An Outlook to Mexico’s Security Strategy

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The George Washington University
Overview.

Introduction.


II. Critical Zones of Conflict.

III. Seizures and Apprehensions.

IV. Mérida Initiative.

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VI. Conclusion: Rebuilding and Modernizing Institutions.
Introduction.

• Mexico faces a full-frontal fight against organized crime as never before, due to several reasons, including:
  – An increase in the demand for drugs in the US.
  – An increase in both arms and money flows from the US to Mexico.
  – Uneven levels of wealth (poverty and informal economies) at the two sides of the border.
  – Criminal organizations increasingly weakening local security institutions for years.

• The National Security Strategy, implemented by President Calderón is focused towards consolidating the rule of law as well as in protecting life and integrity of the citizenry.

• The Strategy includes **five elements**:
  1. Temporary joint armed operations in conflict zones, requested by state governors.
  2. Reinforce/Build up armed forces’ both technological skills and operational capacities (Army, Navy, Federal Police).
  3. Reform legal framework and strengthen institutions.
  4. Active prevention of crime policy.
  5. Increase international cooperation and joint responsibility.

• These are some of the main achievements over the first four years of the current administration:

1. There have been historical records in confiscation of drugs, weapons, money, vehicles, planes and properties.
2. Federal Police has quintupled its recruits, from 6.5 thousand to almost 35 thousand, including 7 thousand with college degrees specialized in intelligence tasks.

3. Armed forces’ wages have increased 80 percent. The number of scholarships for soldiers’ sons and soldiers’ house mortgages have also increased.

4. Plataforma México is the most ambitious database that consolidates criminal information regarding over 400 million security profiles (2.6 thousand are uploaded every day).

5. Over 40 thousand recruits and public officers have taken confidence tests.

- The 2010 security budget (highest in modern history) is practically twice as much as the one for 2006.

Money spent in Security
(millions of pesos)

Source: Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público (SHCP).

- Critical Reforms **Approved**:
  - Federal Police Law.
  - Attorney General Law.
  - Criminal Justice System.
  - Asset Forfeiture Law.
  - Law to punish kidnapping and abduction.
  - Law to decriminalize possession of small amounts of major narcotics.
  - Money laundering strategy.
  - Amparo Law.

• Critical Reforms Pending of Approval:
  – Single Police Command.
  – Human Rights.
  – Political Reform.

  • Consecutive reelection for legislators and municipal presidents.
  • Presidential majority runoff.
  • Narrowing size of Congress.
  • Presidential Line-Item Veto.
  • Citizens’ proposals and independent candidates.
II. Critical Zones of Conflict.

- Criminal organizations (COs, not only DTOs) accumulated power over the years. These COs also evolved from smuggling to trafficking (drugs and people), extorting and distributing along several critical zones of conflict.
- COs fight against each other in clearly located zones for markets, resources, and hegemony.
- Violence is not pervasive: 4 out of every 5 homicides related to COs occurred in only 162 municipalities (2,456 total).
- According to the death toll distribution, there can be identified 7 main conflicts among COs.
Homicides in 162 municipalities
(Total: 2,456 municipalities)

162 municipalities with 22,701 homicides*
(80 percent of total)

* Data until July 31st, 2010.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Homicides</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pacífico vs Juárez</td>
<td>8,236</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacífico vs Beltrán Leyva</td>
<td>5,864</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacífico vs Golfo-Zetas</td>
<td>3,199</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacífico vs Arellano Félix</td>
<td>1,798</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familia Michoacana vs Golfo-Zetas</td>
<td>1,744</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golfo vs Zetas</td>
<td>1,328</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familia Michoacana vs Beltrán Leyva</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No specified</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22,701</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. Critical Zones of Conflict.

• Chihuahua, Sinaloa and Baja California concentrate most of the homicides related with COs.

• Increases in the number of homicides mostly coincide with captures and deaths of leaders of, and divisions within COs.

• During the first two quarters of 2010, Nuevo León and Tamaulipas have registered an increased rate of homicides, related mostly with the fight between the Gulf Cartel and Zetas.
HOMICIDES RELATED WITH ORGANIZED CRIME
BAJA CALIFORNIA, CHIHUAHUA, NUEVO LEÓN, SINALOA AND TAMAULIPAS

2,000
2,500
3,000
3,500
4,000
4,500
5,000

T1 07 T2 07 T3 07 T4 07 T1 08 T2 08 T3 08 T4 08 T1 09 T2 09 T3 09 T4 09 T1 10 T2 10

Trimesters

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 2,500 3,000 3,500 4,000

Homicides

National
Nuevo León
Tamaulipas
Baja California
Sinaloa
Chihuahua
III. Seizures and apprehensions, by COs.

Total, by crimes against health, by crime organization: 81,128*

- La Familia: 3,015 (4%)
- Milenio: 1,632 (2%)
- Arellano Félix: 10,012 (12%)
- Juárez: 12,847 (16%)
- Golfo/Zetas: 22,138 (27%)
- Pacífico: 19,714 (24%)

*Data until July 29, 2010. There are 34,350 arrested without any relation with any crime organization, that gives us a total of 115,478 people arrested for crimes against health.
IV. Mérida Initiative.

- Multi-year program signed between the US and Mexico in December 2008 to confront criminal organizations whose illicit actions undermine public safety and erode the rule of law.
- US Congress has funded MI appropriating over $1.6 billion USD.
- Mérida Initiative rests on **four main pillars:**
  1. Disrupt capacity of organized crime to operate.
  2. Institutionalize capacity to sustain rule of law.
  3. Create a 21st century border structure.
  4. Build strong and resilient communities.
IV. Mérida Initiative.

• To date, some $310 million USD in equipment and training has been delivered, including several critical tools to curb the activities of transnational criminal organizations:
  – 7 Bell-412 helicopters.
  – 3 UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters.
  – 318 polygraph machines.
  – 18 non-intrusive inspection (NIIE) vehicles.
  – 13 armored vehicles.
IV. Mérida Initiative.

– Biometric equipment for Mexico’s immigration agency (INAMI)

– Case tracking software for the Mexican Attorney General’s Office.

– 4,500 college educated investigators, trained by U.S. and Mexican experts.

– Trained 1,300 new correction officials in up-to-date techniques for holding, classifying, and transporting prisoners.

– 52 canine handlers have been trained as well as 78 trained dogs.
V. Human Rights and Military Jurisdiction.

• Over the past years, **Mexico has registered unmatched improvements in Human Rights.**
• The Mexican Government recognizes that the strengthening of democracy is fundamentally based in **acknowledging and fully respecting Human Rights.**
• Such transformation is reflected in both Federal Government’s **domestic policy** as well as its **foreign policy.**
V. Human Rights and Military Jurisdiction.

• **Domestic policy**: Oriented to institutionalize and consolidate human rights within public policies (including legal reforms), as well as strengthening institutions in charge of protecting, defending and promoting human rights.

• **Foreign policy**: Focuses in three main aspects:
  a. Openness and collaboration with international organizations.
  b. Strong presence and leadership in international forums.
V. Human Rights and Military Jurisdiction.

• The Mexican Military has a history of an integral Human Rights’ policy:
  – A Department of Citizens’ Attention (2010).
V. Human Rights and Military Jurisdiction.

• The Mexican Military has a history of an integral Human Rights’ policy:
  – Equal Opportunities between Women and Men 2008-2012 Program.
  – Promotion and Strengthening of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Program.
  – Permanent Prevention and Attention to Violence and Gender Issues Program.
V. Human Rights and Military Jurisdiction.

- The Mexican Military has a clear mechanism to receive complaints and to accept recommendations from the Mexican Human Rights’ Ombudsman.
- Until September 28, 2010, there has been 4,266 complaints of which only 62 have ended in recommendations, that is 1.45 percent of the total.
- Every military judicial process related to such recommendations started before they were delivered to the Military.
V. Human Rights and Military Jurisdiction.

- Military jurisdiction is specialized in solving all crimes related with violations to military discipline.

- Soldiers who commit crimes while not in service (either federal or ordinary crimes), are not judged by Military Courts, but instead by civil courts, as any other citizen.

- Military jurisdiction has each and every guarantee of due process contemplated in the Mexican Constitution.
VI. Conclusion: Rebuilding and Modernizing Institutions.

• The fight against organized crime has been acknowledged as a global responsibility, especially a shared one between Mexico and the United States.

• There is an ongoing process in Mexico of rebuilding and modernizing institutions, ranging from reforms in public security institutions to the implementation of oral trials to the creation of confidence testing centers and construction of new federal prisons.

• Still pending several key reforms that will allow a more effective and overwhelming fight against criminal organizations.
VI. Conclusion: Rebuilding and Modernizing Institutions.

• The Security Strategy has proved to be effective in breaking up and pulverizing criminal organizations.

• Temporary joint armed operations have proved successful, not only in deterring crime, but also in allowing federal and local police to strengthen their presence in conflict zones, to modernize their equipment and to enhance their skills.

• According to different public surveys, a large majority approve President Calderón’s fight against organized crime, despite increased perception of violence.
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