



PRESS RELEASE

Mexico: International Fact-Finding Mission to Assess Press Freedom

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ARTICLE 19, with the assistance of *International Media Support* (Denmark), has called on international organisations that specialise in the promotion and defence of freedom of expression to undertake a fact finding mission to Mexico. Taking place from the 21st to the 25th of April, the mission will include working meetings with federal and local authorities, press associations/unions, journalists, broadcasters, and media owners, as well as victims, survivors, and their families.

National and international organisations have pointed out the adverse climate for the exercise of freedom of expression that prevails in Mexico, including the increasing incidents of violence, impunity, and self censorship that has taken root in the country to the detriment of the right of society to be informed. The acts of aggression against journalists have been on the increase since 2003. In that year 76 cases of aggression were registered, the figure grew to 92 cases in 2004, 93 in 2005, and by 2006 the attacks had increased to peak at 131 incidents. Although in 2007 the trend registered a slight descent, the view continues to be devastating.

The central objective of the mission is to evaluate the situation of freedom of expression and press freedom in regions in the north and south of the country, these include Oaxaca, Guerrero, Michoacán, and Sonora. The aim is to provide support to local media organisations/unions, and to raise awareness about the risks that media workers face. In addition it will, by means of the establishment of a dialogue with federal and state authorities, and other bodies relevant for the full exercise of freedom of expression, promote exploration of the viability of remedies/instruments created to address the issue.

The organisations participating include ARTICLE 19, International Media Support (IMS), Asociación Mundial de Radios Comunitarias (AMARC), Rory Peck Trust Fund, Reporters Without Borders, International Federation of Journalists, International News Safety Institute (INSI), Committee for the Protection of Journalists (CPJ), Fundación para la Libertad de Prensa (Colombia), International Press Institute (IPI), Inter American Press Association (SIP), Open Society Institute (OSI) and UNESCO.

The participating organisations will present a public report on freedom of expression issues from which they will make specific recommendations to the Mexican state.

NOTES TO EDITORS

- For more information please contact Ricardo González, ricardo@article19.org (55)1054-6500.
- ARTICLE 19 is an independent human rights organization that Works around the world to protect and promote the rights to freedom of expression. It takes its name from Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees freedom of expression