

Press Release

Gender Justice Uncovered Awards

Highlight the Best and Worst Judicial Decisions Related to Gender Equality

Bogotá, May 11, 2009. An international jury, comprised of Juan Mendez (Argentina), President of the Center for Transitional Justice and former member of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights; Rosa Montero (Spain), journalist, writer and psychologist, and Kavita N. Ramdas (India), President and Executive Director of the Global Fund for Women, considered all the cases nominated to Women's Link Worldwide's Gender Justice Uncovered Awards to identify the best and the worst judicial decisions related to gender justice in Spain, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

From New York, Juan Mendez announced the winners of the gold, silver, and bronze Bludgeon Awards and the gold, silver and bronze Gavel Awards.

A total of 33 decisions were nominated, issued by courts in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Spain and by the UN Human Rights Committee.

The Bludgeon Awards were given to those decisions that had the worst effect on gender equality.

The Bronze Bludgeon was granted to a decision of the court of first instance in Murcia, Spain that denied parental custody to a woman because she is a lesbian.

The Silver Bludgeon was given to a decision issued by Guatemala's Constitutional Court, stating that domestic workers (most of them women) do not have the same labor rights as other workers.

The Gold Bludgeon was for a decision issued by the Constitutional Court of Chile, which prohibited the distribution of emergency contraception in public hospitals.

The Gavel Awards were given to those decisions that most promoted gender equality.

The Bronze Gavel was given to the case known as Karen Llantoy vs. Peru, in which the United Nations Human Rights Committee found that the Peruvian government had violated the rights of a woman who was prevented from getting an abortion despite the fact that the fetus was anencephalic and would die at birth.

The Silver Gavel was granted to a decision by the Colombian Constitutional Court, mandating the government to take appropriate measures to protect displaced women, whose rights had been violated systematically, extensively and massively for several years.

The Gold Gavel was for the Supreme Court of Mexico, which held that Mexico City's law legalizing abortion in the first twelve weeks of pregnancy is constitutional because it protects women's fundamental rights.

People's Choice Awards

More than 1,500 votes were received through the website <http://uncovered.womenslinkworldwide.org>. The public gave the **BLUDGEON Award** to a decision by the Constitutional Court of Ecuador, which suspended the pharmaceutical license allowing for the sale and distribution of emergency contraception or the "morning-after pill."

The public gave the **GAVEL Award**, by a large margin, to Colombia's Constitutional Court's decision recognizing the rights of same sex couples.

About Women's Link Worldwide

Women's Link Worldwide is an international human rights non-profit organization working to advance gender justice through the implementation of international human rights law and strategic work with the courts, including strategic litigation.

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