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**Mexico**

# **“Generation Z” and the advance of the far right in Mexico**

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**The Mexican right, backed by oligarchic sectors and the open applause of Donald Trump, is trying to capitalize on social discontent to destabilize the government of Claudia Sheinbaum. Although their ability to mobilise remains limited, the danger is real. The only effective barrier remains the deepening of the project of transformation and the building of an autonomous social movement capable of confronting the fascist threat.**

Although the mass media, both national and international, fuelled great expectations about the alleged destabilizing impact of the mobilization of “Generation Z” on 15 November 2025 against the progressive government of Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo, the result was clearly disappointing for its promoters. Of the 80 to 90 thousand demonstrators who gathered throughout the country, only 30% corresponded to young people; a proportion similar to that of other marches organized by the same right-wing and ultra-right opposition parties that today invoke the security crisis as a pretext, despite having themselves been responsible for its worsening.

Organizers tried to recreate in Mexico the mobilization of tens of thousands of young people — the so-called Generation Z — who in Nepal succeeded in overthrowing a corrupt and deeply unpopular government.

It is true that the murder of Carlos Manzo, municipal president of Uruapan — the second largest city in Michoacán — at the hands of the Jalisco New Generation Cartel unleashed strong national discontent, including young people who identify as part of that generation. But that indignation was quickly instrumentalized by the right-wing parties, which sought to turn it into the engine of an openly coup-plotting mobilization whose objective was to take over the National Palace. The manoeuvre ended up being deactivated: it was those same young people who rejected the call and distanced themselves from the opposition's manipulation.

The forces that drove the mobilization came from well-identifiable oligarchic and conservative sectors. Businessman Ricardo Salinas Pliego, owner of Televisión Azteca, known for his tax disputes with the state and for a discourse increasingly close to the neo-fascism of figures such as Argentine president Javier Milei, stands out. Added to this were the high Catholic clergy — who are preparing to commemorate the centennial of the Cristero war — as well as historical leaders of the PRI and the PAN, whose parliamentarians spread hate speeches and unfounded accusations that describe the government of Claudia Sheinbaum as “communist” and hold it responsible for the murder of Manzo. Journalists and intellectuals also participated, denouncing an alleged “authoritarian drift” of the government, without providing evidence to support this.

This toxic mix of spurious interests helps explain the novel features of this right-wing mobilization. Unlike the previous ones, which tried to cover themselves with a thin “democratic” garb (the white march, the pink tide, the defence of the Federal Electoral Institute and so on), this protest assumed an openly coup-plotting character. Explicit calls were circulating for U.S. armed intervention in Mexico and for the armed forces to lead a coup d'état. Violent actions, clearly coordinated, were recorded to tear down the metal fences that protect the National Palace. Misogynistic, homophobic, anti-Semitic, sexist and racist expressions also proliferated, along with T-shirts displaying Nazi symbolism.

It is no coincidence that, in this context, the President of the United States, Donald Trump, celebrated the mobilization and, subsequently, did not rule out a possible intervention in Mexico under the pretext of combating drug trafficking. The hand of U.S. imperialism is rocking the cradle of the new fascist monster.

Although the 15 November march was small and expresses above all the desperation of a radicalized right, its

significance should not be underestimated. In recent days, there have been massive strikes by transport workers and water defenders, where genuine demands – improving safety in public transport and preventing water from continuing to be concentrated in the hands of large transnational corporations – are combined with the manipulation of right-wing leaders who seek to destabilize the government. It is a scenario that recalls, in some features, the tactics used by the Chilean right before the coup d'état against Salvador Allende in 1973.

# The problem of insecurity

Despite the fact that during Claudia Sheinbaum's term of office, significant blows have been dealt to different criminal groups, the problem persists and even, in some territories, expands. Drug trafficking—along with extortion, kidnapping, debt collection, trafficking in women, cyber fraud, and money laundering—is not the work of fringe gangs. It is an industry deeply integrated into the country's high political, business and financial spheres.

Its global boom dates back to the irruption of the neoliberal economic model, which caused massive unemployment in broad social sectors. Who doesn't remember the big US cities emptying from one day to the next, after the transfer of manufacturing to the south of the country or to Asia?

In Mexico, the neoliberal policies of Miguel de la Madrid, Carlos Salinas and Ernesto Zedillo threw hundreds of thousands of people onto the streets. To survive, the victims were reduced to three options: emigrate to the United States, join the informal economy or join circuits linked to drug trafficking. The illegality surrounding these activities functioned as a breeding ground for new criminal networks: human and women's trafficking networks; smuggling and piracy structures; and, in the case of drug trafficking – the most profitable activity – organizations increasingly associated with political and business power.

We can say, without exaggeration, that the explosive growth of the cartels in the 1980s would have been impossible without the protection—direct or indirect—of the Mexican state and also the United States. It is known that Washington financed its covert wars in Afghanistan and Nicaragua with resources from drug trafficking. Cartels are not fringe gangs: they function as transnational corporations with thousands of employees and networks of power that penetrate local governments, leading politicians, judges and military commanders, while controlling vast territories.

A kind of “narco culture” has emerged in these areas, where many young people assume that their criminal life will be brief, but compensated by an extravagant and ostentatious lifestyle. It is nothing other than the neoliberal philosophy of extreme individualism taken to its most violent limit.

Combating these organizations, their networks of power and the culture that legitimizes them is a long-term task. In addition to financial intelligence, the purging of corruption in the political, judicial and military elites, and decisive action against criminal groups – including the organization of self-defence groups and community police in rural areas – the fundamental solution is to build a more egalitarian, fair economic system based on collective values and solidarity. In other words: dismantling neoliberalism and fighting the cultural battle in favour of a socialist alternative.

# How to fight fascism?

The main reason why Mexico is one of the few countries where the ultra-right and fascism are on the defensive is that, even without a radical break with neoliberalism, the government has managed to raise the standard of living of

the majority in a sustained way. The increases in the minimum wage, the expansion of social programs, investment in infrastructure works, the regulation of outsourcing, the advance in freedom of association, the recovery of margins of energy sovereignty and the obligation for large businessmen to pay taxes have strengthened a broad and stable social base for the so-called Fourth Transformation.

But if this process of transformation does not deepen and remains halfway, a fertile ground is created for the recomposition of the right-wing sectors. Central tasks are still pending: recovering the purchasing power of contractual salaries, reestablishing a solidarity pension system by eliminating the Afores and payment in UMA, substantially improving public security, addressing the problems of different social sectors through real dialogue and effective solutions, promoting a progressive fiscal reform and auditing – and then cancelling – the public debt considered odious.

This agenda must be articulated with the construction of a broad social movement independent of the government, capable of sustaining higher levels of mobilization in the face of the threat posed by the ultra-right and fascist oligarchy – expressed, among others, in figures such as Ricardo Salinas Pliego – which today seeks to make its way through destabilization manoeuvres. At the same time, this movement must raise its own demands against the current government, without subordinating itself to either the right or the ruling party.

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Translated by ***International Viewpoint*** from [\*\*\*Jacobin America Latina\*\*\*](#).

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