

THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY IN PARAGUAY

UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW – 52nd SESSION

About the NGO

TEDIC (Technology and Human Rights Association) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization based in Asunción, Paraguay. Founded in 2012, TEDIC works at the intersection of technology and human rights, with a focus on the protection of privacy, freedom of expression, gender equality, and civic space in digital environments. TEDIC has held ECOSOC consultative status since 2018 and has actively participated in the Universal Periodic Review process by submitting stakeholder reports in multiple cycles.



UPR Background: Accepted Recommendations

Paraguay accepted recommendations on the regulation of surveillance and protection of the right to privacy (102.62, 102.63), as well as due process and effective remedies for women, journalists, and human rights defenders (102.43, 102.82, 102.88), reaffirmed in 2021 (118.38, 118.74, 118.75, 118.77, 118.81, 118.82, 118.83).

Current Situation: Expansion of State Surveillance

The Paraguayan State has significantly expanded its surveillance capacities without establishing adequate legal frameworks, transparent oversight mechanisms, or effective remedies, posing serious risks to privacy and other fundamental rights. Investigations reveal the misappropriation of Universal Service Funds—intended to reduce the digital divide—for the acquisition of surveillance technologies.

Acquisition and Use of Surveillance Technologies

IMSI catchers (“Stingrays”) have been documented, with authorities refusing to confirm or deny their use. Facial recognition systems have been deployed in public spaces and sports venues, with access to information denied on national security grounds. Drone regulation remains fragmented and weak, while spyware and cyber-patrolling tools are reportedly used to monitor lawful expression and political activity without clear judicial oversight.

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Surveillance of Social Protest

During peaceful youth-led demonstrations in September 2025, authorities used OSINT systems and cyber-patrolling tools to monitor participants, including infiltration of organizing groups. These practices, combined with violent repression, have generated a chilling effect on freedom of assembly and expression.

Personal Data Protection and Cybersecurity

Paraguay adopted its first comprehensive Personal Data Protection Law in November 2025, but it remains unregulated, preventing effective enforcement. Risks persist regarding digital identity systems, misuse of habeas data, and the creation of large-scale biometric databases. Human rights defenders face serious cybersecurity vulnerabilities, including lack of training, absence of protocols, and gender-based digital violence.

TEDIC Recommendations

- ▶ Adopt legislation regulating surveillance in accordance with the principles of legality, necessity, and proportionality, including prior judicial authorization.
- ▶ Conduct mandatory human rights impact assessments before acquiring or deploying mass or targeted surveillance technologies.
- ▶ Regulate and effectively implement the Personal Data Protection Law adopted in November 2025, ensuring independent oversight and accountability mechanisms.
- ▶ Ensure that cybersecurity policies adopt a civilian, human rights-based, and multi-stakeholder approach.

Access to the three UPR reports for this cycle: Privacy, freedom of expression and connectivity, gender-based violence facilitated by technology



Access to the summary of the three UPR reports



TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN PARAGUAY

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About the NGO

TEDIC (Technology and Human Rights Association) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization based in Asunción, Paraguay. Founded in 2012, TEDIC works at the intersection of technology and human rights, with a focus on gender equality, freedom of expression, privacy, and civic space in digital environments. TEDIC has held ECOSOC consultative status since 2018 and has actively participated in the Universal Periodic Review process by submitting stakeholder reports in multiple cycles.



UPR Background: Accepted Recommendations

In the 2016 and 2021 UPR cycles, Paraguay accepted several recommendations related to the prevention of violence against women, access to justice, and effective remedies, which are directly applicable to technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV), including:

In the 2016 UPR cycle, Paraguay accepted multiple recommendations aimed at promoting, adopting, and implementing comprehensive legislation to protect women from all forms of violence, as well as guaranteeing women's rights, eliminating discriminatory practices, and strengthening support for victims of violence and sexual abuse, including awareness-raising and educational programs (102.51, 102.67, 102.68, 102.69, 102.70, 102.72, 102.73, 102.74, 102.75, 102.79, 102.80, 102.83, 102.84, 102.86, 102.87, 102.155).

These commitments were reiterated in the 2021 UPR cycle, reaffirming the State's obligation to prevent and address violence against women and to strengthen protection and support mechanisms (118.1, 118.2, 118.30, 118.31, 118.37, 118.80, 118.111, 118.160, 118.169, 118.170). Underlining the role of legal tools and the judiciary in ensuring effective protection for women, journalists, and human rights defenders, as well as the right to adequate reparation (102.43, 102.82, 102.88), which were reinforced in 2021 (118.38, 118.74, 118.75, 118.77, 118.81, 118.82, 118.83).

Further recommendations addressed freedom of expression and freedom of association, calling for an end to the criminalization of human rights defenders, journalists, media workers, and unions, and urging the adoption of effective protection measures against attacks, reprisals, censorship, and unlawful persecution (118.80, 118.81, 118.82, 118.84, 118.85, 118.88, 118.90, 118.93, 118.94).

Current Situation: Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence

- ▶ Technology-facilitated gender-based violence is a systemic and growing problem in Paraguay, disproportionately affecting women, girls, journalists, activists, and human rights defenders.
- ▶ TEDIC's research shows that TFGBV is a continuation of offline gender-based violence, amplified by digital technologies.
- ▶ Common forms include harassment, threats, non-consensual dissemination of intimate images, identity theft, doxxing, and unauthorized access to accounts.
- ▶ Women who participate in public debate, journalism, activism, or politics are particularly exposed.
- ▶ Legal and Institutional Gaps
- ▶ Law No. 5777/2016 on violence against women includes a reference to "telematic violence," but its definition is limited and insufficient to address the full spectrum of TFGBV documented in practice.
- ▶ There are no comprehensive protocols for prevention, investigation, or victim support in digital violence cases.
- ▶ Institutional responses remain fragmented and reactive.

Access to Justice and Effective Remedies

Despite accepted UPR recommendations, access to justice for victims of TFGBV remains severely limited:

- ▶ Delays in judicial proceedings and lack of technical capacity to handle digital evidence.
- ▶ Loss or mishandling of evidence in cases involving online violence.
- ▶ Lack of cooperation mechanisms with platforms and foreign jurisdictions.
- ▶ Survivors often abandon complaints due to revictimization and lack of effective remedies.
- ▶ Impact on Women Journalists and Human Rights Defenders
- ▶ Women journalists and defenders face gender-based online attacks aimed at silencing their voices and excluding them from public debate.
- ▶ TFGBV generates a chilling effect on freedom of expression, participation, and association.
- ▶ The absence of digital security training and institutional protection mechanisms increases vulnerability.

Implementation Gap

While Paraguay has formally accepted UPR recommendations on violence against women and access to justice, implementation in the digital context is insufficient, revealing a significant gap between commitments and practice.

TEDIC Recommendations

- ▶ Expand and strengthen legislation to comprehensively address technology-facilitated gender-based violence, in line with international human rights standards.
- ▶ Ensure effective access to justice for victims of TFGBV, including prompt investigations, preservation of digital evidence, and adequate reparation.
- ▶ Develop institutional protocols and training for judicial and law-enforcement authorities on digital gender-based violence.
- ▶ Implement prevention measures and digital security programs for women journalists, activists, and human rights defenders.



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