



Plenary sitting

B9-0153/2022

8.3.2022

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation of journalists and human rights defenders in Mexico
(2022/2580(RSP))

Leopoldo López Gil, Michael Gahler, David McAllister, Sandra Kalniete, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, Francisco José Millán Mon, José Manuel Fernandes, Gabriel Mato, Antonio López-Istúriz White, Luděk Niedermayer, Loránt Vincze, Sara Skytvedal, Tomáš Zdechovský, Romana Tomc, Janina Ochojska, Christian Sagartz, Arba Kokalari, Loucas Foulas, Jiří Pospíšil, Peter Pollák, Stanislav Polčák, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska, Miriam Lexmann, David Lega, Stelios Kypourouopoulos, Seán Kelly, Michaela Šojdrová, Adam Jarubas, Krzysztof Hetman, Ivan Štefanec, Vangelis Meimarakis, Vladimír Bilčík, Inese Vaidere, Lefteris Christoforou
on behalf of the PPE Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation of journalists and human rights defenders in Mexico
(2022/2580(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Mexico, in particular the one of 11 March 2010 on the escalation of violence in Mexico
 - having regard to the EU-Mexico Global Agreement that is in force since 2000,
 - having regards to the modernised EU-Mexico Global Agreement,
 - having regard to the 9th EU-Mexico High Level Dialogue on Human Rights of 10 July 2020
 - having regard to the 1st EU-Mexico High Level Dialogue on Multilateral Issues of 5 November 2020
 - having regard to the Joint Statements of the EU Delegation in Mexico, the Embassy of Norway and the Embassy of Switzerland in Mexico, on the murder of the journalist Ms Maria de Lourdes Maldonado Lopez of 15 February 2022
 - having regard to the OHCHR statement of 19 October 2020 on “UN expert encourages Mexico to increase protection of human rights defenders”
 - having regard to report of the Committee to Protect Journalists of 2020
 - having regard to the Declaration by the High Representative of 3 May 2021 on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day
 - having regard to the EU Guidelines on human rights defenders and on freedom of expression online and offline
 - having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure
- A. whereas Mexico has long been the most dangerous and deadliest place for journalists outside an official war zone according to different NGOs and international organisations, among them, the Committee to Protect Journalists and Reporters Without Borders; whereas Mexico ranks ranked 143 out of 180 in the 2021 World Press Freedom Index;
- B. whereas in 2022, eight journalists have been killed, namely, Maria de Lourdes Maldonado, Jorge Camero, Michelle Pérez Tadeo, Herber López Vásquez, Margarito Martínez, José Luis Gamboa Arenas, Roberto Toledo Barrera, Jesús Ramírez Cuevas, making it one of the deadliest beginning of the year for journalists in Mexico;

- C. whereas the press in Mexico operates amid a complex context of organised crime and entrenched official corruption, which exacerbates the widespread violence against free press and journalists; whereas the situation of the rule of law in Mexico is seriously deteriorating; whereas institutionalised and widespread corruption, pitted with a deficient judicial system, engenders an endemic problem of impunity as around 90% of the murders of journalists remain unpunished;
 - D. whereas since the election of President López Obrador three years ago, more than 50 journalist and media workers, have been assassinated; whereas President López Obrador has frequently used populist rhetoric in daily press briefings to denigrate and intimidate independent journalists, media owners and activists; whereas the rhetoric of abuse and stigmatisation generates an atmosphere of relentless unrest towards independent journalists; whereas under the pretext of combating fake news, the Mexican government created a state owned-platform to exhibit, stigmatise and attack the critical press'; whereas the government has also weakened protection for journalists under threat and cut funds for their protection and investigations;
 - E. whereas widespread violence in Mexico continues to increase as indicated during the local and regional elections of June 2021 where 782 aggressions were registered against candidates and politicians, including around 80 political assassinations and most recently mass murder that took place on 1 March 2022 with 17 people killed; whereas from December 2018 to September 2021, 94 human rights defenders were killed in Mexico; whereas there are high levels of violence against women;
 - F. whereas several constitutional reforms on the electoral system, the judicial system and the energy sector, initiated by the administration of López Obrador, raise doubts on the stability of the rule of law and the legal certainty and rights of foreign investments in Mexico, which seriously jeopardises foreign investment made by European companies;
 - G. whereas the EU-Mexico Global Agreement include a human rights and democratic clause namely in article 1 and 39; whereas the modernised Global Agreement enables the EU and Mexico to discuss a range of issues like human rights with civil society, including journalists and human rights defenders, among other;
1. Condemns the harassment and killing of human rights defenders and journalists in Mexico and calls on the authorities to investigate the killings in a prompt, thorough, independent and impartial manner;
 2. Underscores that freedom of press constitutes one of the key mechanism of a functioning, healthy democracy; calls on the Mexican authorities to undertake all necessary steps to ensure the protection and the creation of a safe environment for journalists in line with established international standards, including by addressing the issue of widespread corruption and deficient judicial system which leads to such high rates of impunity;
 3. Notes with concern the systematic and tough critiques used by the highest authorities of the Mexican government towards journalists and their work as contributes to worsening

the freedom of expression and press, and generate a climate of harassment, attacks and general insecurity for journalists; Calls on the authorities to uphold their institutional duty and responsibility to protect journalists and human rights defenders;

4. Is concerned about the ongoing constitutional reforms initiated by the administration of Lopez Obrador, in particular those relating to electoral laws, the judicial system, and the energy sector, go against the EU-Mexico Global Agreement as they would further destabilise the division of power among the institutions and therefore the rule of law as well as the legal certainty and rights of foreign investments; Calls on the Mexican government to instead, focus on reforms that would ensure the prevention, protection and accountability in order to guarantee the human rights of human rights defenders and journalists;
5. Underlines the importance of Mexico as a strategic partner; Recalls that the EU-Mexico Global Agreement includes human rights clauses, namely articles 1 and 39, which commits the Mexican government to uphold human rights; Reminds that article 58 of the Global Agreement provides venues for the suspension of the agreement in case of breach of the essential elements of the agreement referred to in Article 1; Notes that the modernised EU-Mexico Global Agreement further strengthens human rights provision and enables the EU and Mexico to discuss a range of issues like human rights with civil society, including journalists and human rights defenders, among others;
6. Calls on all Member States, the EEAS and its delegation in Mexico to raise human rights concerns with the Mexican counterparts; urges on the EU Delegation and the Member States to implement the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders and on freedom of expression online and offline to provide all appropriate support to the work of human rights defenders and journalists;
7. Instructs its President to forward this Resolution to the Commission, the Council, and the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Government and the Parliament of Mexico