



TEXTS ADOPTED
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Disappearance of 43 teaching students in Mexico

European Parliament resolution of 23 October 2014 on the disappearance of 43 teaching students in Mexico (2014/2905(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Mexico, in particular that of 11 March 2010 on the escalation of violence in Mexico¹,
- having regard to the Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and the United Mexican States,
- having regard to its recommendation to the Council of 12 March 2009 on an EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership²,
- having regard to the Commission communication to the Council and the European Parliament of 15 July 2008 entitled ‘Towards an EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership’ (COM(2008)0447),
- having regard to the EU local statement concerning Iguala, issued in agreement with the Heads of Mission of the EU Member States in Mexico on 12 October 2014,
- having regard to the statement made by the Mexican President Enrico Peña Nieto on 14 October 2014,
- having regard to the Mexico-EU Strategic Partnership Joint Executive Plan of 16 May 2010,
- having regard to the declarations of the summits of heads of state and government of the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean (EU-CELAC),
- having regard to the joint statement of 17 June 2012 of the VII Mexico-EU summit, held in Los Cabos, Baja California Sur, Mexico,

¹ OJ C 349 E, 22.12.2010, p. 92.

² OJ C 87 E, 1.4.2010, p. 172.

- having regard to the joint statement of the XII meeting of the EU-Mexico Joint Committee, held in Mexico City on 10-11 June 2013,
 - having regard to Rules 135(5) and 123(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Mexico and the European Union share common values that find expression in our democratic and pluralist societies, defending fundamental freedoms, human rights, labour rights, environmental protection and sustainable development, and a shared commitment to consolidating democracy, the rule of law, equitable economic and social development and fighting corruption and poverty;
- B. whereas our democratic systems have the duty and obligation to safeguard the operation of the rule of law and respect for human rights, and whereas the enjoyment and full exercise of freedoms and the right to the integrity of the human person are thus one of the basic pillars of the rule of law;
- C. whereas the EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership has enabled closer cooperation between the EU and Mexico on issues of global importance, and in particular enhanced dialogue, coordination and exchanges in areas such as security, human rights, electoral reform, regional development and regulatory and trade policies;
- D. whereas on 26 September 2014, six people, among them three students, were killed when the police opened fire on protesting teaching students from the Escuela Normal (‘Normal School’) of Ayotzinapa in Iguala, Guerrero state; whereas since then 43 students remain disappeared; whereas according to various sources those students were rounded up and driven away by police officers and handed over to unidentified armed men linked to a drug cartel;
- E. whereas according to the Mexican Government, 51 persons linked to the crimes have been arrested, most of them police agents from the municipalities of Iguala and Cocula; whereas on 14 October 2014 the Mexican Attorney-General declared that according to forensic analyses of the 28 bodies found in clandestine graves near Iguala on 4 October 2014 the bodies do not correspond to those of the missing students; whereas the Mexican authorities have captured the suspected main leader of the criminal gang Guerreros Unidos (United Warriors), allegedly involved in the disappearance of the 43 students;
- F. whereas the Mayor of Iguala, his wife, and the police chief of Iguala are fugitives from justice and accused of links to the local Guerreros Unidos drug cartel;
- G. whereas the President of Mexico, Enrique Peña Nieto, has instructed the Federal Government and his Security Office to take immediate and conclusive measures, and whereas a roadmap for joint action has been agreed together with the missing students’ families and representatives; whereas the OAS and the UN have urged the Mexican Government to investigate the forced disappearances, punish those responsible, and protect the families of the missing students; whereas in this case the Mexican Government is cooperating with these international multilateral bodies;
- H. whereas the Mexican Government and the main opposition parties agreed in 2012 to a ‘Pact for Mexico’ aimed at addressing Mexico’s key challenges, which include security and impunity;

- I. whereas violence has increased in the state of Guerrero; whereas many students and teachers throughout Mexico are protesting for the safe return of the missing students and denouncing the complicity among certain elements of the local police in the crimes, corruption in the police force and institutional weakness in particular areas of the country where social cohesion gaps are more apparent; whereas the government buildings in Chilpancingo and some other official buildings in different municipalities of the state of Guerrero, as well as some religious leaders and offices of political parties, have also been under threat or have been attacked;
 - J. whereas Mexico participates in all regional and international forums and has signed all the international agreements on human rights and fundamental freedoms;
 - K. whereas the Mexican Government recognises the challenges Mexico is facing and has demonstrated its firm commitment to improving the security situation in the country, including a significant increase in the security forces' budget and reform of the public security institutions, with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness of law enforcement and of the legal system, thus making it possible to confront organised crime; whereas forced disappearances, violence linked to organised crime and the alleged collaboration between particular local entities and organised criminal groups remain matters of grave concern;
1. Strongly condemns the unacceptable forced disappearances and crimes in Iguala and calls on the Mexican authorities to investigate all the crimes, including the finding of 28 bodies in clandestine graves; calls on the relevant authorities to take all necessary steps to act promptly and in a transparent and impartial manner to identify, arrest and bring to justice the perpetrators of the crimes, and calls for those responsible to be identified and prosecuted, using all available information and resources internally and externally and with no margin for impunity; calls for the investigations to be continued until the students have been brought to safety;
 2. Extends its sympathy and support to the families and friends of the victims, and to the Mexican people, whom it encourages to continue to fight by peaceful means to defend democracy and the rule of law;
 3. Takes note of the detentions that have taken place; calls for the search to be continued for the Mayor of Iguala, his wife and the police chief of Iguala; is deeply concerned at the apparent infiltration of local law enforcement and administrative entities by organised crime;
 4. Welcomes President Peña Nieto's determination to investigate and clarify these events, as well as to put an end to gang-related violence in Mexico; welcomes the creation of monitoring committees related to the Iguala case in the Senate and the Chamber of Representatives; calls on the Mexican authorities to protect and assist the families of the victims and keep them informed about the ongoing investigations and efforts to apprehend the perpetrators;
 5. Supports the Mexican Government in its determination to combat organised drug trafficking, while voicing its deep concern at the increase in violence resulting from drug trafficking and the climate of impunity; stands shoulder to shoulder with the Mexican people in the fight against organised drug trafficking;
 6. Urges the Mexican Government, at all levels, to take actions that will prevent events like

those in Iguala from ever occurring again; condemns all forms of violence, in particular the violence and persistent death threats against activists engaged in promoting and defending freedom of speech and human rights in Mexico, and calls on the Mexican authorities to step up efforts to provide legal and personal protection to the groups concerned;

7. Supports the Mexican authorities' efforts to collaborate with international organisations including the EU, the UN, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), with the assistance of Argentinian and international forensic experts; stresses the importance of the Government of Mexico providing the financial resources needed so that the IACHR can implement a technical assistance programme than can complement national actions with regard to the investigation of the events in Guerrero;
8. Underlines the fact that Mexico is a strategic partner for the EU; encourages the Mexican Government to continue with its efforts to strengthen state institutions and consolidate the rule of law, with a view to tackling some of the structural problems that are at the root of the human rights violations, specifically with reference to reform of the judicial system; highlights, accordingly, the importance of an independent judiciary which stands as a guarantee of impartiality and resolute action to combat impunity; calls for federal protection for those who are involved in delivering justice;
9. Calls on the EU, on its Member States in their bilateral relations with Mexico, and on the European institutions to step up the support they provide for human rights through programmes and financial and technical resources; calls on them also to increase the budgetary resources allocated to cooperation in strengthening and reforming the judiciary, law enforcement agencies and prosecution services, with a view to prosecuting and punishing offenders and to setting up effective systems for protecting witnesses and victims and their families;
10. Stresses the urgent need to set up a unified, public and accessible national registry of missing and disappeared persons and a DNA database at federal level;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Member States, the *pro tempore* presidency of CELAC, the Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States (OAS), the Eurolat Parliamentary Assembly and the President and Congress of Mexico.