

Mexican presidential candidates urged to address violence against journalists

PARIS, FRANCE / DARMSHADT, GERMANY / MEXICO CITY, MEXICO: In personal letters to the three Mexican presidential candidates, the International Press Institute (IPI), the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA), and the World Editors Forum have called on the candidates to explain the measures they would take to end violence against journalists and to bring their attackers to justice.



"We are seriously concerned at the horrific levels of violence facing journalists in Mexico," the letters said. "At least 53 have been murdered in the past 6 years and many more have disappeared. In very few cases have the perpetrators been brought to justice and those who kill and threaten journalists are routinely protected by a climate of impunity. "

In the letters to Josefina Vázquez Mota of the National Action Party, Enrique Peña Nieto of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, and Andrés Manuel López Obrador of the Party of the Democratic Revolution, the global press organisations urged the candidates to use their election campaigns "to explain how they would end this intolerable situation and restore Mexico's democratic reputation."

The letters also reiterated the call for Mexican authorities to quickly find and bring to justice those behind the gruesome killings of Regina Martínez, Guillermo Luna Varela, Gabriel Hugué Córdova, and Esteban Rodríguez in Veracruz state; and of Marco Antonio Ávila García, whose tortured body was found on the side of a highway near Guaymás, Sonora.

Since 2007, the government's war against drug-trafficking cartels has plunged Mexico into unprecedented levels of violence, making it the most dangerous country for journalists in the Western Hemisphere. As a result, prevailing self-censorship and massive news blackout have become common in some regions.

The full letters can be read at www.wan-ifra.org/node/59742