

MEXICO

International Instrument	Signature	Ratification, Acceptance (A), Approval (AA), Accession (a), Succession (d)	Entry Into Force
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	26 Jan 1990	21 Sep 1990	
UN Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography	7 Sep 2000	15 Mar 2002	
Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons	13 Dec 2000	4 Mar 2003	
UN Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict	7 Sep 2000	15 Mar 2002	
UN Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance	6 Feb 2007	18 Mar 2008	
Hague Convention on International Child Abduction		20 Jun 1991	1 Sep 1991

In Mexico, there are five laws that refer directly or indirectly to missing children:

1. Constitution of Mexico 1917, amended 2015;
2. Federal Civil Code 1928, amended 2010;
3. Federal Law on Organized Crime 1996, amended 2017;
4. The Law on the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents of 2000; and
5. The Law to Prevent and Punish Trafficking in Persons 2007.

General Child Protection

The Mexican Constitution guarantees “respect for the dignity of the person and the integrity of the family,” and that all persons are equal under the law.¹ The state has the duty to respect and promote the rights of all children.² The Constitution also provides children the right to an education,³ and protection from unsafe working conditions.⁴

The Mexican government has enacted several laws that promote child rights such as the Law on the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents.⁵ This Law outlines a child or young person’s right to protection against any acts or omissions that affect their “physical or mental health, their normal development, or their right to education, including: neglect; negligent

¹ Constitution of Mexico, amended through 2015, Article 3, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Mexico_2015.pdf?lang=en (last visited Feb. 20, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

² *Id.* at Article 4.

³ *Id.* at Article 31.

⁴ *Id.* at Article 123.

⁵ The Law on the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents of 2000, at https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/211050/10_Ley_para_la_Proteccion_de_los_Derechos_de_Niños_y_Adolescentes.pdf (last visited Feb. 15, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

treatment; abandonment; emotional, physical, or sexual abuse; exploitation; the use of drugs and narcotics; kidnapping; and trafficking.”⁶

The Federal Law on Organized Crime also includes articles which protect children from organized crime including pornography of a person under 18 years of age and sex tourism.⁷

Mexico also is signatory to a number of treaties that have an effect on children’s rights.⁸ Mexico signed the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1990,⁹ the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction in 1991,¹⁰ the Inter-American Convention on the International Return of Children in 1992,¹¹ and the Inter-American Convention on International Traffic of Minors in 1995.¹²

General Missing Child Issues

In November 2017, Mexico passed the General Law Regarding the Forced Disappearance of Persons, Disappearance Committed by Individuals and the National System of Search of People.¹³ The second chapter of this Law specifically addresses disappearances of persons under age 18. Article 7 requires that in all cases when a child or adolescent has been reported missing, regardless of the circumstances of their disappearance, a case file will be created and an immediate search will be initiated.¹⁴ Those responsible for managing the National Search System must “take into account the children’s best interests, and they must establish information segmented by gender, age, situation of vulnerability, risk or discrimination.”¹⁵ Article 89 specifies that following the report of a missing person to the National Search Commission, an immediate search must be initiated and the Specialized Prosecutor’s Office notified if the disappearance may be due to the commission of a crime.¹⁶ The provision sets out criteria to establish the presumption of a crime, which include when the missing person is under the age of 18.¹⁷

Definition of “Missing Child”

The term “missing child” is not defined in Mexican legislation. However, Article 4 of the General Law Regarding the Forced Disappearance of Persons, Disappearance Committed by Individuals and the National System of Search of People defines a “missing person” as a

⁶ *Id.* at Article 21.

⁷ Federal Law on Organized Crime, Mexico, at http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/101_070417.pdf (last visited Feb. 15, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

⁸ U.S. Department of State, *International Parental Child Abduction, Mexico*, May 2015, at <https://travel.state.gov/content/childabduction/en/country/mexico.html> (last visited Feb. 15, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

⁹ United Nations, Ratification Status for Mexico, at http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?CountryID=112&Lang=EN (last visited Feb. 15, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

¹⁰ See, the Hague Conference on Private International Law, 28: Convention of 25 October 1980 on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, at <https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/conventions/status-table/?cid=24> (last visited Feb. 15, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

¹¹ Department of International Law, OAS, *General Information of the Treaty: B-53*, at <http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/sigs/b-53.html> (last visited Feb. 14, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

¹² The Law on the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents of 2000, *supra* note 5. See also, Convention of 25 October 1980 on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, HCCH, at <https://www.hcch.net/en/instruments/conventions/status-table/?cid=24> (last visited Feb. 15, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

¹³ General Law Regarding the Forced Disappearance of Persons, Disappearance Committed by Individuals and the National System of Search of People, 2017, at http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/LGMDFP_171117.pdf (last visited Feb. 22, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children) (hereafter the General Law Regarding the Forced Disappearance of Persons).

¹⁴ *Id.* at Article 7.

¹⁵ *Id.* at Article 8.

¹⁶ *Id.* at Article 89.

¹⁷ *Id.*

person whose whereabouts are unknown and presumed based on the evidence to be related to the commission of a crime.¹⁸ In addition, a “misplaced person” is a person whose whereabouts are unknown and does not appear to be related to the commission of a crime.¹⁹

Further, Article 2 of the Law on the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents defines children as people under the age of 12, and adolescents as those who are between the ages of 12 and 18.²⁰ The Federal Civil Code establishes 18 as the age of maturity.²¹ According to the Civil Code, there are instances in which minors under the age of 18 may exercise control over actions such as marriage, with some exceptions.²²

Abandonment

Chapter V of the Federal Civil Code outlines punishments associated with child abandonment.²³ Under this chapter, child abandonment occurs when a child is placed into a circumstance of helplessness by those who, under the law, are bound to their custody, protection, and care.²⁴ In order to be considered abandoned, the minor’s origin must be known.²⁵

Kidnapping and Abduction

The General Law to Prevent and Punish Crimes in the Matter of Kidnapping provides a penalty of imprisonment from 40 to 80 years and a fine from one thousand to four thousand days for depriving another person of their freedom.²⁶ The penalty is aggravated to 50 to 90 years imprisonment and a fine of four thousand to eight thousand days when the victim is under the age of 18 years.²⁷ Article 37 of the law provides a fund to be used by authorities to support the victims of kidnapping primarily medical and psychological care and protection of minors in distress.²⁸

Parental Abduction

Generally, when parents get divorced in Mexico, a judge awards parental authority to both parents unless a parent is deemed unfit or extenuating circumstances exist. In some cases, one parent may be deprived of their parental authority.²⁹ When a child is particularly young, judges usually grant custody to the mother.³⁰

The Law on the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents provides that parents, or the child’s legal guardians must protect the child against any form of “ill treatment, prejudice, harm, aggression, abuse, trafficking, and exploitation.”³¹ The law does not specify a crime for parental abduction; however, it does recognize increased penalties for parents or guardians who aid in a child’s abduction.³²

¹⁸ General Law Regarding the Forced Disappearance of Persons, *supra* note 13, at Article 4) XV.

¹⁹ *Id.* at Article 4) XVI.

²⁰ Law on the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents, *supra* note 5, at Article 2.

²¹ Federal Civil Code, Mexico, Article 646, at http://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/text.jsp?file_id=199847 (last visited Feb. 15, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

²² *Id.* at Articles 148 and 149.

²³ *Id.* at Chapter V, Article 492.

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ General Law to Prevent and Punish Crimes in the Matter of Kidnapping, Regulatory of 2010 (amended 2018), Article 9, at http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/LGPSDMS_190118.pdf (last visited Mar. 2, 2018).

²⁷ *Id.* at Article 10.

²⁸ *Id.* at Article 37.

²⁹ International Family Law, *Mexico-Child Custody Law*, at <http://www.international-divorce.com/Mexico-Child-Custody-Law.htm> (last visited Feb. 15, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

³⁰ *Id.*

³¹ The Law on the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents of 2000, *supra* note 5, at Article 11.

³² *Id.* at sub-section B.

Mexico is a signatory to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. In preparation for the 7th Special Commission meeting of the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law in October 2017, Professor Nigel Lowe and Victoria Stephens, on behalf of the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC) and in consultation with the Permanent Bureau (which oversees the Hague Abduction Convention), prepared the fourth research study concerning all applications received by Central Authorities in 2015 in relation to the Hague Abduction Convention.³³ A survey – concerning applications received between 1 January-31 December 2015 – was sent to the 93 Central Authorities (as of 2015) and responses were received from 72 (accounting for about 94% of applications received). In total, Mexico received a combined (incoming and outgoing) 306 applications.

In 2015, Mexico received far fewer return applications – a 51% decrease – than in 2008 when the prior study was completed.³⁴ The Central Authority noted a 250% increase in access applications in 2015.³⁵ Mexico also reported a high proportion of applications involving taking fathers (28 applications, 34%).³⁶

Reporting Mechanism

Missing person cases, including missing children cases, may be reported through the hotline 01800-00-85-400, which is supported by the Attorney General's Office.³⁷ The Attorney General's Office also supports an online database – ¿Has visto a ..?.³⁸

The General Law Regarding the Forced Disappearance of Persons specifies that anyone can request the search for a missing or lost person through the news media, reporting mechanism, or by filing a complaint.³⁹ Reports can be made 24-hours-a-day, 365 days-a-year by phone to the national number, through digital media, or in person to the National Search Commission, the Local Search Commissions, or the Public Ministry.⁴⁰ Article 85 outlines the information that should be included in a report of a missing person.

Additionally, Mexico has been a member of INTERPOL since 1955.⁴¹ Missing persons cases in Mexico are entered into the INTERPOL database in an effort to alert people on a global level. Currently there are 159 missing Mexican persons on the INTERPOL database, 29 of whom are between the ages of 4-17.⁴²

³³ Prel. Doc. No 11 A of September 2017 - Part I – A statistical analysis of applications made in 2015 under the *Hague Convention of 25 October 1980 on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction* – Global report (provisional version), at <https://assets.hcch.net/docs/511f0cb3-2163-4fd1-92ce-e3f16e304377.pdf> (last visited Feb. 21, 2018).

³⁴ A return application is a request for a child wrongfully removed or retained across international borders to be returned to the country of habitual residence. See, U.S. Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs, Completing the Hague Abduction Convention Application, at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/International-Parental-Child-Abduction/abductions/guidance-hague-application.html> (last visited Feb. 21, 2018).

³⁵ An access application is a request to secure rights of access to a child when parents live in different countries. See, *Id.*

³⁶ Questionnaire Concerning the Practical Application of the 1980 Convention – *Mexico Responses* (2017), at <https://assets.hcch.net/docs/ce32c555-f78c-401b-b242-5a4b3576a5d8.pdf> (last visited Feb. 21, 2018).

³⁷ Has Visto A, at <https://app.cedac.pgr.gob.mx/HASVISTOA/index.jsp> (last visited Feb. 22, 2018).

³⁸ *Id.*

³⁹ General Law Regarding the Forced Disappearance of Persons, *supra* note 13, at Article 80.

⁴⁰ *Id.* at Article 81.

⁴¹ INTERPOL, *Mexico*, at <https://www.interpol.int/Member-countries/Americas/Mexico> (last visited Feb. 15, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

⁴² INTERPOL, *Mexico Missing Persons*, at <https://www.interpol.int/notice/search/missing> (last visited Feb. 15, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

Investigation of Missing Child Cases

The Procuraduría General de la República (PGR) (Attorney General) is the executive power's agency in charge of investigating and prosecuting crimes at the federal level. The office of the PGR created the Especializada Investigación de Delitos en Materia de Secuestro (UEIDMS), a unit responsible for coordinating the investigation of abductions and kidnappings in Mexico.⁴³ Additionally, the PGR has a unit, Fiscalía Especial para los Delitos de Violencia Contra las Mujeres y Trata de Personas (FEVIMTRA), which oversees all cases related to women and child trafficking.⁴⁴ This unit is also responsible for overseeing the Alerta AMBER.

Each of the 32 States have a local PGR office that oversees the response to missing persons in their state. Further, some of the States have enacted laws outlining procedures for the response to missing and abducted children cases.⁴⁵ On a federal level, the PGR created the *Protocol for Searching Disappeared People and the Investigation into Forced Disappearances*.⁴⁶ The protocol states an investigation should start immediately, once a report has been made and all information should be entered into the national database.⁴⁷

National Database

The General Law Regarding the Forced Disappearance of Persons, Disappearance Committed by Individuals and the National System of Search of People explains that the National System includes a National Registry of Missing and Misplaced Persons, National Database of Forensic Data, National Registry of Unidentified and Unclaimed Deceased Persons, National Registry of Graves, and AMBER Alert, among other tools.⁴⁸ Article 102 states that the National Registry is a "search and identification tool that organizes and concentrates information about missing and lost persons, in order to provide support in the investigations for their search, location and identification."⁴⁹ The required fields contained in the National Registry are laid out in Article 106.⁵⁰

The Executive Secretariat of the National Public Security System (SESNSP) developed the National Registry of Missing or Disappeared Persons Data (RNPED).⁵¹ The registry compiles data obtained from complaints filed with the responsible ministerial authority concerning persons who, at the court date, remain unlocated. The registry provides an accessible, simple, and secure tool to search national data concerning missing or disappeared people.⁵²

The SESNSP National Information Center published the Instrument for the Registration, Classification and Reporting of Crimes and Victims in January 2018. This report showed that

⁴³ Procuraduría General de la República, *Unidad Especializada en Investigación de Delitos en Materia de Secuestro*, at <https://www.gob.mx/pgr/acciones-y-programas/unidad-especializada-en-investigacion-de-delitos-en-materia-de-secuestro> (last visited Mar. 19, 2018).

⁴⁴ Procuraduría General de la República, *Fiscalía Especial para los Delitos de Violencia Contra las Mujeres y Trata de Personas*, at <https://www.gob.mx/pgr/acciones-y-programas/unidad-especializada-en-investigacion-de-delitos-en-materia-de-secuestro> (last visited Mar. 19, 2018).

⁴⁵ For example, see Attorney General of Justice of the State of Colima, *Protocol of Action for the Search of Missing Persons, Especially Children, Adolescents, and Women*, Jan. 10, 2015, at <http://www.ordenjuridico.gob.mx/Documentos/Estatal/Colima/wo100765.pdf> (last visited Mar. 19, 2018).

⁴⁶ Procuraduría General de la República, *Protocolo Homologado para la Búsqueda de Personas Desaparecidas y la Investigación del Delito de Desaparición Forzada*, Jun. 2015, at http://www.pgr.gob.mx/que-es-la-pgr/PGR_Normateca_Sustantiva/Protocolo%20Desaparici%C3%B3n%20Forzada.pdf (last visited Mar. 19, 2018).

⁴⁷ *Id.* at 35.

⁴⁸ General Law Regarding the Forced Disappearance of Persons, *supra* note 13, at Article 48.

⁴⁹ *Id.* at Article 102.

⁵⁰ *Id.* at Article 106.

⁵¹ National Registry of Missing or Disappeared Persons Data, at <https://rnped.segob.gob.mx/> (last visited Feb. 21, 2018).

⁵² Executive Secretariat of the National Public Security System, Ministry of Interior, *Public Consultation*, at <http://secretariadoejecutivo.gob.mx/rnped/consulta-publica.php> (last visited Feb. 20, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

nationally in 2017 there were 1,389 cases of kidnapping registered and 231 cases of trafficking of minors, among other crimes.⁵³

Case Management System

The National Commission on Human Rights (CNDH) manages the National Information System of Missing and Unidentified Persons (SINPEF) comprised of three databases: SINPEF Integration; Lost, Missing or Disappeared Persons (SINDE); and Unidentified Deceased Persons (SINFANI).⁵⁴ The SINPEF Integration database records: all cases that were originally received in the Complaints area of the CNDH; the matters transmitted by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances of the United Nations Organization to the Mexican State; and various requests for collaboration made to the National Commission, the State Commissions on Human Rights, NGOs, and the law enforcement agencies of the different states of the Mexican Republic.⁵⁵ The other two databases contain information on missing persons or unidentified deceased persons provided by law enforcement agencies of the 32 states from 2007 until 2015.⁵⁶

Alert Mechanism

In May of 2012, with help from the PGR, the Mexican government implemented the AMBER Alert system.⁵⁷ This system works in cooperation with the United States via the Merida Initiative. This initiative has helped combat trafficking and bolster border security.⁵⁸ The AMBER Alert Mexico database can be accessed online at: <http://www.alertaamber.gob.mx/>.⁵⁹

The criteria to launch an AMBER Alert in Mexico are:

- The child is under the age of 18;
- The child is at imminent risk or suffering serious harm; and
- There is sufficient information to identify the child.⁶⁰

Awareness-Raising Initiatives

In 2015, the Mexican government launched a National Program for the Integral Protection of Children and Adolescents. This program is intended to protect children's rights at all levels of the government.⁶¹

A number of organizations are carrying out awareness raising efforts in Mexico. For example, the National Foundation for Stolen and Disappeared Children (La Fundación Nacional de Niños Robados y Desaparecidos, IAP) carries out events focused on child safety and prevention, primarily in the national education sector and through various media venues, to raise awareness among children and parents about the problem of the disappearance, abduction,

⁵³ *Instrument for the Registration, Classification and Reporting of Crimes and Victims*, CNSP/38/15, Jan. 2018, at <http://www.secretariadoejecutivo.gob.mx/docs/pdfs/nueva-metodologia/CNSP-V%C3%ADctimas-2017.pdf> (last visited Feb. 20, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

⁵⁴ CNDH Mexico, *Missing People*, at <http://informe.cndh.org.mx/menu.aspx?id=10036#lda10759> (last visited Feb. 21, 2018).

⁵⁵ *Id.*

⁵⁶ *Id.*

⁵⁷ U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Mexico, *Tri-Lateral Forum Strengthens International Coordination on Amber Alert Emergency Response System*, at <https://mx.usembassy.gov/tri-lateral-forum-strengthens-international-coordination-amber-alert-emergency-response-system-2/> (last visited Feb. 21, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

⁵⁸ *Id.*

⁵⁹ AMBER Alert Mexico, at <http://www.alertaamber.gob.mx/> (last visited Feb. 22, 2018).

⁶⁰ AMBER Alert Mexico, *Frequently Asked Questions – Question 4*, at <http://www.alertaamber.gob.mx/Alerta/PreguntasFrecuentes> (last visited Feb. 23, 2018).

⁶¹ *President Enrique Peña Nieto Installs National System of Integral Protection for Children and Adolescents*, GOB.MX, at <https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/president-enrique-pena-nieto-installs-national-system-of-integral-protection-for-children-and-adolescents> (last visited Feb. 21, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

and loss of children.⁶² The Mexican Association of Stolen and Missing Children (La Asociación Mexicana de Niños Robados y Desaparecidos A.C.) works to search, locate, rescue, and reintegrate disappeared persons with their families.⁶³ The Association implements prevention measures including speaking in schools to teachers, students, and parents about safety measures, providing unique identification cards for children, and maintaining a public website containing information about cases of missing children.⁶⁴ The Network of Mothers Seeking their Missing Children in Mexico (Red de madres buscando a sus hijos) maintains a Facebook page to share information about missing children.⁶⁵ The Network hosted the second national “March for National Dignity” on 10 May 2017, Mother’s Day, to raise awareness and support a common message seeking action by the government.⁶⁶

Trafficking

Mexico passed an anti-trafficking law in 2012 that was amended in 2014.⁶⁷ including increased penalties for traffickers who: are public officers; have a family relationship with the victim; live in the same house as the victim; or are part of an organization that cares for trafficking victims.⁶⁸ The law considers the crime of trafficking aggravated if the victim is under 12 years old and if the means used to commit the crime include threats, use of force, coercion, deception, seduction, the use of power, and/or payment to a third party.⁶⁹

In October 2016, the Mexican Senate again approved amendments to the anti-trafficking law to align it more closely with international law.⁷⁰ The Decree by which the General Law to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Crimes in the Field of Trafficking in Persons and for the Protection and Assistance to the Victims of these Crimes came into effect in January 2018.⁷¹

Mexico has implemented the National Program on Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Trafficking in Persons and for the Protection and Assistance of Victims of these crimes 2014-2018.⁷² The National Program is focused on prevention and aimed at reducing the risks of victimization. One of the goals of the program is to expand support for children and young people in situations of disadvantage or vulnerability.⁷³

⁶² The National Foundation for Stolen and Disappeared Children, at <http://ninosrobados.org.mx/> (last visited Feb. 23, 2018).

⁶³ The Mexican Association of Stolen and Missing Children, at <http://www.regresoacasa.org/index.html> (last visited Feb. 23, 2018).

⁶⁴ *Id.*

⁶⁵ Network of Mothers Seeking their Missing Children in Mexico, at <https://www.facebook.com/RedDeMadresBuscandoASusHijos/> (last visited Feb. 23, 2018).

⁶⁶ *Id.*, See, *On Mexican Mother’s Day, Hundreds of Mothers March for Their Disappeared Children*, TELESUR, May 10, 2017, at <https://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/On-Mexican-Mothers-Day-Hundreds-of-Mothers-March-for-Their-Disappeared-Children-20170510-0016.html> (last visited Feb. 23, 2018).

⁶⁷ General Law to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Crimes in Trafficking in Persons and for Protection and Assistance to the Victims of these Crimes 2012 (amended 2014), at http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/ref/lgpsedmtp/LGPSDEMTP_ref01_19mar14.pdf (last visited Mar. 2, 2018).

⁶⁸ Library of Congress, *Mexico: Federal Senate Approves of Law Against Human Trafficking*, at <http://www.loc.gov/law/foreign-news/article/mexico-federal-senate-approves-of-law-against-human-trafficking/> (last visited Feb. 15, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

⁶⁹ *Id.*

⁷⁰ U.S. Department of State, *2017 Trafficking in Persons Report – Mexico* 279, at <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/271343.pdf> (last visited Feb. 20, 2018) (on file with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children).

⁷¹ Decree by which the General Law to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Crimes in the Field of Trafficking in Persons and for the Protection and Assistance to the Victims of these Crimes amended 2018, at http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/legis/reflxiii/191_Diversas_CDMX_19ene18.pdf (last visited Mar. 2, 2018).

⁷² National Program on Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Trafficking in Persons and for the Protection and Assistance of Victims of these crimes 2014-2018, at http://dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5343079&fecha=30/04/2014 (last visited Mar. 2, 2018).

⁷³ *Id.*

According to the 2017 U.S. State Department Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, Mexico is considered a Tier 2 country as it does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, though it has taken significant steps to combat trafficking.⁷⁴

Mexico is a source, transit, and destination country for women and children subjected to sex trafficking.⁷⁵ The majority of foreign victims in Mexico are from Central and South America.

In 2016, authorities reported fewer investigations and prosecutions than in 2015. Authorities reported, however, an increase in convictions from 86 in 2015 to 228 a year later.⁷⁶ In 2016, the federal government of Mexico reported identifying 179 trafficking victims, 58 of whom were children, while state governments identified 561 victims, 173 of whom were children.

⁷⁴ U.S. Department of State, *supra* note 70.

⁷⁵ *Id.*

⁷⁶ *Id.*