



Plenary sitting

B9-0158/2022

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))

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on behalf of the ECR 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 that of 23 October 2014 on the disappearance of 43 teaching students in Mexico,
 - having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists (*“Ley para la Protección de Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas”*), adopted in April 2012,
 - having regard to the Mechanism for Protecting Human Rights Defenders and Journalists (*“Mecanismo de Protección para Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos y Periodistas”*),
 - having regard to the Mexican Constitution,
 - having regard to the decision of the Congreso Nacional, 21 October 2020,
 - having regard to the reports of the Delegation to Mexico of the European Parliament,
 - having regard to the UN Human Rights Committee expert report on *“Issues Concerning Torture, the Militarization of the Police, and Enforced Disappearances”*, 2019,
 - having regard to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in particular Article 19 thereof,
 - having regard to the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders of 8 March 1999,
 - having regard to the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- A. whereas an significant-increase in violent acts committed against journalists has been witnessed in recent years; whereas against the backdrop of a press freedom crisis spreading across Latin America, reports on crimes committed against journalists have been highest in Mexico;
- B. whereas aggression against journalists ranges from cyber attacks, violent attacks and death threats to disappearances, rapes and displacements - reportedly mainly carried out by criminal and paramilitary groups;
- C. whereas a total of 55 Mexican journalists were killed from 2015 to 2021; whereas as of 7

March 2022, seven journalists had already been murdered; whereas the Mexican authorities reported even higher numbers, stating that 43 journalists had been killed since the six-year term of President López Obrador began the 1st December 2018;

- D. whereas in 2022, among the journalists killed, Heber Lopez Vasquez, Roberto Toledo, Lourdes Maldonado, Margarito Martinez, Jose Luis Gamboa Jorge Luis Camero Zazueta and Juan Carlos Muñiz were the most recent victims, all killed within the short timeframe of one month;
- E. whereas criminal and paramilitary groups are reported to be the primary groups targeting journalists; whereas state officials have also been ordering attacks targeting journalists in order to protect their image or avoid information leaking to the public;
- F. whereas in 2020, the first year of the pandemic, there were a total of 692 reported cases of aggression against journalists including threats and physical violence;
- G. whereas implementation of existing legislative protection mechanisms has been minimal and resulted in as few as 1 155 applications for protection presented, of which 1 012 were accepted, between 2012 and 2021; whereas the main challenges to efficient enforcement of said mechanisms were found to be due to lack of coordination and insufficient funding; whereas in October 2020 the Mexican Congress voted to eliminate the special, independent fund that financed the protection mechanism, transferring it to the ministry of interior;
- H. whereas both recently killed journalists Margarito Martinez and Lourdes Maldonado sought protection from the Baja California's protection program; whereas both murders show that the journalists protection program has completely ceased to function in recent months; whereas, according to Mexican journalists, the mechanism gave only bureaucratic protection;
- I. whereas Mexico was ranked one of the most dangerous countries for journalists in 2021 ahead of Syria and Afghanistan;
- J. whereas investigation of crimes against journalists is reportedly often not done; whereas reportedly more than 90 percent of murders of journalists and human rights defenders remain unsolved and unpunished;
- K. whereas the killing of Alfonso Margarito Martínez Esquivel, Lourdes Maldonado López and José Luis Gamboa Arenas in less than a month triggered one of the largest mass protests over the murders of media workers in recent years in cities across Mexico in January 2022;
- L. whereas the rights to freedom of expression, to information and to public participation, are among the cornerstones of democracy; whereas freedom of expression is indispensable for the realisation of the principles of transparency and accountability;
- M. Whereas the president López Obrador has not only failed to act in the face of such a dramatic situation, but has attacked repeatedly the press in his public conferences and has targeted directly by name some journalist whose reporting he disapproves because it is critical to his government and to the lack of transparency of the presidency amid

accusations of corruption;

1. Expresses its deep concern at the increasing violence linked to organised crime, deterioration in fundamental rights and freedoms and the rule of law in Mexico;
2. Denounces the increasing collusion between official circles and criminal drug trafficking cartels which are at the roots of the rapid generalization of criminal violence and intimidation towards journalists and other professionals;
3. Condemns all forms of violence, intimidation and political pressure exerted upon journalists and activists engaged in exposing the organized crime, including drug cartels, corruption, promoting and defending freedom of speech and human rights in Mexico; Calls on the Mexican authorities to step up efforts to provide legal and personal protection to the groups concerned and to act promptly and in a transparent and impartial manner to end impunity;
4. Deplores the fact that numerous Mexican journalists have paid with their own lives for simply doing their jobs, and the attacks to the press coming directly from the president of the Republic and the threats frequently emanating from governmental and official circles;
5. Expresses its deepest condolences to the families, friends and colleagues of all killed journalists and all innocent victims of crimes;
6. Commends journalists and civil society who, despite the risks involved, work to raise awareness of the dangers of journalistic work in Mexico and the prevailing impunity for criminals who threaten and commit violence against journalists;
7. Considers that the assault on press freedom constitutes a violation of basic democratic freedoms and represents a tremendous backslide in democratic development;
8. Calls on the Mexican authorities to respect the Human Rights and relevant national and international legislation and agreements, devised to protect citizens;
9. Expresses its serious concern over the functioning of the legal system in Mexico and the viability and implementation of existing legislative protection mechanisms; calls for a revision of the state protection programmes and the Federal Protection Mechanism for Human Rights Defenders and Journalists in cooperation with journalists organizations;
10. Highlights that the fight against corruption, in particular through coverage by journalists, is essential for preserving democracy and fundamental rights, as corruption undermines the proper functioning of the state and enables organised crime;
11. Urges the High Representative, the EEAS, the Commission and the Member States to continue to raise the situation of journalists, human rights defenders, political activists, lawyers and academics in their bilateral relations with Mexico and to provide diplomatic and political support for them;
12. 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 EEAS, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the President and Congress of the United Mexican States.