

Panama

Panama 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, Panama 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. Panama 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 Panama to the [Inter-American human rights system](#). For example, the Commission found that Panama violated the rights of multiple judges by dismissing them without due process. See IACHR, Merits Report No. 28/94, Case 10.026 *Judges of Chiriquí* (Panama), Sept. 30, 1994. In *Vélez Looz v. Panama*, the Court found Panama responsible for due process and other rights violations, including failure to investigate allegations of torture, related to the arrest and prosecution of Vélez Looz, a citizen of Ecuador. See I/A Court H.R., *Vélez Looz v. Panama*. Preliminary Objections, Merits, Reparations, and Costs. Judgment of November 23, 2010. Series C No. 218.

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

Panama 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

United Nations System

As a UN Member State, Panama 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, Panama's policies and practices are monitored by UN [treaty bodies](#). It has accepted the complaints procedure of five treaty bodies.

Panama 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)

Panama has submitted a reservation, declaration or understanding that modifies its obligations under the following treaties: [ICCPR](#) and [CAT](#).

Panama 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. Panama has a duty to submit **State reports** to each UN treaty body associated with the treaties Panama has ratified. These reports must be submitted on a periodic basis, and describe the steps Panama has taken to implement the treaty provisions.

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

On March 14, 2011, Panama extended a **standing invitation** to UN special procedures, which means they are welcome to conduct visits in Panama. For example, the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent went on a mission to Panama in January 2013 and published a [report](#) in August 2013.

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

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