

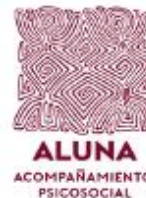
Colectivo

EP



Examen
Periódico
Universal
México 2024

ESPACIO OSC
Para la Protección de Personas Defensoras y Periodistas



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I am Paola Pacheco, a human rights defender from Mexico. It is an honor to address this assembly for the first time on behalf of the **Espacio OSC** and **Colectivo EPU**, to shed light on the plight of human rights defenders and journalists in Mexico.

In the 2018 Universal Periodic Review, **thirty-nine states issued recommendations to the Mexican government concerning human rights defenders and journalists, all of which were accepted.**

Mexico's relationship with international scrutiny on human rights has been paradoxical, supporting progressive initiatives on one hand but displaying significant resistance, implicitly or explicitly, when its actions face examination.



According to figures from the Federal Mechanism for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists, between December 2018 and June 2022, there were **106 murders of defenders and 59 of journalists in Mexico**.

This positions **Mexico among the top three most dangerous** countries globally **for journalism**, as reported by the Committee of Protection for Journalists (CPJ) this year. Additionally, it ranks **third in environmental defenders' risk in Latin America**, according to Global Witness.



Identified obstacles over the past five years include persistent violence against defenders and journalists, an increase in digital defamation campaigns and espionage practices, a weakened civic space, the lack of a comprehensive national public policy, and ineffective measures against impunity.



Despite having a protection program, the Mechanism, in place since 2012, Mexico faces challenges a decade later:

- Lack of political measures, such as working sessions with authorities.
- Insufficient dissemination of information to defenders and journalists by state bodies.
- Inaction by Mechanism's constituent bodies.
- Lack of interinstitutional information exchange.
- Limited transparency in internal information.
- Absence of a national coordination protocol.
- Erosion of the Advisory Council's participation in the Mechanism's Board.
- Obstacles to civil society organizations' accompaniment.
- Absence of a comprehensive human rights approach; the need to incorporate an intersectional, collective and community approach.



What are the major pending issues identified by the Espacio OSC for a secure environment for the defense of human rights and freedom of expression in Mexico?

- 1 Prevention and acknowledgment of defense work.
- 2 Enhanced federal and state-level interinstitutional coordination.
- 3 Integration of a gender perspective, collective and community approach.
- 4 Development of a comprehensive prosecution plan.
- 5 Internal strengthening of the Federal Protection Mechanism processes.



We propose the following recommendations:

- 1** Implement 80% of the recommendations from the UN Human Rights Office's diagnosis on the Federal Protection Mechanism.
- 2** Establish a comprehensive protection public policy with specific actions for prevention, protection, investigation, and remedy, incorporating an intersectional, differential, and gender perspective.
- 3** Within two years, promote the creation of guidelines for implementing a criminal prosecution plan for crimes against defenders and journalists through the National Prosecution Conference, ensuring gender focus and the involvement of human rights organizations.
- 4** Independently investigate and punish those responsible for illegal espionage against defenders and journalists, and disclose verifiable information about current state surveillance software.



In the thematic report, additional recommendations can be found for further consideration. Addressing these urgent issues is crucial not only for Mexico but for the entire region. In the words of the Mexican defender Digna Ochoa, who was assassinated in 2001: "Human rights are not optional; they are an essential part of the dignity of every human being."

I appreciate your attention and intention to address this pressing matter.