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PRESS RELEASE

Violence and Press Freedom in Mexico: Still in the Line of Fire

London 11.05.11: ARTICLE 19's latest report on violations of press freedom in Mexico in 2010 highlights yet again an appalling level of violence and attack perpetrated against journalists and media workers over the year, along with a marked increase in self-censorship on the part of journalists and editors.

In a report released in Mexico City on the occasion of World Press Freedom day on May 3rd, ARTICLE 19 and its partner Cencos document a total of 155 attacks against journalists, media facilities and media workers. This is the third year in a row that ARTICLE 19 undertakes such an exercise, allowing it to monitor trends in Mexico and to identify key patterns and changes.

"A disturbing level of violence against journalists in Mexico has continued throughout 2010. 8 journalists were killed in 2010 simply in the exercise of their profession. It makes for a total of 44 journalists killed and 8 still missing during the period of the administration of President Felipe Calderon Hinojosa," says Dr. Agnes Callamard, ARTICLE 19 Executive Director.

However, ARTICLE 19 found a decline in the overall number of attacks against journalists. There were 155 attacks in 2010 down from 244 in 2009. This does not reflect significant improvement in the situation for media workers Mexico. Instead, ARTICLE 19's and CENCOS' research finds that this decline was linked primarily to a marked increase in self-censorship by journalists and editors, taken as a protective measure against possible future attack.

Statistical analysis undertaken by ARTICLE 19 and Cencos demonstrates that the majority of the attacks against journalists were carried out by government agents. In 49.03% of the assaults, the evidence pointed directly to government agents whereas 26.45% of the assaults could be attributed to organized criminal groups. Nevertheless, since 2009 there has been a drop in the proportion of these assaults committed by government authorities, down from 65% to 49.03%.

The research also found that there had been 6 cases of kidnapping of journalists in 2010, up from just one in the previous year. Five of these victims in 2010 worked for national media companies, including Televisa and Multimédios, and were covering local issues of national interest.

The report on the state of freedom of the press in 2010 also includes for the first time an index of the most dangerous states for journalists in the country which are found to be Guerrero, Michoacan, Coahuila, Tamaulipas, Chihuahua, Nuevo Leon and Sinaloa. Attacks in these states represented 41.9% (65) of all attacks nationwide and included 8 homicides, and 13 violent attacks against media workers.

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- For a copy of the executive summary of the report in Spanish, please click on the following link: <http://www.article19.org/pdfs/reports/mexico-resumen-ejecutivo-2011.pdf>
- For a full copy of the report in Spanish, please click on the following link: [http://www.articulo19.org/articulo/sites/default/files/documentos/ARTICLE19%20Informe%202010\(1\).pdf](http://www.articulo19.org/articulo/sites/default/files/documentos/ARTICLE19%20Informe%202010(1).pdf)
- For an executive summary in English, please click on the following link: <http://www.article19.org/pdfs/reports/mexico-executive-summery.pdf>
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