

The imposture of the “minister”: when patriarchy masquerades as inclusion

WDI Colombia: We reject the usurpation of our spaces

From the Colombian Chapter of the Declaration of Women's Sex-Based Rights (WDI), we categorically reject men occupying the political and symbolic spaces conquered by women. The recent appointment of a man to head the Ministry of Equality and Equity, who also calls himself “minister,” is not a gesture of diversity or an act of inclusion: it is a patriarchal usurpation. It is about erasing, under a progressive guise, centuries of feminist struggles that forcibly wrested away what has always been denied to us.

“Minister” is not a disguise for identity

The title of minister is not a simple word or a semantic whim. It is the result of centuries of exclusion and resistance of women, who were erased from dictionaries, from the vote, from citizenship, from politics, and from all decision-making spaces. To say “minister” means to recognize that, despite patriarchy, women have won their right to govern in their own name. For a man, through self-perception, to arrogate this title to himself is to once again expropriate from women what belongs to us, diluting the memory embodied in our bodies and struggles.

The political subject of women is material, not identitarian.

Radical feminism clearly maintains: the political subject of women is not defined by perceived identities, but by the material reality of being born women in patriarchal societies that subordinate us by sex. The oppression of homosexual men or those who call themselves “diverse” is not, and can never be, the oppression of being born female and being treated as inferior from birth. Our rights are not interchangeable or comparable with individual experiences. To pretend otherwise is an erasure disguised as inclusion.

A Feminist, Non-Queer Genealogy

Ministries of Equality do not originate from queer theory or discourses of gender fluidity. They are the fruit of more than two centuries of international political feminism: from Olympe de Gouges, murdered for demanding equality, to the 1979 CEDAW Convention and the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. In Colombia, their construction was slow and persistent: Women's Councils, Vice-Ministries, Secretariats, and Directorates established by feminist leaders throughout the country. None of this was invented by a man: it was the work of women who resisted the structural exclusion of the State.

The Old Patriarchal Trap in a New Disguise

The current usurpation repeats the old patriarchal pattern: when women conquer a space, men reappropriate it with new masks. Before, they prohibited us from naming ourselves in private; today, they occupy what they conquered in public under the guise of “inclusion.” Calling yourself “minister” without being a woman is privatizing a collective heritage, emptying of political content a category torn apart by centuries of exclusion, imprisonment, persecution, and death. Erasure is not new: it just changes its costume.

Not everything is performativity

At WDI, we remind you: not everything is performativity. Political legitimacy is not born from self-perception, but from the genealogy of struggle that gave meaning to the name. “Minister” is not a disguise; it is the sign of a feminist victory that cannot be reduced to a subjective identity. The appropriation of this title by a man is not a democratic advance; it is a media mirage that erases women in the name of diversity. It is patriarchy, with false feathers.

Feminism is not diversity

The underlying problem is not just the appointment of a man. It is the replacement of political feminism with an ideology of diversity that dissolves women as a collective subject. When the

category "women" is replaced by "gender" or "felt identities," what disappears are women themselves, rendered invisible beneath the magma of diversity. And if feminism doesn't defend women, no one will. As Olympe de Gouges warned: when women are erased from history, they are also erased from the present.

To exist is not to represent

We say clearly: to exist is not to represent. Men have the right to live as they wish, but not to occupy or appropriate the political positions won by women. The Ministry of Equality must be led by a feminist woman with a track record in defending women's rights, not by a man who turns our achievements into an identity accessory. "Minister" is of women, by women, and for women. And we will not give an inch in defending it.

Alejandra Vera.