

Alan Stoga, President

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Security

Cabinet comments on security

The President and several cabinet Secretaries made statements on the security situation during the week that generated widespread political and editorial comment.

- **President Calderón:** "We are confronting with determination the problems of the country, including the problems of crime and organized crime. We are doing so precisely to preserve the rule of law in our country, because our objective is to consolidate Mexico as a country of laws, a country that has the best conditions for the safety of mothers, fathers, their children, as well as all the investments in our country." (Universal 2/19)
- **Gerardo Ruiz,** Economy Secretary: "The logic of the attack by the government against drug trafficking is because the drug traffickers have created a State within the State. It's a serious problem, so serious that we had to act. The easiest thing to do, as suggested by many people, would have been to leave things as they were, and this would ensure that the next President of the Republic would be a drug trafficker." (Universal 2/22)
- **Patricia Espinosa,** Foreign Minister: "I want to emphasize particularly that violent actions are concentrated in three states of the Republic [Baja California, Chihuahua, and Sinaloa.] There isn't a generalized climate of violence in the country. Certainly, in this environment, where there is a frontal assault against crime, everyone needs to be cautious. But it is also certain that the large majority of Mexicans go out every day, living their lives with total normality." (Universal 2/17, 19)
- **Rodolfo Elizondo,** Tourism Secretary: "There's been a deterioration in the image of our country abroad that is, basically, the result of the insistence of some media in giving a great deal of importance to everything that happens in the country regarding organized crime, drug trafficking, and this is contributing to the deterioration of Mexico's image abroad." (Reforma 2/18)

Key Dates

1/31-3/11: Federal 'pre-campaign' period

3/14-29: Major parties select candidates for Congress

4/6: Start of state election campaigns *

4/30: End of regular Congressional session

4/29-5/2: Deadline for registering candidates for Chamber of Deputies

5/5: Start of federal election campaigns

7/5: National congressional, 6 gubernatorial, and 5 other local elections.

* May vary by state

Narco protests spread; President responds

Street actions by masked protestors demanding the end of army operations against drug interests spread from Monterrey to other areas of the north, including Ciudad Juárez, Nuevo Laredo, and Reynosa, where they blocked the international bridges to the U.S. Nuevo León Governor **Natividad González** blamed the **Gulf Cartel** and their **Zeta** paramilitary wing. President **Felipe Calderón** marked Army Day in Monterrey under heavy security. In his speech, he called the masked protestors "cowards" for using women and children as shields. Responding to the traffickers demands that the army withdraw, the President said, "I want to be clear: wherever generalized extortion and intimidation by organized crime against a defenseless society prevails, there will be the Mexican Army. Wherever criminal groups operate that seek to gain power over entire communities thanks to the—on occasion—frank cooptation of the authorities charged with defending them, there will be the Army." (Reforma 2/20)

Juárez police commissioner resigns after chief murdered

Juárez police commissioner **Roberto Orduña Cruz** resigned after 'narco posters' appeared threatening to kill an officer every 48 hours until he quit. His resignation came days after his chief of police **Sacramento Pérez** was killed in a hail of machine gun fire along with three of his bodyguards. Pérez was the third chief of police in Juárez to be murdered in just over a year. (Excelsior 2/18, Reforma 2/21)

Chihuahua governor attacked; bodyguard killed

The caravan of Chihuahua Governor **José Reyes Baeza** (PRI) was attacked Sunday night. One bodyguard died, and two more were wounded. It was reported that at least one of the attackers was also killed. The governor cancelled his public events to meet with the family of his bodyguard. (Reforma 2/23)

Calderón hits PRI chieftains for lack of support

President Calderón hosted a private lunch with the PRI party leadership and governors to seek stronger support for the economic program and in the fight against drug traffickers. According to columnist **Salvador García Soto**, the President complained that "some governors weren't doing their part in this war, and preferred to distance themselves from the seriousness of the problem" and that "the Army is annoyed." (Reforma 2/20, Universal 2/21)

IFE fines TV broadcasters

The IFE board voted 9-0 to fine Televisa and TV Azteca Ps. 4.2 million for failing to broadcast 33 minutes of required political and electoral ads on Feb. 7-8. The IFE voted 5-4 last week not to fine the broadcasters on a separate complaint, but to accept their assurances of obeying the electoral law in the future. (Reforma 2/21)

Téllez scandal deepens

The day after filing a criminal complaint regarding the leak of audiotapes of private conversations, the Ministry of Communications and Transportation (SCT) said that Secretary **Luis Téllez** received a letter and an email threatening more disclosures of his phone calls unless he resigned. The SCT accused former Communications Undersecretary **Purificación Carpinteyro** of being involved in the leaks. She denied the charge, but admitted to having the tapes and said she got them from **Héctor Osuna**, the head of the telecoms regulator, Cofotel. (Excelsior 2/18, Reforma 2/20)