



MARÍA CLARA GALVIS PATIÑO

Candidate for the Inter-American Commission
on Human Rights



Gobierno de
Colombia





PROFILE

With over three decades of experience, María Clara Galvis Patiño is a renowned expert in human rights defense, approaching them from multiple perspectives, including international law, human rights, humanitarian law, transitional justice, and constitutional law.

She has an unparalleled understanding of the Inter-American System, garnered through her extensive experience working and engaging with all stakeholders, including victims of human rights violations, civil society, and States.

A seasoned academic, María Clara Galvis Patiño possesses both theoretical knowledge and practical experience teaching public international law, international human rights law, and international human rights protection systems.

Her expertise extends to academia, with a proven track record as a lecturer on international human rights law in over 20 countries across Latin America, Europe, and Asia.

Her in-depth knowledge of Inter-American law and the IACHR's mechanisms ensures a seamless transition, enabling her to make an immediate and impactful contribution to the IACHR's work without requiring a learning curve.



PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Member (2015-2019) and vice-president (2017-2019) of the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances.

She has comprehensive experience with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, having litigated cases before these bodies and served as an expert before the Court.

She has worked with various Colombian institutions, including:

- Attorney General's Office (criminal investigation)
- Ombudsman's Office (disciplinary oversight)
- Superior Council of the Judiciary (associate magistrate, 2014-2015)
- Special Jurisdiction for Peace (2024-2025)

- National Ombudsman's Office (Director of Human Rights Promotion and Outreach, 2016-2017)

María Clara Galvis Patiño has:

- Collaborated with victims of human rights violations and civil society organizations such as the Center for Justice and International Law (2001-2007) and the Due Process Foundation (2007-2014)
- Worked with academic institutions across Latin America and Europe
- Served as a consultant for international cooperation agencies (USAID, GIZ, Hans Seidel Foundation), the Inter-American Court, and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Central and South America.



ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

- Law Degree: Universidad Externado de Colombia (1990).
- Postgraduate Studies:
 - o Comparative Constitutional Law: Università degli Studi di Genova (Italy), with a prestigious scholarship from the Bank of Italy (1992-1993).
 - o Constitutional Law: Universidad Nacional de Colombia (2000).
- Language Skills: Fluent in Spanish, English, and Italian.

ACADEMIC AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE



- Universidad Externado de Colombia (1992-present): Professor of Constitutional Law, Political Institutions, and International Human Rights Protection Systems.
- Escuela Superior de Administración Pública (ESAP) (1996): Taught Human Rights Guarantees in International Law.
- Universidad Santo Tomás (2009-2011): Taught the Master's program in Human Rights Defense.
- Visiting professorships:
 - o Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (2008)
 - o Berg Institute (Spain) and Universidad Alfonso X El Sabio (2019)
- Academy of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, Washington College of Law, American University (2016-present): Teaches the UN human rights system.

NOTEWORTHY PUBLICATIONS

1. The impact of the Guiding Principles for the Search for Disappeared Persons adopted by the Committee on Enforced Disappearances, with Rainer Huhle, in “Collection of papers on the next ten years of the Convention”, Grazyna Baranoswka and Milica Kolaković Bojović (editors), Cambridge University Press (in press, for publication in 2025).

2. The work of the Committee on enforced disappearances: achievements and jurisprudence ten years after the entry into force of the international convention for the protection of all persons against enforced disappearances, Geneva Academy, August 2021. Translation: August 2022.

3. El caso Gustavo Petro ante la Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos: posibles escenarios a la luz de la jurisprudencia interamericana, in “Justicia en las Américas”, blog of the Due Process Foundation, DPLF, August 6, 2020.

4. The Rights of the Victims of Enforced Disappearance Do Not Have an Expiration Date, with Rainer Huhle, in “Opinio Juris”, international law blog in association with the International Commission of Jurists, July 7, 2020.

5. De Velásquez Rodríguez a los Principios Rectores para la Búsqueda de Personas Desaparecidas, in “Desaparición Forzada en el Sistema Interamericano de Derechos Humanos. Balance, impacto y desafíos”, Inter-American Institute of Human Rights and Institute of Constitutional Studies of the State of Querétaro, Mexico, April 2020, pp. 353-317.





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