

SWP Research Paper

Claudia Zilla and Marie Peschke

Feminist Foreign Policy in Latin America

Comparing Mexico, Chile and Colombia



Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik
German Institute for
International and Security Affairs

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- In Latin America, Mexico (2020), Chile (2022) and Colombia (2022) have all officially committed to a feminist foreign policy (FFP). The introduction of a feminist approach to foreign policy should be seen in the context of a growing awareness of gender issues in international, regional and national politics.
- In comparison with their European counterparts, the Latin American approaches to FFP exhibit a stronger focus on the domestic dimension, on internal problems. This is especially clear in the case of Mexico, while Chile's FFP emphasises the feminist perspective in foreign trade and Colombia's FFP defines itself as pacifist.
- These countries' FFPs have not brought about a fundamental political change, but they do inject new momentum into existing gender equality policies and gender mainstreaming. They expand women's participation and representation and enhance the visibility of women's contribution to foreign policy.
- Mexico, Chile and Colombia are important partners for Germany and the EU in matters concerning the global gender and human rights agenda. As these Latin American countries are intensifying their cooperation in these areas, they are also worthwhile partners for the expansion of trilateral cooperation.
- As the German Federal Foreign Office has dropped its FFP, while the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is continuing its feminist development policy and the future of Chile's FFP is uncertain due to the change of power, it will make sense to pursue cooperation on human rights, inclusion and gender issues through variable formats and terminological framing. Germany should also benefit from learning processes, and strengthen bi-regional dialogue and exchange, including between feminist and women's organisations.

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Until the end of 2025, Marie Peschke was a Research Assistant in the project “Success Criteria for a Feminist Development Policy (FDP) Specific to Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)”, which was co-financed by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

The study was conducted as part of this project.

Issues and Conclusions

Feminist Foreign Policy in Latin America: Comparing Mexico, Chile and Colombia

Since Sweden officially committed to a feminist foreign policy (FFP) in 2014, about a dozen states have announced such a step. These include three Latin American states: Mexico (2020), Chile (2022) and Colombia (2022). But what actually followed the public declarations? The course of events turned out differently in each case, as there is no “one-size-fits-all” model for the conception and institutionalisation of a feminist approach in foreign policy.

The spread of FFP can be viewed as phenomenon of international norm diffusion. However, this does not mean that the governments in question are simply adopting a purely exogenous policy approach. On the one hand, processes of growing gender awareness are converging in international, regional and national politics. On the other, the local context shapes the feminist approach’s interpretation and legal-bureaucratic anchoring. Research on FFP has to date largely ignored the political-institutional preconditions, even though they have come to be regarded as crucial for FFP’s effectiveness and sustainability. This aspect is all more relevant after Sweden dropped its FFP following a change of government in 2022, triggering a rollback since joined by other states.

Such forth and back movements are part of the broader trends affecting the human rights and inclusion agenda. Currently, a pushback is globally dominant in this area. Against this backdrop, the question of less visible human rights – oriented efforts and improvements is becoming increasingly relevant.

The impact and resilience of a feminist approach in foreign policy depend on the degree of internalisation. Here, internalisation refers to the process by which key actors decide to introduce the policy approach and lend it their political backing. Then the approach must be legally and politically anchored, provided with resources. Finally, its content must be elaborated and implemented. The analysis of these aspects lies at the heart of the present research paper. Two central questions guide the investigation: What was the political and legal road to FFP in Mexico, Chile and Colombia? And how was the FFP subsequently internalised, i.e. institutionalised and conceptualised? Mexico, Chile and Colombia are the Latin American

countries that have committed at the highest level to a meaningful FFP. A systematic evaluation of the implementation and impact of FFP lies beyond the scope of the present contribution, and would demand a longer period of observation. Nonetheless initial pointers concerning the implementation process can be offered.

The central findings of this research paper include the following: In all three investigated countries the introduction of an FFP was preceded by a legal and political process that expanded and deepened the human rights agenda and anchored the gender perspective in the state's actions. In all three cases the FFP was introduced by a left-leaning (male) president who viewed their government as feminist and observed gender parity in cabinet appointments. At the same time, these governments saw FFP as a continuation of other domestic gender-orientated reforms. FFP does not represent a political rupture. Instead it lends momentum to existing gender equality policies and gender mainstreaming by increasing women's participation and representation and enhancing the visibility of their contributions to foreign policy. While the three investigated cases exhibit commonalities with regard to the normative foundations and political justification of FFP, its legal and political anchoring differs among the cases. The thematic focus also varies in the framework of the conceptualisation. Mexico's FFP is the most domestically orientated, while the external perspective is especially prominent in Chile's; Colombia's lies in-between and is explicitly defined as pacifist. Overall the Latin American FFP approaches are more inward-looking, more orientated on domestic problems than their European counterparts. They do not address questions concerning geopolitics, the international order, global asymmetries, international conflict management and colonial logics.

Mexico, Chile and Colombia are found to be relevant partners for promoting the gender and human rights agenda on a global level. Growing cooperation between them on these issues, as well as their respective bilateral cooperation with other states, offer potential to expand trilateral cooperation. Any engagement will need to accept variable formats and designations, and should only insist on FFP and feminist development policy (FDP) where that is possible. Cooperation with Latin America can be also instructive for Germany, so active participation in knowledge circulation is recommended (also on the receiving side). The general pushback in this area makes it

all the more important to support civil society organisations and encourage their bi-regional dialogue.

Growing Gender Awareness in Politics

Sweden was the first country to introduce a formal feminist approach in its foreign policy in 2014, coining the FFP concept. Since then governments or ministries of foreign affairs in several countries on different continents where left-wing, centre-left or progressive party alliances were in power have announced a similar move:¹ Canada in 2017; Luxembourg in 2018; France in 2019; Mexico in 2020; Germany, Scotland, Spain and Libya in 2021; Colombia, the Netherlands, Chile and Liberia in 2022; Mongolia, Argentina and Slovenia in 2023;² and most recently Bolivia in 2024. In doing so, they have contributed to the associated norm diffusion in international politics.³

In certain cases the move amounted to little more than a declaration of intent, and there is debate over when a government counts as one that actually implements a FFP. Nevertheless, Sweden, as the country with the longest-running and most firmly institutionalised FFP, made waves when it officially abandoned the policy in 2022 – followed by the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Argentina and the Federal Foreign Office in Germany.⁴ Each of these changes in policy was pre-

ceded by a change in power, meaning an ideological shift to the right within the governing parties, although the size of the swing varied from country to country.

Internationally, the FFP remains closely bound up with a particular ideological orientation. This linkage makes it harder to establish a broad political consensus around FFP and remove it from the arena of party-political contest, i.e. to transform it from a government policy to a so-called state policy.

Dropping FFP is part of a broader rollback that encompasses a wide range of phenomena, from deprioritisation of human rights and inclusion to deliberate policies of exclusion and reinforcing power asymmetries. Rights are being curtailed and mechanisms of compensatory justice dismantled in many states across the world. Solidarity in society is eroding and thus weakening social cohesion. In the worst cases, where patriarchal populism⁵ or variants of the global radical right hold sway, antifeminism is promoted and characterised (in their own terminology) as a “culture war” against “gender ideology”. Defunding and in some cases even institutional dismantling also affects civilian conflict management, humanitarian

1 Various terms are used, including feminist foreign policy, feminist diplomacy, feminist development cooperation, depatriarchalised foreign policy and decolonial foreign policy. Furthermore, there is no consensus as to when a government is actually considered to be pursuing FFP, which is why various lists of states circulate in the context of policy research on FFP.

2 Lyric Thompson et al., *Defining Feminist Foreign Policy: The 2023 Edition*, The Feminist Foreign Policy Collaborative, 2023, <https://tinyurl.com/ye244de4> (this and all other links accessed 16 November 2025).

3 Karin Aggestam and Annika B. Rosamond, “Feminist Foreign Policy 3.0: Advancing Ethics and Gender Equality in Global Politics”, *SAIS Review of International Affairs* 39, no. 1 (2019): 37–48.

4 The new German foreign minister, Johann Wadephul (CDU), announced before taking office that he would be dis-

continuing the feminist approach in foreign policy, and the Federal Foreign Office removed all references to FFP from its websites. At the same time Germany’s feminist development policy (FDP) has been quietly retained. The relevant documents remain available on the websites of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, although Development Minister Reem Alabali-Radovan (SPD) has not committed publicly to the policy. Barbara Mittelhammer, *Ein Schritt vor, zwei zurück? Geschlechtergerechtigkeit in der deutschen Außenpolitik nach der Abschaffung der Feministischen Leitlinien* (Bonn: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/3su3uv99>.

5 Rebecca Sanders and Laura D. Jenkins, “Patriarchal Populism: The Conservative Political Action Coalition (CPAC) and the Transnational Politics of Authoritarian Anti-Feminism”, *The International Spectator* 58, no. 3 (2023): 1–19.

aid and development cooperation, while global military spending rises.⁶ Democratic erosion and autocratisation are the prevailing trends.⁷ Current global statistical data reveals rapid growth in the number of conflicts, the prevalence of (sexualised) violence and the numbers of deaths in conflict contexts.⁸ Feminist analyses suggest that these developments are closely interconnected.⁹

Despite the pushback, FFP is far from history. Countries like Mexico, Chile and Colombia are anchoring the feminist approach institutionally in their foreign policy and developing it conceptually. Gender awareness may be under pressure but it has not been abandoned altogether. Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), for example, is pressing ahead with its regional gender agenda. Even in an era of global setbacks in the field of human rights, progressive developments should not be overlooked. Closer examination of these not only provides insights into the individual case, but also into the connection between trend and resilience as well as opportunities for cooperation.

Growing gender awareness in governments and institutions does not simply appear out of nowhere. It is the outcome of civil society engagement and pressure, of activism, organisation and participation. Feminist and women's organisations have been voicing their demands for a very long time, and have always stressed two aspects: gender equality as a universal principle and social transformation in the sense of changing the patriarchal social, economic, political and legal structures that cement gender hierarchies. Variations in the importance attributed to these perspectives contributed to the differentiation of feminist currents.

⁶ SIPRI Military Expenditure Database (Solna: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute [SIPRI], 2024), doi: 10.55163/CQGC9685.

⁷ V-Dem Institute, *V-Dem Democracy Report 2025. 25 Years of Autocratization – Democracy Trumped?* (University of Gothenburg, March 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/2ra4j726>.

⁸ UN Security Council, *Women and Peace and Security. Report of the Secretary-General* (New York, 5 September 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/2tfst7jp>.

⁹ For example, Sabine Hark and Paula-Irene Villa, eds., *Anti-Genderismus: Sexualität und Geschlecht als Schauplätze politischer Auseinandersetzungen* (Bielefeld, 2017); Ines Kappert, *Das »Recht des Stärkeren« ist keine Lösung* (Berlin: Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung, 28 July 2025) (Hintergrund), <https://tinyurl.com/5f4dpc7c>.

Political developments and decisions have gender-specific effects.

Gender awareness implies empirical knowledge about the existence of gender regimes. In all societies these exert enormous influence on social roles, life experiences and access to rights, liberties, resources and positions of power. Consequently, political developments and decisions have gender-specific effects. That means that they impact differently on people of different gender (in the sense of experienced or attributed gender identity). At the same time gender hierarchies are an important cause of social conflict and violence, and exacerbate problems of other origin.

Growing gender awareness gives rise to a gender agenda encompassing all the political, legal and institutional measures required to reduce gender-related asymmetries. The term "gender" in the broader sense includes multiple dimensions: body, identity, expression, attraction and role. One of the key components of a gender agenda is gender mainstreaming. This involves taking into account the different life situations and interest of individuals with various gender identities when planning political, social and economic projects. Another central element is the targeted promotion of gender equality through policies. Both are usually included in FFPs, which should be understood in the historical context of increasingly critical reflection on gender (even if this has not been strictly linear and without setbacks) and build on corresponding developments in the UN system, on the multilateral level in Latin America and at national level in many states in the region.

The gender agenda in the UN context

The explicit inclusion of a gender perspective within the framework of the United Nations (UN) dates back to its founding.¹⁰ In 1946 the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) established the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)¹¹ as most important global intergovernmental body (Resolution 11 (II) of 21 June 1946).

¹⁰ A similar historical timeline was first published in: Claudia Zilla, "Feminist Foreign Policy in Latin America: The Approaches of Mexico, Chile and Colombia", in *Trends in Latin American International Relations. Shifting Alliances in the New World (Dis)Order*, ed. Peter Birle and Claudia Zilla, Europa Regional Perspectives Series (Oxford: Taylor & Francis, 2025).

¹¹ UN Women – Headquarters, "Commission on the Status of Women" (24 September 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/jxwz48c>.

exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality, women's rights and empowerment of women.¹² In 1972 the UN General Assembly (UNGA) declared 1975 "International Women's Year" (Resolution 3010 (XXVII) of 18 December).¹³ The first World Conference on Women was held in Mexico in 1975,¹⁴ and adopted a World Plan of Action. In December 1976 the UNGA declared 1976 – 1985 the "United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace" (Resolution 31/136).¹⁵ In 1979 the UNGA adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which came into force 1981.¹⁶ Two further World Conferences on Women were held in 1980 in Copenhagen and 1985 in Nairobi. The fourth World Conference on Women was held in 1995 in Beijing and adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.¹⁷

The gender perspective also found its way into the spheres of development and security. Gender equality was anchored in the Millennium Goals (MDGs, 2000 – 2015, Goal 3) and in subsequent Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, 2016 – 2030, Goal 5). In 2000 the UN Security Council (UNSC) adopted Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) at the initiative of the Namibian women's affairs minister, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah.¹⁸ Nine further resolutions on gender-specific topics followed. Bundled together as the WPS Agenda,¹⁹ they aim to strengthen women's

participation in peace processes, protect them from sexualised violence in armed conflicts and comprehensively anchor their rights in the field of peace and security. Since 2005 about 100 countries have prepared National Action Plans (NAPs) for the implementation of UNSCR 1325. After years of negotiations between member states, women's organisations and civil society, the UNGA finally adopted Resolution 64/289 on 2 July 2010. This brought the organisation UN Women into being,²⁰ by merging several UN agencies involved in women's issues.²¹

The gender agenda in the Latin American context

States in LAC have traditionally been strongly committed not only to the development of the United Nations Organisation (UNO), but also to the promotion of women's rights within the UN system and in regional organisations. LAC is home to 20 of the UN's 51 founding members.²² Although only four of the 160 signatories of the UN Charter were women, two of them were from LAC. These were Minerva Bernardino (Dominican Republic) and Bertha Lutz (Brazil) – alongside Virginia Gildersleeve (United States) and Wu Yi-Fang (China). It is thanks to Lutz and Bernardino that the preamble to the UN Charter explicitly mentions women.²³

12 In Resolution 1996/6 of 1996, the Economic and Social Council expanded the Commission's remit and gave it a leading role in monitoring the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the activities of the United Nations.

13 UN General Assembly Resolution, A/RES/3010 (XXVII), *International Women's Year* (New York, 18 December 1972), <https://tinyurl.com/8skhw7tn>.

14 UN Women – Headquarters, "World Conferences on Women" (25 September 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/3jumpx2n>.

15 UN General Assembly Resolution 31/136 – 1976, *United Nations Decade for Women* (New York, 1977), <https://tinyurl.com/4vkh8d5f>.

16 UN Women, "CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" (12 June 2009), <https://tinyurl.com/49p25vd3>.

17 UN Women – Headquarters, "Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Beijing +5 Political Declaration and Outcome", <https://tinyurl.com/49896u7n>.

18 UN Security Council, Resolution 1325, "Landmark Resolution on Women, Peace and Security" (3 June 2005), <https://tinyurl.com/mrx7xu4d>.

19 "Women, Peace and Security and the UN Security Council. Global Study on the Implementation of UN Security

Council Resolution 1325" (26 December 2023), <https://tinyurl.com/4yvm2ne7>.

20 UN Women – Headquarters, "About Us" (25 September 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/2bchkt9v>; UN Women – Headquarters, "Commission on the Status of Women" (see note 11).

21 The following units were merged into UN Women: the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW, founded in 1976), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI, founded in 1997), and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM, founded in 1976).

22 The timeline laid out in the section was previously published in similar form in Zilla, "Feminist Foreign Policy in Latin America" (see note 10).

23 From the preamble to the Charter of the United Nations: "... to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small", United Nations, "UN Charter", 1945, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/preamble>.

The Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean²⁴ is the region's most important intergovernmental forum for women's rights and gender equality. It is a subsidiary body of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), which is responsible for the secretariat of the Regional Conference on Women and has been working in this area in coordination with UN Women since 2020. The Regional Conference on Women, founded in 1977 in Havana, Cuba, brings together governments and civil society groups – in particular feminist and women's movements and organisations, academics, intergovernmental bodies, cooperation agencies and the UN system. Fifteen Regional Conferences on Women have been held to date and agreements reached under their auspices have significantly shaped the region's gender agenda.

The 10th Regional Conference on Women held in 2007 in Quito, Ecuador, launched the Gender Equality Observatory of Latin America and the Caribbean (Observatorio para la Igualdad de Género de América Latina y el Caribe).²⁵ Its purposes are to strengthen national mechanisms for promoting women's rights, to disseminate official information from the countries in the region and to facilitate the monitoring of international and regional agreements on women's rights and gender equality.

The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women is one of most important agreements on gender issues in LAC. Also known as Convention of Belém do Pará, it was adopted in 1994 by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS).²⁶ As a legally binding international instrument within the Inter-American System of Human Rights, this was the world's first to recognise violence against women as a human rights violation and a systemic problem, and to define the due diligence obligations of states with regard to prevention, investigation, assistance, and

punishment.²⁷ Effective implementation of the Convention requires continuous and independent evaluation and support, for which the Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention (MESECVI) was established in 2004.

To this day, the CIM is the only continent-wide political forum in the Americas specifically for women's rights and gender equality.

The Inter-American Commission of Women (Comisión Interamericana de Mujeres, CIM) was created in 1928 by the Pan-American Union (predecessor of the OAS). To this day, the CIM is the only continent-wide political forum in the Americas specifically for women's rights and gender equality. In the interim, further regional bodies dedicated to the gender agenda have been created within the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and in subregional integration systems such as the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR).

The gender agenda in national politics

Across the world, recent decades have seen growing efforts to promote gender justice at the national level. In LAC the trend is clearly towards stronger legal anchoring and codification of rights of women and of people who do not conform to the gender binary and heteronormativity.²⁸ This has occurred at the constitutional and legislative levels, thanks to the engagement of human rights organisations and movements. The same applies to anti-discrimination, where many states have successively sharpened their norms and legislation. Additionally, states are held legally responsible for protecting and realising these rights and for taking the gender perspective into account in their activities. This makes rights actionable.

Awareness of the gap between legally enshrined rights and the realisation of substantive gender equality in LAC states has spurred programmes and

²⁴ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), "Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean | ECLAC" (25 September 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/wz2we2t5>.

²⁵ ECLAC, "Gender Equality Observatory", 25 September 2025, <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

²⁶ Organization of American States, "Belém do Pará, Status of Signatures and Ratifications", <https://tinyurl.com/mvnzzawb>. The Convention has been ratified by 32 of the 34 full members of the OAS, the exceptions being Canada and the United States.

²⁷ Katherine Payne, "The Belém do Pará Convention at 30: Five Things You Should Know", *Equality Now* (online), 7 June 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/3myhwbak>.

²⁸ Javier Corrales, *The Politics of LGBTQ Rights Expansion in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Cambridge Elements. Elements in Politics and Society in Latin America (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), doi: 10.1017/9781108993609.

measures to address structural disadvantage (affirmative action). One example of this is quotas for historically marginalised groups such as minorities in educational institutions or women in politics. Gender quotas²⁹ have been introduced in many countries in the region,³⁰ initially for electoral lists and parliamentary representation. Today they are commonplace for cabinet appointments³¹ and senior ministerial positions. In many places gender parity in collective bodies has become standard political practice, whether formally or informally.

The growing prominence of the gender perspective is reflected institutionally in the establishment of state bodies (departments, agencies, institutes) with corresponding remits. These are frequently answerable to a women's ministry. In recent years, increasing numbers of Latin American states have prepared (and subsequently updated) an NAP for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.³² The most recent innovations include the introduction of FFPs. Taken together, these legal, political and institutional developments can be seen as a trend. However, the underlying national processes should not be understood teleologically, as they are neither linear (in the sense of a fixed sequence of steps) nor irreversible.

29 "Quotas | International IDEA" (12 November 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/4cxmwmflk>.

30 Marcela Ríos Tobar (ed.), *Mujer y política. El impacto de las cuotas de género en América Latina* [Women and politics: The effect of gender quotas in Latin America] (Santiago de Chile: IDEA Internacional; FLACSO-Chile; Catalonia, 2008), <https://tinyurl.com/5x7jrthd>.

31 Anabella Molina, "Presidentes débiles y ministras presentes: La representación de género en los gabinetes de América Latina 1999–2019" [Weak presidents and present female ministers: Gender representation in Latin American cabinets 1999–2019], *Estado, Gobierno y Gestión Pública* [State, government and public management] 21, no. 41 (2023), doi: 10.5354/0717-8980.2023.71534.

32 Paula Drumond et al., *Mapeando la agenda "Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad" en América Latina: una comparación de los Planes de Acción Nacional de la ONU* [Mapping der Agenda "Frauen, Frieden und Sicherheit" in Lateinamerika: Ein Vergleich der Nationalen Aktionspläne der UNO], BRICS Policy Brief, no. V.12 N.4 (BRICS Policy Center, 2022), <https://bit.ly/4i0Qyca>.

Feminist Foreign Policy

FFP creates a political framework for a government's foreign policy activities, and for its ministerial structures and processes.³³ The point of introducing such a framework is to bring about policy change. The degree of ambition varies from case to case, for example with respect to the number of foreign policy areas covered, the extent of linkage with other policy areas, the depth of change envisaged, and the breadth of target groups. The varieties of FFP actually instituted by states are diverse, but less ambitious than the FFP concepts discussed in feminist academic circles or civil society.³⁴

There is no such thing as a “one-size-fits-all” FFP. A successful FFP will develop and change in the course of the implementation process, and will involve significant change within the implementing instances. The internalisation process encompasses various aspects: Firstly, key actors must choose to take the step from expanding and deepening rights to introduction of an FFP, and must lend it their political backing. Secondly, the approach must be legally and politically anchored, in the sense of embedded in the institutional structures of the state and adequately funded. Thirdly, the FFP approach must be elaborated. Finally, and most importantly, the approach must be implemented.

Any critical analysis of FFP thus entails two principal challenges. Firstly, there is not always a clear distinction between the measures required to anchor an approach (preconditions) and those whose purpose is to implement it (consequences). The second challenge is the question of causality, of whether particular decisions and actions are attributable exclusively to the introduction of an FFP. Given the complexity of

³³ The first part of this section is adapted from Claudia Zilla, “Introduction: Feminist Foreign Policy as a Work in Progress”, in *Feminist Foreign and Development Policy in Practice: Requirements and Potentials*, ed. idem, SWP Research Paper 9/2024 (Berlin: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, June 2024), 7–16.

³⁴ See, for example, Katie M. Whipkey et al., *Defining Feminist Foreign Policy 2025* (Feminist Foreign Policy Collaborative, 2025), 4, <https://bit.ly/3JOkAU7>.

societies and the impossibility of counterfactual analysis, this cannot be answered definitively.

Mexico

The path to a feminist foreign policy

Equality of men and women has been anchored in the Mexican constitution since 1974.³⁵ An amendment of 2001 also explicitly prohibits any form of discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation or origin.³⁶ These protections were further strengthened by the constitutional reform of 2011 (the “human rights reform”), which incorporated rights deriving from international treaties signed by Mexico into the constitution. Protection against discrimination is now legally enforceable and the state is required to actively promote it.³⁷ National legislation concretises these constitutional principles, and also seeks to combat sexualised and gender-specific violence.

The General Law for Equality Between Women and Men of 2006 defines the institutional framework for realising substantive equality in the public and private spheres, and specifically promotes gender main-

³⁵ “Decreto que Reforma y Adiciona los Artículos 4o., 5o., 30 y 123 de la Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, en relación con la Igualdad Jurídica de la Mujer”, 31 December 1974 (Diario Oficial de la Federación, no. 41), <https://tinyurl.com/59c46h3r>.

³⁶ “Decreto por el que se aprueba el diverso por el que se adicionan un segundo y tercer párrafos al artículo 1o., se reforma el artículo 2o., se deroga el párrafo primero del artículo 4o.; y se adicionan un sexto párrafo al artículo 18, y un último párrafo a la fracción tercera del artículo 115 de la Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos”, 14 August 2001 (Diario Oficial de la Federación), <https://tinyurl.com/325zknxr>.

³⁷ “Decreto por el que se modifica la denominación del Capítulo I del Título Primero y reforma diversos artículos de la Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos”, 10 June 2011 (Diario Oficial de la Federación), <https://tinyurl.com/bdfe3ksz>.

streaming in government activities.³⁸ Finally, since 2011 development cooperation has been explicitly required to contribute to sustainable human development on the basis of human rights and gender justice.³⁹

In the course of this legislative process, the gender perspective has also found its way into government plans and programmes. For example, Mexico's National Development Plan for 2019–2024 specifically includes references to non-discrimination and the aims of promoting gender equality and combatting gender-specific violence.⁴⁰

Concrete measures are laid out in national gender equality plans, which operationalise objectives set out in the National Development Plan. The National Gender Equality Programme for 2013–2018 explicitly called for a gender perspective in the work of the ministries, including the Foreign Ministry (Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, SRE).⁴¹ The subsequent programme for 2020–2024 further strengthened gender mainstreaming and established it as a binding principle of government activity.⁴²

An explicit gender perspective within the Foreign Ministry was introduced in April 2018, when a decree issued by President Enrique Peña Nieto (2012–2018) reformed the Mexican Foreign Service Law. The changes included flexibilisation of working conditions in Foreign Ministry, in order to enable career demands to be reconciled with family responsibilities.⁴³ However at the point when Mexico launched its FFP in 2020, it

had not yet prepared an NAP for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

The election of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) in 2018 brought a left coalition – Together We Make History (Juntos Haremos Historia), led by AMLO's National Regeneration Movement (Movimiento de Regeneración Nacional, MORENA) – into government. In line with his campaign promises, AMLO's first cabinet was roughly gender-balanced, although this was not upheld through subsequent reshuffles.⁴⁴

Mexico was the first Latin American country to commit to an FFP – and the first country in the Global South.

One early indication that Mexico was moving towards a FFP came on 28 September 2019, when Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard told the UNGA that Mexican government saw itself as feminist.⁴⁵ The FFP was officially announced on 9 January 2020, at the annual meeting of Mexican ambassadors and consuls.⁴⁶ This made Mexico the first Latin American country to commit to an FFP – and the first country in the Global South. Just three weeks later, on 28 January 2020, Martha Delgado Peralta, undersecretary for multilateral affairs and human rights (subsecretaria para asuntos multilaterales y derechos humanos), presented Mexico's FFP in a multilateral context, at the 10th Regional Conference on Women in Santiago de Chile.⁴⁷

Legal and political anchoring

The process of institutionalising Mexico's FFP began hesitantly under AMLO, but accelerated under his

38 “Ley General para la Igualdad entre Mujeres y Hombres”, 2 August 2006 (Diario Oficial de la Federación), <https://tinyurl.com/2hsr4up8>.

39 “Ley de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo”, 6 April 2011 (Diario Oficial de la Federación), <https://tinyurl.com/bdfvsysc>.

40 Gobierno de México, *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo, 2019–2024* (2019), 12; 30, <https://tinyurl.com/3mjn8psk>.

41 Gobierno de México/INMUJERES, *Proigualdad 2013–2018: Programa Nacional para la Igualdad entre Mujeres y Hombres* (2013), <https://tinyurl.com/4y5wynvv>.

42 Gobierno de México/INMUJERES, *Proigualdad 2020–2024: Programa Nacional para la Igualdad entre Mujeres y Hombres* (2020), <https://tinyurl.com/57dpczet>.

43 Ana Gómez García and Brianda Romero Castelán, *Diez años de política exterior feminista y política de cooperación internacional para el desarrollo feminista: una oportunidad para América Latina y el Caribe* [Ten years of feminist foreign policy and feminist international cooperation for development: An opportunity for Latin America and the Caribbean], serie Asuntos de Género, no. 164 (Santiago: CEPAL, March 2024), 53, <https://tinyurl.com/44tru3zt>.

44 “¿Y la paridad de género? Así es el gabinete de AMLO en 2022” [And gender parity? This is AMLO's cabinet in 2022], *El Financiero* (online), 6 October 2022, <https://bit.ly/3X0LuuU>.

45 Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, *Mensaje del canciller Marcelo Ebrard Casaubon en el marco de la 74 Asamblea General de la ONU* [Message from Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard Casaubon at the 74th United Nations General Assembly] (New York, 28 September 2019), <https://bit.ly/4idKrBG>.

46 In Spanish the gender-neutral title “Reunión Anual de Titulares de Embajadas y Cónsules de México” replaced the gendered form “Reunión Anual de Embajadores y cónsules” in 2024.

47 Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, *La Política Exterior Feminista del Gobierno de México* (2020), <https://tinyurl.com/9h773vyp>.

successor Claudia Sheinbaum, whose policies and discourse exhibit a clear feminist slant. Sheinbaum, like AMLO a member of MORENA, became Mexico's first female president on 1 October 2024. As an avowed feminist she was quick to declare gender equality a political priority.⁴⁸ In October 2024 she tabled a series of reforms designed to anchor substantive equality, the gender perspective, the right of women to freedom from violence, and equal pay for equal work in the constitution. These constitutional amendments were approved unanimously by both chambers of the Congress of the Union, and entered into force in November 2024 following their adoption by the 26 local parliaments.⁴⁹ Institutional changes to upgrade the policy area followed, with a new Ministry of Women (Secretaría de las Mujeres) replacing the National Institute of Women (Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres, INMUJERES) on 1 January 2025.⁵⁰ President Sheinbaum also declared 2025 the Year of the Indigenous Woman.⁵¹

Given this background, and the fact that Sheinbaum argues in explicitly feminist terms, it is noteworthy that she does not actually use the term "feminist foreign policy".⁵² Nor was FFP mentioned in her

48 "O están las mujeres o no es 4T": Claudia Sheinbaum se declaró aliada y feminista" ["If women are not included it is not 4T": Claudia Sheinbaum declares herself ally and feminist], *infobae*, 25 November 2021 (online), <https://tinyurl.com/y89uzkh6>.

49 Presidencia de la República, "Presidenta Claudia Sheinbaum firma decreto que garantiza la igualdad sustantiva de las mujeres en la Constitución" [President Claudia Sheinbaum signs decree guaranteeing meaningful women's equality in the constitution], press release, 15 November 2024, <https://bit.ly/4809kvX>; Irma Kánter Coronel, *Reforma constitucional para la igualdad sustantiva de las mujeres y el derecho a una vida libre de violencia* [Constitutional reform for meaningful women's equality and the right to a life without violence], Dirección Mirada Legislativa, no. 252 (General de Análisis Legislativo, November 2024), <https://bit.ly/3XApbfG>.

50 Andrés García, "Secretaría de las Mujeres inicia operaciones; reconoce labor del Inmujeres" [Women's Ministry inaugurated, praises work of Inmujeres], *infobae* (online), 1 January 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/muv8yxr4>.

51 Presidencia de la República, *Anuncia Gobierno de México que 2025 será el año de la mujer indígena*, 23 November 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/5xfpemvv>.

52 There is one exception. In a joint declaration of 8 November 2025, issued during French President Emmanuel Macron's official visit to Mexico, the two heads of state underline their engagement for gender equality and their intention to promote the principles of FFP at the inter-

electoral programme "100 Steps for the Transformation"⁵³ or in the latest National Development Plan for 2025–2030, which foregrounds gender justice and highlights the role of women in economic and social change.⁵⁴ The term is used by the Foreign Ministry under Juan Ramón de la Fuente, however, which reiterated its commitment to FFP on 27 June 2025, the International Day of Women in Diplomacy.⁵⁵

To date Mexico's FFP has no binding legal backing: there is no legislation and no decree. Nor is there any official strategy document, action plan or implementation report. Two Foreign Ministry PowerPoint presentations collated information that could be regarded as functionally equivalent but without legal or official status. The first was shown in January 2020 at the 14th Regional Conference on Women in Santiago de Chile,⁵⁶ the second in August 2025 at the 15th Regional Conference on Women in Mexico City.⁵⁷ Both included a rough "roadmap", while the second also contained a rudimentary progress report.

Mexico's FFP is anchored in the ministerial planning process. FFP gets a fleeting first mention in the Sectoral Programme for External Relations 2020–2024,⁵⁸ while the subsequent programme for 2025–2030⁵⁹ contains more concrete references to FFP. There, FFP is initially found under the first of three cross-cutting issues (ejes transversales) that deals with "substantive

national level. Presidencia de la República, *Declaración conjunta México-Francia*, 8 November 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/3dumyvn3>. All translations of titles, quotations etc. from Spanish into English were made by the authors.

53 Claudia Sheinbaum, *100 pasos para la transformación* (2024), <https://tinyurl.com/2fewd4v6>.

54 Gobierno de México, *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2025–2030* (2025), 75ff., <https://tinyurl.com/5az8fwzc>.

55 Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, "Realiza Cancillería diversas actividades en el marco del Día Internacional de las Mujeres en la Diplomacia" [Foreign Ministry organises various activities in the framework of the International Day of Women in Diplomacy], 27 June 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/445eku7t>.

56 Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, *La Política Exterior Feminista del Gobierno de México* (see note 47).

57 One of the authors attended and photographed the second PowerPoint presentation.

58 Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, *Programa Sectorial de Relaciones Exteriores 2020–2024* (2 July 2020), <https://tinyurl.com/mrrzu6et>.

59 Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, *Programa Sectorial de Relaciones Exteriores 2025–2030* (30 September 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/2sa26arw>.

equality and women's rights".⁶⁰ FFP is described as an important instrument for the Foreign Ministry, with the gender perspective representing a cross-cutting dimension strengthening all aspects of public policy. Certain vulnerable groups are also named as priorities for FFP. Finally, in various places FFP is discussed as a component of strategies and actions intended to serve the ministry's six overarching goals.

Within the Foreign Ministry, FFP falls under the auspices of the undersecretary for multilateral affairs and human rights. Specifically, her director-general for human rights and democracy is responsible for FFP monitoring and evaluation. Internally, the director-general works with the embassies and consulates and various institutions run by the Foreign Ministry, including the Diplomatic Academy (Instituto Matías Romero, IMR); externally her partners are the government of Mexico City and the Senate of the Republic. The ministry also intends to establish a working group on gender mainstreaming and appoint special envoys for FFP (enviadas de política exterior feminista). The position of an FFP coordinator was created in the office of the foreign minister; she cooperates closely with the director of feminist foreign policy and international cooperation in the Ministry of Women.

International development cooperation falls under the remit of the Foreign Ministry, and is thus part of Mexico's FFP. The Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (Agencia Mexicana de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo, AMEXCID) plays an important role, coordinating incoming and outgoing development funding. AMEXCID's programme for 2021 – 2024 defines gender equality as an overarching priority.⁶¹ As is the case for FFP, there is no strategy document or action plan for feminist development cooperation, although there are documents providing orientation and instruments for gender mainstreaming, some of which predate the introduction of FFP. These include the Mexican Protocol on Mainstreaming the Gender Perspective in Development Programmes and Projects (2018),⁶² prepared jointly with the German development agency GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammen-

arbeit), and a guide on the same topic, published jointly with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) in 2023.⁶³

There is no published or proposed budget for FFP measures, and little is known about reporting and accountability mechanisms. One slide in the 2020 FFP presentation – on the roadmap for 2020 – 2024 – did mention plans to develop outcome and impact indicators, but no details were given and there is no follow-up publication.⁶⁴ More broadly, there is no publicly available information on the extent of civil society involvement in preparing Mexico's FFP concept. The Foreign Ministry cannot show which actors were involved, which participation mechanisms were used, or whether submitted contributions were heeded. In response to an information request, the Foreign Ministry admitted having neglected its duty of documentation.⁶⁵

The concept

The 2025 PowerPoint presentation defines FFP as follows: "The entirety of transformative measures contributing to the realisation of substantive equality in all areas of Mexico's foreign policy and the associated institutional work, on the basis of human rights, promotion of women's autonomy and integration of the perspectives of gender justice and intersectionality, with the objective of eliminating structural inequalities based on gender and thus contributing to the creation of a more just, peaceful, prosperous and sustainable society." This version is more comprehensive than the earlier one from 2020,⁶⁶ as it lays out the foundations of FFP. Sheinbaum's foreign minister, de la Fuente, has said that Mexico's FFP embodies the

⁶³ Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores et al., *Guía para la transversalización de la Perspectiva de Género en Programas y Proyectos de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo* (2023), <https://bit.ly/4pzQRO3>.

⁶⁴ Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, *La Política Exterior Feminista del Gobierno de México* (see note 47).

⁶⁵ Corporación Humanas et al., *Política Exterior Feminista: Una mirada a 5 países de América Latina* [Feminist foreign policy: A Look at five Latin American countries] (Santiago de Chile, June 2024), <https://tinyurl.com/4vherbw>.

⁶⁶ Definition from 2020: "The entirety of foreign policy principles intended to guide state measures to reduce and eliminate structural differences, omissions and gender-specific inequalities, in order to create a more just and prosperous society." Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, *La Política Exterior Feminista del Gobierno de México* (see note 47), 4.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, *Programa de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo 2021–2024* (2021), <https://tinyurl.com/4jrtu4ma>.

⁶² Agencia Mexicana de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo and GIZ, *Protocolo Mexicano de Actuación para la Transversalización de la Perspectiva de Género* (4 December 2018), <https://bit.ly/49plalE>.

“humanistic vision” that traditionally characterises the country’s foreign policy.⁶⁷ Earlier, AMLO’s foreign minister, Alicia Bárcena (2023 – 2024) had described humanism as an approach focussing on people’s needs and working towards a more just, stable and peaceful system.⁶⁸

FFP is intended to enable Mexico to play a leading role internationally in this field.

According to the Foreign Ministry, FFP is a transformative approach that is both inward and outward orientated in order to promote political coherence. However, the definition focusses on effects within the Mexican society. The argumentation combines a normative dimension (value in its own right) and an instrumental one (contributing to specific developments). In this sense, FFP is also intended to enable Mexico to play a leading role internationally, especially in Latin America, encouraging other states to introduce such an approach.⁶⁹ The feminist approach is also intended to enhance the visibility of women in the realm of foreign policy and global politics.⁷⁰

The 2020 presentation lists five areas of action (called “principles”) for FFP. Firstly, the human rights approach and the intersectional gender perspective are to be implemented as cross-cutting principles “in all areas of Mexican foreign policy”.⁷¹ The presentation explicitly names development cooperation, business promotion, culture, tourism, environment and

climate.⁷² Secondly, gender equality is to be promoted within the ministry, for example through career development measures and equal pay. The third area is combatting gender-specific violence, both internally (for ministry staff) and externally (by offering support for Mexican women living abroad). Fourthly, the visibility of women in foreign policy and on the global stage is to be improved. The fifth area is entitled “The Foreign Ministry is intersectionally feminist: Complementarity with other global and national measures”. The discussion of mainstreaming (transversalidad) in this section suggests that the terms “intersectional” and “transversal” may have been confused here.⁷³

Although no clear thematic focus can be identified in Mexico’s FFP concept, particular issues stand out in international comparison. These are closely bound up with the national and regional context, and include preventing and combatting gender-specific violence, which is a priority for the feminist movements in Mexico. The issue of care (cuidados) is a growing focus, with a dynamically developing regional agenda. The first references to this are found in the 2020 FFP presentation, which mentions support for diplomatic staff with care responsibilities.⁷⁴ Care is also discussed in the guide to gender mainstreaming in development cooperation published in 2023 by AMEXCID and UNDP,⁷⁵ and at national level in the 2025 – 2030 Development Plan.⁷⁶ Important momentum also came from the regional gender agenda and Mexico’s role as host of the 16th Regional Conference on Women in August 2025, which was dedicated to transformations to promote the “care society” (sociedad del cuidado).⁷⁷

The Mexican government pursues an inclusive and intersectional approach in its FFP and speaks of

67 Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, “Diálogo y negociación consolidarán relaciones bilaterales y multilaterales de México: canciller De la Fuente” [Dialogue and negotiations will consolidate Mexico’s bilateral and multilateral relations: Foreign Minister De la Fuente], 4 April 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/3hvzzc36>.

68 Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, “El Gobierno de México implementa una política exterior humanista cercana a la gente” [The Mexican government pursues a humanist foreign policy close to the people], press release, 20 August 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/96dhpmx4>.

69 Martha Delgado Peralta, “La política exterior feminista de México y la agenda de la sostenibilidad 2030” [Mexico’s feminist foreign policy and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda], *Revista Mexicana de Política Exterior*, no. 118 (2020): 131 – 38 (137).

70 Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, *La Política Exterior Feminista del Gobierno de México* (see note 47).

71 Ibid., 4.

72 Ibid., 16.

73 Ibid., 17ff.

74 Ibid., 19.

75 Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores et al., *Guía para la transversalización de la Perspectiva de Género* (see note 63), 19 – 20.

76 Gobierno de México, *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo: 2025–2030* (see note 54).

77 Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, “Se celebra el foro ‘Avanzar hacia una sociedad del cuidado’” [Forum held: “Moving towards a care society”], press release, 8 May 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/4r39b3ct>. As part of the preparations for the Regional Conference on Women, the Foreign Ministry held a forum in May 2024 entitled “Moving towards a care society”, organised jointly with ECLAC, UN Women, the German embassy and other institutions.

women and “historically disadvantaged groups”⁷⁸ as its target groups. The FFP and the gender perspective are characterised as intercultural with respect to the indigenous and Afro-Mexican communities. All in all, the focus is clearly on women, with measures to improve gender parity very prominent, for example in connection with career structures and the composition of delegations and conference panels.⁷⁹ A publication giving guidance on inclusive and non-sexist language was published in January 2023.⁸⁰ It also indicates which historically disadvantaged groups the Foreign Ministry is seeking to address, with specific sections on lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transsexuals, transgender people, transvestites and intersexuals, people with disabilities, Afro-Mexicans, indigenous people, people with HIV/AIDS, migrants, members of religious minorities, and domestic staff.

Measures and activities

No official reports on the implementation of Mexico’s FFP have been published, so it is hard to discern how much action has followed its introduction.⁸¹ The 2025 presentation does include a section on “progress” that lists activities in the areas of gender parity, training, planning, instruments and alliances. Although many of these lack any publicly accessible documentation, there is evidence of implementation in individual cases.

At the institutional level, the Foreign Ministry has instituted internal changes that align with its FFP. For example, it is reported that the proportion of women in international delegations rose from 58 percent in 2019 to 72 percent in 2021.⁸² Seeking longer-term gender parity in the diplomatic service, the women’s quota for the 2025 diplomatic training intake at Instituto Romero was increased to 66 percent. And in August 2025 LGBT+ activist Genaro Lozano was appointed ambassador to Italy. Measures to promote

compatibility between work and care responsibilities, such as flexible working conditions and nursing rooms, have reportedly been introduced in certain embassies.⁸³

The 2025 presentation indicates that training events – on gender justice and FFP and on positive masculinity – were offered that year, although the target groups are not specified. A comprehensive internal (i.e. unpublished) guide on deepening the FFP in the work of the Foreign Ministry and the Mexican missions abroad was also prepared in 2025. It is reported that the guide provides both conceptual and operational orientation for implementing the FFP.⁸⁴ At the planning level, two (quantitative) FFP indicators were introduced.

One notable bilateral achievement is the memorandum of understanding signed in 2020 by the Mexican embassy in Italy and the “pink telephone” organisation (Associazione Nazionale Volontarie del Telefono Rosa), concerning protection for Mexican women who experience gender-specific violence in Italy.⁸⁵ A memorandum of understanding with Spain on promoting FFP was signed in 2022.⁸⁶

Multilateral initiatives include Mexico’s ratification of two ILO conventions: the Domestic Workers Convention (No. 189, ratified 3 July 2020) and the Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190, ratified 15 March 2022). Foreign Minister Ebrard and Undersecretary Delgado both underlined that this reflected Mexico’s commitment to FFP.⁸⁷

⁷⁸ Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, *La Política Exterior Feminista del Gobierno de México* (see note 47), 2.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 10.

⁸⁰ Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, *Guía de lenguaje incluyente y no sexista* (20 January 2023), <https://tinyurl.com/2yyj5mmd>.

⁸¹ Fátima Gamboa, *La política exterior feminista ¿o no será?* *Situación de la política exterior feminista del Gobierno de México* [Feminist foreign policy – or not? The situation of the Mexican government’s feminist foreign policy] (EQUIS Justicia para las Mujeres, March 2024), 20, <https://tinyurl.com/39exsjwk>.

⁸² Ibid., 18.

⁸³ Mariana Herrera Salcedo Serrano, “*La Política Exterior Feminista: ensayo para la retención de las mujeres en la diplomacia mexicana*” [Feminist foreign policy: seeking to retain women in Mexican diplomacy], *Foreign Affairs Latinoamérica*, (February 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/3hz98ywa>.

⁸⁴ Whipkey et al., *Defining Feminist Foreign Policy 2025* (see note 34), 121 – 32.

⁸⁵ Gamboa, *La política exterior feminista ¿o no será?* (see note 81), 18.

⁸⁶ Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, *Memorándum de Entendimiento en materia de colaboración en Política Exterior Feminista entre el Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Unión Europea y Cooperación del Reino de España y la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos* (9 March 2022), <https://bit.ly/3LC9ke7>.

⁸⁷ International Labour Organization, “*Ratification by Mexico of Convention No. 189 on Domestic Workers*”, 6 July 2020, <https://tinyurl.com/4zxdsk3n>; Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, “*El Estado mexicano ratifica el Convenio 190 de la OIT sobre acoso y violencia*” [The Mexican state ratifies ILO Convention 190 on Harassment and Violence], press release, 1 October 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/acz4pj78>.

In 2022 the Foreign Ministry published an action plan on gender and climate change,⁸⁸ covering three central areas: strengthening women's participation and leadership in international climate policy; building national capacities for gender-sensitive climate policy; and providing gender-sensitive funding.⁸⁹

In 2021 Mexico and France jointly hosted the Generation Equality Forum in Mexico City and Paris. Generation Equality is coordinated by UN Women and is “the world’s leading initiative to accelerate investment and implementation on gender equality”.⁹⁰ The Global Alliance for Care (Alianza Global por los Cuidados) was founded at that meeting.⁹¹

Chile

The path to a feminist foreign policy

The legal foundations of the principle of equality in Chile go back to the constitution of 1980, which was adopted under military dictator Augusto Pinochet. It has witnessed numerous substantial amendments since the democratic transition. Article 1 states: “Persons are born free and equal, in dignity and rights.” The original version of 1980 used the Spanish generic masculine “hombres” (men) to describe all people. Law 19.611 of 1999 replaced the term with “persons” and specified the legal equality of men and women (Article 19 [2]).⁹² Although the constitution of 1980 also stated: “Neither the law nor any authority whatsoever may establish arbitrary differences,”⁹³ it did not explicitly prohibit discrimination. That was rectified through the adoption of Law 20.609 in 2012,

which also regulated prevention, sanctions and compensation.⁹⁴

Although Chile has no general gender equality legislation, Law 20.820 of 2015 created the Ministry of Women and Gender Equity to integrate gender perspective in politics in general and in the policies of all the ministries and agencies.⁹⁵ Further legislation protects specific rights of women and other disadvantaged groups.

As Chile has no tradition of comprehensive national development plans, gender-related plans and targets are laid out in multi-year national equality plans, which were introduced in the 1990s. The current Fourth National Plan for Equality of Women and Men 2018–2030⁹⁶ names anchoring the gender perspective in all public institutions, state programmes and budget planning as a central strategic objective.⁹⁷ This only tangentially affects foreign policy – for example in connection with the WPS Agenda.

Chile has been a pioneer regarding the WPS Agenda in Latin America. During Michelle Bachelet’s first presidency (2006–2010), it was the first Latin American country to adopt an NAP (2009–2011) for the implementation of UNSCR 1325. Another NAP (2015–2018) was published during her second presidency (2014–2018). Although Chile had no current NAP when its FFP was introduced (2023), its third NAP (2025–2030) was unveiled in September 2025.⁹⁸ It is to be implemented jointly by the foreign, interior, defence, security, environment and women’s ministries. The NAP discusses linkage with the FFP. Concretely, it proposes collating knowledge accumulated through the FFP, with a focus on peacebuilding.⁹⁹

⁸⁸ Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, *Plan Nacional de Acción sobre género y cambio climático del gobierno de México* (November 2022), <https://tinyurl.com/mseh23jn>. This “action plan” (also referred to as a “strategy”) names concrete steps and objectives but no timeframe.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Generation Equality Forum, <https://forum.generationequality.org>.

⁹¹ Alianza Global por los Cuidados, *Alianza Global por los Cuidados* (19 September 2025), 2, <https://tinyurl.com/4ahsjxdf>.

⁹² “Ley Núm. 19.611”, 16 June 1999 (Diario Oficial de la República de Chile), <https://bcn.cl/2k4o1>.

⁹³ *Constitución Política de la República de Chile*, 1980, <https://tinyurl.com/2xx68mnp>.

⁹⁴ “Ley Núm. 20.609”, 24 July 2012 (Diario Oficial de la República de Chile), <https://bcn.cl/2g7mr>.

⁹⁵ “Ley Núm. 20.820”, 20 March 2015 (Diario Oficial de la República de Chile), <https://bcn.cl/2flok>.

⁹⁶ Ministerio de la Mujer y la Equidad de Género, *Cuarto Plan Nacional de Igualdad Entre mujeres y hombres 2018–2030*, 2018, <https://tinyurl.com/yckyzu74>.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 27.

⁹⁸ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, “Gobierno presenta Tercer Plan de Acción Nacional sobre la Resolución 1325 de Naciones Unidas” [Government publishes third National Action Plan on UN Resolution 1325], press release, 2 September 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/2tvc3v9w>.

⁹⁹ Gobierno de Chile, *Tercer Plan de Acción Nacional para la Implementación de la Resolución 1325 (2000) del Consejo de Seguridad de las Naciones Unidas sobre Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad: 2025–2030* (1 September 2025), 44, <https://tinyurl.com/46dpj3hf>.

When he took office on 11 March 2022, Boric explicitly called his government feminist.

The left alliance Approve Dignity (Apruebo Dignidad), led by Gabriel Boric and his Broad Front (Frente Amplio), promised in its election programme to include the gender perspective in all policy areas, including gender parity in cabinet appointments. The programme also explicitly proposed the development of an FFP using participatory methods, to anchor the human rights-based approach, the gender perspective and intersectional approaches in the government's foreign policy.¹⁰⁰ When he took office on 11 March 2022, Boric explicitly called his government feminist, and appointed a cabinet of 14 women and 10 men.¹⁰¹ He also included – for the first time in the country's history – the Ministry of Women and Gender Equity in the political committee of the most important ministries.¹⁰² Barely a week later, on 22 March 2022, his first foreign minister, Antonia Urrejola (2022–2023), announced the preparation of an FFP strategy. Speaking in Berlin at an event staged by the German–Latin American women's network Unidas, she declared that FFP would become a mark of distinction of Chilean diplomacy and reflect the country's commitment to human rights.¹⁰³ During an official visit to Madrid in July 2022, Urrejola and her Spanish counterpart José Manuel Albares signed a cooperation agreement on FFP (to which Spain committed in 2021).¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Gabriel Boric, *Programa de Gobierno* (2021), <https://tinyurl.com/mv82wwtp>.

¹⁰¹ Rocío Montes, "Chile consolida el primer Gobierno feminista latinoamericano" [Chile consolidates Latin America's first feminist government], *Ediciones El País* S.L., 11 March 2022 (online), <https://tinyurl.com/3c29wab>.

¹⁰² Emiliana Pariente, "Las implicancias de que el Ministerio de la Mujer y la Equidad de Género integre por primera vez en la historia el Comité Político" [The effects of including the Ministry of Women and Gender Equity in the political committee], 25 March 2022, <https://bit.ly/4r3zHcX>.

¹⁰³ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, "Canciller Antonia Urrejola: 'El desarrollo de una política exterior feminista será un sello distintivo y elemento de vanguardia de nuestra diplomacia'" [Foreign Minister Antonia Urrejola: "Developing a feminist foreign policy will be a mark of distinction and a cutting-edge element of our diplomacy"], press release, 22 March 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/mv6ansrk>.

¹⁰⁴ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, "Canciller Antonia Urrejola se reúne con su par de España y firma Memorandum de Entendimiento de colaboración en Política Exterior Feminista" [Foreign Minister Antonia Urrejola meets Spanish

On 12 June 2023, Chile became the second Latin American country to adopt an FFP, when Foreign Minister Alberto van Klaveren (appointed 2023), Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs (Subsecretaría de Relaciones Exteriores) Gloria de la Fuente González and Undersecretary of International Economic Relations (Subsecretaría de Relaciones Económicas Internacionales) Claudia Sanhueza Riveros presented Chile's FFP strategy in the capital Santiago. Chile's first FFP Action Plan (2024–2025) followed on 8 March 2024 – International Women's Day.¹⁰⁵ The Chilean Foreign Ministry does not interpret FFP as a change in foreign policy, but as a continuation of the previous political course. Adopting a feminist approach, it says, aligns with Chile's international engagement for human rights during recent decades.¹⁰⁶ Chile's FFP was developed in a participatory process, involving meetings with academics, civil society representatives and officials from the Foreign Ministry.¹⁰⁷ The ministry also reviewed existing gender-related commitments, initiatives and instruments regarding gender issues, which can serve as a basis for the development of the FFP.¹⁰⁸

Legal and political anchoring

Chile possesses a detailed FFP strategy, which is laid out in a 56-page document published in 2023,¹⁰⁹ and

counterpart and signs memorandum of understanding on cooperation on feminist foreign policy], press release, 1 July 2022, <https://tinyurl.com/4c5yvkjy>.

¹⁰⁵ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, "Cancillería presenta el Plan de Acción de la Política Exterior Feminista en conmemoración del Día Internacional de la Mujer" [Foreign minister presents Plan of Action on Feminist Foreign Policy on International Women's Day], press release, 7 March 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/2p9k4yve>.

¹⁰⁶ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, "Cancillería presenta la Política Exterior Feminista de Chile y refuerza su compromiso internacional con los derechos humanos" [Foreign Ministry presents Chile's feminist foreign policy and underlines international engagement for human rights], press release, 12 June 2023, <https://bit.ly/48feqW1>.

¹⁰⁷ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Política exterior feminista de Chile* (June 2023), 9, <https://tinyurl.com/4v7njmmm>.

¹⁰⁸ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Plan de Acción Política Exterior Feminista 2024–2025* (March 2024), 5, <https://bit.ly/3LIqMNY>.

¹⁰⁹ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Política exterior feminista de Chile* (see note 107).

an FFP action plan for 2024–2025.¹¹⁰ Although there is no specific law or decree explicitly requiring that an FFP be pursued,¹¹¹ decree 207 of 27 August 2025 created a gender division in the Chilean Foreign Ministry, which immediately took over from the transition team.¹¹² Its tasks include integrating the FFP vision into the broader foreign policy strategy and coordinating gender-related measures.¹¹³ In the interests of cross-government coordination, the FFP strategy foresees the gender division joining the network of ministerial gender advisors (Red de Asesoras Ministeriales de Género) and proposes creating a network of gender focal points in the Foreign Ministry and the missions abroad to expedite the process of disseminating, coordinating and implementing the FFP.¹¹⁴ The FFP action plan also proposes establishing gender working groups in the foreign affairs and international economic relations departments (subsecretarías). Additionally all agencies of the Foreign Ministry – such as the Chilean Agency for International Development Cooperation (Agencia Chilena de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo, AGCID) – should have gender advisors (encargada/o de género).¹¹⁵

The AGCID is a functionally decentralised agency that has been subordinate to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 2005. It is tasked with implementing measures in accordance with its guidelines in the area of (received and awarded) development cooperation. This includes the FFP, which is cited as one of the Foreign Ministry's four guiding goals (ejes de acción) in AGCID's strategy for 2023–2026.¹¹⁶ AGCID's strategy names human rights and gender justice as one of four guiding criteria, and defines a series of priority

cross-cutting issues: the fight against social inequality and discrimination, gender justice and women's empowerment, and human rights and democracy promotion.¹¹⁷ AGCID's Executive Director Enrique O'Farrill has said publicly that proper consideration of the different needs of women and men is vital for improving the effectiveness of development initiatives.¹¹⁸

Although Chile's FFP strategy announces a “gender-sensitive mainstreaming budget”, neither the FFP action plan nor the 2025 FFP implementation report mention it. Nor does the FFP action plan refer to funding for specific initiatives – apart from project “Ellas+”, for which the Spanish government provided €300,000.¹¹⁹ The FFP implementation report mentions certain financial resources at project level. For example, in 2023 ten of the 95 projects run by Chilean diplomatic missions had gender components, which only amounted to US\$28,667 in total. It is also reported that 28 projects in 2024 had FFP components – without naming their budgets.¹²⁰ The foreword to the FFP action plan describes the document as a monitoring guide and mechanism. However – at least in the published version – timelines, responsibilities and fields to enter realised measures are lacking.¹²¹ The detailed FFP implementation report of 2025, by contrast, exhibits solid documentation and great transparency, with 97 pages of figures and evaluations.¹²²

The concept

Chilean Foreign Ministry defines FFP as “a paradigm under development that aims to change the way the global and regional agenda is constructed and

110 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Plan de Acción Política Exterior Feminista 2024–2025* (see note 108).

111 A decree on gender issues in the context of consular business is currently in the review process.

112 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, “División de Asuntos de Género de la Cancillería inicia funciones” [Gender division in Foreign Ministry begins operation], press release, 27 August 2025, <https://bit.ly/4oHr5aj>.

113 “Decreto 207”, 27 August 2025 (Diario Oficial de la República de Chile), <https://bcn.cl/Br6IXW>.

114 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Política exterior feminista de Chile* (see note 107), 50.

115 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Plan de Acción Política Exterior Feminista 2024–2025* (see note 108), 24.

116 Agencia Chilena de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo AGCID, *Estrategia de la Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo de AGCID 2023–2026* (September 2023), 4, <https://tinyurl.com/hkysmmes>.

117 Ibid.

118 Agencia Chilena de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo AGCID, “AGCID reitera compromiso de seguir integrando el enfoque de género en la cooperación internacional de Chile” [AGCID underlines continuing commitment to integrate gender approach in Chile's international cooperation], press release, 13 March 2023, <https://bit.ly/4r5Ljw5>.

119 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Plan de Acción Política Exterior Feminista 2024–2025* (see note 108), 22.

120 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Balance de la Implementación del Plan de Acción: Política Exterior Feminista 2024* (March 2025), 41, <https://tinyurl.com/4ds74px7>.

121 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Plan de Acción Política Exterior Feminista 2024–2025* (see note 108).

122 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Balance de la Implementación del Plan de Acción* (see note 120).

addressed, and the power distribution among the actors".¹²³ That indicates transformative ambitions. The approach is described as participatory, inclusive, transversal, intersectional and human rights-based. Chile's FFP is intended to establish equality and non-discrimination as guiding principles of the country's foreign policy.¹²⁴ Its institutional vision is that promoting gender equality at the international level leads to more stable societies, stronger democracies and more inclusive economies.¹²⁵ In her foreword to the FFP strategy, Undersecretary de la Fuente writes that FFP strengthens and deepens "Chile's engagement to promote democracy and human rights, which are also part of our foreign policy principles".¹²⁶ FAP is thus normatively linked to the principles of Chile's political regime.

The Chilean Foreign Ministry also highlights the aspect of "trade and gender", where Chile already saw itself as a pioneer before introduction of FFP.

The Chilean Foreign Ministry also highlights the aspect of "trade and gender", where Chile already saw itself as a pioneer before introduction of FFP.¹²⁷ It seeks broader inclusion of women in international trade in order to promote their economic independence, improve gender equality and secure economic growth.¹²⁸

Under the AGCID strategy for 2023 – 2026 – and in line with Chile's FFP – development cooperation pursues a two track approach in the area of gender, implementing targeted gender equality initiatives in key areas and promoting systematic gender mainstreaming in development cooperation.¹²⁹

The eight priority areas named in the FFP strategy underline the comprehensive nature of the approach. Firstly, the FFP emphasises gender equality in initiatives promoting human rights and strengthening democracy. Secondly, the FFP addresses gender-specific violence, which is described as one of the greatest threats to peace and development. The third area is empowering women and increasing their representation, especially in relevant foreign policy decision making and embassy leadership positions. Fourthly, the strategy references the WPS Agenda and the need to prepare a new NAP. Fifthly, the relevance of gender for international economic relations is emphasised. Sixthly, climate change and gender are mentioned, and seventhly, the digital agenda, science, technology and innovation. Eighthly, finally, the FFP strategy emphasises the need to create a comprehensive care system, with particular attention to the regional debates and conferences.¹³⁰

The FFP strategy identifies women and girls in their full diversity as the core target group of the inclusive and intersectional approach. Here and there it also mentions LGBTIQA+ persons¹³¹ and – in the context of international economic relations – indigenous peoples (pueblos originarios).¹³² A similar focus is found in the FFP action plan, which speaks of groups requiring special human rights protection (grupos especiales de protección en derechos humanos). While individual passages mention LGBTIQA+¹³³ and a youth support project,¹³⁴ the document does not discuss the concerns of indigenous peoples. The FFP implementation report of 2025, on the other hand, goes into greater detail on trans and intersex persons and addresses the rights of indigenous women (although here again this occurs principally in the context of trade policy).¹³⁵

Measures and activities

A detailed report published in March 2025 assesses the implementation of Chile's FFP action plan and demonstrates the breadth of instituted measures.

¹²³ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Política exterior feminista de Chile* (see note 107), 29.

¹²⁴ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Balance de la Implementación del Plan de Acción* (see note 120), 8.

¹²⁵ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Plan de Acción Política Exterior Feminista 2024–2025* (see note 108), 5.

¹²⁶ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Política exterior feminista de Chile* (see note 107), 8.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 10. The trade agreements with Mexico (2024) and Saudi Arabia (2024) also included gender chapters, but have not entered into force.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 35.

¹²⁹ Agencia Chilena de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo AGCID, *Estrategia de la Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo de AGCID 2023–2026* (see note 116), 9.

¹³⁰ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Política exterior feminista de Chile* (see note 107), 33ff.

¹³¹ Ibid., 15.

¹³² Ibid., 54.

¹³³ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Plan de Acción Política Exterior Feminista 2024–2025* (see note 108), 20f.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 22.

¹³⁵ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Balance de la Implementación del Plan de Acción* (see note 120).

The fact that the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs has taken important internal steps towards gender equality is demonstrated by the fact that its foreign relations department (Subsecretaría de Relaciones Exteriores) has been awarded the 2025 UNDP Gender Equality Seal. This is a global certification programme for private and public institutions, assessing their actions on introducing equal pay, tackling workplace sexual harassment and increasing the proportion of women in leadership positions.¹³⁶ The external relations department fulfilled 92.5 percent of the requirements and therefore received the Gold Seal.¹³⁷

The report provides information about progress in the area of gender and international trade, in line with the focus of Chile's FFP. Since the introduction of the FFP, chapters on gender have been included in new trade agreements with Mexico, Paraguay and Saudi Arabia (all 2024), as well as the EU, Singapore and the Pacific Alliance (all 2025).¹³⁸ Action has also been taken to support women-owned businesses. Their share of Chilean export firms, the report says, rose continuously between 2021 and 2024. By 2024 29.7 percent of Chilean export firms were female-owned.¹³⁹

Progress has been made on gender mainstreaming in AGCID development projects. The number of gender-related projects increased from 26 in 2023 to 34 in 2024.¹⁴⁰ The gender dimension was also taken into consideration in funding for training and specialisation. In 2024, 55 percent of grants went to women.¹⁴¹

Chile signed bilateral agreements on gender issues with Spain, France, the United States, Mexico, Brazil, Colombia and most recently Norway.¹⁴² Gender

equality was also addressed in strategic agreements on sustainability and technological innovation signed with Germany, Canada and Australia, and gender issues were discussed in political dialogues, especially with Europe. For example, when Boric and van Klaveren visited France in July 2023, both sides declared their intention to increase the number of women in leadership positions in joint research projects and in the bilateral climate agenda.¹⁴³ In the sphere of South-South cooperation, Chile offered knowledge transfer to assist Costa Rica in preparing its NAP.¹⁴⁴

Chile's multilateral engagement has been strong in the framework of the OAS. For example, it contributed paragraphs on gender parity and on strengthening the MESECVI evaluation mechanism for the resolution on "Promotion and Protection of Human Rights" that was adopted at the 54th OAS General Assembly in June 2024. At the United Nations in July 2023, Chile sponsored Resolution A/77/L.81, jointly with Spain and other states, declaring 29 October the International Day of Care and Support.

The Chilean government has also worked to achieve gender parity in the country's representation in international organisations. Three of the five successful Chilean candidates in 2023 and 2024 were women. Chile is engaged in international forums including the Women, Peace and Security Impact Group.

Colombia

The path to a feminist foreign policy

Article 13 of the Colombian constitution of 1991 codifies the principle of equality. All citizens "shall receive equal protection and treatment from the authorities, and shall enjoy the same rights, freedoms, and opportunities without any discrimination on account of gender, race, national or family origin, language, religion, political opinion, or philosophy". The article also lays down the responsibility of the state to create the conditions for equality and to take targeted

¹³⁶ UNDP, "Sello de Género PNUD – Instituciones Públicas" [UNDP Gender Equality Seal for Public Institutions], <https://tinyurl.com/3pa22xvc>.

¹³⁷ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, "Cancillería recibe la distinción del Sello de Oro en Igualdad de Género del PNUD" [Foreign Ministry receives UNDP Gold Seal for Gender Equality], press release, 25 August 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/mxtet79m>.

¹³⁸ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Balance de la Implementación del Plan de Acción* (see note 120), 53.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 54.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 75.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 77.

¹⁴² Ibid., 33; Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, "Chile y Noruega suscriben Memorándum de Entendimiento sobre Igualdad de Género en Política Exterior" [Chile and Norway sign memorandum of understanding on gender equality in

foreign policy], press release, 14 July 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/5y28asuvk>.

¹⁴³ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Balance de la Implementación del Plan de Acción* (see note 120), 38.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 45.

measures in favour of discriminated or marginalised groups.¹⁴⁵

These principles have been successively concretised in legislation. For example Law 823 of 2003 defines the institutional framework for political and governmental action to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women in the public and private spheres.¹⁴⁶ This regulation introduced the requirement in Colombia to always take the gender perspective into account in government action.

Even before introduction of the FFP, women's rights and equal opportunities featured prominently in Colombia's national development plans. The question was elevated to special prominence in the Development Plan 2018 – 2022, which had a separate chapter on the Pact for Gender Equality.¹⁴⁷ It proposed a mechanism to implement and coordinate gender equality policies at the national level (the Sistema Nacional de las Mujeres), which was established in 2019.¹⁴⁸

Gustavo Petro was elected president on 19 June 2022, as the candidate of the Humane Colombia party (Colombia Humana) and of the Historic Pact for Colombia coalition (Pacto Histórico). He is first left-wing head of state in Colombia's history, and his vice-president, Francia Márquez, is the first female Afro-Colombian and only the second woman to hold that position. Petro – Márquez's electoral programme for 2022 – 2026 made no mention of FFP, but did have a section titled "Change occurs with women". It emphasises the importance of women's participation and representation, the gender perspective, gender parity at the highest political levels, the role of women in the economy and their economic autonomy, their sexual and reproductive rights, combatting violence against women, and women's contribution to peace.¹⁴⁹

Petro's first cabinet included ten women and nine men, and gender parity was largely upheld through numerous cabinet reshuffles. He promised that his appointments would reflect the country's ethnic

diversity. These changes also affected the Foreign Ministry, which has been headed since 2022 by Álvaro Leyva (2022 – 2024), Luis Murillo (from February 2024), Laura Sarabia (from January 2025) and Rosa Yolanda Villavicencio (since July 2025).

Petro announced Colombia's FFP at the United Nations on 20 September 2022, during an official meeting with the executive director of UN Women, Sima Bahous, along with a commitment to consultations with women's organisations in order to prepare the NAP for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.¹⁵⁰ While decades of armed conflict make peace and security key issues in Colombia, it did not yet have an NAP. On 5 October 2022, in a speech to the OAS General Assembly, Vice Minister for Multilateral Affairs Laura Gil (2022 – 2023) also announced the preparation of an FFP, emphasising that it would explicitly focus on women in all their diversity and underlining the centrality of promoting women's and LGBTI rights if "total peace" was to be realised.¹⁵¹

The ministry's name includes neither "women" nor "gender" and its remit covers an unusually broad spectrum.

A Ministry of Equality and Equity (Ministerio de Igualdad y Equidad) was established in January 2023, as promised in the electoral programme. It has five departments covering different target groups: women; youth; excluded populations and regions and overcoming poverty; diversity; and ethnic peoples and peasants.¹⁵² In April 2024 it replaced the Presidential Council for Women's Equity (Consejería Presidencial para la Equidad de la Mujer).¹⁵³ Strikingly, the minis-

¹⁵⁰ "Gobierno nacional planteó ante ONU mujeres la construcción de una política exterior feminista para el país" [Government proposes to UN Women to develop a feminist foreign policy], *infobae*, 20 September 2022 (online), <https://tinyurl.com/87r6cxkp>.

¹⁵¹ Las Igualadas, "Vamos a formular una política exterior feminista": Colombia en la OEA" ["We will develop a feminist foreign policy": Colombia at OAS], *El Espectador*, 5 October 2022 (online), <https://tinyurl.com/3zdub5pe>.

¹⁵² Ministerio de Igualdad y Equidad, "Viceministerios", 16 November 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/35w4wau9>.

¹⁵³ The Colombian Constitutional Court annulled the ministry's establishment in 2024 on grounds of procedural error, but delayed the effect of the ruling until 2026 in order to give the Congress time to pass new legislation. The ministry has also been criticised for having one of the lowest implementation rates. Juan E. Lewin/Juan Miguel Hernández

¹⁴⁵ Constitución Política de Colombia, 1991, <https://tinyurl.com/33524au9>.

¹⁴⁶ "Ley 823", 7 July 2003 (Diario Oficial), <https://tinyurl.com/4vnnn6rr2>.

¹⁴⁷ Departamento Nacional de Planeación, *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2018–2022. Pacto por Colombia, pacto por la equidad* (Resumen), 160ff., <https://tinyurl.com/4puad6jr>.

¹⁴⁸ "Ley 1955", 25 May 2019 (Diario Oficial), <https://tinyurl.com/2827yhw3>.

¹⁴⁹ Gustavo Petro/Francia Márquez, *Colombia potencia mundial de la vida. Programa de Gobierno 2022–2026* (2022), <https://tinyurl.com/24m62bwx>.

try's name includes neither "women" nor "gender" and its remit covers an unusually broad spectrum. For example it is also responsible for eliminating economic, political and social inequality through rights-based, gender-specific, differential, race-critical and intersectional approaches. Vice-President Márquez also headed the Equality and Equity Ministry until the cabinet reshuffle of February 2025.¹⁵⁴

Colombia's FFP was elaborated in a participatory process between June and December 2023. The work involved more than 20 meetings of 18 civil society women's and LGBTIQ+ organisations, a group of female academics, various divisions of the Foreign Ministry and the Presidential Agency for International Cooperation (Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional, APC), the migration agency (Migración Colombia) and the National Planning Department (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, DNP). The process produced a joint plan of work naming priority areas and measures, and a mechanism for further participation.¹⁵⁵

As in the other two cases, Colombia's FFP was launched at an international forum. Diana Parra, Advisor for Gender Affairs and Feminist Foreign

Bonilla, "La Corte Constitucional anula la creación del Ministerio de la Igualdad" [Constitutional Court annuls creation of Ministry of Equality], *Ediciones El País S.L.*, 9 May 2024 (online), <https://tinyurl.com/3avkt2ss>.

154 The equality minister changed again in August 2025. The appointment of Juan Carlos Florián was widely criticised, as he had previously performed in pornographic films. The appointment of Cuban-born trans woman Charlotte Schneider Callejas as vice minister for women also generated controversy. Valentina P. Lugo, "Petro aparta a su vicepresidenta Francia Márquez de su cargo como ministra de Igualdad" [Petro dismisses Vice President Francia Márquez from post of Equality Minister], *Ediciones EL PAÍS S.L.*, 28 February 2025 (online), <https://tinyurl.com/9t9ky7sj>; Santiago Torrado, "Gustavo Petro elige a Juan Carlos Florián como reemplazo de Carlos Rosero en el Ministerio de la Igualdad" [Gustavo Petro chooses Juan Carlos Florián as successor to Carlos Rosero at Ministry of Equality], *Ediciones EL PAÍS S.L.*, 1 August 2025 (online), <https://tinyurl.com/3j3zxf2p>; Redacción Política, "Charlotte Schneider: la nueva viceministra de la Mujer en Colombia es transexual y nació en Cuba" [Charlotte Schneider: New Colombian vice minister of women's affairs is Cuban-born transsexual], *El Irreverente*, 16 August 2025 (online), <https://tinyurl.com/7rrt4wc>.

155 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Política Exterior Feminista Colombiana. Pacifista + Participativa + Interseccional = Transformadora* (Bogotá, 19 December 2023), 3, <https://tinyurl.com/ym6f94dj>.

Policy in Colombia, presented the FFP concept and FFP action plan on 15 March 2024 at a meeting held in parallel to the 68th session of the CSW.¹⁵⁶

Colombia's first NAP for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 was unveiled in November 2024 by Vice-President and Equality and Equity Minister Márquez and enacted by decree.¹⁵⁷ It covers the period 2024–2034, pursues an intersectional approach and concentrates on truth, justice, reparations and support for female victims of armed conflicts.¹⁵⁸ As such, the NAP is more domestically orientated than the FFP.

Legal and political anchoring

The National Development Plan for 2022–2026 was adopted in May 2023. Entitled "Colombia, World Power of Life" (Colombia, Potencia Mundial de la Vida),¹⁵⁹ it announces that the government will formulate and implement "foreign policy with a gender perspective" under the auspices of the Foreign Ministry.¹⁶⁰ Colombia's FFP was enacted by decree. The corresponding draft was published in November 2024 and placed on the state's online public consultation system SUCOP (Sistema Único de Consulta Pública) for two weeks. It was signed into force on 24 June 2025 – International Day of Women in Diplomacy – by then Foreign Minister Sarabia.¹⁶¹ The decree also includes an FFP action plan for 2024–2029.

156 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Por primera vez en la historia Colombia presentó su Política Exterior Feminista ante Naciones Unidas* [Historical first: Colombia presents feminist foreign policy at United Nations] (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, 15 March 2024), <https://tinyurl.com/2jsp8uj8>.

157 Ministerio de Igualdad y Equidad, "Colombia da un paso histórico: Gobierno adopta el Plan Nacional de Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad" [Colombia takes historic step: Government adopts National Plan for Women, Peace and Security], press release, 11 November 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/4ptprjnb>.

158 Ministerio de Igualdad y Equidad, *Primer Plan De Acción Nacional Mujeres, Paz Y Seguridad Resolución 1325 Del Consejo De Seguridad De Las Naciones Unidas, República de Colombia, 2024–2034* (2024), <https://tinyurl.com/3kb6tvp8>.

159 "Ley 2294", 19 May 2023 (Diario Oficial), <https://tinyurl.com/34ey79yc>.

160 Departamento Nacional de Planeación, *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2022–2026: Colombia, Potencia Mundial de la Vida* (2023), <https://tinyurl.com/m4c4amf8>.

161 Redacción Política, "Gobierno Petro dejó en firme la Política Exterior Feminista: Sarabia ya firmó decreto" [Petro government confirms feminist foreign policy: Sarabia has already signed decree], *El Espectador*, 25 June 2025 (online), <https://tinyurl.com/4jpbe6yt>.

Responsibility for FFP is shared among several ministries. The Foreign Ministry is the central coordinating instance, while the Ministry of Equality and Equity, the Transport Ministry, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation and the National Planning Department are also involved.¹⁶² In February 2024 the Foreign Ministry created a working group on FFP and gender issues and established two dedicated posts: an advisor (asesora, Diana Parra) and a travelling ambassador for gender issues and feminist foreign policy (embajadora itinerante, Arlene B. Tickner).¹⁶³ There are also gender focal points in the relevant areas of the Foreign Ministry.¹⁶⁴

APC Colombia (Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación) is responsible for managing incoming and outgoing development cooperation.¹⁶⁵ Although the APC is not mentioned in the FFP action plan, the FFP document appended to the decree explicitly mentions development cooperation as a field of action.¹⁶⁶ Indeed, the APC's strategy for 2023–2026 also mentions feminist development cooperation as an underlying approach and devotes a chapter to it.¹⁶⁷

Although the FFP action plan makes no mention of financing, the FFP document annexed to the decree states that the resources for FFP are to be provided by the ministries and departments responsible for measures laid out in the FFP action plan.¹⁶⁸ Additionally, spending of 3,000 million Colombian pesos (equivalent to almost €700,000 at the time) was approved

for an FFP investment project for 2024–2026,¹⁶⁹ to develop foreign policy instruments to promote gender equality and strengthen an institutional culture of equality in the Foreign Ministry.¹⁷⁰ However, neither document explains how the investment project relates to the FFP action plan.

Under the FFP decree and the associated documents, the Foreign Ministry is responsible for monitoring and reporting on FFP, working in cooperation with civil society.¹⁷¹ A participation mechanism for women's organisations and LGBTIQ+ groups is proposed, which will receive annual progress reports on implementation of the action plan.¹⁷²

The concept

The National Development Plan speaks only of a “foreign policy with a gender approach” (política exterior con enfoque de género), with no reference to the terms “feminist” or “women's rights”. That might appear to signal a weak normative orientation.¹⁷³ But the corresponding decree explicitly treats FFP and “foreign policy with a gender approach” as synonyms and mentions the policy's transformative character.¹⁷⁴

The Colombian approach as characterised as “pacifist + participatory + intersectional = transformative”.

The Foreign Ministry defines the FFP as a “mechanism providing a series of principles and tools to orientate the state's foreign policy in order to identify, reduce and transform social norms and practices that

162 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Plan de Acción Política Exterior Feminista* (May 2024; updated 30 September 2024), <https://tinyurl.com/yrkrj7xd>.

163 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y su Fondo Rotatorio, *Informe Proyecto de Inversión. Incorporación del Enfoque de Género en la política exterior del estado, a nivel bilateral y multilateral* (2024), 10, <https://tinyurl.com/3hhexsdb>.

164 Cancillería, “Análisis de género: Una herramienta para poner en práctica la Política Exterior Feminista” [Gender analysis: An instrument for implementing the feminist foreign policy], press release, 25 June 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/4yzpzbvz>.

165 Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia, “Quiénes somos” [About us], 17 July 2023, <https://tinyurl.com/2m9wp9zv>.

166 Diana M. Parra Romero, *Documento Política Exterior Feminista* (1 November 2024), <https://tinyurl.com/2vwmk4yy>.

167 Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia, *Estrategia Nacional de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia (ENCI) 2023–2026* (2023), 15ff., <https://tinyurl.com/jawc858m>.

168 Parra Romero, *Documento Política Exterior Feminista* (see note 166), 61.

169 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Política Exterior Feminista Colombiana* (see note 155), 11.

170 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y su Fondo Rotatorio, *Informe Proyecto de Inversión* (see note 163), 6f.

171 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Por el cual se adopta la Política Pública Exterior Feminista o Política Exterior con Enfoque de Género y se dictan otras disposiciones* (1 November 2024), <https://tinyurl.com/ty9tsrwu>.

172 Ibid.

173 Sofía Pérez Gil, “Sobre nuestra Política Exterior [ya no Feminista] con enfoque de género. Y razones para mantener viva la esperanza” [On our (no longer feminist) gender-focussed foreign policy: And reasons to keep hope alive], *Diplomacia Abierta*, (May 2023), <https://tinyurl.com/37cudupr>.

174 Parra Romero, *Documento Política Exterior Feminista* (see note 166), 2.

reproduce gender-specific inequality".¹⁷⁵ It characterises the Colombian approach as "pacifist + participatory + intersectional = transformative". The Foreign Ministry understands the transformative claim of the approach as resulting from the combination of these three principles.¹⁷⁶

Concrete goals of the Colombian FFP are explicitly formulated: The gender perspective is to be recognised as a fundamental instrument of foreign policy; diplomacy and development cooperation should promote the rights of women in all their diversity, and of LGBTIQ+ persons; organisations of these groups should be encouraged to actively shape foreign policy.¹⁷⁷ The Colombian government also regards FFP as an opportunity to burnish the country's international reputation, especially in the contexts of the gender agenda, women's and LGBTIQ+ rights, and regional and global peacebuilding.¹⁷⁸

The feminist perspective is also central to the strategy of APC Colombia. The presidential office describes it as a strategic focus intended to improve the effectiveness of international cooperation in eliminating inequality.¹⁷⁹ The feminist approach thus rests on both normative and instrumental arguments (human rights and effectiveness, respectively).

The Colombian FFP is linked to a clear commitment to pacifism. Official documents underline the centrality of women and LGBTIQ+ persons to efforts to achieve "total peace" at home and abroad.¹⁸⁰ The WPS Agenda also plays an important role in Colombia's FFP. The prioritisation of peace and security reflects the country's history and political situation.

FFP concept rests on five pillars, which are named in the decree. The first foregrounds social justice, defined as global engagement for equality and human security. The second pillar is environmental justice, in the sense of enabling individuals and groups to access mechanisms and instruments to protect their environmental rights. The third pillar is the agenda of "total peace", aiming for lasting and inclusive peace foregrounding victims' rights to truth, justice and reparations and emphasising the role of women and LGBTIQ+ persons in peace processes. The fourth is international promotion of equal access to education, knowledge and culture. The fifth pillar, finally, is institutional strengthening of the foreign relations sector, which is seen as a structural prerequisite for realising the other four pillars. This encompasses gender mainstreaming in the government planning process (Modelo Integrado de Planeación y Gestión), institutional reforms to promote gender equality, and a cultural shift towards the eradication of discrimination and violence in the working environment.¹⁸¹ Most of these priorities are also found in the chapter on feminist development cooperation in the APC strategy, which names climate protection and environmental justice, inclusive and socially equitable development, and total peace.¹⁸²

Diversity and intersectionality are very visible in Colombia's FFP approach. The FFP decree and most other official documents use the phrase "women in their difference and diversity, and LGBTIQ+ persons". The principle of intersectionality takes account of the overlapping dimensions of identity: gender, ethnicity (etnia, raza), age, phase of life, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, origin etc.¹⁸³ Certain measures named in the FFP action plan address specific groups, including young people, rural women, pregnant women in border areas, homeless children and Afro-Colombian women ("comunidad negra, afrodescendiente, raizal y palenquera").¹⁸⁴ Colombia's feminist development cooperation also pursues intersectional approaches. According to the APC strategy it should take account of characteristics including

175 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Política Exterior Feminista Colombiana* (see note 155), 2; Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y su Fondo Rotatorio, *Informe Proyecto de Inversión* (see note 163), 6.

176 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y su Fondo Rotatorio, *Informe Proyecto de Inversión* (see note 163), 19.

177 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Plan de Acción Política Exterior Feminista* (May 2024) (see note 162).

178 Parra Romero, *Documento Política Exterior Feminista* (see note 166), 7; Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Memoria justificativa del proyecto PN-2024-17360* (16 October 2024), 3, <https://tinyurl.com/3m4nhuwe>.

179 Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia, *Estrategia Nacional de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia (ENCI) 2023–2026* (see note 167), 15.

180 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y su Fondo Rotatorio, *Informe Proyecto de Inversión* (see note 163), 19; Parra Romero, *Documento Política Exterior Feminista* (see note 166), 9.

181 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Por el cual se adopta la Política Pública Exterior Feminista* (see note 171).

182 Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia, *Estrategia Nacional de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia (ENCI) 2023–2026* (see note 167), 18.

183 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Por el cual se adopta la Política Pública Exterior Feminista* (see note 171).

184 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, *Plan de Acción Política Exterior Feminista* (May 2024) (see note 162).

gender, age, ethnicity and disability, as well as specific groups like victims of armed conflict, former combatants and human rights and environmental activists.¹⁸⁵

Measures and activities

Colombia's FFP was announced for 2022 but only properly introduced in March 2024, so implementation is still in the early stages. The only progress report available to date is one on the FFP investment project. It indicates implementation of 88.75 percent of planned activities as of 31 December 2024.¹⁸⁶ There is no information at all about implementation of the FFP action plan.

A survey on discriminatory attitudes and behaviour within the Foreign Ministry was conducted as part of a project on "changing the culture" run jointly with Canada (which has also committed to FFP).¹⁸⁷ A workshop to enhance expertise for FFP implementation in Colombia's Foreign Ministry was held in May 2025, again with Canadian support.¹⁸⁸ The Foreign Ministry also asked staff to complete UN Women's online courses "I Know Gender",¹⁸⁹ and in November 2024 introduced a protocol on preventing gender-specific violence and supporting victims.¹⁹⁰

Several bilateral agreements in the field of FFP were concluded in 2024. In February 2024 a memorandum of understanding was signed with US State Department on jointly establishing the first women, peace and security centre of excellence in LAC. However, its fate became unclear after Trump's election, on account of the tensions between presidents Trump and Petro. In July 2024 Colombia and France signed

a declaration of intent to promote exchange in the sphere of FFP.¹⁹¹

Colombia's development cooperation focuses on South-South cooperation, especially with African countries. Colombia has been working with Kenya since 2023 to promote gender equality, for example in knowledge exchange projects seeking to improve the prevention, investigation and prosecution of gender-specific violence. On the Colombian side this involves APC Colombia, the Foreign Ministry, the Justice Ministry, the Ministry of Equality and Equity and the office of the vice-president.¹⁹² A string of joint initiatives for economic empowerment of women were agreed during Vice-President Márquez's official visit to Ethiopia, Mozambique, Madagascar and Nigeria in August 2025.¹⁹³

As well as advancing the WPS Agenda, Colombia also supports the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda (UNSC Resolution 2250).

Regarding the multilateral level, in January 2024 Colombia assumed the chair of the International Alliance on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, whose current membership comprises 19 states, five civil society organisations, UN Women and the International Criminal Court. In this role Colombia organised the Alliance's conference on victim-centred approaches in peacebuilding.¹⁹⁴ As well as advancing the WPS Agenda, Colombia also supports the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda (UNSC Resolution 2250); preparation of a corresponding NAP began in May

¹⁸⁵ Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia, *Estrategia Nacional de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia (ENCI) 2023–2026* (see note 167), 17.

¹⁸⁶ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y su Fondo Rotatorio, *Informe Proyecto de Inversión* (see note 163), 8f.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 12.

¹⁸⁸ Cancillería, "Colombia reafirma su compromiso con la igualdad de género a través del fortalecimiento de sus capacidades técnicas para implementar la Política Exterior Feminista" [Colombia underlines its commitment to gender equality by enhancing technical capacity for implementing feminist foreign policy] (30 May 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/mry39m64>.

¹⁸⁹ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y su Fondo Rotatorio, *Informe Proyecto de Inversión* (see note 163), 10.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 11.

¹⁹² The original title of the project was: "Atención, prevención, investigación y judicialización de las violencias basadas en género: intercambio entre Kenia y Colombia". Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional de Colombia, "Colombia y Kenia refuerzan cooperación feminista en el marco de la Estrategia África" [Colombia and Kenya strengthen feminist cooperation in scope of the Africa Strategy] (20 May 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/4c53xcjc>.

¹⁹³ Sebastián Vargas Rueda, "Relaciones entre Colombia y Nigeria: Vicepresidenta Francia Márquez visita Abuja para promover cooperación y desarrollo" [Relations between Colombia and Nigeria: Vice-President Francia Márquez visits Abuja to promote cooperation and development], *infobae*, 31 August 2025 (online), <https://tinyurl.com/4huskuk9>.

¹⁹⁴ Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y su Fondo Rotatorio, *Informe Proyecto de Inversión* (see note 163), 11f.

2025.¹⁹⁵ Colombia joined the Equal Rights Coalition, an intergovernmental LGBTI organisation, in December 2024, and took the position of joint chair together with Spain (which also pursues FFP). Colombia put feminist politics on the table in other international forums, too. Diana Parra presented Colombia's FFP at the UN Biodiversity Conference in Cali (COP16, October 2024),¹⁹⁶ and the Colombian delegation at the 15th EU-LAC human rights dialogue advocated in particular for the rights of women, LGBTIQ+ persons and indigenous peoples.¹⁹⁷

Joint initiatives

Since introducing their FFPs, Mexico, Chile and Colombia have stepped up their engagement in joint activities and broader multilateral initiatives that align with feminist approach.

Exchange between the three is especially systematic in the CoPEF project (Strengthening Feminist Foreign Policy and Feminist International Cooperation), which was launched in 2024 at the Seventh Regional Conference on Trilateral Cooperation with Latin America and the Caribbean. The project, which is funded by the trilateral cooperation fund of the German Development Ministry BMZ and realised by the German development agency GIZ, brings together ECLAC with Mexico, Chile and Colombia. It sees itself as a community of practice to strengthen the capacity of foreign ministries and development cooperation agencies involved in designing and implementing FFP.¹⁹⁸ In the

area of development cooperation, Mexico and Chile have been operating a common fund (Fondo Conjunto de Cooperación México Chile) since 2006. Its gender perspective was strengthened in 2021 when gender was elevated to a thematic area in its own right for project funding.¹⁹⁹

At the 8th CELAC Summit in early March 2025 in Kingston, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Chile, Mexico and Colombia tabled a declaration on FFP, which gained the support of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and the Dominican Republic. Its five points lay out a series of commitments concerning implementation of a feminist approach or gender agenda in foreign policy.²⁰⁰ In early July 2024 Mexico hosted the 3rd Ministerial Conference on FFP under the title "Solutions for a Better Tomorrow". It was organised by the Mexican Foreign Ministry together with INMUJERES and UN Women, and produced a declaration that was signed by about 20 states including Chile and Colombia.²⁰¹ The 16th Regional Conference on Women, also held in Mexico City, adopted the Tlatelolco Commitment, which acknowledges FFP's potential to implement gender mainstreaming in foreign policy.²⁰²

There were also activities at the bi-regional level. The Bi-regional Pact on Care was adopted on 13 November 2025 at the 4th EU-CELAC Summit, held in Santa Marta, Colombia. It is supported by all 27 EU member states and by 16 LAC states, including Chile, Colombia and Mexico. The Pact emerged in response to demands raised by civil society organisations, and is intended to expedite cooperation in the field of

195 Cancillería, "Colombia inicia el proceso del Plan de Acción Nacional de la Resolución 2250 del Consejo de Seguridad de la ONU sobre Juventud, Paz y Seguridad" [Colombia starts process for the National Action Plan on UNSC Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security], press release, 23 September 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/whsrbw5t>.

196 Cancillería, "Cancillería socializa la Política Exterior Feminista de Colombia en el conversatorio 'Mujeres que cuidan la vida en el territorio'" [Foreign Ministry presents Colombia's feminist foreign policy at discussion on "Women who take care of life in the territory"], press release, <https://tinyurl.com/ftzkrk5j>.

197 Cancillería, "En 2024, la Cancillería apostó por la paz, sostenibilidad, igualdad y cooperación internacional" [In 2024 the Foreign Ministry bet on peace, sustainability, equality and international cooperation], press release, 2 January 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/mwz9kx7m>.

198 CEPAL, "Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Germany, and ECLAC Partner to Strengthen Feminist Foreign Policies and

International Cooperation for Development", 5 October 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/22djkx2w6>.

199 Agencia Chilena de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo, "Fondo Chile-México" (16 November 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/6p9mmxvy>.

200 VIII Cumbre de la CELAC, "Declaración sobre la Política Exterior Feminista de América Latina y el Caribe" (Kingston, San Vicente y las Granadinas, 1 March 2024), <https://tinyurl.com/a3s7khp4>.

201 Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, INMUJERES, UN Women, III Ministerial and High-Level Representatives on Feminist Foreign Policies. *Declaration by the Chair of the Third Conference* (3 July 2024), <https://tinyurl.com/26j886h9>.

202 XVI. Conferencia Regional sobre la Mujer, *Compromiso de Tlatelolco. Una década de acción para el logro de la igualdad sustantiva de género y la sociedad del cuidado* (Mexico City, 15 August 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/bdf8ubhe>.

care on the basis of gender equality and social justice.²⁰³

Mexico, Chile and Colombia are also involved in various international platforms and networks on FFP, such as the Feminist Foreign Policy Group (FFP+), which was founded in 2021. FFP+ works with the United Nations and civil society groups to promote feminist and gender-transformative approaches in multilateral and foreign policy contexts. It is chaired by pairs of nations representing the Global North and South: in 2023 Chile and Germany (at which point the German Federal Foreign Office was still pursuing its FFP), and in 2024 Mexico und Spain.²⁰⁴

203 European Union External Action Service, “EU – LAC Bi-regional Pact on Care”, press release, 8 November 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/4xunxpwb>.

204 Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, “Spain assumes co-presidency of UN Feminist Foreign Policy Group”, press release, 17 February 2024, <https://tinyurl.com/arwth7dk>.

Comparing the Cases

As the comparison of Mexico, Chile and Colombia demonstrates, the road to FFP is not straight and narrow. The states that have introduced such a policy are not necessarily those that are most progressive on all aspects of gender equality. In addition to efforts to implement a gender agenda, a favourable party-political constellation is required. Moreover, the act of committing to an FFP frequently reflects elevated awareness of the problems around women's equality at home and is understood as a strategy for addressing them. As a result, FFP in Latin America tends to have a strong domestic slant. That certainly applies – to differing degrees – to the three states examined in the present publication.

The introduction of a feminist approach to foreign policy was preceded by comprehensive legal, institutional and policy efforts to improve gender equality.

Mexico committed to an FFP in 2020 as the first Latin American state to do so, and the first in the Global South. Chile and Colombia followed two years later. In all three countries, the introduction of a feminist approach to foreign policy was preceded by comprehensive legal, institutional and policy efforts to improve gender equality, combat discrimination and gender-specific violence. In Mexico and Colombia the gender perspective is also legally anchored as a criterion for state activities.

These developments occurred under heads of state from different parties. But in all three cases the decision to introduce an FFP was made under a (male) president from the left or centre-left. At the time of the respective announcement, the Mexican foreign minister was male; his Chilean and Colombian counterparts were woman. All three governments described themselves as feminist, and their cabinets were gender-balanced.

In all three countries, the implementing party's electoral programme included a chapter on the role of women and the importance of gender equality. But

only Boric in Chile made a campaign promise to implement an FFP. In all three cases the new government was very quick to commit to FFP or present an initial concept. And in all three cases the announcement was made in a multilateral context, as governments often strive for international leadership in this area.²⁰⁵ The ambition of playing a leading role internationally in this area is especially clear in statements from Mexico and Colombia, both of which have experienced criticism over internal conflicts and severe human rights violations.

Although Mexico was the first of the three to introduce an FFP, its institutionalisation has persistently lagged behind Chile's and Colombia's. This applies to all dimensions: preparation of the concept, formal involvement of civil society, legal-bureaucratic anchoring, and monitoring of implementation. One reason for the delay is that the approach was only properly institutionalised under Foreign Minister de la Fuente, after President Sheinbaum succeeded AMLO. AMLO's term in office coincided with the Covid pandemic, and little progress was made on FFP. Feminist and women's organisations criticised AMLO for patriarchal aspects in his opinions and policies and disrespectful statements about feminist movements.²⁰⁶ His stance during his presidency was noticeably less progressive than during his time as head of government of Mexico City (2006–2012).²⁰⁷

In Mexico and Chile the FFP operates without a binding legal basis. In Colombia it is enacted by decree and anchored in the National Development Plan. The decree also includes an FFP action plan.

²⁰⁵ Leonie Stamm, *Beyond Values: How Feminist Foreign Policy Serves Strategic Interests*, FEPS-FES, Policy Brief, October 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/3nkntz9d>.

²⁰⁶ Jorge Z. Patterson, “¿Tenemos un presidente misógino?” [Do we have a misogynist president?], *Ediciones EL PAÍS* S.L., 3 February 2022 (online), <https://tinyurl.com/3n6hxwrm>.

²⁰⁷ Corporación Humanas et al., *Política Exterior Feminista* (see note 65).

Table 1

Comparison of FFP approaches

	Mexico	Chile	Colombia
<i>President</i>	Andrés Manuel López Obra-dor; Claudia Sheinbaum	Gabriel Boric	Gustavo Petro
<i>FAP announcement</i>	Speech by Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard to the UNGA, 28 September 2019	Boric's 2021 electoral pro-gramme; speech by Foreign Minister Antonia Urrejola at Unidas meeting in Berlin, 22 March 2022	Petro's official meeting with executive director of Women, United Nations, 20 September 2022
<i>Start of institution-alisation</i>	Presentation at annual mee-ting of Mexican ambassadors and consuls, 9 January 2020	Presentation of FFP strategy in Santiago de Chile, 12 June 2023	Presentation of FFP concept and action plan at CSW, 15 March 2024
<i>Civil society involve-ment</i>	Not documented	Meetings with academics and civil society	More than 20 meetings with academics and civil society, including design of a participation mechanism
<i>Legal and political anchoring</i>	Sectoral Programme for External Relations 2020 – 2024 and 2025 – 2030	Strategy and action plan; decree creating gender division	National Development Plan 2022 – 2026; FFP decree
<i>Specific positions and units</i>	FFP coordinator in office of foreign minister; director for FFP and international cooperation in Women's Ministry	Transition team, then gender department in Foreign Ministry	Advisor and special envoy for gender issues and FFP
<i>Budget</i>	Not foreseen	Gender-sensitive budget, but little information on implementation	Almost €700,000 for FFP investment project
<i>Policy areas covered (within foreign policy and development cooperation)</i>	all	all	all
<i>Self-characterisation of FFP approach</i>	Intersectional, human rights-based, transformative	Participatory, inclusive, transversal, intersectional	Pacifist, participatory, intersectional, transformative
<i>Link to domestic policy</i>	Very strong	Weak	Strong
<i>Thematic focus</i>	Preventing and combatting gender-specific violence; care society	Trade and gender	Peace
<i>Target groups</i>	Primarily women, but also "historically disadvantaged groups"	"women and girls in their entire diversity"; occasional mention of other groups	"women in their difference and diversity, and LGBTIQ+ persons"; frequent mention of other groups

Mexico has no FFP strategy, FFP action plan or FFP implementation report; Chile possesses all three in very detailed form. Mexico's FFP is bureaucratically anchored at ministerial level through the Sectoral Programme for External Relations 2025 – 2030, which includes copious references to FFP. In Mexico and Chile the development cooperation agency is part of the Foreign Ministry; in Colombia it falls under the office of the president. In all three it is included in the FFP concept. Both AGCID (Chile) and APC (Colombia) refer to FFP in their strategy documents. AMEXCID (Mexico) does not do so, although it does define gender equality as a cross-cutting priority.

In all three cases, introducing an FFP had institutional and organisational consequences. The Foreign Ministry is responsible for coordinating FFP, normally through the departments or divisions concerned with human rights (and democracy). A new division for FFP was created in Chile, and FFP working groups were established in Mexico and Colombia. In Mexico there is now also a FFP coordinator in the office of the foreign minister. In Colombia two new high-profile posts were created in the Foreign Ministry: an FFP advisor and a travelling ambassador for gender issues and FFP. There is also intra- and inter-ministerial coordination. In Chile this involves networking gender advisors in the Foreign Ministry, the missions abroad and various other ministries. In Mexico and Chile the foreign and women's affairs ministries collaborate especially closely, with an official responsible for FFP based in the Women's Affairs Ministry. Appointees to these new positions are generally highly qualified women with a record feminist engagement.

Funding is the Achilles' heel of FFP planning. Mexico has no specific budget for FFP. Chile's FFP strategy does announce a gender-sensitive budget, but the country's FFP action plan and implementation report make only vague mention of a handful of funding measures. Colombia has approved an FFP investment fund, although it is not mentioned in the FFP action plan.

Accountability and participation mechanisms are institutionalised to different degrees; in all three cases there is room for improvement. Chile has a comprehensive implementation report. In Colombia women's organisations and LGBTIQ+ groups were involved in the establishment of a participation mechanism that allows them to contribute to the discussion and exercise their control function. Civil society involvement tends to be greatest in the early phases of FFP

development. In Chile and Colombia – but not Mexico – information on this is publicly available.

Conceptualising FFP is an ongoing process, and drafting the first FFP documents is only the start. The understanding of FFP develops over time, on basis of discourses, texts, activities and omissions. Chile, which has the least disruptive approach and emphasises continuity in its foreign policy activities,²⁰⁸ characterises FFP explicitly as a paradigm under construction. While Mexico and Colombia's initial definitions of FFP are strongly policy-driven and focus on goals, Chile's first definition of FFP addresses the foundations of politics, the logic of political action. All three governments see the human rights approach and the gender perspective as central to FFP. They regard the realisation of gender equality and gender justice as both a value in its own right and a factor conducive to prosperity, social justice and peace. In Chile, there are also clear references to the democratic regime.

None of the three refer to the 3Rs (more rights, representation and resources for women), the formula coined by Sweden and also adopted by Germany. All three do however pursue internal improvements within their foreign ministry, as Sweden and Germany did. The Latin American FFPs are altogether more inward-looking than those of European states: domestic issues and a change in the country's own foreign policy overshadow questions of international order and global governance.

Of the three, Chile's FFP concept is most outward-looking in terms of the locus of intended change. Mexico's is the most slanted towards the domestic political sphere, while Colombia's occupies a middle position. The variations correspond with the status of foreign policy in each country. AMLO's stated view that "the best foreign policy is a good domestic policy"²⁰⁹ is illuminating in this connection.

The link between FAP and a domestic perspective in Mexico, Chile and Colombia, i.e. in societies with strong structural asymmetries, is underpinned by two institutional factors: firstly, close coordination between the foreign and women's ministries, with a post for FFP established in the latter; and secondly,

²⁰⁸ Gonzalo Álvarez Fuentes, *Resistencias Al Cambio En Política Exterior: Chile ante el nuevo ciclo político* [Resistance to change in foreign policy: Chile entering a new political cycle] (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, October 2024), <https://tinyurl.com/d6z6rf3h>.

²⁰⁹ Andrés M. López Obrador, "La mejor política exterior es la interior" [The best foreign policy is domestic policy] (15 June 2022), <https://tinyurl.com/53ctvnwz>.

the dual role of their development agencies, which are responsible for managing both incoming and outgoing project funding.

In all three cases the FFP encompasses all the Foreign Ministry's fields of activity, including development cooperation, but they each foreground different themes. For example, only Colombia's FFP is explicitly defined as pacifist, which is unsurprising in light of the country's history of armed conflict and President Petro's programme of "total peace". Combatting gender-specific violence is a high priority in Colombia and even more so in Mexico. The rate of femicide in both these countries (1.3 and 0.7 per 100,000 women per year respectively in 2024) is significantly higher than in Chile (0.4).²¹⁰ Mexico emphasises the relevance of "climate and gender", while Chile stresses "trade and gender". Chile stands out for its large number of free trade agreements and its pioneering role in introducing gender perspective in that sphere. Interest in the care approach is backed by a regional agenda and plays a significant role, especially in Mexico. Research shows that women in Mexico spend 24.2 percent of their time doing unpaid work, while men devote just 8.8 percent. The figures for Chile are 20.7 and 11.5 percent, for Colombia 18.9 and 5.9 percent.²¹¹

All three countries characterise their own feminist approach as intersectional. In the first place this accounts for the diversity of women, as the principal target group. But it also brings in other historically disadvantaged groups, above all those who do not conform with gender binarity, heteronormativity or assigned gender. In the cases of Mexico and Colombia, indigenous and Afro communities are also mentioned as target groups, while Chile lacks an intercultural inclusion agenda. This is notable given that indigenous people represent 13 percent of the Chilean population and the Mapuche conflict is highly securitised.

FFP represents a policy approach that requires normative and institutional preparation, so institutionalisation is often treated as part and parcel of implementation. In all three cases, the progress reports list organisational reforms and innovations, preparation of handbooks and protocols, sensitisation seminars

and training events, and conclusion of bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements.

²¹⁰ CEPAL, *Urgent Action to Prevent and Eliminate Femicides*, <https://tinyurl.com/mt432v62>.

²¹¹ The percentages relate to the 24-hour day. CEPAL, "CEPALSTAT DataBank: Proportion of Time Spent on Unpaid Domestic and Care Work, by Sex" (8 January 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/332ran8b>.

Conclusion and Outlook

None of the three investigated countries describe the introduction of FFP as a paradigm shift in their foreign policy. Instead it is understood as a synonym for (or expansion of) gender equality policies and gender mainstreaming. All three governments (especially the Chilean) see FFP in the context of a succession of gender justice reforms in recent years. In each case FFP was introduced after a change of power, with the new government stressing the special importance of clear feminist priorities in its domestic and foreign policies. This ambivalence of continuity and change characterises the framing of FFP. It has also created a situation where FFP is closely bound up with a particular ideological orientation and therefore remains strongly dependent on election results, although it has never been understood as a fundamental shift. Consequently, those responsible for developing and implementing FFP in these countries are generally unable to name examples of effects of FFP at the level of “high politics”. They describe it above all as a policy instrument to strengthen the gender perspective in government activities. In other words, the transformative impact can therefore only consist in the longer-term effects that might arise from reforms driven by FFP.

The immediate visible benefits are restricted largely to gender equality policies and gender mainstreaming. However, if FFP is to be understood primarily as an approach promoting those aspects within the national foreign policy, then Mexico, Chile and Colombia need better-defined targets, proper budgets, improved monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and institutionalised instances for civil society input and oversight.

In all three countries, FFP is implemented in a context where patriarchal structures remain dominant and practices of exclusion continue, for example through militarisation of public security²¹² and securitised

²¹² Gamboa, *La política exterior feminista ¿o no será?* (see note 81), 19.

treatment of migrants.²¹³ However, it is precisely this environment that makes a feminist approach all the more necessary – and implementation all the more difficult.²¹⁴ Despite the strongly domestic orientation of these FFPs, feminist civil society organisations criticise the lack of spill-over effects in other areas such as security and migration policy, where certain problematic developments have occurred in parallel to institutionalisation of the FFP. But the point of FFP is not to serve as damage limitation for a fundamentally unchanged policy. Its principles also need to be applied to other policy areas.

Against this backdrop, instrumentalisation of FFP cannot be excluded. It has been criticised as “purple-washing”, lending governments an undeserved feminist sheen.²¹⁵ FFP certainly confers status in large parts of the international community, opens up additional sphere of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and enables access to project funding.

The FFPs in Mexico, Chile and Colombia skirt around questions of geopolitics, international order, global asymmetries and international conflict management. Colonial logics that create inequality are not problematised. Substantial parts of civil society feel that the governments FFPs lack a critical perspective grounded in feminist theory and practice. One example of such a critique is the regional manifesto on FFP in LAC issued in May 2025 by four organisations from Mexico, Chile, Colombia and Brazil.²¹⁶ It is based on feminist,

²¹³ María P. Rivera Chávez, “Feminist Foreign Policy: Coloniality in New Clothes?”, *Feminist Perspectives* (11 August 2022), <https://tinyurl.com/yz9kc95z>.

²¹⁴ Flor Alcaraz, “Antonia Urrejola: ‘Hay una dificultad interna para comprender por qué es necesaria una política exterior feminista’” [Antonia Urrejola: “There is an internal difficulty understanding why a feminist foreign policy is necessary”] (24 February 2024), <https://tinyurl.com/pz7wkpfw>.

²¹⁵ Stefanny Peláez, “*Purple Washing*” in *Feminist Foreign Policy of Chile* (May 2024), <https://tinyurl.com/2y4vu75x>.

²¹⁶ Red Mexicana de Política Exterior Feminista (Mexico), Plataforma para la Política Exterior Feminista en América Latina (Chile), Observatório de Política Exterior Feminista Inclusiva (Brazil), Observatorio de Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad

decolonial and anti-racist epistemic perspectives, and calls for power structures to be transformed, human security to be prioritised, the right to mobility to be rethought, the climate crisis to be addressed appropriately, human rights mechanisms to be strengthened, and sustainable financing to be provided.

FFP has promoted exchange between state institutions, civil society and academia, and cooperation between states. Abandoning the FFP approach – which has to date only occurred after conservative and right-wing election victories – lead to a narrowing or even closing of those communication channels. Upcoming political developments may presage change: elections will be held in Colombia in 2026, and Antonio Kast will take office as Chile's new president on 11 March 2026. Kast, founder of the radical right Republican Party, is known for his traditional conservative views and his opposition to rights for women and minorities. His current proposals include replacing the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality with an institution “for the family”. A hard line on security and migration remains central to his discourse, which makes no mention of FFP.²¹⁷

If Germany and the EU wish to defend and deepen a gender and human rights agenda at the multilateral level, Mexico, Chile and Colombia will be important partners. They are strongly engaged in the UN system and members of the OECD. Mexico is also a member of the G20. They have taken initiative at the global and regional levels, intensifying their cooperation and increasingly supporting third states, and thus offer openings for expanding trilateral cooperation projects.

In a situation where the German Federal Foreign Office has dropped its FFP (while the German development ministry BMZ continues its feminist development policy) and the fate of Chile's FFP hangs in the balance, it will make sense to pursue cooperation on human rights, inclusion and feminist interests through variable formats and flexible terminologies, without necessarily insisting explicitly on FFP (and feminist development policy). But exchange specifically on FFP remains profitable, on account of the heterogeneity of

para América Latina y el Caribe (Colombia), *Manifiesto Regional: Consensos y agendas comunes de las políticas exteriores feministas desde América Latina* [Regional manifesto: Consensus and shared agendas in feminist foreign policy in Latin America] (Mexico City, May 2025), <https://tinyurl.com/5n7x474d>.

²¹⁷ José Antonio Kast, *La fuerza del cambio: Bases programáticas* [The power of change: Programmatic principles] (2025), <https://tinyurl.com/mrxas7mx>.

conceptualisation and institutionalisation in Europe and Latin America.

Germany could also learn from Latin America here, and its role should not be restricted to funding knowledge circulation within the Global South. Germany's promotion of feminist civil society should be transnational, strengthening horizontal bi-regional dialogues and promoting vertical integration with the ministries. Given the present retrograde trends in human rights and inclusion questions, the educational and advocacy work of civil society organisations is more important than ever.

Abbreviations

3R	Rights, representation, resources
AGCID	Agencia Chilena de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (Chilean Agency for International Development Cooperation)
AMEXCID	Agencia Mexicana de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation)
AMLO	Andrés Manuel López Obrador
APC	Agencia Presidencial de Cooperación Internacional (Presidential Agency for International Cooperation, Colombia)
BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany)
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEPAL	Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean)
CIM	Comisión Interamericana de Mujeres (Inter-American Commission of Women)
COP	Conference of the Parties
CoPEF	Strengthening Feminist Foreign Policy and Feminist International Cooperation
CPAC	Conservative Political Action Coalition
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DAW	Division for the Advancement of Women
DNP	Departamento Nacional de Planeación (National Planning Department; Colombia)
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (United Nations)
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council (United Nations)
FFP	Feminist foreign policy
FFP+	Feminist Foreign Policy Group
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

INMUJERES	Instituto Nacional de las Mujeres (National Institute of Women, Mexico)
INSTRAW	International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LGBT+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and others
LGBTIQA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual and others
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MERCOSUR	Mercado Común del Sur (Southern Common Market)
MORENA	Movimiento de Regeneración Nacional (National Regeneration Movement, Mexico)
OAS	Organisation of American States
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSAGI	Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women
PEF	Política Exterior Feminista (feminist foreign policy)
PND	Plan Nacional de Desarrollo (National Development Plan)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SRE	Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (Foreign Ministry, Mexico)
SUCOP	Sistema Único de Consulta Pública (online public consultation system, Colombia)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNIFEM	UN Development Fund for Women
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

