

PRESS RELEASE

Mexico: ARTICLE 19 condemns continued assault on its work and the press

In Mexico, freedom of expression is under siege and faces a hostile environment in which the stigmatising discourse from those in power and against human rights defenders and the press perpetuates violence.

Throughout the year, our Regional Office has documented that the Mexican press is attacked every 14 hours. So far, 12 journalists have been murdered because of their work. This situation has led to Mexico becoming the riskiest country for the press in the Americas.

For 15 years, ARTICLE 19, with the opening of the Regional Office for Mexico and Central America, has documented, highlighted and denounced restrictions against freedom of expression.

We also actively participated in the development of institutional mechanisms to achieve greater government transparency. Since opening, our organisation has supported and accompanied victims and marginalised voices, such as journalists within remote areas, women and indigenous communities. For these reasons, national and local power players have harassed and threatened the organisation and its members numerous times.

The most recent hostilities were triggered by the president's attacks issued during his public morning press conferences throughout 2021. This year alone, the Regional Office was attacked on at least 18 occasions. For instance, the office and its staff were subjected to judicial harassment, death threats, threats against their integrity, smear campaigns, digital attacks such as DDoS and DDS, and the presence of unknown people outside the office and the homes of staff members. Additionally, and continuously, the organisation receives online attacks, verbal attacks, phishing attempts, and is forced to endure other acts of intimidation.

We denounce this publicly now, but prior to this, we have made similar denouncements before the relevant authorities. In some cases, open files currently sit with prosecution institutions.

So far, none of our complaints have led to effective investigations, and there has been a failure to identify those responsible for the attacks. Even worse, the authorities have not been able to stop the harassment against the organisation. It is difficult to stop the acts against us when ARTICLE 19 is considered to be an enemy of the government in power.

This situation contributed to the decision of the International Board of ARTICLE 19 to hold its biannual meeting in Mexico, as an act of solidarity with the staff and their work for freedom of expression in the region.

We want to make clear that the failure of the Mexican government to live up to their commitments to human rights and to endorse the work we do, reduces our ability to defend and protect freedom of expression.

Our demand is straightforward: we seek the guarantee of the Mexican government to end hostilities against ARTICLE 19 in Mexico, and provide acceptable conditions for our pursuit of human rights.

We are part of a brave and courageous community of journalists and activists who shed light on acts of corruption and serious human rights violations. We stand in solidarity with these individuals and groups, and demand guarantees for their lives and integrity too.

Incidents and aggressions against ARTICLE 19

ARTICLE 19 has continued to be a beneficiary organization of the Federal Protection Mechanism. While protection measures have been implemented and are being maintained as indicated by the authorities, the organization has experienced a series of incidents and aggressions.

ARTICLE 19

Below is a log of the incidents in 2022:

