

# LATIN AMERICA

The World This Week



## MEXICAN WOMEN TO STRIKE MARCH 9

Katia Leiva

## A DAY WITHOUT WOMEN

In an effort to bring attention to gender-based violence, over 20,000 women in Mexico are preparing to strike on March 9, the day after International Women's Day, during which a march will be held. Countless protests against sexual violence, abuse and murder have taken place in the past year, but women are hoping Monday's strike will be a call to action. Activists believe that the government's failure to act and protect its women is leaving women with no option but to protest. Some are calling Monday's strike their "last resort."

# LATIN AMERICA

The 24-hour strike scheduled for Monday will be held in order to show a day without women, simulating their disappearance. Many women are pledging to stay home, refrain from spending money and participate in a “digital blackout”. Concanaco Servytur, a national business group, has estimated that the one-day strike will cost the Mexican economy \$1.37 billion. Despite these figures, many businesses are supporting the event and have pledged not to penalise female employees who participate.

Government figures show that men kill at least ten women daily in Mexico. The number of femicides in the country have risen by over 200% since 2015. This is a cause for concern as is the low rate of crimes that ever receive a conviction: a shocking ten percent.

Michelle Walser, 24, of Colima, highlights the importance of the strikes, stating, “[Y]es, we are mad, angry, pissed off, so what do we do? We protest for our rights, we strike for the present, we scream for the women who have died, we cry for the ones disappearing, we put graffiti on monuments to make us be seen. Whatever it takes to stop this injustice... Let us women rise from the shadow and find our ancient and immense power to recover our rightful place.” Walser notes how most women, including her, fear for their lives and live with paranoia on a daily basis. She compares this to living in a nightmare. Walser believes that March 9 will prove women’s importance to society and demonstrate the problem of femicide.

The strike, entitled #UnDíaSinNosotras (A Day Without Us), is expected to be a monumental event in Mexican history with hopes of bringing about concrete change in Mexican policies.

## Credibility of Guyana Election Questioned

Stuck in a political deadlock between the two main parties, Guyana is the focus of international concern. Following the March 2 parliamentary elections, tensions have risen between President David Granger’s party, the Partnership for National Unity and Alliance for Change (ANPU-AFC) and the opposition party, the People’s Progressive Party (PPP). Both parties claim victory, although full election results have not been released. The election was held to decide the conditions of the country’s oil production, which is expected to promote economic growth in the country.

*“With the absence of many women in the city tomorrow, we want to open eyes and make society realize that if this does not change, sooner or later we will all disappear and it won’t be one day without women, it will be reality.”*  
– Michelle Walser, English teacher and graduate in psychology from the Western Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESO)

# LATIN AMERICA

Members of the PPP and the international community have accused election authorities of committing fraud, stating that the tabulation process lacks transparency and credibility. Votes from a key region, Region Four, are currently in question. Due to the allegations, the Guyanese President has been advised by some of the international community to avoid a transition of government, which would be seen as unconstitutional. The disputed election also threatens to heighten tensions between the country's Afro-Guyanese and those of Indian descent, who have been divided since the country's 1966 independence from the United Kingdom.