

**DUBLIN**

Front Line Defenders – Head Office
First Floor, Avoca Court
Temple Road, Blackrock
Co. Dublin, A94 R7W3, Ireland

info@frontlinedefenders.org
www.frontlinedefenders.org

phone +353 1 212 3750
fax +353 1 233 8695

BRUSSELS

Front Line Defenders – EU Office
Square Marie-Louise 72
1000 Brussels
Belgium

euoffice@frontlinedefenders.org
www.frontlinedefenders.org

phone +32 2 230 9383
fax +32 2 230 0028

27 November 2023

Update - Andorra: court hearing on the case of Vanessa Mendoza Cortés scheduled for 4 December 2023

On 4 December 2023, Criminal Court of Andorra ("Batllia") will hear the case of woman human rights defender **Vanessa Mendoza Cortés** who is charged with "committing a crime against the prestige of the institutions". If convicted, Vanessa Mendoza Cortés will face a fine of up to 12,000 EUR for criminal and civil liability and will be barred from public office for 6 months.

[Vanessa Mendoza Cortés](#) is a psychologist and women's rights defender. She is head of Stop Violències, a human rights organisation that works on gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive rights and advocates for the decriminalisation of abortion in Andorra.

The criminal case was opened on 28 October 2019 following the woman human rights defender's statement concerning sexual and reproductive rights in the country, and the presentation of a shadow report submitted by Stop Violències to the UN CEDAW on 19 October 2019.

The woman human rights defender was originally charged with "defamation with publicity" against the Government under Article 172, "defamation against the co-princes" under Article 320, and "crimes against the prestige of institutions" under Article 325 of the Criminal Code of Andorra. In February 2021, the former two charges were dropped.

Front Line Defenders condemns the legal harassment of woman human rights defender Vanessa Mendoza Cortés, as it believes that the criminal case is in reprisal for her legitimate and peaceful human rights work and, in particular, for working to advance sexual and reproductive rights in Andorra. The organisation calls for the woman human rights defender to be acquitted and for all charges against her to be dismissed.

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Company No. 593190; Registered Charity No. 20204494; CHY 22404