
13th Session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute

General Debate

December 10th, 2014

Mr. President

Mexico is a democratic country; it has the twenty-fourth largest economy worldwide, is champion of free trade, a prominent member of the international community, and one of the main contributors to the International Criminal Court (ICC) budget. However, since former President Felipe Calderón declared war against drug cartels in December 2006 when he deployed soldiers and federal police to take on organized crime and implemented a militarized security policy, Mexico has been subject to the worst levels of violence and lawlessness since the 1917 revolution – we are facing a “national crisis”.

Although the Mexican government denies that an armed conflict exists in Mexico, federal authorities have acknowledged and recorded over 22,000 forced disappearances, over 70,000 extrajudicial executions, and thousands of torture cases. Other studies have also recorded over 160,000 victims of forced internal displacement induced by violence.

An even more disheartening fact is that in spite of these statistics, which should provoke the international community’s consciousness and demand the urgent protection of its citizenship, there have been no convictions in relation to these crimes. High ranking state officials and criminal organizations who perpetrate these crimes benefit from the impunity and the country’s inability or unwillingness to prosecute.

Consequently, in September of this year, the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights, the International Federation for Human Rights and the Citizens Commission on Human Rights in the Northwest presented a communication to the Prosecutor of the ICC pursuant to Article 15 of the Rome Statute. In this communication we exemplified the way that various police forces and members of the Mexican Army tortured at least 95 people between 2009 and 2011 in the state of Baja California. In each of the recorded cases, the victims were arbitrarily detained, disappeared for several days, and brutally tortured in military installations. In most cases, the victims were tried and absolved. For us, there is no doubt that these crimes were committed as part of the Mexican government’s strategic internal public policy.

Mr. President

We are convinced that the ICC has sufficient elements to presume that graves crimes have been committed in Mexico – crimes which are concurrent with the jurisdiction and mandate of the ICC. Furthermore, it is clear that the law enforcement institutions on their own have been unable or unwilling to investigate and convict the high-ranking officials who are responsible for these crimes.

Furthermore, we are confident that the ICC’s system and processes will aid in the consolidation of the Mexican judicial system and government. We hope that the Prosecutor will provide assistance to the victims and strengthen the weak institutions so that the country can meet its international obligations including: the investigation, prosecution and punishment of all those responsible of said crimes, including those who hold the highest positions of power in the Mexican government or criminal organizations.

Thank you very much,

José Antonio Guevara Bermudez , Executive Director