

URGENT ACTION

BILL TO GIVE ARMED FORCES CONTROL OF SECURITY

Mexican legislators could pass a bill for a constitutional reform that would broaden the powers of the armed forces providing them wider policing authority and permission to remain on the streets of Mexico permanently. The bill is tabled for voting in the chamber of deputies.

On 14 December, members of the Mexican Congress finalized a bill that is now tabled for voting by the drafting commission and likely by the full chamber of deputies in coming days. The bill would amend thirteen articles of the Mexican Constitution to create a new security force called the “National Guard” that would be comprised of the armed forces (Army and Navy), and subsume the role of the Federal Police under a military model. If approved, the bill would pass to the Senate for discussion and vote.

Even though Mexico’s Supreme Court recently ruled on 15 November that employing the armed forces in public security tasks on a permanent basis would be unconstitutional, Mexican legislators responded by presenting the current bill to change the Constitution and exempt members of the proposed National Guard from the constitutional rule under Article 129 that prohibits the use of armed forces in public security tasks except during times of war.

In addition, the constitutional reform proposal lacks sufficient oversight mechanisms for the armed forces, overlooks the urgent need to strengthen civilian policing institutions; and instead proposes that the Federal Police be subsumed into the “National Guard”, comprising military forces. In a separate document, the Executive Branch has outlined plans to ensure that the “National Guard” would be under the control of the Secretary of Defence and receive military training. Finally, the current constitutional reform would widen the powers of the “National Guard” to carry out policing functions and allow for the possibility that they execute judicial warrants and other tasks that until now were expressly reserved for civilian policing institutions.

1) TAKE ACTION

Write a letter, send an email, call, fax or tweet:

- Urging them to reject the Constitutional Reform that would amend thirteen articles of the Constitution to create the “National Guard”.

Contact these two officials by 30 January, 2019:

President of the Board of Directors - Chamber of Deputies

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Ciudad de México, México
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Salutation: Dear Deputy/Estimado Diputado

Ambassador Gerónimo Gutiérrez, Embassy of Mexico

1911 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 20006
Phone: 202 728 1600

Email: mexembusa@sre.gob.mx

Twitter: [@EmbamexEUA](https://twitter.com/EmbamexEUA) [@GERONIMO_GF](https://twitter.com/GERONIMO_GF)

Facebook: [EmbamexEUA](https://www.facebook.com/EmbamexEUA)

Instagram: [@embamexeua](https://www.instagram.com/embamexeua)

Salutation: Dear Ambassador

2) LET US KNOW YOU TOOK ACTION

[Click here](#) to let us know if you took action on this case! *This is Urgent Action 212.18*

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since 2006, different Mexican administrations have employed a public security strategy relying on a military model as the main response to the threat posed by organized crime and drug cartels. This is despite clear evidence that this strategy has failed to ensure public security during a decade since the army was deployed on the streets of Mexico. The number of soldiers deployed for public security tasks has increased considerably, but this has not contributed to reducing violence and crime in the country. The long list of grave human rights violations continues to increase, including extrajudicial executions, torture and enforced disappearances.

The year 2018 will end as the most violent year on record in recent decades, alongside an increased presence of the military in public security tasks.

Armed forces are not suitable for policing functions, given that their training is focused on eliminating an enemy rather than ensuring the protection of the population and the use of force as a last resort, as is the case of civilian policing institutions.

Amnesty International recently launched a new explainer entitled "Five things you need to know about the National Guard" (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr41/9578/2018/en/>).

Name: N/a
Gender m/f: N/a

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