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# Mexican Activists Splash Presidential Palace Red, Protesting Murder of Women

Valentines Day 2020 in Mexico City was surely one to remember, but for the Mexican state it will live in infamy. The presidential palace was awakened on Friday to dozens of activists who charged its doors to protest recent violence against women. Their chants echoed “not one murder more” as they smothered the palace doors in large blood-red paint. Protestors left their mark on the doors on the palace reading “femicide state.” The burst of insurrection on Valentines Day, led entirely by women, was sparked by the recent murder of the young 25 year old Ingrid Escamilla in Mexico City. To worsen the matter, the graphic photos of her disfigured and maimed corpse were published publicly in newspapers. The name “INGRID” was spray-painted in tall pink letters by one protetsor on another one of the palace doors as a semblance to her death. The protestors were especially upset and felt a need to act largely because the death of Ingrid Escamilla was not an outlier, but rather just one of many brutal murders of women. Murders of women have been so prevalent, that they are being dubbed “femicides” explaining why the protestors sprayed the word on the palace doors. Mexico has quickly become a hub for the untimely death of women, with statistics showing that on average, 10 women are killed a day in Mexico. The sheer number of women murdered has led to Mexico reaching a new high in overall homicides last year according to official data. According to Lilia Florencia Guerrero, “It’s not just Ingrid. There are thousands of femicides.” Lilia recently lost her daughter in 2017, due to the absurd number of violent femicides. “It fills us with anger and rage,” Lilia said when speaking to reporters Friday. Protesters called upon Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador to do more to stop the violence. President Obrador was inside the palace at the time of the protest, but would not release any official word until later. Protesters continued to paint the walls of the palace with slogans including “they are killing us.” The graffiti even included flames that were erected from the cans of spray paint as protestors left their mark on the palace. President Obrador lives with his family in the palace and he attempted to weather the storm with the activist during his morning news conference. The president attempted to assure protesters by stating that “I’m not burying my head in the sand… The government I represent will always take care of ensuring the safety of women.” The glaring issue with the President’s words is that he detailed absolutely no new plans for how to better protect the Mexican women. Protestors were far from amused and continued chants, this time claiming “the press is complicit.”1 Overall, the issues of female homicides in Mexico point to what could be more underlying issues within the Mexican state itself. According to Anne-Marie Slaughter of the World Economic Forum the “oldest and simplest justification of government is as protector: protecting citizens from violence.2 In recent years, it is blatantly evident that the Mexican government has brought a new definition to failure when it comes to protecting its citizens, specifically women. Slaughter also claims that the government should be “the medium through which citizens create public goods.”2 At this time, the women of Mexico are longing for their government to hear their cries for change as they attempt to enact a public good through the government, who has not seemed to do much for the women. The femicides point to issues within Mexico that may take a long time to fix, and even longer to make habitual. Currently the executive branch of the government is receiving heavy scrutiny for its lack of policies concerning the femicides. Lack of action on the part of the Mexican government has allowed it to appear not only apathetic, but politically weak. The state of a country can be extremely fragile when it is not consistently run with strong and intelligent leaders. Currently, the state of Mexico appears weak when it is failing to protect the women within its borders. Internal sovereignty as a state is hard to achieve, especially when the people within your state do not trust that you can keep them alive and out of harm’s way. On the same note, it can be hard to establish a global sense of external sovereignty as a respected state, when the state cannot perform one of its most basic tasks: protecting the people. The situation of safety in Mexico brings about some interesting political issues when discussing what is the best way to handle what appears to be either an apathetic or weak state. The decision to fight back in the manner of protest is something that some would deem as unfit in the political game, while others would see it as a necessary response to apparent governmental malfunction. The situation of Mexico City leads to an important question: Is it best to respond in a coordinated, and possibly destructive protest when serious issues arise, or does protest only add fuel to the flame?

[[1]](#footnote-1)This footnote is the Article chosen for this piece\*

1. Gonzalez, Josue. “Mexican Demonstrators Splash Presidential Palace Red in Protest Over Murder of Women.” U.S. News & World Report. U.S. News & World Report. Accessed February 15, 2020.

2 Slaughter, Anne-Marie. “3 Responsibilities Every Government Has towards Its Citizens.” World Economic Forum. Accessed February 15, 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)