in Costa Rica.

Costa Rica has ratified the following **regional human rights treaties**:

- American Convention on Human Rights
- Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (“Protocol of San Salvador”)
- Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities
- Inter-American Convention on the Forced Disappearance of Persons
- Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (“Convention of Belem do Pará”)
- Inter-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture
- Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Related Forms of Intolerance
- Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons

United Nations System

As a UN Member State, Costa Rica is subject to the oversight of various [UN human rights bodies](#), including the [Human Rights Council](#) and its [Universal Periodic Review](#) and thematic [special procedures](#). As a party to specific universal human rights treaties, Costa Rica's policies and practices are monitored by UN [treaty bodies](#). It has accepted the complaints procedure of six treaty bodies.

Costa Rica has ratified the following **UN human rights treaties**:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED)
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)

Costa Rica has ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR aimed at abolishing the death penalty, and optional protocols to the CRC addressing children in armed conflict and the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography. Costa Rica has a duty to submit **State reports** to each UN treaty body associated with the relevant treaty Costa Rica has ratified. These reports must be submitted on a periodic basis, and describe the steps Costa Rica has taken to implement the treaty provisions.

Costa Rica has ratified [optional protocols](#) and made appropriate declarations allowing individuals to submit **complaints** against the State alleging violations of the ICCPR, CEDAW, CAT, CRPD, CERD, and CRC. Additionally, certain UN treaties include **inquiry procedures**, which allow the UN treaty body to consider allegations of grave or systematic human rights violations. Costa Rica has accepted the inquiry procedures of the CAT, CED, CEDAW, and CRPD.

In 2002, Costa Rica extended a **standing invitation** to UN special procedures, which means that any special rapporteurs or working groups are welcome to conduct visits in Costa Rica. For example, the Independent Expert on human rights and the environment went on a mission to Costa Rica in 2013 and published a [report](#) in April 2014.

For more information on Costa Rica's engagement with [UN human rights bodies](#), visit <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/countries/LACRegion/Pages/CRIndex.aspx>.

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