

Reporters Without Borders

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Americas - Mexico

Fact-finding visit

RWB urges authorities to reinforce mechanism for protecting journalists

3 April 2014

During four days of meetings in Mexico City that end today, Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Christophe Deloire has urged the Mexican authorities to "move as quickly as possible to reinforce the mechanism for the protection of journalists and human rights defenders" that was created in October 2012.

According to RWB's figures, 89 journalists have been killed in connection with their work since 2000 in Mexico, which is ranked 152nd out of 180 countries in [RWB's press freedom index](#). Another 17 journalists have gone missing. Most of the victims were [killed by organized crime](#) members while doing investigative reporting. In some cases, corrupt officials in collusion with cartels were behind the murders.

Winding up a four-day visit in which he met representatives of the government, media and civil society, Deloire said at a news conference today that he "regretted the extremely high level of violence against journalists and the almost complete impunity enjoyed by those responsible."

He said he decided to go to Mexico after Reporters Without Borders' correspondent, Balbina Flores, was the target of threats in March. "It is astounding that Balbina, who has never stopped courageously defending threatened journalists and their families, should herself now be subjected to intimidation."

The many people Deloire met during his visit included secretary of interior Miguel Angel Osorio Chong and under-secretary for human rights Lia Limon Garcia.

He told them that, even before its current crisis, the federal mechanism had clearly failed to overcome the problems resulting from bureaucratic red tape and had [not achieved its goals](#).

"The response times envisaged by the law were never respected, the allocated funds were not disbursed and the potential beneficiaries ended up being deeply disappointed," Deloire said.

The secretary of interior assured Deloire of the government's "full determination" to carry out a "complete overhaul" of the federal protection mechanism for journalists and human rights defenders, "the results of which have not been satisfactory." He added that he had just had a meeting on the subject with President Enrique Pena Nieto, to whom Reporters Without Borders sent an email on 24 March (attached).

Deloire also met with Mexico City mayor Miguel Angel Mancera (photo) to discuss the city's protection mechanism, which has so far benefitted 53 journalists and human rights defenders, and the measures taken to protect Flores.

The mayor undertook to issue guidelines to reduce police violence against journalists. According to RWB's tally, at least 31 journalists were manhandled by police during demonstrations on [2 October 2013](#) commemorating the 1968 massacre of students.



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