

Mexico Political Chatter

August 13, 2026

As the formal start of the 2026-2027 electoral process approaches, the tightening of the judicial and financial net around various political actors has shaped the agenda in recent days. The circle of PRI leader Alejandro "Alito" Moreno came under scrutiny with the arrest of two people close to him in Campeche: Carlos Alberto Medina, former director of Social Communication during his administration, accused of a scheme to divert 36 million pesos through shell companies, and Luis Antonio Espinosa Campos, an accountant linked to Mayavisión, a television station tied to the PRI leader's brother.

The arrests come just as Moreno faces impeachment proceedings and seeks to position himself as one of the main opponents of Morena. But there are also accusations on the other side: an investigation by Mexicans Against Corruption and Impunity (MCCI) documented the alleged infiltration of an operator of Florian Tudor's Romanian mafia into the National Customs Agency, Alejandro Enrique Arcos Romero, now linked to Rafael Marín Mollinedo's bid for Morena's candidacy for the governorship of Quintana Roo. Marín, whose time at Customs was marked by the flourishing of fuel-tax fraud cases, called for Arcos to be investigated and distanced himself from any criminal activity.

On security, the government of Claudia Sheinbaum touted a 51% reduction in the daily average of intentional homicides between September 2024 and July 2026, consolidating a trend its administration has been trumpeting in recent months. Nevertheless, the progress coexists with two problems: seven states concentrate 49% of the homicides in 2026, and the official statistics themselves opened a credibility flank, with a difference of 3,645 cases between INEGI's count and that of the SESNSP in 2025 — the largest gap in more than a decade.

U.S. pressure on the cartels and their alleged political networks has also remained at the forefront of the public agenda. Ambassador Ronald Johnson warned that Washington will pursue CJNG members "wherever they operate," following the narco-terrorism charges against four alleged members detained in the Czech Republic. To this is added, as Raymundo Riva Palacio reveals, an alleged U.S. investigation into central figures of the Green Party (among them Jorge Emilio González, Arturo Escobar, and Manuel Velasco) over possible crimes of influence peddling and illicit enrichment, which would broaden the pressure on the governing coalition's allies.

This was compounded by the temporary withdrawal of U.S. inspectors from Michoacán's avocado sector (the third suspension since 2022), which once again showed that insecurity can halt a strategic export chain, forcing Mexico to deploy 1,500 soldiers to allow their return.

Finally, on the judicial front, the Supreme Court determined that amparo judges will not be able to grant suspensions against the account freezes ordered by the UIF, prioritizing social interest and the protection of the financial system, and upheld the constitutionality of the Wellbeing Pension Fund, one of the main social policies inherited from the López Obrador government. To this was added the

bindover of former Guerrero Governor Ángel Aguirre Rivero for the alleged concealment of information in the Ayotzinapa case, which once again places the file at the center of the political and judicial agenda more than a decade later.

⚠️ The net tightens around Alito: arrests put his circle under scrutiny

The net around Alejandro "Alito" Moreno's circle tightened once again with the arrest of Carlos Alberto Medina, who was director of Social Communication during his administration in Campeche and is accused of participating in a scheme to divert 36 million pesos through shell companies. The accusation points to simulated operations to extract public resources during Moreno's administration, which once again places the financial management of his government under scrutiny and comes at a particularly delicate moment for the PRI leader, who faces impeachment proceedings related to alleged acts of corruption committed during his time as governor.

To this is added the arrest of Luis Antonio Espinosa Campos, an accountant and representative of companies linked to Emigdio Moreno Cárdenas, Alito's brother. Espinosa Campos founded Mayavisión, a television station that received 97 million pesos during Moreno's government, of which the Campeche Prosecutor's Office is investigating at least 36 million for possible services lacking documentary or material support and therefore allegedly simulated. The two arrests take on political relevance because they connect direct former collaborators and members of the Moreno family's business circle with investigations into the alleged diversion of public resources, just as the PRI leader seeks to present himself as one of the main opponents of the Morena government.

🔗 [Reforma: Former Alito collaborator arrested over shell-company network](#)

● 51% fewer homicides under Sheinbaum, but the data raises doubts

The government of Claudia Sheinbaum touts a 51% reduction in the daily average of intentional homicides between September 2024 and July 2026, seeking to consolidate security as one of the main results of her administration. The figure is significant because it represents an improvement over the end of López Obrador's term and allows the National Palace to argue that its security strategy is yielding results. However, the national progress coexists with a territorial concentration of violence: seven states account for 49% of the homicides recorded in 2026, led by Guanajuato, Baja California, and Chihuahua.

The problem is that the official statistics themselves open a new credibility flank. In 2025, INEGI counted 27,989 homicides, while the SESNSP recorded 24,344 victims, a difference of 3,645 cases, the largest gap between the two databases in more than a decade. The discrepancies reach extremes at the state level: in the State of Mexico, INEGI records a thousand more homicides than the SESNSP; in Zacatecas the difference reaches 77%, and in Quintana Roo 75%. Although both institutions use different methodologies — death certificates versus investigation files — the magnitude of the

differences makes it necessary to review how murders are being counted and leaves open questions about the data.

-  [Reforma: Homicides down 51% compared to the end of AMLO's term](#)
-  [Entorno: Homicides differ by hundreds across states in INEGI and SESNSP databases](#)

From Customs to Morena: the tentacles of the Romanian mafia

An investigation by Mexicans Against Corruption and Impunity places under scrutiny Alejandro Enrique Arcos Romero, identified by Mexican and U.S. authorities as one of the main financial operators of Florian Tudor's Romanian mafia. According to the investigation, the UIF froze his accounts in 2021 at the request of the U.S. Department of Justice and identified him as responsible for a structure of 14 front companies to launder resources; despite this, he was never arrested and subsequently worked at Mexico's National Customs Agency during Rafael Marín Mollinedo's tenure, where he was identified as his private secretary. Now, Arcos Romero appears accompanying Marín in his bid for Morena's candidacy for the governorship of Quintana Roo.

The second report adds an even more delicate connection: Araceli Hernández Perea, former director of Material Resources at the ANAM during the terms of Horacio Duarte and Marín Mollinedo, established two companies in Texas together with Arcos Romero and, in 2024, acquired a residence currently valued at nearly 928,000 dollars. From her position at Customs, Hernández Perea was in charge of millionaire contracts, among them contracts worth more than one billion pesos for X-ray inspection equipment; moreover, before arriving at the ANAM she had faced an arrest warrant over an allegedly irregular contract at the then Mexico City Secretariat of Public Security, though it was subsequently canceled due to the statute of limitations.

-  [MCCI: The Romanian mafia operator who infiltrated the ANAM and now accompanies Marín Mollinedo on the campaign](#)
-  [MCCI: Former Customs official partners with Romanian mafia operator; buys 1-million-dollar residence](#)

Avocado: crime is now a trade problem with the U.S.

Michoacán's avocado ceased to be solely a story of extortion and territorial control by organized crime to become a commercial and diplomatic risk for Mexico. Michoacán concentrates around 88% of national production and a substantial part of its exports depends on the U.S. market; that is why Washington's decision to temporarily withdraw its inspectors after receiving threats once again showed that insecurity can halt a strategic export chain. It is not an isolated episode: it is the third suspension of U.S. inspections since 2022, while producers and transporters continue to face extortion and violence.

The political message for Claudia Sheinbaum's government is more delicate: security in Michoacán is no longer measured only in homicides, but also in the State's capacity to guarantee economic operations and the presence of foreign personnel. Mexico had to deploy 1,500 soldiers to allow the inspectors to return, while authorities announce arrests against cells dedicated to extorting the sector. The problem, therefore, goes beyond avocado: if Washington perceives that crime can condition strategic activities on Mexican territory, insecurity becomes an additional argument within the bilateral relationship and in trade negotiations with the United States.

 [El País: Michoacán's avocado, caught between crime and U.S. demands](#)

us U.S. raises the pressure against the CJNG

The U.S. ambassador to Mexico, Ronald Johnson, warned that the international reach of the Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG) also represents its main vulnerability and asserted that Washington will pursue its members "wherever they operate." The message comes after U.S. authorities charged four alleged CJNG members detained in the Czech Republic with narco-terrorism and drug and weapons trafficking, while Washington maintains rewards of more than 100 million dollars for information leading to the capture of several of the organization's main leaders, designated a terrorist group by the Donald Trump administration. The case reinforces the international dimension the U.S. offensive against Mexican cartels is acquiring and raises the pressure on security cooperation with Mexico.

 [El Universal: "The CJNG's international reach is also its vulnerability": Ambassador Johnson; "we will pursue them," he warns](#)

Congress heats up: narco-politics, interference, and blows

The dispute between Morena and the PRI escalated this Wednesday from political accusations to shoving and scuffles at the Senate, amid a particularly sensitive debate: the "narco-government" accusations against Morena and the claim of alleged foreign interference over Alejandro Moreno's trips to Washington. PRI member Carlos Gutiérrez Mancilla confronted and grabbed Morena's Arturo Ávila by the neck, after exchanging insults and accusations of ties to organized crime. The episode reflects an increasingly aggressive polarization in Congress, where the debate over security, organized crime, and freedom of expression mixes with partisan confrontation and the dispute over the role of the United States in Mexican politics.

 [El País: The debate over foreign interference and the "narco-government" accusations heat up tempers in Congress](#)

Aguirre, under process over Ayotzinapa

Former Guerrero Governor Ángel Aguirre Rivero was bound over for trial for his alleged responsibility in the concealment of information and evidence related to the disappearance of the 43 Ayotzinapa students in September 2014. A control judge determined that there are sufficient elements for the process to continue and ratified pretrial detention, so Aguirre will remain imprisoned while the FGR's investigation advances. The file represents a new attempt to establish responsibility for high-level officials for their actions during one of the country's gravest episodes of violence and institutional crisis, and once again places the Ayotzinapa case at the center of the political and judicial agenda, more than a decade after the students' disappearance.

 [El Universal: Ángel Aguirre bound over for trial in Ayotzinapa case; control judge ratifies pretrial detention](#)

The SCJN rules that judges cannot halt UIF account freezes

The Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation determined that amparo judges will not have the power to grant provisional or definitive suspensions against the bank account freezes ordered by the Financial Intelligence Unit (UIF). The plenary noted that in those decisions social interest and the protection of the financial system must prevail, particularly when there are indications that the funds could be related to illicit operations. The Court stated that the freeze constitutes a preventive administrative measure, whose purpose is to prevent funds allegedly linked to illicit activities from continuing to circulate within the financial system. The ruling modifies previous jurisprudential criteria that allowed, under certain circumstances, the granting of suspensions so that individuals could temporarily recover access to their funds while the amparo trial was resolved. With this, affected individuals or companies will no longer be able to release their accounts through a suspension for the duration of the process: the money will remain frozen throughout the trial.

 [Excélsior: Amparos against UIF freezes fail; judges have no power, SCJN affirms](#)

Court shields the Wellbeing Pension Fund

The Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation upheld the constitutionality of the reforms that gave rise to the Wellbeing Pension Fund, thereby cementing the mechanism that allows the transfer to the fund of resources from Afore accounts that remain inactive and whose holders do not claim them within the established timeframes. The ruling represents an important endorsement of one of the main social policies inherited from the López Obrador government and continued by Claudia Sheinbaum: as of the end of June, the fund had accumulated 61.616 billion pesos and had returned 5.94 billion to workers. The Court held that the resources are not expropriated, since workers or their beneficiaries retain the right to claim them.

 [Milenio: Court upholds Wellbeing Pension Fund; no harm to workers' assets](#)

Opinion express

- **Rocha Moya's "insurance" and Inzunza's alternate — Salvador García Soto**
García Soto argues that Rubén Rocha maintains political protection from the federal government despite the accusations by U.S. authorities over his alleged ties to organized crime. He warns that the governor on leave continues to influence Morena heading into 2027 and suggests he could even return to his post, while the dispute over the duration of his leave persists. He also puts the focus on Senator Enrique Inzunza, who will have to face the restart of the Senate's ordinary session, and on his alternate Omar López Campos, a gubernatorial hopeful, which could alter the Morena succession in Sinaloa. García Soto attributes Rocha's protection, among other things, to an alleged contribution of 150 million pesos to Sheinbaum's presidential campaign, a version he presents as the claim of a Morena governor.

[El Universal: Rocha Moya's "insurance" and Inzunza's alternate](#)

- **The student "surpasses" the teacher — Carlos Puig**
Puig questions the Claudia Sheinbaum government's strategy of placing security as one of the central axes of its communication and warns that this decision could end up becoming a political risk for the National Palace. Although he acknowledges the reduction in homicides, he notes that the disparity between INEGI figures, prosecutors' offices, and other counts fuels skepticism, while problems such as extortion and protection rackets continue to grow. He recalls that Peña Nieto went so far as to conceal information about homicides and concludes that, by making security a priority issue, Sheinbaum will directly assume the political cost of any new high-impact tragedy.

[Milenio: The student "surpasses" the teacher](#)

- **Audiences — Carlos Elizondo Mayer-Serra**
Elizondo analyzes the discussion over the new guidelines on audience rights and the impact they may have on the media. The argument is embedded in a broader debate about how far content regulation can go without becoming a tool of pressure or censorship. The discussion is especially relevant given the new regulatory framework promoted by the government and the need to balance audience protection with the editorial and expressive freedom of the media.

[Reforma: Audiences](#)

- **The heat reached the greens — Raymundo Riva Palacio**
Riva Palacio notes that the United States has allegedly placed central figures of the Green Party under investigation, as well as companies and operators linked to their campaigns, over possible crimes such as influence peddling, illicit enrichment, and criminal association. The focus would be on Jorge Emilio González, Arturo Escobar, and Manuel Velasco, in addition to

political networks in Quintana Roo and Chiapas. The columnist warns that the inquiry broadens Washington's pressure on the parties of the governing coalition and could generate new complications for Morena and its allies.

 [El Financiero: The heat reached the greens](#)

Agenda in brief

August 17 | The president of the Senate, Laura Itzel Castillo Juárez, will present her annual report before concluding her term on August 31. On September 1 she will take office as head of the Secretariat for Women, an agency that has remained leaderless since April and that, with her arrival, will have to resume operations at the start of the second year of Claudia Sheinbaum's government.

September 8 | The Budget Commission of the Chamber of Deputies, headed by Merilyn Gómez Pozos, is preparing to receive the 2027 Expenditure Bill no later than September 8. To accelerate the discussion and the building of agreements, it asked the parliamentary groups to submit their proposals early and send them to the Finance Secretariat, headed by Édgar Amador, with a view to incorporating them into next year's public spending.