



Extreme Violence in México

I. Objective and scope

To monitor and register examples of extreme violence in Mexico during 2020, posted in national newspapers, as well as in journalistic websites. The importance of this work is that there is no public record of extreme violence, beyond quantitative reports.

It must be mentioned that any record based on journalistic sources is inevitably incomplete. That is why this work has at least two important limitations: 1) many newspapers do not report events that could be associated with organized crime, due mainly to intimidation; 2) and, in the context of generalized violence, many high impact events, such as the murder of minors, women or people with disabilities, are not registered by the media.

Causa en Común defined “extreme violence” as the use of physical force that includes laceration or extreme abuse; that causes the death of a high number of people, of members of vulnerable groups, or relevant political actors; or used to provoke terror. In order to classify the events, the following categories are used:

- a) *Massacre*: murder of three or more people.
- b) *Murder of members of vulnerable groups or relevant political actors*: human rights defenders and activists of social or environmental causes, journalists, migrants, minors, people with disabilities, senior public officials, or relevant political actors.
- c) *Laceration or extreme abuse*: aggravated femicide, mutilation, lynching or lynching attempt, desecration of corpses, quartering, torture, slavery or aggravated rape.
- d) *Terrorism*.

In short, this exercise has the value of compiling specific events, which should not be forgotten. However, it must also be borne in mind that they represent a very minor proportion of actual events in Mexico.

II. Main findings

- Between January and March 2020, *Causa en Común* registered:
 - 211 news about extreme violence events.
 - 553 acts of extreme violence.
 - 477 victims.

On several occasions, for one event there are many victims, and for each one of them, there can be several types of extreme violence. For example, on January 18th, 2020, in Huimanguillo, Tabasco, a 5-years-old boy was tortured and killed; his 15-years-old brother was tortured; and his 18-years-old sister was killed and quartered.



In this case, one news article, three victims, and four events of extreme violence (two torture cases, one infanticide and one case of quartering), were registered.

- At least 26 states registered extreme violence events, with Guanajuato and Michoacán at the top of the list, with 29 and 24 events, respectively. In contrast, there were no registries of extreme violence in six states: Nayarit, Tlaxcala, Yucatán, Baja California Sur, Durango and Querétaro. In some of these states, it is highly unlikely that some crimes, which fit under the definition of “extreme violence”, have not been perpetrated.
- The states with more victims of extreme violence were Michoacán (82), followed by Guanajuato (78). Again, it is highly unlikely that there have not been victims of extreme violence in some of the states without registries.
- The most frequent extreme violence events were massacres, especially in Guanajuato (62 victims registered); dismemberment, especially in Michoacán (with 35 victims); and desecration of corpses, mostly in Michoacán (with 34 cases).