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The Mexican platform Actívate (Get Active) delivered 10,400 signatures to the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) on June 6, 2023. (photo: Courtesy photo / Actívate)

David Ramos

[National Catholic Register](#) (09.06.2023) - The Mexican platform Actívate (Get Active) delivered 10,400 signatures to the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) demanding that a protocol be drawn up to guarantee religious freedom and to prevent and punish attacks against Catholic priests, laypeople, and churches.

The campaign asks the CNDH that the protocol specify "how to take action against violent acts against churches or their ministers of worship."

In addition, the petition demands that the authorities be trained “on the protection of this human right” and that the protocol should detail “the measures that will be taken in the places or persons where human rights were violated.”

According to its website, the CNDH “is an autonomous public agency of the Mexican State,” which “is not under any other authority” and whose mission is to defend and promote “the human rights recognized in the Mexican Constitution, international treaties, and the laws.”

The functions of the CNDH include “formulating public recommendations” as well as “developing and executing preventive programs in the field of human rights.”

The commission is also to “formulate programs and propose actions in coordination with the competent agencies that promote compliance within the national territory with the international treaties, conventions, and agreements signed and ratified by Mexico in the field of human rights.”

Uriel Esqueda and Hugo Rico, who came to the CNDH headquarters in Mexico City on behalf of Actívate, demanded “that the authorities get their act together.”

“We want the autonomous agencies, the institutions, the government on all levels, to get their act together to guarantee that any citizen and religious leader of whatever religion they may be can worship as they choose or exercise their ministry without fear,” a statement from the platform explains.

According to a report by the Multimedia Catholic Center, between 1990 and 2022, 63 priests were murdered in Mexico, including the archbishop of Guadalajara, Cardinal Juan Jesús Posadas Ocampo, who was [gunned down in broad daylight](#) in the parking lot of the Guadalajara International Airport in 1993.

During the current six-year term of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, in the midst of historic homicide figures for the country, nine priests have been murdered.

Most recently, Augustinian priest Javier García Villafaña [was shot to death in his car](#) on the Cuitzeo-Huandacareo highway in the Mexican state of Michoacán on May 22.

The day before, a knife-wielding 80-year-old man [tried to kill the archbishop of Durango](#), Faustino Armendáriz, inside the cathedral sacristy after Mass was over.

In addition, various churches have been the target of [robberies, desecration, and attacks](#) in different parts of the country.