

Venezuela Creates New Ministry for Women

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British campaigners for equality and women's rights have welcomed the decision of the Venezuelan government to create a Ministry for Women's Affairs, as announced on International Women's Day by President Hugo Chavez. Maria Leon, President of INAMUJER (Venezuela's National Institute for Women,) has been appointed as Minister.

The announcement has been welcomed as an important step forward in improving equality for women in Venezuela. Since President Hugo Chávez was first elected in 1998, the position of women in Venezuelan society has been transformed, with numerous policies and initiatives lifting women out of poverty and challenging inequality.

Maria Leon becomes the seventh woman to head a Ministry in Venezuela. The Ministers for the Environment, Indigenous Peoples' Affairs, Tourism, Participation and Social Development, Sports, and Telecommunications and IT are women. In addition the National Assembly, the Attorney General's Office, the Office of the Public Prosecutor, the National Electoral Council and the Office of the 'Ombudsman' are also headed by women.