



Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum, center, reviews the troops with Defense Minister Gen. Ricardo Trevilla Trejo, left, and Navy Secretary Alt. Raymundo Pedro Morales, at Campo Marte in Mexico City, Oct. 3, 2024. (AP/Fernando Llano, File)

by Associated Press

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Four Roman Catholic bishops in the southern Mexican state of Guerrero called Monday for civilian and military authorities to take steps to protect residents of a region rocked by violence that has left more than a dozen dead in recent days.

The violence around Tecpan de Galeana, about 65 miles (104 kilometers) up the Pacific coast from Acapulco, led authorities to suspend classes at schools there and in two neighboring municipalities on Monday.

In a statement circulated by the Catholic bishops conference of Mexico, bishops Jesús González, Leopoldo González, Joel Ocampo Gorostieta and Dagoberto Sosa said the power struggles among criminal organizations are growing stronger “because they have the complicity, tolerance or indifference of many of those who must promote and ensure justice, legality and security.”

The same four bishops [drew attention earlier this year](#) when they acknowledged meeting with Mexican drug cartel bosses in a bid to negotiate a possible peace accord. The truce did not come to fruition because one of the parties allegedly did not agree.

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Then-President Andrés Manuel López Obrador had said at the time that he approved of such talks.

The first month of his successor President Claudia Sheinbaum’s administration has been [roiled by violence](#). Not only in Guerrero, where the newly elected mayor of the state capital was killed and decapitated days after taking office, but also in the western state of Sinaloa and the southern state of Chiapas, where [gunmen last week killed a well-known Catholic priest and Indigenous activist](#).

On Monday, Sheinbaum responded to a reporter’s question by saying that her security policies – largely a continuation of her predecessor’s – “are going to be seen little by little.”

Sheinbaum said she would not negotiate with criminals, but rather battle impunity and address the root causes of violence through social problems.