Border Burden: Public security in Mexican border communities and the challenge of polycentricity

DANIEL M. SABET

Georgetown University

April 2009

Presented at the Theorizing Borders through Analyses of Power Relationships Workshop

Luxembourg

Introduction

In 2008, there were between 5,000-6,000 organized crime related killings in Mexico, and Mexican border cities have been particularly affected by the violence. Since at least 2005, organized criminal groups have been in a violent struggle over territorial control for prime trafficking routes in the United States. The effect of this conflict is evidenced by both numerous statistics and an equal number of personal stories detailing a staggering numbers of deaths, dramatic increases in violent crimes, and a overwhelming sense of insecurity.

Residents of border communities have pushed public security up to the top of the political agenda. As local governments are closest to the problem and more closely tied to their constituents, they have been under particular pressure from border residents. Nonetheless, local governments lack the legal jurisdiction and the financial resources to provide solutions to these challenges. Border residents are therefore dependent on the federal government, but even the federal government has been unable to offer a sufficient response: partially because of the size of the challenge, partially because of corruption in its own ranks, but also because its prospects for success are highly dependent on the United States.

Understanding the current levels of violence requires understanding the failure of cooperation among the numerous government actors involved in the public security policy arena. While organized crime has developed a transnational network that is able to penetrate the border and earn an estimated $10-30 billion annually, the governing response to organized crime has been fragmented and uncoordinated among municipal, state, and federal governments in Mexico and the U.S. This paper seeks to document and describe the diverse security challenges that location along the border has created for Mexican border residents by analyzing the northward and southward flows of drugs, arms, and migrants. Second, the paper argues that the policy arena has become increasingly pluralistic, involving a diversity of municipal, state, federal, organized crime, and civil society actors on both sides of the border. This recent pluralism requires new governance structures based on the notion of polycentricity that have not yet been forthcoming.

Flows, bottlenecks, and eddies

A decade and a half after the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement, there is an impressive flow of goods and services across the U.S.-Mexico border. In many ways Mexican border communities benefit enormously from their location. Mexican border cities like Ciudad Juárez and Tijuana rank as some of the most competitive and dynamic economies in Mexico. Nonetheless, in terms of security, location along the border is undoubtedly a major liability.

An analogy is useful: when a river flows through a barrier that obstructs its path a bottleneck is produced, creating a backlog of water upstream of the barrier. Once crossing a barrier, water does not always surge forward but is often guided into eddies, or currents that flow counter to the main current. In terms of public security, Mexican border communities suffer from both bottlenecks and eddies.

Rules preventing the northward flow of drugs and undocumented migrants, both of which are in substantial demand in the United States, have created illegal "business" empires unbound by the law and all too willing to employ violence to transport their "goods." Moreover, the rules have created a bottleneck at the border and a subsequent backlog of the goods on the Mexican side. The backlog of drugs has served to foster a local market for narcotics that greatly exceeds that of other Mexican cities. The backlog of migrants also produces security concerns. While the empirical relationship between migrants and crime is less certain, police departments and many border residents view a large population without stable employment or resources and absent a social support network as both a target of and susceptible participant in criminal activities.

(Insert Figure 1 here)

However, as shown in Figure 1, there is also a southward flow of goods. The first such good is money, or profits from the drug trade in the U.S. Once money crosses the border, it tends to eddy on the Mexican side. While some of the money will move further south to fund operations throughout the country, a significant portion will remain in the border communities, providing resources to criminal organizations that are used to buy off government officials, hire more "employees," and purchase arms. The trafficking of arms that produces a second eddy. Conflict among Mexico's warring criminal organizations has dramatically increased the demand for arms, which are easily obtained in the U.S. and flow illegally into Mexico. As with drug money, some of the arms flow south into the rest of Mexico, but much of the weapons will remain in the border communities.

A final eddy is produced by deported or "removed" migrants, which also flow from north to south, some returning to their home communities but many remaining in the border region with the intention to cross again in the future. This recreates the backlog of migrants hoping to cross into the U.S., but it also introduces a new challenge. While many removals are migrants caught trying to cross the border, an increasing number are deportees from the interior of the U.S., some of whom have been removed precisely as a result of criminal convictions. All of these flow, bottlenecks, and eddies create security challenges that will be discussed in greater detail below; however, it is sufficient to conclude at this point that they present very complex governance challenges to Mexican border communities.

From unitary to fragmented actors: Drug trafficking and organized crime

The notion of "games" between unitary actors offers a useful heuristic tool to conceptualize public security problems along the border. In the arena of drug trafficking during the latter portion of the twentieth century, it was possible to imagine three games between three sets of actors: organized crime, the Mexican government, and the U.S. government. In these games, actors have the options to either cooperate or conflict with one another ("cooperate" or "defect" in the parlance of game theory). As has been noted by several researchers, during the twentieth century, the game between organized crime and the Mexican government was generally one of "collusive corruption."[1] Simply put, government officials benefited

---

[1] Bailey, John and Matthew M. Taylor, 2007, "Evade, Corrupt, or Confront? Organized Crime and the State in Mexico and Brazil. Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Latin American Studies Association, Montreal, Canada, September 6-8. Luis Astorga ; Blancornelas, Payan; Luis Astorga. 2005. *El Siglo de las Drogas: El narcotráfico, del Porfiriato al nuevo milenio.* México: Plaza & Janés Blancornelas, Jesús. 2002. *El Cártel: Los Arellano Félix: La mafia más poderosa en la historía de América Latina.* México: Plaza & Janés.

from bribes and avoided violence while organized crime obtained unhindered leeway to conduct business. Dating back to the Nixon Administration's declaration of a war on drugs in the 1970's and the emergence of the border as the preferred smuggling route for Colombian cocaine in the 1980's, the game between the U.S. and organized crime has been one of conflict.[2] Finally the game between the U.S. and Mexican government has traditionally been a mix of cooperation and conflict. As Mexico was primarily a transit route for drugs bound for the U.S., drug trafficking was often viewed in Mexico as a U.S. problem. While the U.S. pushed Mexico to do more to limit the flow of drugs, Mexico sought to balance the threat of organized crime with the demands of its powerful northern neighbor.[3]

The product of these games was something that could be considered an equilibrium that entailed (1) relative peace in Mexico, (2) the largely successful introduction of drugs into the U.S. despite numerous arrests and seizures by U.S. authorities, (3) the strengthening and enrichment of Mexican organized crime, and (4) the corruption of Mexican law enforcement.

The use of games as a heuristic is problematic in that diverse sets of actors (e.g. the Mexican government) cannot necessarily be treated as unitary. During this time, there were of course Mexican governmental efforts to fight organized crime as there were cases of U.S. governmental corruption. Generally speaking, however, the unitary actor assumption appears to explain the status quo in the latter part of the 20th century. Nonetheless, a series of events beginning in the final two decades of the previous century caused these actors to fragment and with them the equilibrium that governed the drug trade and public security on the U.S.-Mexico border.

While traditionally dominated by a powerful central government controlled by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), Mexico undertook a process of both democratization and decentralization, ending the PRI's hegemony, increasing the relevance of state and local governments, and ending the ability of the Mexican state to enter into pacts with organized criminal groups.[4] As a result, while some government

---

[2] Bagley, Bruce and William O. Walker (eds.) 1994. *Drug Trafficking in the Americas.* Miami: University of Miami Press.

[3] Gomez, Maria Idalia and Dario Fritz. 2005. *Con la muerte en el bosillo: Seis desaforadas historias del narcotráfico.* Mexico: Editorial Seix Barral.

[4] Several authors have argued this point, including Luis Astorga *El siglo de las drogas;* Tony Payan 2006. The Drug War and the U.S.-Mexico Border: The State of Affairs.. *South Atlantic Quarterly.* 105(4): 863-880; Yáñez Romero, José Arturo. 2009. Drug-Trafficking-Related Violence in Mexico: Organization and Expansion. Forthcoming in *Voices of Mexico.* Vol. 84: 83-88.

actors were still willing to pursue collusive corruptive strategies, others were combating the cartels.

A similar fragmentation occurred within the ranks of organized crime. Several powerful criminal organizations have dominated the flow of drugs into the United States, including the Gulf Cartel in Tamaulipas, the Juárez Cartel in Ciudad Juárez, the Arellano Félix Cartel in Tijuana, and the Sinaloa cartel with a base in the state of Sinaloa.[5] These groups had coexisted in relative peace since Mexican since the 1989 division of Mexican territory following the arrest of traditional drug kingpin Miguel Ángel Félix. However, a series of events in the early 2000's interrupted the uneasy equilibrium that existed between the rival groups. Concurrently (1) the U.S. market began to shift from Andean produced cocaine to synthetic drugs, (2) crossing drugs into the U.S. became more difficult in the post 9-11 security environment, and (3) several Mexican *capos* were arrested by the Mexican federal government, which was transitioning from a strategy of collusive corruption to one of conflict. This shifting environment weakened some of the cartels, disrupting the balance of power between them and creating power struggles for territorial control.

The first front of these war between rival cartels emerged in 2005 in the border town of Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas. Nuevo Laredo is a major transit hub for legal commerce, which means it is also an ideal location to transport illegal goods. The Gulf Cartel had traditionally controlled Nuevo Laredo, but it had become weakened by the arrest of several of its leaders and was believed to be controlled by Osiel Cárdenas Guillen from his prison cell.[6] The Sinaloa cartel attempted to develop a presence in this traditional Gulf Cartel stronghold, but the Gulf Cartel fought back. The latter criminal group had been the first to invest in what has at times been described as a armed paramilitary wing, known as the Zeta's, whose original members were highly trained anti-narcotics officers that had defected from the Mexican army. In total, there were an estimated 228 deaths related to drug violence in Nuevo Laredo's state of Tamaulipas in 2005 as a result of the conflict.[7] The city gained international media attention when the

---

[5] Jose Arturo Yáñez Romero has argued that the number of organized criminal groups in Mexico is far more numerous and diverse than the 4-10 groups that are normally cited and might number as many as 130. Yáñez Romero. Drug-Trafficking-Related Violence in Mexico: Organization and Expansion.

[6] Ravelo, Ricardo. 2005. *Los Capos: Las narco-rutas de México*. Mexico City: Debolsillo.

[7] Merlos, Andrea. "Nueve mil ejecutados en sexenio foxista, reportan." *El Universal.* January 2, 2007; A more detailed discussion of the conflict in Nuevo Laredo can be found in Payan. The Drug War and the U.S.-Mexico Border.

head of the municipal police was assassinated hours after he took office.[8] The conflict expanded to the neighboring border state of Nuevo León, and a second front opened in the states of Guerrero and Michoacan on Pacific coast.

Similar and increasingly more violent conflicts would break out all along the border. In Tijuana, Baja California, the Arellano Felix family had dominated the drug trade since the 1990's, however, the death of one of the Arellano Felix brothers and the capture of several others in the 2000's led to the decline of the organization. Formally the cartel is in the hands of a young nephew to the Arellano Felix brothers, Luís Fernando Sánchez Arellano; however, in early 2008, one of the cartel's chief operators, Eduardo García Simentel broke off from the traditional leadership and aligned itself with elements of the Sinaloa Cartel, itself in a factional fight.[9] Intense conflict between these two rival groups produced the vast majority of the state's 604 organized crime related killings in 2008 (See Table 1).

(Insert Table 1 here)

Despite the extent of the violence in Nuevo Laredo in 2005 and Tijuana in 2008, it pales in comparison to the 2008-2009 conflict in Ciudad Juárez between the Juarez Cartel and the Sinaloa Cartel. The Juarez cartel had been working in partnership with the Sinaloa cartel; however, it is believed that the relationship turned to conflict when the Juarez cartel began charging its partner for the right to cross drugs in its territory. Whatever the cause of the conflict, the fighting there led to an estimated 1,649 deaths in 2008, a number that has continued to grow throughout 2009 and invited comparisons with Baghdad. Only a massive military deployment of thousands of military personnel in March 2009 appeared to slow the blood letting.

While some commentators have been reassured that the majority of the killings have been participants in organized crime, Mexican society has increasingly born the burden of the conflict. To offer a few examples from Tijuana in 2008: a civil society group called Asociación Esperanza Contra las Desapariciones Forzadas y la Impunidad A.C (The Hope Against Forced Kidnappings and Impunity Association) reported in an interview that in the first half of 2008, they documented 134

---

[8] Marshall, Claire. "Gang Wars Plague Mexican Drugs Hub." *BBC News*. August 18, 2005.

[9] Camarena, Kriztian. "Opera 'El Chapo' en TJ." Tijuana, *Frontera.* November 13, 2008. A more detailed discussion of the conflict in Tijuana can be found in Daniel Sabet. 2009. "Collusive Corruption in Disequilibrium: The Relationship between Organized Crime and Law Enforcement in Tijuana." Unpublished.

kidnappings.[10] Military personnel became increasingly visible as they established checkpoints throughout the city, surrounded public hospitals attending to wounded cartel members, and eventually took over policing in the eastern half of the city. A four hour confrontation between authorities and organized crime took place alongside a nursery school, and 450 children had to be evacuated in the midst of a shootout. A baby was killed by crossfire from a shootout between police and criminals. A family was accidentally killed by hit men attempting to assassinate a police officer. In other words, citizens became both targets of the violence and found themselves unintentionally caught up in the crossfire. As organized criminal groups have seen their market shrink under intense competition and as they have dedicated more resources to fighting off rivals, they have diversified into other activities, including theft, kidnapping, and local drug sales, to raise additional funds. As Table 1 indicates, Mexico as a whole and the border states in particular are suffering from a high incidence of organized crime related killings, high crime victimization rates, and an acute sense of insecurity.

Clearly the three original games have changed. Rather than a simple game between the state and organized crime, the state has fractured into several political parties and numerous state and municipal governments as organized crime has splintered into warring factions If collusive corruption was the governance mechanism to prevent violence in the past, no successful replacement has emerged. The game between the U.S. and Mexico is also changing, as extreme violence, the diversification of organized crime, and the emergence of a domestic drug market, has made drug trafficking and organized crime a Mexican national security priority rather than simply a U.S. one. This transformation does lay the prospect for a shift to cooperative strategies between the U.S. and Mexico, but as Mexico is paying the price for a drug trade that emerged to meet U.S. drug demand, there is also the potential for conflict. Given the current state of violence and these changing games, this paper asks: what is the appropriate governance mechanism for the security of Mexican border communities in the 21st century.

Polycentricity

John Dewey argued that the need for government in the modern world is the result of negative externalities, or spillover effects, created by private actions.[11] While the focus of this paper is public security, an analogy of environmental concerns is illustrative. In a purely open market, a factory

---

[10] While the number is far above the official statistics, official numbers are unreliable as the vast majority of kidnappings go unreported.

[11] Dewey, John. 1927. *The Public and its Problems.* Athens: Swallow Press.

could pollute a stream with no effect on its product or profitability. Downstream water users would bear the costs of pollution without receiving the economic benefits that the factory's shareholders enjoy. To address this spillover problem, it is necessary for the government of that locality to regulate factory emissions. Regulation can ensure that the factory "internalizes" the negative externality of pollution. By cleaning emissions before releasing them into the water supply, the factory is obligated to bear the costs of pollution and the down stream-users are no longer negatively affected by the factory's effluent.

This same problem is reproduced between governing bodies. A locality might regulate emissions within its territory but prefer to allow downstream communities bear the cost of its pollution. In the case of public security along the U.S.-Mexico border, the negative externalities of U.S. actions are paid by Mexico rather than internalized by the U.S. To illustrate, many U.S. residents use drugs, which fuels the drug trade, enriches organized crime, and produces a backlog of drugs in Mexican border communities. In addition, the U.S. public insists on its right to bear arms, which means that organized crime can easily obtain guns in the U.S. to fuel violence in Mexico.

The challenge of "internalizing negative externalities" provides the justification for larger governing bodies that do not just regulate emissions within one community but across the boundaries of communities. But there are problems with this centralization tendency when applied to the case at hand. Both Mexico and the United States are constitutionally federal systems and there are constitutional limits to what authority can be surrendered to larger forms of government. Moreover, there is no governing body that can dictate regulations to both the U.S. and Mexico.

Perhaps more importantly, the desirability of larger, more centralized forms of government is also questionable. As governing authority becomes centralized, those making decisions about how to solve local problems are not necessarily the ones affected by those problems. If democracy is functioning effectively, local governments can be expected to be more responsive to needs of local constituencies. In addition, solving many local problems requires local knowledge and solutions unique to the needs of the problem; however, large governments might be too clumsy or inflexible to obtain or apply local knowledge.[12] Allison Rowland, for example, notes that the desire to centralize public security in Mexico runs contrary to much

[12] Ostrom, Elinor, Larry Schroeder, and Susan Wynne. 1993. Institutional Incentives and Sustainable Development: Infrastructure Policies in Perspective. Boulder: Westview Press.

of the U.S. literature, which has advocated a decentralized and community focused approach to addressing public security challenges.[13]

While there is an extensive debate on the virtues of centralization and decentralization to address complex policy problems, writing in 1961, Ostrom, Tiebout, and Warren circumvent the debate and advocate instead for what they term polycentricity.[14] They point out that while political boundaries of nations, states, and municipalities are fixed, new policy boundaries can be drawn around the parameters of a given policy problem. This can result in the creation of a new jurisdiction or informal cooperative arrangements between existing jurisdictions. The authors argue that in practice, polycentricity has been the means by which local governments in the United States have been able to solve a variety of problems that exceed their boundaries and their jurisdiction, including in the area of law enforcement.[15]

The notion of polycentricity becomes important in places like border communities where political boundaries cannot be easily ignored. If there is a flow of arm from Texas into Tamaulipas, then both countries' local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies operating along this smuggling route can in theory cooperate to develop a governance structure capable of confronting the problem. The following sections look at the different policy arenas of drug trafficking, local drug dealing, arms trafficking. The sections detail the security burden that has been placed on Mexican border communities and the failure to create polycentric forms of government to confront these challenges.

Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime

Despite the desirability of polycentricity, because the violence is occurring on Mexican soil, there is a tendency to view it as a Mexican problem rather than a shared binational problem. Of course, there has always been some cooperation between the two countries, evidenced by the significant Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) presence in Mexico, but binational collaboration has confronted two major obstacles. From the Mexican point of view, the U.S. considers its assistance a gift to help a neighbor rather than an admission of responsibility. From the U.S. point of

---

[13] Rowland, Allison M. 2003. La seguridad pública local en México. In Enrique Cabrero Mendoza ed. *Políticas Públicas Municipales: una agenda en construcción.* México: Porruas.

[14] Ostrom, Vincent, Charles M. Tiebout, and Robert Warren. 1961. The Organization of Government in Metropolitan Areas: A Theoretical Inquiry. *American Political Science Review.* Vol. 55: 831-42.

[15] Ostrom, Elinor and Gordon P. Whitaker. 1973. Does Local Community Control of Police Make a Difference? Some Preliminary Findings. *American Journal of Political Science.* Vol. 17(1):48-76.

view, Mexican law enforcement suffers from corruption at the highest levels and is not necessarily a trusted partner.

The announcement of the bilateral aid package known as the Merida Initiative in October 2007 between George W. Bush and Felipe Calderon sought to usher in a new age to security cooperation, but it has also brought old tensions in the bilateral relationship to the surface. The U.S. Congress reduced the size of the aid package and considered amendments to make U.S. support conditional on Mexican actions to address human rights violations and corruption. The potential inclusion of conditions provoked a strong outcry in Mexico, including from President Calderon, and were excluded from the final appropriation.[16] The final aid package of $400 million was passed in June 2008, but by April 2009 only an estimated $7 million had been spent. Moreover, helicopters promised under the agreement would likely not be ready for another two years, which provoked the president of the Mexican lower house to state in a newspaper interview, "What we need is not some overly publicized Merida plan. We need true solidarity."[17]

Given the financial crisis and numerous urgent national priorities, extensive U.S. support will not be forthcoming unless there is consensus that organized crime and violence on the border represent national and public security priorities for the United States. Some signs suggest such recognition. The Obama administration dispatched the Secretary of State, Secretary of Homeland Security, and Attorney General to Mexico for bilateral meetings in March and April of 2008. During her visit, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton captured headlines in both countries when she openly admitted, "Our insatiable demand for illegal drugs fuels the drug trade."[18] The 2009 National Drug Threat Assessment stated that Mexican drug trafficking organizations "maintain drug distribution networks or supply drugs to distributors in at least 230 U.S. cities."[19] And there have also been revelations of the violence spilling over in the U.S., including a dramatic increase in kidnappings in Phoenix, Arizona linked to Mexican organized crime and evidence that Atlanta, Georgia has become a major distribution hub for drugs from Mexico.

For its part, the Mexican federal government has had a difficult time combating corruption within its police ranks. Corruption investigations,

---

[16] Roig-Franzia, Manuel. Anti-Drug Assistance Approved for Mexico; U.S. Lawmakers Responded to Counterparts' Objections. Washington D.C. *Washington Post:* June 28, 2008.

[17] Booth, William and Steve Fainaru. U.S. Aid Delays in Drug War Criticized; Mexicans Seek 'True Solidarity' Washington D.C. *Washington Post:* April 5, 2009.

[18] Landler, Mark. Clinton Says Demand for Illegal Drugs in the U.S. 'Fuels the Drug Trade' in Mexico. Washington D.C. *Washington Post.* March 26, 2009.

[19] National Drug Threat Assessment 2009. Washington D.C.: National Drug Intelligence Center. Report No. 2008-Q0317-005.

such as the Attorney General's Operation Clean-Up, have produced numerous arrests but they have also revealed extensive corruption at the highest levels of the fight against organized crime, including the head of the branch of the Attorney General's office responsible for pursuing organized crime.

But binational collaboration is not the only requirement for a more polycentric form of governance. On the Mexican side of the border, collaboration among Mexican authorities has been equally and if not more problematic than binational cooperation. To illustrate, drug trafficking and participation in organized crime are federal offenses and the responsibility of federal authorities, while homicides are the responsibility of state authorities. As a result, organized crime related killings (which have been occurring on a large scale since 2005) have fallen into a legal black hole and investigated by neither federal nor state authorities. A newspaper report likened trying to determine the results of police investigations to a game of ping pong where the responsibility bounces between the state and federal attorney general's offices.[20] Even the cases of assassinated police officers fall into this black hole, and Yáñez Romero contends, "The 831 drug-related executions of police officers between 2007 and 2008 have not been investigated, nor are their perpetrators in prison in 98% of the cases."[21]

As with the bilateral relationship, there have been efforts to improve domestic cooperation. In August, 2008, for example, the federal government, states, and municipalities all signed a national agreement to improve collaboration. Nonetheless, short-comings in binational cooperation, domestic cooperation, and anti-corruption efforts all produce a governance regime that falls far short of polycentricity.

Narcomenudeo

While traditionally the primary drug-related concern for Mexican border communities has been drug trafficking, local consumption has increased dramatically in recent years. Although increases in drug consumption are a national phenomenon, the border region has always led the country in consumption. When traffickers have a hard time crossing product across the border, a local drug market allows them additional options to still make a quick and easy return. Evidence of this bottleneck effect on domestic drug consumption can be seen in the 2002 Encuesta Nacional de Adicciones, which shows higher self-reported drug use in the

---

[20] Veledíaz, Juan. Homicidios Violentos, los que nadie investiga. Mexico City. *El Universal.* Feb. 23, 2009.

[21] Yáñez Romero, José Arturo. 2009. Drug-Trafficking-Related Violence in Mexico: Organization and Expansion. Forthcoming in *Voices of Mexico.* Vol. 84: 83-88.

north than in the rest of the country. The report estimates that 7.45% of residents age 12-65 in Northern Mexico have used drugs at least once, as compared with 4.87% in Central Mexico and 3.08% in Southern Mexico (See Table 2). The relationship holds for stronger drugs such as cocaine: 3.05% in the North, .071% in the Center, and .052 in the South.[22] While the rates are still low compared to the United States, the problem is only worsening: preliminary results from the 2008 survey reveal that in six years, self-reported drug use had increased 28.9% nationwide.[23]

(Insert Table 2 here)

In border cities such as Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez, the domestic drug market is far larger: a older 1998 study found that 14.7% of Tijuana residents age 12-65 reported using drugs at least once and 9.2% of Ciudad Juárez residents.[24] More recently, local authorities complain about skyrocketing use of low cost, powerful, and addictive methamphetamines. Citing data that they feel is conservative, Case et al. contend that there are approximately 6,000 persons regularly injecting methamphetamines in more than 200 "shooting galleries" in Tijuana.[25] Data from youth rehabilitation centers (Centros de Integración Juveniles) in Tijuana, reveals that among admitted youths, those reporting having at least tried methamphetamines rose from basically 0% in the early 1990's to 82.9% in 2002, surpassing all other drugs, even marijuana.[26]

Like the other negative security impacts of border location, addressing the problem of local drug dealing and consumption suffers from a coordination problem among authorities. All drug related offenses are technically federal crimes and therefore they have traditionally been the jurisdiction of the federal police. Municipal police can in theory only make drug arrests if someone is caught in the act (*en flagrancia).* This arrangement made sense when the primary drug related concern was trafficking rather than local sale and consumption. As local consumption has expanded, however, federal authorities lack the manpower and the local

---

[22] Encuesta Nacional de Adicciones 2002. Mexico City. Consejo Nacional Contra las Adicciones.

[23] Se presentan los resultados preliminares de la Encuesta Nacional de Adicciones 2008. Consejo Nacional contra las Adicciones. Press Release: Sept. 18, 2008.

[24] Encuesta Nacional de Adicciones 1998. Mexico City. Consejo Nacional Contra las Adicciones. This increase over regional averages is not due to an urban-rural division. According to the survey results, self-reported drug consumption is similar across urban and rural areas.

[25] Case, Patricia, Rebeca Ramos, Kimberly C. Brouwer, Michelle Firestone-Cruz, Robin A. Pollini, Steffanie A. Strathdee, Miguel A. Fraga, Thomas L. Patterson. 2007. At the Borders, on the Edge: Use of Injected Methamphetamine in Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*. Vol 10: 23-33.

[26] *Observatorio mexicano en tabaco, alcohol, y otras drogas: 2003*. Mexico City: Consejo Nacional contra las Adicciones.

knowledge to affectively address a problem that exists throughout the nation at not just the city but the neighborhood level. The result has been a legal vacuum and relative impunity for drug operations. Despite local level authorities' repeated assertions of lack of jurisdiction and lack of legal tools to address the problem, frequent cases of police complicity in criminal activities have led many citizens to conclude that law enforcement has failed to respond to drug dealing and other crime problems not because of jurisdictional issues but because of corruption. In fact, it is commonly held that municipal and state police have used the argument of federal jurisdiction to provide legal cover for inaction while accepting bribes from those selling.

The problem requires a legislative solution, but legislative initiatives have not been successful. In 2005, President Vicente Fox, under U.S. pressure, vetoed legislation that would have expanded local authority to address so called *narcomenudeo* because it would have decriminalized small amounts of drugs. The Felipe Calderon administration has been pushing for new legislation since coming into office, however, at the time of this writing, the reform has been held up by political disagreement. The opposition Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) worries that the legislation amounts to tossing a "hot potato" to local authorities, who lack the resources and ability to address the problem: an abdication of federal responsibility. The Democratic Revolution Party (PRD) opposition wants to make sure that dealers and not addicts and consumers are the targets of enforcement efforts.[27]

In the meantime, policing authorities have attempted to fill the gap by creating mixed units made up of municipal, state, and federal authorities: Unidades Mixtas de Atención al Narcomenudeo, or UMAN. In theory the UMAN's should have combined the local knowledge and manpower of local police with federal authority; however, in practice the UMAN's are still dependent on insufficient federal manpower. Moreover, they have favored dissuasive rather than investigative strategies and have been a target for corruption.[28] While there have been some successful enforcement efforts,[29] newspaper reports detail border community neighborhoods where drugs are sold with impunity.[30] The result has been an insufficient enforcement effort and a frustrated citizenry that does not

---

[27] See for example: Jorge Santa Cruz. Perspectivas de Poder. Mexico City. *El Financiero:* March 24, 2009

[28] Rivero, Mary. Pactan procuradores cerco contra narcomenudeo. *Organización Editorial Mexicana:* March 7, 2009.

[29] For example: Caen 36 'puchadores' en una sola noche. Tijuana. *La Frontera:* February 21, 2008.

[30] For example: Salinas, Daniel. Imponen 'malandros' su ley en Zona Norte. Tijuana. *La Frontera:* March 6, 2008.

understand or accept why neighborhood drug dealing continues despite reports and complaints.

Southward flowing arms trafficking

Notable in the increase in violence in Mexican border communities has been organized crime's access to increasingly powerful weapons and an apparent arms race between the various warring criminal groups. The national Attorney General's Office (PGR) reported that from December 1, 2005 to January 22, 2009 it confiscated 31,512 weapons from organized criminal groups including 17,118 assault weapons.[31] Confiscated material included anti-tank weapons, RPG rocket launchers, grenade launchers, and .50 caliber assault rifles. One of the largest busts occurred in November 2008 in the border city of Reynosa and included 314 assault weapons, 126 short range guns, 287 grenades, and over half a million rounds.

The violence in Mexican border cities has reached such extreme levels because of the ability of organized criminal groups to obtain an ample supply of high quality and lethal weapons from the United States. In a recent conference on border security, a Department of Homeland Security official offered his recollection of a meeting with Mexican counterparts in the lead up to the Merida Initiative; one of the chief Mexican negotiators argued that Mexico would far prefer that the U.S. provided no financial support but simply took action to address the flow of weapons into the country.[32] As it turned out, the US was more prepared to offer money than to address such a sensitive political issue.

Through a program called E-Trace, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) is able to trace confiscated weapons and arms found at crime scenes to the original manufacturers or purchasers and potentially identify conduits through which arms are trafficked. Cooperation between ATF and Mexican authorities has increased in recent years and in 2008 a reported 7,700 weapons were traced by the ATF. Of these weapons, it is commonly cited that 90-95% could be tied to the United States.[33]

While U.S. senior law enforcement officials believe the number to be lower, some sources estimate that there are the equivalent of 2,000 weapons

---

[31] El Universal. Es el cártel del Golfo el más violento: PGR. Mexico City. *El Universal:* January 29, 2009

[32] Comments made at Cross Talk II: Building Common Security in North America. North American Center for Transborder Studies. Washington D.C.: February 10-11, 2009.

[33] This number is based on an unidentified ATF document but has been cited in other government documentation, such as the: International Narcotics Control Strategy Report. March 2009. Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. Washington D.C.

crossing the border on a daily basis.[34] U.S. officials have developed enforcement efforts to prevent arms trafficking, such as the ATF's Project Gunrunner and the Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Operation Armas Cruzadas. These programs have produced some success stories, such as the May 2008 seizure of 1,300 weapons from a gun store owner in Phoenix,[35] but the flow of weapons has clearly exceeded interdiction efforts.

Preventing the trafficking in weapons is challenging for a number of reasons. First and foremost, like the flow of drugs northward, there is a high demand for weapons in the south. As criminal organizations have been able to avoid law enforcement to meet the demand for drugs, they have also been able to meet the demand for weapons. Secondly, however, law enforcement efforts are severely constrained by a weak regulatory regime in the United States, the product of legislative loopholes and implementation problems, themselves a consequence of a powerful gun lobby and popular support for the protection of the second amendment right to bear arms. Analysts at the Violence Policy Center, note a variety of loopholes in existing legislation. They include the following:[36]

- Despite regulation of guns sold by federally licensed dealers, there is minimal regulation of the large informal market made up of unlicensed or "hobby" dealers, flea markets, and gun shows. For example, background checks required for guns purchased at licensed dealers are not federally required at gun shows.
- The sale of ammunition is largely unregulated and can be easily bought and sold without background checks or record keeping.
- Despite high penalties if caught, guns are often purchased through "straw" buyers, or surrogates who are able to pass background checks.

---

[34] Dresser, Denise. "Testimony of Denise Dresser." Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Crime and Drugs and Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control Law Enforcement Responses to Mexican Drug Cartels. March 17th, 2009. Washington D.C.. The number 2,000 can also be found in a variety of media reports and appears to originate in a Mexican governmental report.

[35] Goddard, Terry. "Testimony of Terry Goddard." Senate Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on Crime and Drugs and Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control Law Enforcement Responses to Mexican Drug Cartels. March 17th, 2009. Washington D.C. Although the prosecution against Phoenix gun store owner George Iknadosian, who was alleged to have sold around 700 assault weapons illegally through straw purchases was dismissed on a legal technicality. .

[36] Tom Diaz. 2008. "Disrupting Arms Trafficking to Mexico." Washington D.C. Violence Policy Center. And Kristen Rand. "Statement of Kristen Rand." Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. Washington D.C.: March 18, 2009.

- Records are not required to be kept on gun sales and secondary sales. As a result, traced guns can often not be traced to the last point of sale.
- A 1989 ban on imported assault rifles was not well enforced during the George W. Bush administration and was re-interpreted to allow gun parts to be imported and assembled in the U.S.
- A 1994 ban on domestically produced assault rifles was easily avoided through cosmetic modifications to such weapons and allowed to lapse during the George W. Bush administration.

As a result of these policy design problems, weapons can be relatively easily purchased in the United States, often in the legal market, and transported to Mexico. In theory, they could be detected at the border by Mexican border and customs authority, the responsibility of the federal government. In practice, however, the Mexican border and customs authority is weak and nets only a small percentage of the total trafficked weapons. Mexican authorities have resisted building up a strong customs presence on the border, which has historically been a target for corruption

In a surprising change in U.S. policy, the Obama administration has enacted emergency revisions of cars heading into Mexico, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton admitted U.S. responsibility for the problem, stating unequivocally, "Our inability to prevent weapons from being illegally smuggled across the border to arm these criminals causes the deaths of police officers, soldiers and civilians."[37] While the actions and statements were well received in Mexico, they provoked condemnation from gun rights lobbying groups like the National Rifle Association, which has a long history of preventing effective gun regulation in the United States. Unable to address the root of the problem, Mexican authorities have instead joined the arms race.

Migration

Border communities are also subject to the north and southbound flow of migrants. On the northbound journey, potentially hundreds of thousands of migrants from Mexico and other countries arrive in Mexican border communities annually hoping to cross into the United States. Crossing is neither immediate nor guaranteed and even successful crossers might spend months in a border community. This implies a large low-income, unemployed or underemployed population far removed from their social support network that local police authorities fear could be tempted to engage in criminal activities. Perhaps more importantly, their presence

[37] Landler, M. "Clinton says demand for illegal drugs in the U.S. 'fuels the Drug Trade' in Mexico."

attracts criminal elements seeking to take advantage of this vulnerable population. Prior to the mid-1990's, the human smuggling business was made up of small scale operations that might have charged $50-100 to cross a migrant. However, increased border enforcement in the mid-1990's beginning with Operation Gatekeeper in San Diego, Operation Hold the Line in Texas, and Operation Safeguard in Arizona made crossing the border far more difficult, providing an unintended boom to illegal human smugglers, whose rates climbed into the thousands of dollars.[38]

Combined with the northward flow is the southward flow of undocumented migrants formally deported and voluntarily removed from the U.S. by the Department of Homeland Security. While some "removed" migrants return to their community of origin, many stay in the border communities or continue to attempt to cross into the U.S. The precise size of the this migrant population is unknown. The Department of Homeland Security reported that it made 960,756 apprehensions of "illegal aliens" in 2007, of which 89% were along the border (See Table 3). Of course, this number is much larger than the size of the emigrating community, as individuals can be apprehended numerous times in a given year. Mexican authorities at the Instituto Nacional de Migración report much smaller numbers of what they term "repatriation events," reflecting the lack of coordination between U.S. and Mexican authorities in regulating the southward flow of migrants (See Table 4). Even given disagreement on the numbers, the burden on border communities is substantial when one considers that there were, according to Mexican authorities, 224,858 orderly repatriations in Tijuana, Baja California in 2008: an average of 616 a day. In Nogales, Sonora, a community with a 2005 official population count of 193,517, there were 153,736 repatriations in 2008. Of course, many of these repatriations involve repeat offenders, however, the numbers offer a sense of the impressive north and southward flows across the border.

(Insert Tables 3 and 4 here)

Also among the southward flow of "removed" migrants is an increasingly number of "aliens" with criminal convictions in the United States. In 2007, 75,243 convicted criminals were removed to Mexico, and this number is expected to increase in the coming years.

As anti-immigration sentiment grew in the U.S., the George W. Bush administration's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) developed several initiatives to identify and deport undocumented migrants. Among the priority groups for removal were those with criminal convictions. The National Fugitive Operations Program was expanded from 8 teams in 2003

---

[38] See for example, Ellingwood, Ken. 2005. *Hard Line: Life and Death on the U.S.-Mexico Border.* New York: Vintage: 84-85.

with a $9 million budget to over a hundred teams with a $218 million budget in 2008. Their objective is to remove those with active deportation orders, giving priority to "aliens" that pose a threat to national security and public safety.[39] The Criminal Alien Program was also created to identify criminal aliens serving time in federal, state, or local prisons and begin deportation proceedings against them so that they could be deported at the completion of their prison term. In 2008, charging documents were issued against 221,085 "criminal aliens," up from just 67,850 in 2006.

Even more controversial is a program known as Rapid REPAT (Removal of Eligible Parolees Accepted for Transfer), which is operational in Arizona, New York, Rhode Island, and Puerto Rico and allows for the removal of convicted criminals of nonviolent crimes *prior* to serving their sentences. The program is openly advocated for as a cost saving mechanism for local authorities. From 2005-2008, it is estimated that Arizona saved $18 million in detention costs.[40]

While these programs might be appealing from a U.S. perspective and the perspective of U.S. local governments looking to save money, it is primarily Mexican border communities that are bearing the burden. Surprisingly, there appears to be limited formal coordination on the transfer of aliens removed from the U.S., even for those with a criminal record or those who have been released early from prison. Interviewed local law enforcement officers in Tijuana reported having absolutely no information about those being repatriated into the country. With hundreds of repatriations daily, the local police have responded with a policy of "preventive detention," which might mean arrest for up to 36 hours. Municipal authorities contend that the repatriated migrants represent a public safety threat, citing the increased numbers of repatriated criminals. The Binational Human Rights Center (Centro Binacional de Derechos Humanos – CBDH), a local human rights group argues that the policy is a violation of the rights of migrants and an easy way for local authorities to boost arrest statistics.[41]

The prospects for binational collaboration are far worse on the immigration issue than the other security concerns discussed here. While

---

[39] Although a study by the Migration Policy Institute finds that in practice the NFOP targeted "illegal aliens" more generally and ignored its mandate to meet arrest quotas. Margot Mendelson, Shayna Strom, Michael Wishnie. 2009. Collateral Damage: An Examination of ICE's Fugitive Operations Program. Washington D.C.: Migration Policy Institute.

[40] Rapid REPAT Factsheet. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Other states are hoping to join the program, including Washington state, which estimates that it could save $9 million over two years. These programs are currently under review by the Barack Obama administration and might be ended or reformed.

[41] Centro Binacional de Derechos Humanos. 2008. Migrantes Repatriados: Arresto y detenciones arbitrarias. Tijuana: Centro Binacional de Derechos Humanos.

arguably, the U.S. and Mexico have a similar interest in curbing the drug trade, they have opposing positions on immigration. Although the U.S. has spends billions annually to construct fences and man an almost 20,000 strong border patrol, Mexico contends that Mexican citizens have the right to travel freely in their country and takes only limited actions to stem the northward flow of migrants. As there is little cooperation on addressing the northward flow of migrants, there is also little coordination on addressing the southward flow.

Discussion

This paper has discussed how the northward flow of drugs and migrants and the southward flow of money, arms, and removed migrants has produced bottlenecks and eddies in Mexican border communities, resulting in serious security challenges that are primarily a product of geographic location. Each of these flows produces a slightly different, although often related, impact. In the case of drugs, demand for illegal drugs in the United States and a strong U.S. law enforcement effort to prevent drugs from entering the country have resulted in the consolidation of organized criminal groups along the border. The bottleneck of drugs waiting to cross has facilitated the development of a local market and conflict between criminal groups has led to arms trafficking and extreme violence. In the case of migration, demand for low-wage workers in the U.S. and limited job opportunities in Mexico have produced the northward flow of migrants. The increasing migrant population in the U.S. has produced an anti-immigration backlash that led to stronger immigration enforcement, a tighter bottleneck at the border, and the removal of migrants, including those with criminal convictions, into Mexican border communities.

Despite the urgent problems created by these challenges, no effective polycentric governance mechanisms have emerged to replace the three simple games that governed the border region for decades. By contrast, drugs, arms, money, and human traffickers are able to coordinate activities across multiple jurisdictions to successfully transport their goods across the border.

Given the temporal correlation, it is tempting to view the democratization and decentralization of Mexican authorities as the cause of the violence. From there it is a short step to consider returning to either "pacting" with organized crime or centralizing Mexico's law enforcement response. The problem with the first tendency is that "collusive corruption" allowed for the strengthening of organized crime and the weakening of law enforcement that made the current violence possible. A return to such a strategy might provide short term reductions in violence, but it would only further empower criminal groups and undermine law enforcement.

Although *open* advocacy of returning to pacts is at least politically unpopular, a push towards centralization has considerable political momentum. At the beginning of his administration, Felipe Calderon pushed for the creation of a national police force to avoid the coordination problems currently confronting the government. Legislators in the congress have been resistant to extending municipalities and states jurisdiction over drug sales and consumption. In addition, as a result of law enforcement corruption, the national military, rather than federalized law enforcement, has primary responsibility for the fight against organized crime.

While not unreasonable given the documented corruption in local law enforcement, the sidelining of local authorities has been problematic for two reasons. First, it has allowed local authorities to abdicate responsibility and continue to tolerate corruption in their ranks. Second, it has meant a failed opportunity to bring much needed manpower and local knowledge to support the limited efforts of an overextended federal police force and the blunt force of the military.

To the administration's credit, there has been an unprecedented effort to promote the professionalization of local law enforcement. Through a program called the Municipal Public Security Subsidy (SUBSEMUN), the Calderon administration has offered municipalities much needed financial resources to purchase equipment; however, the money comes with strings attached. To obtain the funds, municipal authorities must subject their officers to integrity control tests and implement new policies aimed towards professionalization. The strategy to rely on the military in the medium term while professionalizing local law enforcement for the long term is probably the best possible strategy given the circumstances; however, success will likely depend more on the latter than the former.

Although effective polycentric governance mechanisms are desperately needed on the Mexican side of the border, Mexico cannot solve what is a transnational security crisis without the support of the United States. Dramatically reducing U.S. drug demand might be outside of the realm of possibility; however, actions could be taken to close loopholes in gun-control enforcement, improve information sharing mechanisms, improve coordination on deportations, combat money laundering, and share the financial costs of fighting the organized criminal groups. There does appear to be political will in the Obama and Calderon administrations to address many of these issues more effectively; however, previous optimistic predictions of historic cooperation between the Bush and Fox administration turned out to be more talk than substance.[42]

---

[42] For one such hopeful prediction, see: Randy Willoughby. 2003. Crouching Fox, Hidden Eagle: Drug trafficking and transnational security – A perspective from the Tijuana – San Diego border. *Crime, Law, and Social Change.* Vol. 40: 113-142

What is clear, however, is that neither the Mexican federal government alone nor the U.S. government alone can overcome the current security challenges facing Mexican border communities. Absent a more polycentric form of governance entailing cooperation across jurisdictions and across the binational divide, the security crisis and/or the presence of strong organized criminal networks along the border will likely continue.

Figure 1: Bottlenecks and eddies on the Mexican side of the border

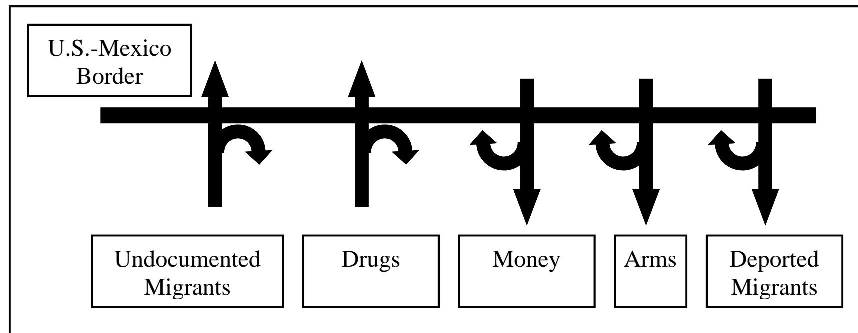

Table 1: Crime and insecurity by state

State	Total estimated organized crime related killings (2008)	Total estimated organized crime related killings (2007)	Total estimated self-reported victimizations per 100,000 (2007)	Percent who feel insecure in their state (2007)	Percent who feel insecure in their municipality (2007)
Chihuahua	1,649	145	7,200	64	59
Sinaloa	680	346	3,300	74	55
Baja California	604	154	8,700	74	67
México	359	111	9,800	73	56
Guerrero	287	253	4,200	69	47
Durango	268	130	3,900	43	35
Michoacán	233	238	4,300	63	39
Jalisco	145	93	6,300	50	39
Sonora	137	125	6,800	40	36
Distrito Federal	135	145	14,800	85	66
Tamaulipas	110	89	8,400	63	44
Nuevo León	78	107	8,300	64	53
Guanajuato	61	40	7,300	34	26
Coahuila	53	29	3,500	48	37
Oaxaca	49	34	2,900	60	30
Hidalgo	37	37	2,200	43	25
Aguascalientes	35	27	5,600	63	51
San Luís Potosí	32	13	4,300	47	31
Veracruz	30	48	3,900	45	30
Chiapas	30	12	2,300	44	36
Morelos	25	17	6,400	52	40
Zacatecas	24	13	1,700	52	38
Tabasco	20	24	5,000	78	47
Quintana Roo	18	34	7,800	57	52
Yucatán	17	1	3,200	35	27
Puebla	15	2	7,400	49	31
Querétaro	7	4	3,100	37	24
Nayarit	5	2	3,400	35	21
Campeche	3	2	4,700	48	33
Colima	3	0	3,100	10	10
Tlaxcala	1	1	4,500	55	29
Baja California Sur	0	1	4,900	38	37
National	5,153	2,280	6,700	59	44

Note: The crime thermometer is a derived from three indicators, self-reported victimization per 100,000, proportion of crimes involving a weapon, and the number of homicides per 100,000.
Source: Victimization and insecurity figures come from the large 'n' Quinta Encuesta Nacional sobre Inseguridad, 2008, Instituto Ciudadano de Estudios sobre la Inseguridad A.C. Data on organized crime related data was compiled by the Transborder Institute using data from

Reforma newspaper. 2008 numbers are only through December 22. Numbers are not definitive and other sources, including *El Universal* have placed the number of organized crime related killings at 5,700.

Table 2: Percent that has used drugs at least once

	Males	Females	Total
North	12.35%	2.73%	7.45%
Center	8.0%	2.41%	4.87%
South	5.77%	1.0%	3.08%

Note: Frequencies not provided. "Drugs" include illegal drugs and abused prescription drugs and do not include alcohol and tobacco.
Source: Encuesta Nacional de Adicciones 2002. Mexico City. Consejo Nacional Contra las Adicciones. Data based on a national sample of 11,252 respondents.

Table 3: Apprehensions, removals, and criminals removed according to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security

	2007	**2006**	**2005**	**2004**
Declared Mexican apprehensions	854,261	1,057,253	1,093,382	1,141,802†
Non-Mexican apprehensions	106,495	149,204	197,760	99,287
Total apprehensions	**960,756**	**1,206,457**	**1,291,142**	**1,241,089**
Removals to Mexico	208,996	183,445	144,840	148,551
Removals to other countries	110,386	88,944	63,681	54,291
Total removals*	**319,382**	**272,389**	**208,521**	**202,842**
Criminals removed to Mexico	75,243	70,951	68,840	68,771
Criminals removed to other countries	24,681	24,801	20,566	20,126
Total criminals removed	**99,924**	**95,752**	**89,406**	**88,897**

Source: Department of Homeland Security *Annual Report: Immigration Enforcement Actions.* Reports for 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007
Note: Apprehensions include those not along the U.S.-Mexico Border. Border Patrol apprehensions along the border make up 89.38% of apprehensions. If one person is apprehended 10 times in a year that would be considered 10 apprehensions not 1. Removals are those that have been through a formal removal process. Many more return "voluntarily" and are not processed through formal immigration proceedings. Criminals have been found

guilty of a criminal offense in the US. In 2007, 33.5% were charged for drugs, 21.6% immigration, 11.1% assault, 3.5% burglary, 2.9% larceny, 2.9% sexual assault, 2.8% robbery, 2.4% family offenses, 1.9% sex offenses, 1.9% stolen vehicles, 15.7% other. Those considered Mexican by DHS are not necessarily Mexican citizens. Data is for the fiscal year, which ends prior to December.
*DHS revised its measurement of removals in 2007. Based on the new measurement there were 280,974 and 246,431 removals in 2006 and 2005 respectively. The original measures are presented here because they offer a break down of removals to Mexico.
†The number of 2004 Declared Mexican Apprehensions is an approximation based on DHS figure of 92% of total apprehensions

Table Y: Ordered and secure repatriation events reported by Mexico's National Migration Institute

	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
COAHUILA	**13,589**	**6,271**	**10,110**	**15,150**	**13,216**	**13,395**	**22,723**
Ciudad Acuña	11,811	4,815	6,005	6,709	6,559	5,794	7,464
Piedras Negras	1,778	1,456	4,105	8,441	6,657	7,601	15,259
TAMAULIPAS	**47,186**	**32,946**	**25,376**	**37,339**	**44,119**	**50,558**	**60,480**
Nuevo Laredo	26,712	18,981	14,772	27,420	30,140	27,044	24,127
Miguel Alemán	242	2,257	2,450	1,444	2,855	3,043	5,675
Reynosa	12,104	5,576	1,883	5,705	8,741	17,152	25,628
Matamoros	8,128	6,132	6,271	2,770	2,383	3,319	5,050
SONORA	**174,558**	**175,011**	**191,075**	**204,234**	**186,393**	**201,974**	**184,888**
Nogales	153,736	129,330	115,571	87,340	52,165	39,995	37,741
San Luís Río Colorado	2,294	17,621	48,530	74,318	78,089	38,841	35,231
Agua Prieta	7,913	14,476	15,103	26,407	31,668	56,911	56,552
Sonoyta	0	0	0	0	3,129	6,036	8,490
Naco	10,615	13,584	11,871	16,169	20,925	58,771	46,232
Sasabe	0	0	0	0	417	1,420	642
CHIHUAHUA	**59,045**	**87,194**	**104,284**	**98,411**	**90,451**	**84,136**	**95,727**
Ciudad Juárez	56,091	83,763	85,693	67,132	59,881	55,595	65,642
Ojinaga	2,950	3,175	3,097	4,347	5,828	6,119	4,608
Porfirio Parra	0	2	142	212	313	817	1,103
Puerto Palomas	4	16	12,396	25,647	22,427	19,935	21,159
Zaragoza	0	238	2,956	1,073	2,002	1,670	3,215
BAJA CALIFORNIA	**265,075**	**213,187**	**183,934**	**181,633**	**180,765**	**209,886**	**219,590**
Tijuana	224,857	173,580	137,878	136,966	88,939	78,827	59,415
Tijuana (Otay)	1	266	2,635	8,358	42,343	55,426	58,130
Algodones	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Mexicali	40,063	39,335	43,377	36,215	49,302	75,463	102,029
Tecate	154	6	44	94	181	170	14
TOTAL	**559,453**	**514,609**	**514,779**	**536,767**	**514,944**	**559,949**	**583,408**

Source: *Instituto Nacional de Migración*