

Mexico Political Chatter

May 7, 2026

The Sinaloa crisis showed no signs of letting up this week. The case against Governor Rubén Rocha Moya deepened with new warnings from Washington: Attorney General Todd Blanche indicated that more charges against Mexican politicians could be coming, while Trump hardened his rhetoric by warning that his government "will act" if Mexico does not confront the cartels more forcefully. As analysts warn, the link between organized crime and political power will continue generating bilateral tension, and the Sinaloa file threatens to become the primary flashpoint with Washington. For Morena, the dilemma is increasingly difficult to sidestep: as Zepeda Patterson notes, the ambiguity toward possible ties between political power and organized crime is no longer sustainable, and the cost of standing by Rocha has ceased to be local and become national.

Meanwhile, Rocha Moya requested a leave of absence on May 1, followed by Culiacán Mayor Juan de Dios Gámez; the Sinaloa Congress designated Yeraldine Bonilla as the new governor on May 2; Deputy Attorney General Dámaso Castro Saavedra requested leave on May 5; and Senator Enrique Inzunza, though he refused to step aside, was absent from his legislative duties and was reported to have taken refuge on a ranch in his home municipality of Badiraguato. The INE also opened a review into alleged irregularities of 82 million pesos in Morena's 2021 Sinaloa campaigns.

At the same time, the Chihuahua case, far from being resolved, escalated: the Attorney General's Office summoned around 50 officials linked to the operation in which alleged CIA agents participated, while state authorities revealed that the drug laboratory seized in the Sierra Tarahumara had the capacity to produce up to 2.8 metric tons of methamphetamine per cycle. Governor Maru Campos accused the Attorney General's Office of "unequal treatment" and drew a comparison between her situation and the backing Morena has given to Rocha, while also signaling her political alignments by receiving Madrid regional president Isabel Díaz Ayuso alongside other PAN governors.

After taking the reins of Morena over the weekend, Ariadna Montiel launched her tenure with a combative tone: she went after Maru Campos over the Chihuahua case and described Isabel Díaz Ayuso's visit to Mexico as a provocation by the "foreign far right." President Sheinbaum also hardened her tone over the Madrid regional president's visit, calling those who promoted it "behind the times" and framing the tour as a conservative narrative against the 4T, turning the episode into a new front of polarization between the ruling party and the opposition.

On the economic front, Sheinbaum unveiled an update to Plan México with a package of decrees to streamline procedures and accelerate investment: projects worth more than 2 billion pesos in strategic sectors will be authorized in under 30 days through a new single-window system, while those that do not meet that threshold will have a maximum of 90 days, with a positive default ruling if authorities fail to respond. The business sector welcomed the announcement with broad support.

On other fronts, the Federal Administrative Justice Tribunal barred former Segalmex Administration Director René Gavira Segreste from public office for 10 years and ordered him to pay 261 million pesos in damages — a ruling that also reached two other former officials and keeps Segalmex as one

of the largest recent corruption scandals. Finally, the Secretariat for Women has been without a permanent head for 21 days since the departure of Citlalli Hernández on April 16 — now president of Morena's National Elections Commission — raising questions about whether the agency reflects a genuine institutional priority or a largely political gesture within the cabinet.

Washington tightens the net on narco-politics in Mexico and issues further threats

The political crisis around Sinaloa escalated this week after U.S. Attorney General Todd Blanche warned that more charges against Mexican politicians allegedly linked to drug trafficking could be forthcoming. In the same vein, President Donald Trump hardened his rhetoric by stating that his government "will act" if Mexico does not confront the cartels and fentanyl trafficking more forcefully. The declarations raised the pressure on the Mexican government and set off alarms about possible sanctions, investigations, and migration or financial restrictions against political figures linked to Sinaloa, while the Sheinbaum government's position remains that it will require solid evidence before acting on the accusations.

Meanwhile, signs of erosion around Governor Rubén Rocha's political circle continued to multiply. Senator Enrique Inzunza — named in U.S. reports — announced he will not request a leave of absence, but is absent from his legislative duties and reportedly sheltering at a ranch in his home municipality of Badiraguato, while Morena opened a review of his daughter's Senate position following nepotism accusations. These developments come on top of the INE's flagging of alleged irregularities worth 82 million pesos in Morena's 2021 Sinaloa campaigns, and the controversial leave of absence of Deputy Attorney General Dámaso Castro Saavedra, who only stepped down after scrutiny intensified. The case has ceased to be purely judicial and is beginning to take shape as a political and diplomatic crisis for Morena and those closest to Rocha.

Timeline of the Sinaloa earthquake: April 28: The Foreign Ministry receives the U.S. request for provisional detention for extradition purposes against Sinaloa officials and former officials. April 29: The U.S. Department of Justice formally charges 10 current and former Sinaloa officials with alleged ties to drug trafficking. Among those named: Rubén Rocha, Senator Enrique Inzunza, and the mayor of Culiacán. April 30: President Claudia Sheinbaum sets her position: demands "clear evidence" from the U.S. government, rejects intervention, and orders the Attorney General's Office to review the case. May 1: Rubén Rocha and Juan de Dios Gámez request temporary leaves of absence as governor of Sinaloa and mayor of Culiacán, respectively, to face the investigations. May 2: The Sinaloa Congress designates Yeraldine Bonilla as the new governor. May 3: The federal security cabinet travels to Sinaloa. May 5: Deputy Attorney General Dámaso Castro Saavedra requests leave. Senator Enrique Inzunza rejects a leave of absence and asserts he will face the charges without abandoning his post. He does not attend the legislative session. May 6: U.S. officials warn that more charges against Mexican politicians linked to criminal organizations could be coming.

 [Reforma: More charges against Mexican politicians could come, says U.S.](#)

Chihuahua: from mega-operation to political clash with the federal government

The case surrounding the Sierra Tarahumara operation continues to grow and has already become one of the country's largest political and security flashpoints. The Attorney General's Office summoned around 50 officials, police officers, and participants linked to the operation in which U.S. agents allegedly took part during the seizure of a drug laboratory in Chihuahua. The case has raised questions about possible violations of national sovereignty, irregular cooperation with U.S. agencies, and the responsibilities of state authorities.

The underlying facts of the case intensified the controversy further: state authorities confirmed that the laboratory, located between Morelos and Guachochi, had the capacity to produce up to 2.8 metric tons of methamphetamine per cycle, making it one of the largest seizures on record in Mexico and representing a blow of nearly one billion pesos to organized crime.

Governor María Eugenia Campos accused the Attorney General's Office of "unequal treatment" and compared the Chihuahua case to the backing Morena has given to Sinaloa's governor on leave, Rubén Rocha Moya. Tensions rose further after Morena legislators called for Maru Campos to request a leave of absence — a proposal ultimately rejected by the state congress. The case has now opened a new clash between the PAN, Morena, and the federal government amid the debate over security, sovereignty, and cooperation with the United States.

 [Reforma: AG's office summons 50 to testify in the CIA agents case in Chihuahua](#)

 [Milenio: Chihuahua's mega drug lab: the industrial monster that could produce 2.8 metric tons of methamphetamine](#)

Sheinbaum updates Plan México and issues decrees to accelerate investment

The government of Claudia Sheinbaum unveiled an update to Plan México with a package of decrees aimed at streamlining procedures, attracting domestic and foreign investment, and removing the regulatory obstacles that have stalled capital decisions. The most significant measure is the creation of a Presidential Investment Office and a single-window system that will authorize projects worth more than 2 billion pesos located in Wellbeing Economic Development Poles or in strategic sectors such as electronics, technology, and automotive in under 30 days; projects that do not meet those criteria will have a maximum of 90 days, with a positive default ruling if authorities fail to respond.

On the energy front, Sheinbaum announced that private generation permits for 5,000 MW of renewable sources have already been authorized, and that the winners of a tender for 11,000 MW of mixed projects will be announced this week. Cofepris reduced its procedures from 340 to 125, its requirements by 50%, and its resolution times from 100 to 24 days. The Finance Ministry published an agreement establishing a single comprehensive tax review per fiscal year and taxpayer. The business sector welcomed the announcement with broad support: Coparmex called it "very good,"

and the head of the Relocation Advisory Council described it as "a hug of confidence" for those who have postponed strategic projects.

 [El Economista: Government issues decrees to accelerate investment](#)

Historic fine and bans in the Segalmex case

The administrative blow in the Segalmex case now has clear figures: former Administration Director René Gavira Segreste was barred from public office for 10 years and ordered to pay 261 million pesos in damages, following a ruling by the Federal Administrative Justice Tribunal. The sanction stems from "urgent" purchases of corn and beans in 2019 that were not justified, carried out through direct awards outside the legal framework of guaranteed prices.

Gavira did not fall alone. The ruling also reached two other former officials: Oliverio Pérez Santoyo (former Operations Manager) and Miguel Carrillo Villarreal (former Planning Director), who were found responsible for abuse of authority in approving the irregular transactions. The case also reveals a key line of defense: the defendants argued that the purchases were authorized by the then head of Segalmex, Ignacio Ovalle, who has not been charged. Meanwhile, Gavira's file continues to grow, now encompassing seven criminal proceedings for diversions exceeding 2.6 billion pesos, keeping Segalmex as one of the largest recent corruption scandals.

 [Animal Político: Segalmex case: René Gavira and two former officials barred from office for 10 years; ordered to pay 261 million pesos in damages](#)

MXES Spain's Díaz Ayuso turns her Mexico visit into a political clash

The visit to Mexico of Isabel Díaz Ayuso continued to generate controversy after criticism from the National Palace grew over the events and meetings she held during her tour. The Madrid regional president participated in events that championed the figure of Hernán Cortés and met with figures close to the Mexican opposition, including businessman Claudio X. González and individuals linked to Ricardo Salinas Pliego's inner circle, triggering new accusations from Morena of an alleged alliance between Mexican conservative sectors and the Spanish right.

President Claudia Sheinbaum hardened her tone, calling those who promoted Ayuso's visit and champion the Spanish conquest "behind the times." Sheinbaum argued that the debate is no longer purely historical but also political and ideological, contending that the tour carries a narrative against the 4T driven by conservative groups. The visit thus ended up becoming a new episode of polarization between the ruling party and the opposition, mixing themes of historical memory, political identity, and an international dispute over narratives.

 [El País: Sheinbaum calls those who organized Ayuso's Mexico visit "behind the times"](#)

Ariadna Montiel takes Morena and immediately opens fire

The change at the top of Morena was completed over the weekend, but the political fallout was swift. Ariadna Montiel assumed the national party leadership immediately after her appointment at the Morena congress, and launched her tenure with a message of continuity in the ruling party's line and a rallying of the troops ahead of 2027. Once installed, Montiel raised the political temperature on two fronts. On one side, she went after Chihuahua Governor Maru Campos, accusing her of inconsistencies in her stance on fighting organized crime and of "lying" in her handling of the state's security case, reigniting the confrontation between state governments and Morena's leadership. On the other, she entered the international debate by calling the visit of Madrid regional president Isabel Díaz Ayuso a "provocation," arguing it represents a "foreign far-right" posture and a narrative contrary to the 4T's project.

 [El Universal: "Maru Campos lies and should be prosecuted"; Ariadna Montiel goes after governor over remarks defending Rocha](#)

The 4T is not prioritizing the Secretariat for Women: it remains leaderless

The Secretariat for Women has been without a permanent head since Citlalli Hernández's departure on April 16, 2026, when she left the post to take on political organizing duties within Morena ahead of the 2027 electoral cycle. Since then, the agency has remained in transition with no definitive appointment announced, while the rest of the cabinet moves forward with its own adjustments and reshuffling. As of May 7, 2026, 21 days have passed without a new secretary, raising questions about the agency's real relevance within the federal structure. The issue is not trivial: the secretariat was created as part of President Claudia Sheinbaum's stated commitment to leading the "most feminist government in history," with the promise of placing the gender agenda at the center of public administration.

Yet the lack of an appointment and parallel adjustments in other areas have fed the perception that institutional design does not necessarily translate into operational priority. The agency had already been under scrutiny from its early stages — with reports of insufficient resources, pending cases, and internal reshuffling — reinforcing the debate over whether the secretariat's creation reflects a genuine policy commitment or largely a political gesture.

 [Proceso: The Secretariat for Women is not a priority](#)

Opinion express

- **Trump's hunt continues: who's next? — Salvador García Soto** García Soto argues that the Trump administration's offensive against Mexican politicians linked to drug trafficking is only beginning, and that the Sinaloa case is just the first episode of a broader strategy of judicial and political pressure from Washington. He warns that the ruling party's sovereignty narrative will not be enough to stop the charges or possible extraditions, while fear grows within Morena over who might be the next figure named by U.S. authorities. For García Soto, Trump's hardening stance reflects a deepening distrust of Mexican institutions and signals a period of heightened bilateral tension marked by narco-politics accusations, impunity, and extraterritorial pressure.

 [El Universal: Trump's hunt continues: who's next?](#)

- **Sinaloa, the CIA, and the narco: this won't end — Carlos Puig** Puig argues that the Sinaloa case has already surpassed the local level and inserted itself into an international logic where the United States — with Trump in the picture — is playing an increasingly direct role, including with intelligence and unilateral pressure. He warns that the crisis is structural, not temporary: the link between organized crime and political power will continue generating episodes of bilateral tension. His thesis is clear: there is no near-term resolution in sight, because the dynamics at play — power, impunity, and geopolitics — transcend individual governments.

 [Milenio: Sinaloa, the CIA, Trump, the cartel... This won't end](#)

- **Surviving Rocha — Jorge Zepeda Patterson** Zepeda argues that the case of Governor Rubén Rocha Moya exposes a critical juncture for the 4T: ambiguity toward possible ties between political power and organized crime is no longer tenable. The piece suggests that the cost of standing by Rocha is no longer just local but national, putting the movement's anti-corruption narrative in question. The core argument is that Morena faces a stark choice: break with those practices or absorb the political damage of tolerating them, in a context where internal and external pressure is mounting.

 [Milenio: Surviving Rocha](#)

- **Mexico's underestimated negotiating power — Enrique Quintana, *El Financiero*** Quintana argues that Mexico arrives at the USMCA review with the strongest negotiating position it has held since 1994, backed by U.S. Commerce Department data: in the first quarter of 2026, Mexican exports to the United States grew 5.1% year-on-year and set a record, while exports from the rest of the world fell 13.8%. What is remarkable, he stresses, is that this performance occurred under a considerable tariff burden, showing that the integration of North American value chains has a momentum that not even the most aggressive trade policy of the century has managed to break. His final warning: Mexico must be careful not to pursue a deal at any cost, because the cure could end up more expensive than the disease.

 [El Financiero: Mexico's underestimated negotiating power](#)

 Agenda in brief

From May 7 to 8, Mexico will conduct its trade mission to Canada, led by Economy Secretary Marcelo Ebrard and 300 business leaders.

On May 10, collectives of Mothers Who Search plan a march to protest on behalf of their disappeared relatives, in the context of Mother's Day.