

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/mexico-questions-raised-about-high-25-03-2015,47730.html>

Americas - Mexico

Firing

Questions raised about high-profile anchor's dismissal

25 March 2015

Reporters Without Borders is very disturbed by the *MVS* media group's decision to fire journalist **Carmen Aristegui** at a very sensitive moment for freedom of expression in Mexico.

It was wrongly reported that Reporters Without Borders did not think her dismissal was linked to the issue of free speech and we regret that those reports were used to minimize the impact of her firing.

The dispute between Aristegui and *MVS* dates back to 11 March, after she announced that *MVS* would participate in *MexicoLeaks*, a website that has leaked details about government corruption, and the *MVS* logo appeared on the site. *MVS* immediately reacted in comments to the media, saying its brand had been misused and announcing "appropriate measures."

The next day, *MVS* fired **Daniel Lizárra** and **Irving Huerta**, two members of a team of journalists working under Aristegui. They were part of the team that had revealed the existence of a presidential luxury residence dubbed the "white house" last November.

Aristegui was herself fired on 15 March. Joaquín Vargas's *MVS* Radio said it fired her after rejecting her demand that Lizárra and Huerta be reinstated as a condition for continuing her programme.

"The irrevocable dismissal of Aristegui and her colleagues, *MVS*'s decision to wage this dispute through the media and their rejection of any mediation are disturbing developments for freedom of expression and the right to information in an already difficult and tense climate for Mexican journalists," Reporters Without Borders said.

"In the light of Aristegui's investigative reporting, which has been very critical of the government, questions are inevitably being asked about the real reasons behind her dismissal."

During an online news conference on 19 March, Aristegui said her dismissal had murky ramifications and was "clearly not an issue between individuals," as the interior ministry had said. "The sequence of events suggests that this decision was premeditated," she added. "*MexicoLeaks* and the [*MVS*] brand were just used as a pretext."

In interview for the magazine *Proceso* on 22 March, she said she was convinced that presidential pressure was part of the background to her dismissal. She said the president's office had put pressure on *MVS* not to include her "white house" report in its popular *Noticias MVS* news programme on 9 November.

Mexico is ranked [148th out of 180 countries in the 2015 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#).
