

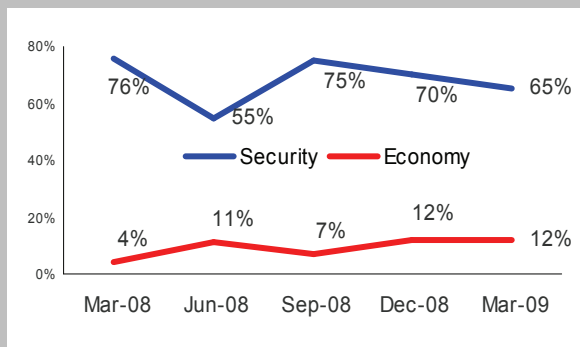
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**Polls**

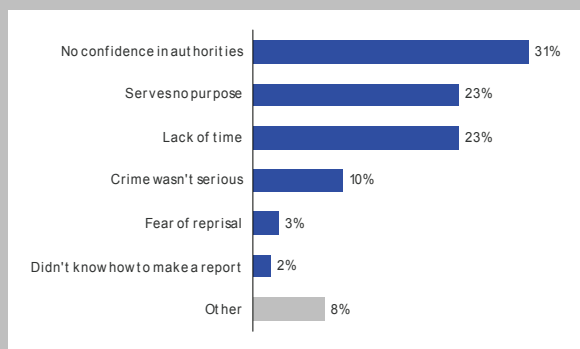
**Security issues dominate in Mexico City**

A Reforma poll (3/16) showed that security concerns continued to dominate economic issues by a wide margin in Mexico City, with 65% saying that security was the principal problem in the capital. Twenty percent of respondents said they had been a victim of a crime in the prior 12 months, mostly personal assault. Only a quarter of victims said they reported the crime, with a most saying they had no confidence in the authorities or that it didn't serve any purpose.

In your opinion, what is the principal problem in the Federal District today?



If you've been a victim, what is the principal reason for not reporting the crime?



**Key Dates**

**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

**'Affaire Cassez' overshadows Sarkozy visit to Mexico**

In a speech to the Mexican Senate, French President **Nicolas Sarkozy** appealed for the repatriation of **Florence Cassez**, a French citizen who is serving a 60-year sentence for being part of a kidnap gang, despite requests from the Mexican Foreign Ministry and the congressional leadership not to do so. Cassez was arrested in 2005 in a much criticized bust by the AFI (then headed by SSP Secretary **Genaro Garcia Luna**) that was staged for the benefit of Televisa's camera crews. Mexico is a signatory to the Strasbourg Convention with the EU, which allows for foreign prisoners to be repatriated to their home countries to serve out their sentences. Presidents Calderón and Sarkozy agreed to form a binational commission to examine the legal issues involved. Author **Carlos Fuentes**, speaking in Paris noted, "There is a very strong nationalist reaction in Mexico over this case. But the reaction also has to do with ... the system of injustice that rules in Mexico. All this noise is not just directed at the presence of a French criminal, but at the reality that so many Mexican criminals evade justice and make a joke of the laws." (Reforma 3/11, Universal 3/13)

**Accusations fly during PRD primary election in Mexico City**

The PRD held primary elections in the Federal District to select candidates for each of the city's 16 boroughs, the legislative assembly, and federal congressional seats. The two principal PRD 'tribes'—the New Left of **Jesús Ortega** and the United Left loyal to **AMLO**—accused each other of busying in phony voters, ballot theft, and vote buying (Ps. 200 for voting for certain slates). Turnout was light, and PRD Mayor **Marcelo Ebrard** left town for the weekend rather than get caught between the factions. The preliminary vote count website crashed, and no official returns are expected until Wednesday. (Universal, Excelsior and Reforma 3/16)

**IFE gives broadcasters a second pass for manipulating ads**

The Federal Electoral Tribunal overturned the controversial 5-4 IFE ruling in February that cleared the two TV broadcasters for their 'atypical' manipulation of electoral ads during the pre-campaign season, which ended March 11. The IFE board convened after the order and again ruled, this time 5-3, to waive fines on the broadcasters. Columnist **Miguel Angel Granados Chapa** thundered, "The IFE Board showed without even blushing that it has been captured by some of those it is supposed to regulate. .... The second time around, obliged by a judicial order not to evade its legal responsibility, the Board denied the obvious, the un-hideable reality: that election ads were manipulated." (Excelsior 3/12, Reforma 3/14-15)

**Hillary Clinton to visit Mexico**

U.S. Secretary of State **Hillary Clinton** will visit Mexico City and Monterrey on March 25-26 to discuss bilateral issues. El Universal's Bajo Reserva column noted that to date none of the US\$400 million for aviation and other equipment authorized under the Mérida Initiative has been spent. (Universal 3/15)