

# *Storm of Criticism Embroils Mexico's New Supreme Court Justice*

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Mexico City, March 18 (teleSUR-RHC) In a relatively brief welcome ceremony Tuesday, Mexico's Supreme Court officially recognized the arrival of its newest and controversial justice, Eduardo Medina Mora, filling a seat that was vacated three months ago.

The former ambassador and now attorney general — who has never served as a judge — assumes the position a week after the country's senate approved his nomination proposed by Mexico's President Enrique Peña Nieto. He fills the seat left by former Justice Sergio Vals, who passed away in December.

Addressing the court and press, Medina Mora affirmed that he will fulfill the post guided by principles of honesty and ethics, "The firm principles of this ethical court are those values that oblige and orient us, as well as unite us: independence, impartiality, objectivity, professionalism and excellence."

However, the new justice assumes his role amid a storm of criticism. Legal experts argue that Medina Mora does not fulfill the residency requirement of two years, and human rights defenders have questioned his rights record as attorney general during the previous administration of Felipe Calderon.

Medina Mora presided over explosive events in Mexico's recent history, such as the so-called "Michoacanazo," which resulted in 38 Michoacan state opposition-party officials, being detained and accused of corruption weeks before elections: they were all later released for lack of evidence.

The former law-enforcement chief also presided over the 2006 launching of the "War on Drugs," which has since then resulted in tens of thousands of people being killed or disappeared. His time in the role oversaw brutal police operations against social protest movements in Oaxaca and Atenco in 2006, resulting in harsh criticism from national and international rights groups for arbitrary detentions, rape, and even deaths due to excessive police force.

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