



# WOLAWEEKLY

The Latest on Latin America

Friday, August 26, 2022

Dear {{FirstName or 'WOLA Supporter'}},

The most recent manifestation of the democratic governance crisis in Central America is an authoritarian wave that criminalizes, attacks, and persecutes independent justice operators, human rights defenders, and journalists, whose voices have been critical of power.

The arrest of Guatemalan award-winning journalist Jose Rubén Zamora is the most recent and one of the most serious in the list of recent attacks on the press in the region, which is alarming because a democratic system cannot be consolidated without freedom of the press, an independent justice system, and access to the media.

In this commentary that I wrote with Héctor Silva we explore how the freedom of the press is under serious attack in Central America, from the exile of entire Nicaraguan newsrooms amidst increasing attacks by the Ortega-Murillo regime to the constant harassment by the Nayib Bukele administration in El Salvador.

Best,

Ana María Méndez Dardón  
Director for Central America, WOLA



## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- A complaint filed on August 1 has brought up a discussion around [U.S. Border Agents' Widespread Confiscation of Migrants' Valuable Personal Items](#). As of mid-August 2022, 13 cases of confiscated documents and 28 cases of non-returned belongings have been reported.
- This week on Central America, [Press Freedom under Siege in Central America](#) as Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua go through one of their worst democratic governance crises in recent years.
- 🇺🇸 As a third Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) report is due in September, read about why the [Renewal of the Mandate of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission \(FFM\) on Venezuela](#) is important.

WOLA IN THE NEWS



**Maureen Meyer**  
Vice President for Programs



“The arrest “is a clear sign of the National Prosecutor’s Office interest in fully investigating the obstruction of justice and human rights violations that occurred” in the case “and holding officials at all levels accountable for their illegal actions.”

– Maureen Meyer, [The Washington Post](#)

“We have decades of accumulated evidence to show that militarizing public security doesn’t solve Mexico’s violence problem,” said Stephanie Brewer, an expert on security and human rights at the think tank Washington Office on Latin America. ‘It’s not realistic to expect that by doing the same thing you’re going to produce different results.’”

– Stephanie Brewer, [The LA Times](#)



**Stephanie Brewer**  
Director for Mexico



**Adam Isacson**  
Director for Defense Oversight



“Border officials said 22% of those encountered at the border were “repeat crossers,” or those picked up more than once in a year, which may overstate the total number [...] But even factoring in repeat crossers, the numbers are on pace to bust previous records.

“No matter how you measure it ... this will be the largest year ever,”

– Adam Isacson, [USA Today](#)

## JOB OPENINGS

WOLA is seeking a **Program Assistant!** We are looking for an administrative, entry-level professional to support two directors and their programs with a variety of tasks, including: event planning, clerical duties, database management, webinar and in-person meeting support, and other logistical support. Learn more [here](#).

## 2022 WOLA Human Rights Awards Ceremony & Benefit Gala



Register to Attend

WOLA's 2022 Human Rights Awards Ceremony and Benefit Gala on September 21 is less than a month away! [Join us](#) for a night to remember as we honor courageous individuals who have worked tirelessly to promote human rights, democracy, and justice in Latin America.

Interested in taking out an advertisement space in our program this year? For more information click [here](#) or, email our Development Associate, Daniela Chaparro, at [dchaparro@wola.org](mailto:dchaparro@wola.org).

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1666 Connecticut Ave NW  
Suite 400, DC 20009  
United States

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