

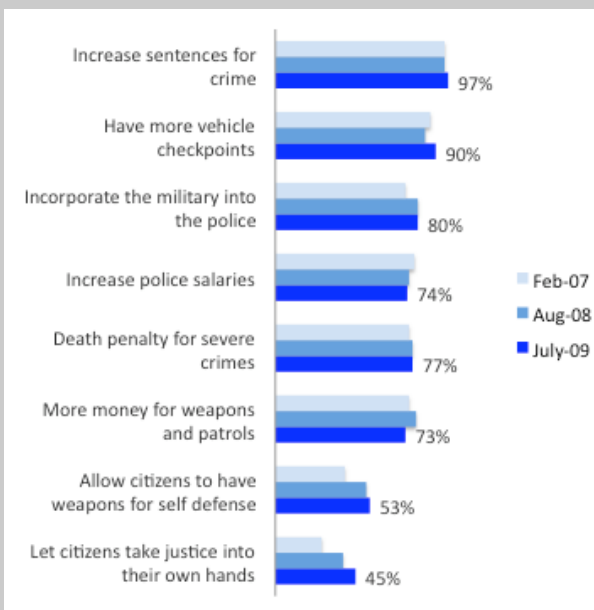
Alan Stoga, President
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Polls

Public supports tough anti-crime stance

A Mitofsky national telephone poll found a continued hardening of attitudes toward crime, with overwhelming support for tougher sentences and more resources for police and use of the military in fighting crime. The actions with the largest increases in support—though still at the lowest level of public acceptance—were to enable citizens to own guns to protect themselves (53%, up from 39% in February 2007) and to take justice into their own hands (45%, up from 26%). (consulta.com)

Do you agree or disagree with the following measures to fight crime in Mexico?



Gang violence and retribution in Nuevo Leon

Two days after **Mauricio Fernández**, the outspoken PAN mayor of the Monterrey suburb of San Pedro Garza García, implicitly took credit for the execution of a notorious kidnapper, the police chief of the neighboring town of García was ambushed and murdered along with four of his bodyguards. General (ret.) **Juan Arturo Esparza García** had only been on the job four days when he was gunned down while responding to a report that gunmen were approaching the mayor's home. Over the weekend, the Nuevo León authorities arrested an alleged hitman for Los Zetas, the paramilitary wing of the Gulf Cartel, for the Esparza killing. ([Universal 11/4](#), [11/9](#))

Polemic on vigilante squads escalates

Mayor **Mauricio Fernández** further inflamed matters when he said he would not be like other (unnamed) officials, who stood by like "stupid oxen" in the face of criminal activity. In an interview in *Reforma*, he called on the private sector to finance his 20-man "cleaning crews" to get rid of gang activity in San Pedro. Government Secretary **Fernando Gómez Mont** condemned vigilante action: "Whoever does this is harming everyone; he is a criminal, and it is not acceptable to fight crime with crime." (*Reforma* 11/6, 11/7)

New president of Human Rights Commission elected

The Senate elected **Raúl Placencia** as the new president of the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH), known popularly as the national ombudsman. Placencia is a professor of law at the National University, and has served as a "visitor" at the CNDH since 1999. He is viewed as providing continuity with the tenure of **José Luis Soberanes**, and as unlikely to engage in high profile battles with the political establishment on human rights issues. The second place candidate, **Emilio Álvarez Icaza**, was the human rights advocate in the Federal District, and had been endorsed by most of Mexico's non-governmental human rights groups. (*Reforma* 11/5)

Chamber moves toward 2010 budget deadline

The Chamber of Deputies worked to define the 2010 expenditure law, which must be passed by November 15. The most contentious elements are the request by the governors to increase their share of co-participated revenues, the magnitude and location of expenditure cuts, and the balance between current and investment spending. ([Universal 11/9](#))

Luz y Fuerza worker buyouts enter final week

Labor Secretary **Javier Lozano** announced that more than 22,000 Luz y Fuerza workers—about half the total—have accepted the government's buyout offer, at a cost of Ps. 12 billion. The buyout offer expires November 14. A judge granted the SME union an injunction to prevent declaring the labor contract between the SME and Luz y Fuerza terminated, but Lozano said the action was a technicality that would not stop the process from moving forward. CFE, the other national electric utility, will start re-hiring Luz y Fuerza's workers this week under its own labor agreement. Some 9,500 workers have asked to be rehired by CFE or get government assistance in setting up their own businesses. (*Reforma* 11/8)

Key Dates

11/15: Deadline for budget approval

by 12/31: Terms end for President of Banco de México, CNDH, and two Supreme Court ministers