



**Local declaration by the European Union on the adoption of the Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists.**

***The Delegation of the European Union (UE) issues the following statement in agreement with the Heads of Mission of the European Union in Mexico.***

The EU welcomes with satisfaction the unanimous approval of the Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists by the Senate and House of Deputies of Mexico.

This is not only an essential step towards strengthening the rule of law in Mexico, but also a recognition of the extraordinary work of human rights defenders and journalists in the country.

The EU would like to highlight the exemplary nature of the Law's elaboration process, which fully involved civil society, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the National Commission for Human Rights and various Ministries of the Federal Government. This Law complements the Presidential Decree issued last year.

Supporting human rights defenders and journalists is a priority of the EU's external policy. Furthermore, the EU welcomes this opportunity to express great satisfaction for the approval of the General Law for Attention to Victims and the Federalization of crimes against freedom of expression and journalists.

After the brutal murders of Mrs. Regina Martínez (*Proceso* magazine correspondent), Mr. Guillermo Luna Varela (photo-reporter for the *Veracruznews* agency), of Mr. Esteban Rodríguez (ex-photographer for the Veracruz newspaper *Diario AZ*) and Mr. Gabriel Hugué (ex-photo reporter for *Notiver* newspaper) in Veracruz state, the EU hopes these new legal instruments will contribute to the identification, the arrest and the prosecution of the perpetrators.

Confident that competent authorities will do everything necessary to protect those who risk their lives in the defence of freedom of expression and human rights, the EU will support Mexican Government efforts to implement the Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists.

Mexico, 7 of May 2012