MIRANDA INTELLIGENCE

Mexico Political Chatter

June 18, 2026

Mexico lived through its first World Cup week with a sporting victory over South Africa, a diminished teachers' boycott, and security results that defied forecasts. The latest official figures showed that the daily average of intentional homicides fell 46% between September 2024 and May 2026, dropping from 86.9 to 47.3 victims per day — the lowest level for any May in more than a decade, and against forecasts that had warned of a possible "truce" or even an alleged pact among criminal groups during the 2026 World Cup.

On opening day, June 11, 30 homicides were recorded across the country, the second-lowest figure for a single day in ten years, with 16 states closing the day without a single intentional homicide. Sheinbaum called the figure "historic" and attributed it to coordination among security institutions and the strengthening of intelligence work.

The opening ceremony at the Mexico City Stadium, formerly Azteca Stadium, also left political snapshots, with figures from across the partisan spectrum attending the match and some leveraging the visibility as a springboard toward other aspirations. Ricardo Salinas Pliego, who was greeted with chants of "President!" as well as boos during the opening, used TV Azteca's coverage to send messages about the country's direction, fueling speculation about his ambitions toward 2030.

On the diplomatic front, Sheinbaum revealed that she might meet with King Felipe VI at the National Palace, taking advantage of the monarch's visit for the Spain-Uruguay match — an encounter that would mark the greatest progress in normalizing the bilateral relationship since the controversy over the Conquest, pushed by López Obrador, erupted in 2019.

On the electoral front, the machinery toward 2027 has already kicked off. Morena, the PVEM, and the PT agreed to compete jointly in 16 of the 17 governorships at stake — all except San Luis Potosí — though the real negotiation, the distribution of candidacies among more than 50 hopefuls, is only just beginning and threatens to become the main source of internal tension, especially in key states such as Nuevo León, Guerrero, Michoacán, Chihuahua, and Sinaloa. The cascade of leaves of absence in the Senate, the Chamber of Deputies, and local governments confirms that the ruling bloc entered electoral mode earlier than expected, in what analysts read as the first symptom of an internal battle that will begin to define the most influential groups ahead of the 2030 presidential succession. Meanwhile, Morena moved forward with a challenge to the electoral results in Coahuila, with accusations of fraud, seeking to overturn an outcome that revitalized the opposition.

On education, Sheinbaum hardened her tone with the CNTE after weeks of blockades during the World Cup kickoff, ruling out leading new negotiations but reinstating dialogue at the Interior Secretariat. In parallel, an investigation reveals that the states with the greatest CNTE presence — Oaxaca, Chiapas, Guerrero, Michoacán, and Zacatecas — also record the lowest levels of school retention.

Finally, President Sheinbaum named Laura Itzel Castillo as the next head of the Secretariat for Women, although her arrival will not be immediate: the current president of the Senate will remain in her legislative post until the end of her term, so the agency — vacant since Citlalli Hernández's departure — will continue without an acting head for several more weeks, a paradox for an administration that presents itself as the first feminist government.

⚽ **Homicides hit historic lows in the middle of the World Cup**

Amid forecasts that had warned of a possible "truce" or even an alleged pact among criminal groups during the 2026 World Cup, official figures delivered a striking data point: the daily average of intentional homicides in Mexico fell 46% between September 2024 and May 2026, dropping from 86.9 to 47.3 victims per day — the lowest level for any May in more than a decade. Among the states that reduced this crime the most are San Luis Potosí (-81%), Zacatecas (-63%), Quintana Roo (-60%), and Morelos (-49%), consolidating a downward trend in security indicators.

The first World Cup weekend reinforced that trend. On June 11, the day of the World Cup opening, 30 homicides were recorded across the country, the second-lowest figure for a single day in the past ten years. In addition, 16 states closed the day without a single intentional homicide, among them Jalisco, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Durango, Zacatecas, Hidalgo, Chiapas, Morelos, and Quintana Roo. The data contrasted with the versions that had anticipated a rise in violence or temporary agreements among criminal organizations during the tournament.

President Claudia Sheinbaum asserted that this is a "historic figure" and highlighted that Mexico is recording the lowest level of intentional homicides of the past decade. She attributed the results to coordination between federal and state security institutions, as well as the strengthening of intelligence and investigation work. For the federal government, the cumulative reduction in this crime is one of the main indicators that the security strategy is beginning to be reflected in national statistics.

🔗 Milenio: Sheinbaum highlights that such a drop in homicides hadn't been seen in more than a decade

🟤 **The 4T's trial by fire: dividing up the governorships ahead of 2027**

Morena, the PVEM, and the PT agreed to compete jointly in 16 of the 17 governorships that will be at stake in 2027, in an attempt to project unity and maximize the chances of preserving the broad territorial dominance the governing coalition currently holds. The agreement seeks to avoid early fractures and to order an internal contest in which more than 50 hopefuls for various state governments are already taking shape, in addition to establishing common rules for the selection processes and the polls that will define the candidates. The only exception, so far, is San Luis Potosí, where the Green Party keeps open the possibility of competing on its own to defend its political stronghold.

However, the picture of unity could face a tough test when the time comes to distribute candidacies. In several states there are strong hopefuls from all three parties, many of them with their own structures, regional groups, and personal projects already underway. The dispute over key states such as Nuevo León, Guerrero, Michoacán, Chihuahua, and Sinaloa threatens to become the main source of tension within the ruling party, especially because the governorships are the most valuable political asset ahead of the 2030 presidential succession. Although the leaderships have publicly closed ranks, the real negotiation is only just beginning.

🔗 Animal Político: Coalition of Morena, PT, and Green Party launches call for governorships; no agreement yet on common candidacies

📹 **A flurry of legislative leaves of absence preheats the 2027 election**

Although the elections are nearly twelve months away, the ruling bloc has already entered full electoral mode. A cascade of leaves of absence in the Senate, the Chamber of Deputies, and local governments confirms that the battle for the 17 governorships of 2027 began earlier than expected. Figures such as Félix Salgado Macedonio, Beatriz Mojica, Imelda Castro, Waldo Fernández, and dozens of other legislators are already moving to position themselves in their states, while Morena, the PVEM, and the PT try to order a process involving more than 50 hopefuls.

The phenomenon also reflects one of Claudia Sheinbaum's main challenges: maintaining the 4T's internal unity while defining who will be the movement's political heirs in the states. Although the coalition agreed to compete together across nearly the entire country, the real tensions will surface when the polls begin to produce winners and losers. The leaves of absence approved in recent days are merely the first symptom of an internal battle that could become the ruling party's main political front over the coming year and that, inevitably, will begin to define the most influential groups ahead of the 2030 presidential succession.

🔗 El País: The cascade of leaves of absence in the ruling party preheats the imminent internal dispute toward 2027

📹 **Morena challenges the Coahuila election, seeking to annul the 16 local seats won by the PRI**

Morena launched an electoral challenge in Coahuila to seek the annulment of the 16 local legislative seats won by the PRI, alleging a massive vote-buying operation. The party stated that the challenge denounces vote buying and coercion through QR codes, participation of public servants, slanderous propaganda, electoral use of social programs, violence, gender-based political violence, exceeding campaign spending caps, and irregularities at 962 polling stations, equivalent to 22.6% of the total. Morena filed complaints before the Specialized Prosecutor's Office for Electoral Crimes of the Attorney General's Office, the INE's Technical Oversight Unit over alleged overspending, and the Financial Intelligence Unit (UIF) to trace the origin of the resources used in the alleged vote buying through QR codes. The PRI rejected the accusations: its national leader, Alito Moreno, asserted that

the party will defend every vote and accused the ruling party of attempting to "fabricate narratives to justify its defeat."

🔗 El Universal: Morena challenges Coahuila election; seeks to overturn the 16 local seats won by the PRI

🥊 The president hardens her tone with the CNTE

After weeks of blockades, encampments, and pressure during the World Cup kickoff, President Claudia Sheinbaum made clear that she will not lead new negotiations with the CNTE and transferred the dialogue to the Interior Secretariat and the SEP. The decision marks a shift in tone toward a movement historically close to the governing left and sends a signal that the federal government is not willing to keep raising the level of negotiation or to yield to the teachers' mobilizations.

The hardening coincides with an El Universal investigation revealing that the states where the CNTE has the greatest presence — Oaxaca, Chiapas, Guerrero, Michoacán, and Zacatecas — also record the lowest levels of school retention and the greatest problems of educational dropout. Specialists consulted by the newspaper warn that recurrent strikes and class interruptions have deepened educational gaps in some of the country's most lagging states, a data point that complicates the teachers' discourse and offers the government new arguments to sustain its position in the conflict.

🔗 El Universal: School dropout predominates where the CNTE has the greatest presence

🚺 Secretariat for Women: late appointment and deferred handover

President Claudia Sheinbaum named Laura Itzel Castillo as the next head of the Secretariat for Women, one of the most symbolic agencies of an administration that presents itself as the first feminist government. However, the appointment comes after weeks of questioning over the lack of a head leading the institution following Citlalli Hernández's departure, leaving leaderless an agency tasked with advancing equality and women's care policies. The paradox did not go unnoticed: while the federal government touts a feminist agenda, the agency remained without formal leadership for months.

Moreover, Castillo's arrival will not be immediate either. The current president of the Senate will remain in her legislative post until the end of her term, so the Secretariat for Women will continue without an acting head for several more weeks. The announcement coincided with an Excélsior investigation revealing that the office she heads in the Senate maintains a payroll of close to 2 million pesos per month, with officials earning salaries of up to 190,000 pesos gross per month — a finding that adds pressure on the person who will take on one of the most sensitive portfolios in Sheinbaum's cabinet.

🔗 Excélsior: Senate presidency takes 2.1 million pesos a month; super-salaries in the Legislature

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MXES **Sheinbaum and Felipe VI: closing a diplomatic crisis**

The possible meeting between President Claudia Sheinbaum and King Felipe VI at the National Palace, taking advantage of the monarch's visit to the World Cup for the Spain-Uruguay match, could become the most significant moment of the recent diplomatic thaw between the two countries. Just two years after the king was excluded from the presidential inauguration and following several years of tensions over the debate on the Conquest, both governments appear determined to close one of the coldest chapters of the bilateral relationship.

Beyond football, the meeting would carry strong symbolic weight. Felipe VI's visit comes after various gestures of rapprochement between Madrid and Mexico City, including the monarch's acknowledgment of the abuses committed during colonization and Sheinbaum's subsequent openness to rebuilding the relationship. If the meeting takes place, it would mark the greatest progress in normalizing ties between Mexico and Spain since the diplomatic controversy launched by former President Andrés Manuel López Obrador began in 2019.

🔗 El Heraldo: Sheinbaum reveals she would meet with King Felipe VI at the National Palace ahead of the Spain vs. Uruguay match

🏟️ A World Cup launch for Salinas Pliego?

The opening of the 2026 World Cup also left an unexpected political snapshot. Ricardo Salinas Pliego was greeted with chants of "President, president!" and used TV Azteca's coverage to send messages about the country's direction, unity, and the need for an effective government. The scene fueled speculation about his eventual political ambitions, especially at a moment when he has become one of the most visible critics of the 4T.

Without confirming any interest in running, the businessman added a new chapter to the narrative that positions him as a national political figure. For some analysts, his prominence during the World Cup kickoff had the traits of an early unveiling toward 2030, taking advantage of a showcase that not even the traditional political class could match that day.

🔗 El País: The political and business elite turns the World Cup opening into a parade of privileges

🗣️ Opinion express

- **The erosion of the brand — Denise Maerker**. Maerker argues that the PRI's victory in Coahuila should not be confused with a national recovery of the party. She contends that the result responds more to local performance and political structure than to a revitalization of the PRI, whose brand remains deeply worn across much of the country. She warns that the Coahuila case leaves a lesson for the entire opposition: elections are won more through effective leadership and governments than through the historical weight of party labels.

🔗 Milenio: The erosion of the brand

- **Pacts of misgovernment — Jesús Silva-Herzog**. Silva-Herzog argues that the relationship between Morena and the CNTE went beyond a simple electoral alliance and ended up incorporating a significant part of the dissident teachers' demands and proposals into the government agenda. He warns that this closeness has complicated the government's ability to contain the union's pressures and partly explains the difficulties the Claudia Sheinbaum administration faces in resolving the conflict without assuming significant political or budgetary costs.

🔗 Reforma: Pacts of misgovernment

- **World Cup surprises and secrets — Javier Tejado Dondé**. Tejado reviews the main successes and less-visible episodes of the 2026 World Cup kickoff. He highlights the audience success of the inaugural match between Mexico and South Africa, the logistical and security coordination behind the event, as well as various challenges the organization faced. For the columnist, the World Cup has shown a greater organizational capacity than many critics had anticipated and has become an opportunity to project a positive image of the country to the world.

🔗 El Universal: World Cup surprises and secrets

- **Iván the Terrible — Raymundo Riva Palacio**. Riva Palacio puts the spotlight on Iván Silva, director of the consultancy Heurística, whom he describes as one of the most influential figures in the presidential circle. The columnist argues that Silva has accumulated enormous political power thanks to his role in Morena's electoral and communication strategies, becoming a key player within the National Palace. The column explores how political and digital operators have acquired growing weight in the ruling party's decision-making.

🔗 El Financiero: Iván the Terrible

📝 **Agenda in brief**

Mexico will play its second group-stage match of the 2026 World Cup today against South Korea in Guadalajara, one of the tournament's three Mexican host cities. The match will once again test the infrastructure, mobility, and operations of a city and state led and governed for years by Movimiento Ciudadano.

Today is the last day of the second round of USMCA review in Washington, held from June 15 to 18; the Mexican delegation is led by Marcelo Ebrard.

Sunday, June 21, marks the deadline for Mexico to formally request from Argentina the extradition of Rear Admiral Fernando Farías Laguna — the cutoff date by which the corresponding requirements must be submitted within the framework of international legal cooperation to advance the process. Deputy Ricardo Monreal reported that on June 22 the registration process will begin to define the Coordinators of Sovereignty, the figure Morena and its allies will use to position their possible candidates for the governorships.