

# **The Evolving Crime Threat from Mexico's TCOs**

Homeland Security Symposium  
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UT El Paso

June Beittel

**(U) MAP 1. MEXICAN CARTELS: AREAS OF DOMINANT INFLUENCE AND KEY AREAS OF CONFLICT**



# TCOs: Different Typologies

By primary function:

- National Cartels
- Regional Cartels
- Toll-Collector Cartels
- Drug Trafficking Mafias or Crime Cells

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By region of Influence or Origin:

- Sinaloa
- Tierra Caliente
- Tamaulipas

Stratfor Global Intelligence

# TCOs that export Opioids, Marijuana, & Cocaine to the United States

***Sinaloa***, the former hegemon in Mexico's criminal landscape, but under pressure in recent years;

***Jalisco New Generation Cartel***, or CJNG, Mexico's fastest growing TCO with an expanding presence in several U.S. cities;

***Juárez***, a traditional drug trafficking group that has been revived with Sinaloa's seeming decline;

***Beltrán Leyva***, one of the cartels that split from the Sinaloa Federation in 2008 and has suffered major leadership losses, but remains cohesive;

***Gulf Cartel***, one of Mexico's oldest crime groups based in Tamaulipas; and

***Los Zetas***, composed originally of Mexican military deserters, now largely disaggregated into violent factions.

# **What Members of Congress Ask about Mexico's TCOs**

- **Status of U.S./Mexico security Cooperation**
- **How much money is being spent and what are the results**

# Congressional Perspectives on US-Mexican Security Cooperation

- Mérida Initiative from 2007 to 2018

A security and rule-of-law partnership: equipment, training, enhance port and border security; combat money laundering

U.S. has expended approximately \$2.9 Billion cumulatively; only 2% of what Mexico spends on security each year

- New Executive Orders on Combating TCOs (E.O. 13773) and Border Security (E.O. 13767)

- DOD Assistance

# **FY18 Omnibus Funding bill for Mexico & the Mérida Initiative**

## **\$152.6 Million**

*(including \$100 million is for INCLE)*

### **Key Concerns of Appropriations Committee**

Disappearances; human rights violations; unsolved crimes committed by Mexican security forces;  
Report on multi-year strategy for Mexico with metrics and specific goals

### **S.Res. 83**

115<sup>th</sup> Congress (2017-2018)

Passed Senate without amendment  
**A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the trafficking of illicit fentanyl into the United States from Mexico and China**

“....all three such countries have a shared interest in, and responsibility for, stopping the production of illicit fentanyl and its trafficking into the United States.

Calls for the United States to:

support the efforts by the governments of Mexico and China to stop such production and trafficking into the United States; take further measures to reduce and prevent heroin and fentanyl consumption through enhanced enforcement to reduce the illegal supply and increased use of evidence-based prevention, treatment, and recovery services; and use its broad diplomatic and law enforcement resources, in partnership with the governments of China and Mexico, to stop such production and trafficking.

Passed Senate 3/15/2017 Agreed to by unanimous consent.

### **H.Res.336**

115th Congress (2017-2018)

Reaffirming a strong commitment to the United States-Mexico partnership.

**Sponsor: Rep. Engel, Eliot L. [D-NY-16]** (Introduced 05/18/2017)

Passed House 12/12/2017 Agreed to without objection.



# 2018 Presidential Candidates



## Andrés Manuel López Obrador

- 64 years old
- Leftist MORENA party
- Former mayor of Mexico City
- Ran for President in 2006, 2012
- Uncertainty in security and economic policies



## Margarita Zavala

- 50 years old
- Independent
- Wife of former President Calderón
- Former legislator
- Maintain current policies



## Ricardo Anaya Cortés

- 39 years old
- PAN (right) –PRD (left)-led alliance
- Former PAN president, legislator
- Maintain current policies



## José Antonio Meade Kuribreña

- 49 years old
- PRI/PVEM/PANAL
- Former minister in PRI and PAN governments, most recently Finance
- Maintain current policies

## Jaime Rodríguez Calderón

- 60 years old
- Independent
- Former governor of Nuevo León (first independent governor)
- Roots in PRI



# The Answer? Rule of Law

Many U.S. government officials and policymakers have concerns about the Mexican government's capacity to decrease the violence in Mexico and effectively curb the power of the country's DTOs. The current government's reliance on a strategy of targeting drug kingpins has reduced the violence in some cases but not in a sustainable way. For some observers, Mexico's DTO challenge remains largely an organized crime or mafia problem, coupled with endemic corruption. Accordingly, these analysts contend that the most important tools for managing the problem include long-term institutional reform to replace a culture of illegality and corruption with one of rule of law and respect for lawful authority.

***-Mexico: Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking Organizations, 2017***