



WOLAWEEKLY

The Latest on Latin America

Friday, June 16, 2023

(Sergio Borbolla/WOLA)

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

This week, we were saddened to hear that [José Rubén Zamora](#), a long-time journalist and founder of the Guatemalan newspaper El Periódico, was arbitrarily sentenced to six years in prison. This represents the latest attack on freedom of expression in Guatemala ahead of the presidential elections set for June 25.

In other news this week, our President Carolina Jiménez Sandoval, along with WOLA board members and staff are in Tapachula, on the border of Mexico and Guatemala. They are [meeting](#) with partners, government officials, and international agencies, but also witnessing first-hand the despair faced by migrants and asylum seekers, as Mexico has stopped issuing documents that facilitated travel through the country and is transporting many to different parts of Mexico, under protocols that are not clear.

Ahead of elections at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), WOLA [urged](#) States to elect candidates who will work towards guaranteeing human rights in the region.

And, in case you missed it, late last week we issued a [joint statement](#) urging Congress to reject a bill seeking to label fentanyl as a “chemical weapon”.

Despite the huge challenges, we believe in a future where states across the Americas guarantee equal rights and opportunities to all LGBTQIA+ communities. We hope you will join WOLA in [celebrating](#) Pride this month of June.

All this and more in this week’s WOLA Weekly.

Best,



Zaida Márquez
Vice President for Communications

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- [GT](#) Renowned journalist José Rubén Zamora was arbitrarily sentenced to six years in prison this week. The newspaper he founded had denounced government corruption in Guatemala. Read our [joint statement](#).
- [MX](#) In a recent [joint statement](#), WOLA condemns Mexico’s agreement to accept asylum seekers to the United States from Haiti, Nicaragua, Cuba and Venezuela under the US law known as Title 8. *This statement is in Spanish.*
- [WOLA](#) signed on to a [joint statement](#) with 25 other human rights organizations to express concerns around the upcoming elections at the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR). We urged States to select candidates that are committed to strengthening the Commission and demonstrate independence, training, experience and full commitment to human rights. *This statement is in Spanish.*
- [US](#) In an effort to urge the House of Representatives to vote down bill H.R. 3205 that aims to label fentanyl as a “chemical weapon”, WOLA [joins](#) several civil society organizations in a joint statement.
- [LGBTQIA+](#) In the month of June, WOLA joins the LGBTQIA+ community in [celebrating](#) diversity and pride. Despite immense gaps and challenges, we believe in a future in which equal rights and opportunities for all people are guaranteed.



MX 🇲🇽 This week WOLA's Board of Directors are in Mexico meeting with partners in Tapachula and Mexico City to discuss and learn more about migration, human rights and the ongoing search for the disappeared.



STAND WITH US IN DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS

UPCOMING EVENTS

SIDE EVENTS
OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JUNE 20 - 23, 2023 (1)

🇵🇷 Puerto Rico: Democratic Crisis, Human Rights and Impunity
 Tuesday 20-22:20 PM - 3:30 PM - HYBRID EVENT
 1713 Massachusetts Avenue NW, 2nd Floor, Organized by UNODC/UN
 SPANISH, ENGLISH, CEJIL, ECLIP & WOLA

🇺🇸 Statement to the OAS General Assembly: American Coalition for Drug Policy Reform (John Walsh, WOLA)
 Wednesday 21 - 10:00 A.M. PRIVATE EVENT
 Organized by the American Society

🇸🇪 Inter-American Principles on Non-Profit Organizations: Regional Response to the Closing of Civic Space
 Wednesday 21 - 12:30 P.M. - 2:30 P.M. HYBRID EVENT
 1970 Massachusetts Ave NW Organized by NP, WOLA, MONA & SORCIS

🇸🇪 Authoritarian Drift in the Americas: What can civil society and international cooperation do?
 Thursday 22 - 8:30 A.M. - 11:00 A.M. HYBRID EVENT
 200 Massachusetts Ave NW Suite 2000 Organized by CEJIL, Inter-Am, A. J. Barria, D. J. Davis, ECLIP & WOLA

Visit wola.org/central for more information

SIDE EVENTS
OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JUNE 20 - 23, 2023 (2)

🇮🇸 Democratic Decline and Authoritarian Drift in Guatemala: Presentation and comments on the inclusion of Guatemala in Chapter 4.B of the IACHR Annual Report 2022
 Thursday 22 - 4:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.
 Organized by CEJIL, ECLIP & WOLA
 HYBRID EVENT

🇨🇴 The Current Situation in Colombia: A conversation with Marco Romero
 Thursday 22 - 5:30 P.M. - 7 P.M. HYBRID EVENT
 1713 Massachusetts Ave NW 2nd floor Organized by ECLIP, IACHR, CEJIL & WOLA

🇸🇻 Civil Unrest and Escalating Criminal reports on one year under El Salvador's state of exception
 Friday 23 - 9:30 A.M. - 11:00 A.M. HYBRID EVENT
 1970 Massachusetts Ave NW Suite 2000 Organized by ECLIP, NP & WOLA

Visit wola.org/central for more information

[Learn More About Upcoming OAS Events](#)



🇺🇸 WOLA is partnering with [DC/DOX](#) for the D.C. premiere of *Eternal Memory* on June 17, 2023. As a friend of WOLA, [learn how you can get a discount on your tickets!](#)

WOLA IN THE NEWS



Ana María Méndez Dardón
Director for Central America



"The arbitrary blocking of candidates because they represent a danger to the [political] establishment is serious [...] It has also brought little credibility to the institutions that have to ensure the integrity of the [electoral] process."

– *Aljazeera*, [Guatemala elections: Campaigning begins amid public distrust](#)

"The rule of law is broken"

– *Le Monde*, [Guatemala newspaper founder sentenced to six years in jail](#)

JOB OPENING

✦ WOLA is looking for its next **Program Assistant for the Central America Program**, which seeks to promote comprehensive reforms to address the root causes of migration and ensure effective and accountable governments in Central America. Learn more [here](#).



Gain hands-on experience in
Research and Advocacy at WOLA!

APPLY NOW!

APPLY TO INTERN AT
WOLA FOR THE FALL!



DEADLINE TO APPLY: JULY 7



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