Drug Trafficking and Violence in Mexico

Number of DTO-Related Homicides at Mid-Year (July 2, 2010)

Overview

During the past five years, Mexico has experienced a sharp increase in violence associated with drug trafficking organizations (DTOs). While the Mexican government sporadically releases official information on the number of DTO-related homicides, the most regular and widely available data are reported by media sources that monitor the violence. The Trans-Border Institute relies on reports from the Mexican daily newspaper, Reforma, which provides the most conservative estimates available among major media organizations in Mexico.

In general, these data suggest that the number of drug related homicides has grown significantly since the mid-2000s. The estimated number of DTO-related killings was estimated at 2,120 in 2006, 2,280 in 2007, 5,153 in 2008, and 6,587 in 2009. By mid-year 2010, there have been over 5,700 DTO-related killings. In 2010, these killings have been most heavily concentrated in the states of Chihuahua (with 1,491) and Sinaloa (with 1,127). Mexican authorities note that the majority of killings are perpetrated by and among organized crime groups, though over 360 police and 35 military personnel were killed so far this year.

The general trend over the last 18 months has been an overall increase in drug related violence identified by Reforma, with violence holding steady or declining in just a few of the states, such as Baja California and Michoacán. The most alarming increases are seen in Chihuahua, Durango, Guerrero, Jalisco, Mexico, Nuevo Leon, Sinaloa, and Tamaulipas.
High Profile Incidents of Violence in 2010:

January 30: 13 young people and two adults killed and 12 injured at a birthday party in Ciudad Juárez

January 31: At least 21 people gunned down in 48-hour period

March 13: At least 28 killed in 24-hour period in Guerrero

March 13: One consular employee and two others linked to the U.S. consulate in Ciudad Juárez killed in separate attacks

March 20: Two students and one other innocent bystander killed in a shootout between authorities and DTO gunmen

April 25: Former mayor Rey Hernández García killed while campaigning for left-right alliance in Guerrero gubernatorial election

April 29: Mayor José Santiago Agustino killed in Guerrero

May 13: Mayoral candidate José Mario Guajardo killed in Tamaulipas


June 14: 29 die in prison during fight among rival drug gangs; 12 federal agents ambushed and killed in Michoacán; 3 federal agents killed in Chihuahua

June 28: Tamaulipas gubernatorial candidate Rodolfo Torre Cantú killed

July 2: 21 die in melee between organized crime groups in Sonora

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