

Local authorities in Jalisco, Mexico move to silence well-known labor rights activist Luis Daniel Prieto Moreno

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The *World Socialist Web Site* condemns in the strongest terms the latest attempt by local authorities in Lagos de Moreno, Jalisco, to silence Luis Daniel Prieto Moreno, a labor rights activist and churro vendor known locally as 'Churros el Brayan.'

Municipal officials, acting through compliant courts and coordinated legal harassment, have obtained a court order barring Prieto Moreno from approaching the seat of local government where he has long exercised his constitutional right to protest in this city in central Mexico.

Seven separate criminal complaints have been filed against him, including by four councilwomen connected to the administration of municipal president Edgar González of the right-wing Movimiento Ciudadano party.

These measures represent a sharp escalation of a years-long campaign of state and corporate persecution against a worker who has committed no act of violence and whose only offense has been to speak the truth.

In the context of rampant inflation, mass layoffs across industry, and growing pressures by US imperialism through the Trump administration's tariffs and threats of military intervention, the ruling class seeks to preempt an upsurge in the class struggle and social protest. Already this week, following repression by riot police in Mexico City, the CNTE teachers' union began an indefinite national strike demanding a pensions reform and a greater budget.

The current case

Prieto Moreno has maintained a regular protest presence outside the Lagos de Moreno municipal presidency, using hand-lettered signs and chants to denounce corruption and abuse of power by local officials. His latest protests have focused on two issues: accusations that municipal police chief Miguel Ángel Pinzón was involved in the forced disappearance of Luis Fernando Cervantes Moya, a twenty-two-year-old mechanic who vanished in February 2024 following an alleged detention by municipal police on a local highway, with authorities subsequently refusing to provide his family any information about his whereabouts.

The second involves labor exploitation at EML (Estructuras y

Montajes de Lagos), a multimillion-peso construction and infrastructure firm owned by municipal president Edgar González himself.

It takes considerable courage to speak publicly on either of these matters. Lagos de Moreno is one of the municipalities in Mexico with the highest number of disappeared persons—more than 600—and has a long history of repression.

State agents from the Jalisco attorney general's office arrived to notify Prieto Moreno of the seven criminal complaints, all by municipal officials. Several were councilors or bureaucrats tied to the Movimiento Ciudadano, including Laura Moran Aguayo, the director of crime prevention, whom Prieto Moreno had denounced in political posts now eliminated by Facebook.

Another complainant is Aneken Alvarez Thomsen, a Partido del Trabajo councilwoman, which is the most politically revealing: a self-described left-wing official who entered office through an alliance with the federal ruling party Morena, whose filing of charges against a labor activist exposes its "left" credentials. Prieto Moreno has also consistently denounced the ruling federal coalition's policies.

Prieto Moreno explained to the WSWs: "It's obvious this is a mandate from the local president, because even the attorneys who appeared yesterday in court are attorneys who work in the legal department of the municipal presidency." He identified one of them as Gustavo Edmundo Dávila Díaz, the municipal legal director.

The legal proceedings have already produced a concrete restriction on his rights. Judge Jesús Enrique Chacón Rojas granted a protective order requested by the municipal officials, prohibiting Prieto Moreno from approaching the municipal presidency until at least June 11, when the next hearing is scheduled. Revealingly, during the hearing, the state prosecutor assigned to the case—a specialist in the defense of women—argued in Prieto Moreno's favor, stating that his case was unsuitable for sanctions because he had never caused physical harm or serious violence to the complainants. The municipal presidency's own attorney then argued that this prosecutor was in error.

The decision does not constitute a criminal conviction, but its

effect is unambiguous: a citizen is now legally barred from protesting outside a public building. Prieto Moreno stated: “It is a legal aberration to prohibit me from approaching the presidency, which is a public building, especially for exercising my right to freedom of expression, protected under Articles 6 and 7 of the Constitution—not to mention the right to free movement.”

While the WSWS was unable to independently verify any direct link between Judge Chacón Rojas and the municipal president, it should be noted that the judge's renewal as a state judge would depend on the Judicial Council, as well as on a local judicial reform currently in preparation—making it plain that judges have every institutional incentive to avoid friction with Movimiento Ciudadano authorities.

The repression has extended beyond the courts. Prieto Moreno's Facebook page, “La Pociлга Laboral” (Labor Pigpen), which had accumulated more than five thousand followers, was abruptly shut down without any prior warning from Facebook. He told the WSWS. He explained: “They only told me it would be permanently deleted in thirty days if I didn't file a claim—which I had already done. Collusion. But I've opened a new page and we're carrying on.”

He also told the WSWS that the municipality placed large concrete planters directly in front of the spot where he parks his churro cart to sell, effectively depriving him of his livelihood. “They dispossess me of my work as a poor, working-class person,” he said, “and on top of that they use my taxes to pay the lawyers and the judicial system to try to intimidate me.”

Background and previous persecution

Prieto Moreno's path to activism was forged through direct experience with corporate exploitation. While employed as a toll-booth collector for ICA, he discovered the company was withholding thousands of pesos in legally mandated benefits. When he refused to sign a consent form accepting the reduced payments and attempted to organize colleagues to protest, he was fired. An eight-month legal battle ended in a modest settlement, which he used to establish his churro stand.

In September 2016, he founded “La Pociлга Laboral de Lagos de Moreno” on Facebook, using the platform to accompany workers from agriculture, manufacturing, and multinational plants including Nestlé and Dräxлмаier in legal complaints and public demonstrations, while sharpening his critique of the pro-employer trade union bureaucracy and the corrupt legal institutions of the Mexican state. His commitment to the international working class deepened after he encountered the *World Socialist Web Site* and the 2019 Matamoros wildcat strikes, which led him to send solidarity messages to striking workers as far away as Detroit.

The response from the state and corporate interests has been relentless. A local labor official sent municipal police armed with machine guns to arrest him under a falsified rape accusation. In late 2017, his original organizing page was also shut down by Facebook. On January 31, 2018, two assailants

beat him with a metal pipe outside his home, and months later his car was set on fire in an act of arson.

In February 2019, thugs attempted a nighttime home invasion days after he published a solidarity video for US autoworkers. In July 2020, police pointed guns at him to force him to move his churro cart. In early 2021, he was illegally arrested on orders from the then-mayor while peacefully protesting outside city hall; during the detention, which was carried out without a warrant, officers slashed his clothing with a knife and filmed him in an attempt at public humiliation before being compelled to release him.

The case of Luis Daniel Prieto Moreno illustrates with stark clarity the character of capitalist rule in Mexico and internationally. A worker who sells churros for a living, who protests with hand-written signs in front of a public building, who operates a Facebook page—this is what the municipal government of Lagos de Moreno, backed by the judicial apparatus of Jalisco, has mobilized its full legal and political resources to suppress. The reason is not difficult to understand: Prieto Moreno connects corporate exploitation to political power and refuses to be silenced.

To oppose the growing attacks on their democratic rights, workers internationally must recognize that the ruling classes operate like a mafia to suppress opposition, and must respond by organizing independent rank-and-file workplace and neighborhood committees entirely free from pro-capitalist trade unions and political parties, which have repeatedly failed to protect workers and have instead facilitated state repression.

As workers from the United States have expressed their solidarity with Luis Daniel Prieto Moreno, the international working class is the most powerful force in history when it stands as a unified body—animated by the conviction that an injury to one is an injury to all, and capable of transforming individual acts of courage into a coordinated global struggle against corporate and state violence.



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