How the United States Can Engage with Mexico to Reduce Violence, Strengthen the Rule of Law, and Combat Human Rights Abuses

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Mexico suffered its most violent year on record in 2019. The country registered 35,588 homicides nationwide, an average of 97 killings a day. This tally surpassed 2018’s record of 33,341 killings, which had already represented a 33% increase over 2017.¹

Criminal groups have expanded their illicit activities beyond the drug trade, into the production and sale of natural resources as a means to exert control over territories and to obtain financial gains, often with the support and/or acquiescence of local authorities. Other illicit activities include kidnapping, extortion, oil theft, pirated goods, vehicle theft, and human trafficking and smuggling. Human rights defenders and journalists working to denounce corruption, organized crime, and human rights abuses continue to face attacks and killings at alarming rates.

Compounding the crippling violence plaguing Mexico are the country’s weak justice institutions. Experts estimate that only around 5% of homicide cases ever end in a conviction.² This impunity has prompted widespread public mistrust in justice institutions: according to national victimization surveys, nearly 90% of crimes are never reported in Mexico.³

In recent months, a number of high-profile acts of violence in Mexico have garnered national and international media attention and highlighted the extensive security challenges facing the López Obrador administration. This includes the tragic murder of nine women and children who were dual U.S. and Mexican citizens in November 2019.⁴

Within this context, we encourage a much stronger focus on addressing human rights violations, strengthening the rule of law, and combating corruption within the U.S.-Mexico bilateral relationship as longer-term investments to respond to ongoing violence and impunity. Evidence demonstrates that the
deployment of Mexican soldiers across the country to carry out public security tasks over the past decade has not effectively reduced crime and violence and has resulted in grave human rights violations. As such, the United States should not provide assistance to Mexico’s armed forces for law enforcement activities, and instead should focus on improving civilian policing and ensuring strong internal and external accountability mechanisms within law enforcement agencies.

PRIMARY DRIVERS OF VIOLENCE IN MEXICO

DRUG TRAFFICKING

Estimates suggest that since 2006, Mexico has suffered around 150,000 murders related to organized crime. This represents somewhere between 30-50% of all intentional homicides during this period.5

According to official government statistics, the number of children working with criminal organizations appears to have risen by 150% from 2015 to 2018. Criminal groups recruit youth to act as lookouts and to transport drugs (while they frequently target young men and boys, girls are also recruited). Older and more experienced youth may be forced to commit other crimes such as extortion, kidnapping, and murder.6

The U.S.-backed “drug kingpin” strategy employed by previous Mexican administrations has led to the splintering of prominent organized crime groups: the four drug trafficking organizations that were dominant in 2006 have now fragmented into at least nine predominant organizations. In addition, experts have estimated that another 200 smaller organizations exist at the local level. This has prompted renewed competition for trafficking routes and other illicit markets, leading to increased violence.

BEYOND DRUG TRAFFICKING

Organized criminal groups have expanded their illicit activities beyond the drug trade. This includes the production and sale of natural resources, often with the support and acquiescence of local authorities.7 Activities also include kidnapping, oil theft, pirated goods, vehicle theft, and human trafficking and smuggling. Their involvement in these products is often a means of territorial control and obtaining financial gains by exploiting whatever commodity is locally available. Competition with other criminal organizations over these products drives violence, placing communities and small farmers in the crossroads.

Groups also rely on extorting small business owners for financial gain. Mexican businesses have reported significant losses in profit due to extortion by organized crime.8 Since 2017, the state of Guanajuato has seen a significant increase in extortion of restaurants, butcher shops, and other businesses. The state has also seen an increase in homicides due to competition between cartels as well a rise in confrontations between these groups and Mexican security forces.9
**Oil and Gas Theft**

A Congressional Research Service (CRS) report states that oil theft from Mexico’s state-owned oil company (Petróleos Mexicanos, PEMEX) costs the government an estimated $3 billion annually.\(^{10}\) Oil theft is particularly popular among factions of the Zetas, the Gulf Cartel, the New Generation Jalisco Cartel, and Santa Rosa de Lima, as well as other individuals operating in gangs commonly known as “huachicoleros”, or oil thieves.\(^{11}\)

Cartels involved in oil theft operate by perforating gas pipelines and installing clandestine taps or outlets to divert the gas, or even temporarily stopping the pipe’s operations.\(^{12}\) These activities have prompted violent competition over control of pipelines and have led to deadly confrontations between criminal groups and Mexican security forces, particularly over the past two years.\(^{13}\) In addition, explosions and gas leakages have frequently forced residents to evacuate their communities.

Arrests of criminal cartel members involved in oil theft have had an adverse effect, leading to increased violence.\(^{14}\) While the López Obrador administration has managed to lower the quantity of stolen oil, the total number of illegal taps on pipelines increased slightly in 2019, demonstrating that this activity continues to be a lucrative activity for criminal organizations.\(^{15}\)

**The Production and Sale of Agricultural Goods**

Criminal organizations have increasingly engaged in the growth and sale of avocados in Mexico. This is especially true in Michoacan, the only state allowed to sell avocados to the United States.\(^{16}\) Some analysts have called avocados a “conflict commodity.”\(^{17}\) Avocado growers have been extorted, threatened, and forced to hand over their crop to criminal organizations. In August 2019, the U.S. Department of Agriculture temporarily suspended its avocado inspection program in a town in Michoacan in response to threats against some of its employees.\(^{18}\)

Groups have also expanded their operations to illegal logging, particularly in states such as Chihuahua. They use illegal logging for a variety of reasons, including maintaining or increasing territorial control, clearing land for poppy and cannabis or other plant cultivation, or to sell wood for financial gains.\(^{19}\) There have been documented cases of cartels killing members of other groups for logging on their turf as well as indigenous activists for defending their lands or investigating logging permits.\(^{20}\) The involvement of criminal organizations in illegal logging implies the participation of local police, families, traffickers and hitmen tied to the cartels. Environmental degradation from the haphazard methods utilized to remove the trees and overall deforestation poses serious cause for concern in these areas.

**OTHER FORMS OF VIOLENCE**

Besides the illicit activities perpetrated by organized crime, there are other factors that continue to drive violence and internal displacement in Mexico. This includes sexual and gender-based violence, the
construction of mega-development projects, as well as localized religious, political, land, and ethnic conflicts.

Indigenous communities in Mexico have long faced forced displacement from the construction of mega-development projects. The government frequently grants concessions without consultation or informed consent from impacted communities. The government’s plans to move ahead with some projects, including its “Mayan Train” railroad project have raised concern among some indigenous communities.21

These dynamics are not necessarily new; in some states, they have historical roots affecting indigenous communities. However, they are compounded by the absence of adequate government responses, the vicious cycle of impunity, and organized crime infighting. Collusion between organized crime and corrupt local authorities fuels the lack of justice and protection that communities can obtain in the face of these various forms of violence.22

Violence against women has also increased in the last year. According to the United Nations, there are up to ten killings of women per day, an increase of at least 10% as compared to 2018.23 The factors behind the violence include sex trafficking and violence tied to organized crime as well as domestic violence.24

**INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT**

Violence in Mexico has resulted in high levels of internal displacement, though estimates on the exact levels differ. According to the IDMC, about 380,000 people were forcibly displaced in Mexico between 2009 and 2018 as a result of violence and organized crime.25 In 2019, the Mexican government estimated that the number of displaced individuals in Mexico is closer to 1 million.26

A study conducted by a Mexican NGO found that 11,491 individuals were internally displaced in 2018 alone, with the majority fleeing violence in Guerrero, Chiapas, Oaxaca, Michoacan, and Sinaloa. The study found that the majority of displaced individuals cited organized crime-related violence as the main driver of their displacement, with land conflicts, social and ethnic violence, and local political disputes listed as other causes.27

**SECURITY POLICY**

Mexican President López Obrador has declared an end to the “war” against drug trafficking organizations, affirming that his government wants peace. However, so far his security strategy has differed little from his predecessors. Incidents such as the botched operation to arrest Ovidio Guzmán López, the son of the drug lord “El Chapo” Guzmán, in Culiacán, Sinaloa in October 2019 evidenced inexperience within López Obrador’s security team and coordination challenges within the federal security forces, including the armed forces.

The centerpiece of López Obrador’s security strategy is the National Guard, a new military-led force tasked with federal public security functions that currently has around 71,000 members. As of December 31,
2019, this force assumed all the functions and responsibilities of the Federal Police—the security force that has received the majority of U.S. training and equipment under the Merida Initiative.  

While the constitutional reforms creating the National Guard established that it would be a civilian force under civilian direction, the majority of the force’s funding and equipment comes from the Ministry of Defense (SEDENA). Likewise, the force’s first chief, Luis Rodríguez Bucio, is a recently retired Army general and nearly 80% of current guardsmen are part of the armed forces. The rest are former Federal Police agents and new recruits.

In the case of new guardsmen, around 15,000 were recruited by the Mexican Army as military police who will be transferred to the National Guard. In addition, the Navy (SEMAR) has recruited over 5,000 agents who will also be transferred. Recruitment is taking place within 12 Mexican Army bases and the Army and Navy are covering the salaries and other costs associated with these new members as well as the soldiers that have been temporarily transferred to the force, further calling into question the civilian nature of the force.

One of the National Guard’s first tasks included immigration enforcement along Mexico’s southern and northern borders. The Mexican government deployed nearly 12,000 members of Mexico’s federal security forces, primarily the National Guard, to its southern border region as part of its agreement with the United States to increase immigration enforcement, with approximately 2,000 positioned on the southern border itself. Almost 15,000 federal agents were sent to Mexico’s northern border states.

This deployment deviates the National Guard from its primary security functions while raising human rights concerns. As we saw in the guardsmen’s response to a January 2020 migrant caravan, which prompted widespread critiques about the excessive use of force against the migrants, including women and children, there are risks associated with placing primarily military personnel in regular contact with citizens and vulnerable populations.

The reforms establishing the National Guard also legalized the role of the armed forces in public security until the National Guard becomes fully operational, for a maximum of five years. As of November 2019, almost 63,000 soldiers from SEDENA were deployed throughout the country to combat drug trafficking and engage in other public security tasks. This deployment surpasses the use of the military during Mexico’s previous two presidencies.

Over the past decade, the deployment of Mexican soldiers across the country to patrol streets and crack down on organized crime has failed to reduce crime and violence. In fact, research has shown that the Mexican government’s decision to deploy the military to confront organized criminal groups is a primary factor behind the increase in violence in Mexico since 2007.

Further militarization also raises serious human rights concerns given the military’s history of committing human rights violations with near total impunity. Between January 2007 and September 2019, Mexico’s National Human Rights Commission issued 159 recommendations for human rights violations perpetrated
by members of the Mexican Army (118 recommendations) and Navy (41 recommendations). The recommendations are in response to cases of arbitrary killings, illegal use of force, torture, and forced disappearances.\textsuperscript{38}

In a December 2019 meeting of Mexico’s National Public Security Council, López Obrador laid out 10 strategies for addressing violence in Mexico. Apart from the need to continue to strengthen the National Guard, López Obrador spoke about combating corruption, improving coordination between states, municipalities, and the federal government; strengthening state and municipal police forces and improving their salaries and benefits; and promoting a zero tolerance culture for human rights violations. He also emphasized the essential role of the judiciary and the need to address the socio-economic factors that drive violence.\textsuperscript{39} While these are all important goals, López Obrador provided few specifics on how to accomplish them. Additionally, Mexico’s 2020 budget does not provide additional resources to strengthen municipal and state police forces or the National Prosecutor’s Office.\textsuperscript{40}

\textbf{RULE OF LAW}

Although multiple Mexican administrations have prioritized reforms to transform the country’s economy, they have largely failed to address Mexico’s weak rule of law. Because of this, Mexican citizens continue to have little trust in justice institutions. According to Mexico’s most recent national victimization survey, 93.2\% of all crimes were not reported or investigated in 2018. The most common reasons victims cited for not reporting the crimes they suffered included that they thought it was a waste of time (31.7\%) or because they did not trust the authorities (17.4\%).\textsuperscript{41}

As a product of Mexico’s weak criminal justice system, widespread impunity continues to be a main driver of crime and violence. As one analysis put it, in Mexico it is easy to murder and never set foot in jail. Out of every 100 homicides, only five result in a conviction of the person responsible.\textsuperscript{42} In 2017, Mexico had the fourth highest impunity index on the Global Impunity Index (out of 69 countries), and it ranked first out of the 21 countries in the Americas that were analyzed.\textsuperscript{43}

Eleven years after Mexico passed sweeping reforms designed to make the country’s criminal justice system more transparent, efficient, and rights-respecting, courts and prosecutors’ offices remain severely backlogged and the federal government has not invested adequate resources toward ensuring justice sector personnel are properly trained and specialized. While several states have made significant gains in implementing the reforms and strengthening the rule of law, it is clear that much still needs to be done throughout the country.\textsuperscript{44}

Additionally, torture and other human rights violations remain prevalent in criminal proceedings. The widespread use of torture has put many innocent people behind bars while undermining criminal investigations and facilitating the release of alleged criminals due to due process violations.\textsuperscript{45}

In 2014, the Mexican Constitution was amended to create a new National Prosecutor’s Office (\textit{Fiscalía General de la República}, FGR) to replace the federal Attorney General’s Office (\textit{Procuraduría General de
la República, PGR) due to the PGR’s lack of independence and results. Unlike the PGR, the National Prosecutor’s Office is autonomous from the executive branch. It will play a fundamental role in Mexico’s criminal justice reforms, given that it has the authority to make important decisions regarding criminal justice policies and practices.

However, concerns about autonomy and the effectiveness of the prosecutor’s office remain. In January 2019, Alejandro Gertz Manero (a close ally of President López Obrador) was named the first national prosecutor to head the new institution for a nine-year term. Gertz has not followed the nomination process for special prosecutors as is required by law and has so far operated with extreme opacity. Moreover, the federal government has not provided the new institution with the funding it needs to effectively establish itself and build up its capacity. In fact, the government cut its budget by 9% in 2019.

**HUMAN RIGHTS**

Human rights violations by Mexico’s security forces, including unlawful killings, torture, and forced disappearances continue to occur at alarming levels. All but a fraction of these cases remain in impunity.

**Disappearances**

According to the latest statistics from the Mexican government, over 60,000 people disappeared in Mexico between 2006 and 2019. The states with the highest rates of disappearances are Jalisco, Tamaulipas, Chihuahua, Nuevo Leon, and Puebla. During the current administration alone, over 9,000 new cases of disappearances were documented.

Evidence suggests that in many of these cases, state officials either directly participated in the victim’s disappearance or turned a blind eye to the crime. In one case, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights—working in partnership with local human rights organizations—found strong indications that Mexican marines had participated in the disappearance of at least 21 people in the border town of Nuevo Laredo between February and May 2018.

The vast majority of disappearance cases remain in impunity: the federal government secured only 14 convictions for the crime of forced disappearance between 2006 and 2017 (the most recent data available).

The López Obrador administration has made addressing disappearances a priority. Though still not completely operationalized and funded, many of the mechanisms mandated by the General Law on Enforced Disappearances and Disappearances Committed by Non-State Actors were institutionalized in the last year. Government officials have led expeditions to several states to search for the disappeared and exhume remains from mass graves. As a part of these efforts, over 3,000 disappeared individuals were identified in the last year.
However, Mexico continues to face an enormous challenge in the forensic registry and identification of the disappeared. In December 2019, the Extraordinary Mechanism for Forensic Identification was approved as an inter-institutional body with international support to assist the government in forensic identification efforts.\textsuperscript{53}

The current government has prioritized advancing the investigation of the case of the 43 disappeared students from the Ayotzinapa rural teacher’s college, meeting with the families on various occasions and taking some important steps to move the investigation forward. Recently, the Mexican government agreed to reinstall the International Group of Interdisciplinary Experts (which is backed by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights) to provide technical assistance on the case.\textsuperscript{54}

**Torture**

In May 2019, the UN Committee against Torture recognized a “very high frequency” of torture committed by security forces and investigative officials. The law Mexico passed in 2017 to combat the use of torture—the General Law on Torture—suffers from incomplete implementation and widespread incompliance. Mexican government data shows that less that 1% of torture cases result in prosecution and conviction.\textsuperscript{55}

**Excessive Use of Force**

Both Mexican soldiers and the Federal Police have a long record of excessive use of force.\textsuperscript{56} In June 2014, members of the Army extrajudicially executed more than a dozen civilians in Tlatlaya, State of Mexico, and in May 2015, a confrontation between the Federal Police and a criminal group in Tanhuato, Michoacan led to the extrajudicial execution of 22 individuals.\textsuperscript{57} In a recent case, a confrontation between the Army and civilians left 14 civilians and one soldier dead in Tepochica, Guerrero on October 15. Mexico’s National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) has launched an investigation into the incident, as the lopsided death toll raises concerns about a possible excessive use of force.

While Mexico passed a “Use of Force Law” in May 2019 to define what levels of force are permitted in different situations, the law lacks strong accountability mechanisms and raises several concerns: it includes vague language on what constitutes “a lethal imminent threat” that warrants lethal force, and it classifies several deadly weapons that have led to killings in the past as “least lethal weapons,” such as electric shock devices.

**Violence against Journalists and Human Rights Defenders**

Journalists and human rights defenders continue to face significant risks in Mexico. The national Human Rights Network “All Rights for All” registered the murder of 161 human rights defenders and 40 journalists during the six years of Enrique Peña Nieto’s presidency (December 2012-December 2018).\textsuperscript{58}

Since López Obrador took office, more than 24 human rights defenders and 15 journalists have been killed in the country.\textsuperscript{59} 21 human rights defenders and 10 journalists were killed in 2019 alone.\textsuperscript{60} Mexico
continues to rank as the most dangerous country in the world for journalists. There have been several cases of environmental defenders killed for carrying out their work, such as the cases of Homero Gómez and Raul Hernández, who were both killed within a week of each other in the state of Michoacan in January 2020. Human rights defenders, including journalists and family members of the disappeared, have faced forced displacement due to threats and harassment.

The government’s Mechanism to Protect Human Rights Defenders and Journalists continues to be understaffed and underfunded. At least three beneficiaries of the Mechanism were killed despite having requested protections last year, including two journalists. Mexico’s Undersecretary for Human Rights has publicly recognized that the Mechanism needs to be strengthened and that government officials are often the perpetrators behind attacks against human rights defenders. However, funding for the Mechanism has decreased over the past year.

U.S.–MEXICO SECURITY COOPERATION

U.S.-Mexico cooperation has expanded in the past two decades, particularly after the launch of the Merida Initiative in 2008. Since then, the United States has provided Mexico with over $3.1 billion in assistance to strengthen security and the rule of law. Merida Initiative funds make up only 2% of Mexico’s total security budget of $10 billion per year, though it remains the main aid package in terms of bilateral security cooperation between the two countries.

This assistance has included over $420 million in hardware and equipment to Mexico’s security forces, such as helicopters and surveillance planes, over $100 million in equipment and training to secure Mexico’s southern border, over $400 million to support judicial reforms and strengthen the rule of law, as well as funding for human rights, freedom of expression, anti-corruption, and violence prevention efforts. Separate from the Merida Initiative, between 2008 and 2018, the Department of Defense provided over $630 million in additional assistance to Mexico’s armed forces to combat drug trafficking, improve security in high crime areas, and for border security.

Apart from additional cooperation and information sharing on transnational criminal organizations, Mexico has increased immigration enforcement and border security policies to reduce the flow of Central American migrants traveling north, and it shares biometric data with U.S. authorities to detect individuals of “special interest countries” who may seek to do harm to either country.

As Congress discusses ways to effectively engage with Mexico on security and rule of law issues, our organizations provide the following recommendations on areas of cooperation. In the second year of the López Obrador administration, U.S. policymakers should encourage reforms to strengthen Mexico’s justice institutions and to advance investigations and prosecutions into grave human rights violations. A strategy primarily based on targeting top criminal leaders and eradicating and interdicting illicit drugs may produce tactical victories, but it will do little to strengthen the criminal justice institutions Mexico needs to effectively combat crime, corruption, and human rights violations, and may even lead to increased violence as criminal groups splinter and dispute territories for their control.
• **Increase funding to strengthen Mexico’s criminal justice institutions.** While Mexico needs effective and rights-respecting security forces, it also needs justice institutions that are capable of carrying out evidence-based investigations and criminal prosecutions. USAID’s rule of law projects in Mexico have provided important support to state attorneys general offices and courts in developing analytical capacity, improving victims’ access to justice, and building public support for the criminal justice system. In USAID target states, there has been a 59 percent increase in the use of alternative dispute resolution, freeing up the courts to focus on high-impact crimes. State/INL projects have provided support to build court infrastructure to ensure transparent trials as well as training and technical assistance to prosecutors, judges, and police. As cooperation moves forward, the U.S. should engage with the Mexican government at the federal and state level to determine possible areas of U.S. support for the transition to independent prosecutor’s offices.

• **We recommend no foreign military financing for Mexico.** If any is provided, it is essential that it be conditioned. U.S. support should not be allocated to agencies that have failed to hold their agents responsible for human rights violations. Conditioning select funds to Mexican security agencies based on progress made to respect human rights and to investigate and sanction perpetrators of human rights abuse provides Congress with important leverage to measure how the Government of Mexico is taking steps to address widespread abuses. Assistance to Mexican law enforcement should also focus on developing strong internal and external accountability mechanisms within professional civilian police forces at the federal and state level. Given concerns about corruption and other abuses by Mexican police, the U.S. should support Mexico’s efforts to build or strengthen internal affairs units for state and municipal police. Any U.S. support to the National Guard should be restricted to improving the professionalism and accountability of this new force.

• **Continue to provide support to strengthen Mexico’s forensic capacity.** Between 2014 and 2018, the U.S. Congress appropriated $33.68 million in obligated funding for forensic laboratory assistance in Mexico. However, additional support is needed to build up Mexico’s forensic services. According to the Mexican organization México Evalúa, only 22 of Mexico’s 32 state prosecutor’s offices report having forensics units. Of those, only 21 have areas specialized in ballistics, genetics, chemistry, or forensic medicine, 18 have psychology or psychiatry units, 10 have fingerprinting specialists, and eight have areas specialized in facial composite. USAID is providing additional forensic support to address widespread disappearances in Mexico: the agency is supporting state-level efforts to forensically identify human remains recovered from clandestine graves. This includes support for a newly established Extraordinary Mechanism for Forensic Identification.

• **Increase support for human rights programming in Mexico.** Between 2014 and 2018, USAID provided $46 million for human rights programming in Mexico. This support has included support for freedom of expression and protection of journalists in Mexico; support to build up the capacity
of government institutions and more than 30 local civil society organizations dedicated to addressing cases of torture and enforced disappearances and improving access to justice and the wellbeing of victims; as well as funding to support the implementation of Mexico’s General Law on Torture and the General Law on Disappearances.

- **Continue U.S. support for Mexico’s refugee system.** Mexico received over 70,000 asylum requests in 2019, the highest number of asylum applications on record.\(^1\) Yet its asylum system remains weak and underfunded. Delays in processing and lack of resources prevents some asylum seekers from staying in Mexico to complete their application. The United States should continue support for the UNHCR to strengthen Mexico’s asylum system and refrain from providing support for migration enforcement at Mexico’s southern border.

In the United States:

- **Address U.S. demand for illicit drugs from a public health perspective.** An average of 180 people die every day in the United States from drug overdoses, including from illicit drugs trafficked through and from Mexico.\(^2\) This requires additional funds to support an urgent public health response focused on prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.

- **Reduce illegal arms trafficking to Mexico.** There is no question that U.S.-sourced guns fuel violence in Mexico. According to U.S. government data, 70% of guns recovered at crime scenes in Mexico that were submitted for tracing came retail sales or production in the United States.\(^3\) U.S. weapons have also been found at the site of extrajudicial executions and disappearances.\(^4\) U.S. policymakers should enact legislation to ban assault weapons, require universal background checks for gun purchases, classify gun trafficking as a federal crime, increase penalties for straw purchases, and require the reporting of multiple sales of long guns within a short period of time. A recent new federal rule implemented by the administration that moves export licensing for semi-automatic firearms, ammunition, and weapons from the State Department to the Commerce Department should also be rescinded.\(^5\) This rule makes it easier for gun manufacturers in the United States to sell weapons to other countries without licenses from the State Department, weakening oversight over the sale of weapons across borders and making it harder to trace where weapons end up, which could increase the possibility of weapons being trafficked to criminal organizations in Mexico and fuel violence and impunity for crimes.

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\(^3\) [https://elpais.com/internacional/2020/01/21/mexico/1579621707_576405.html](https://elpais.com/internacional/2020/01/21/mexico/1579621707_576405.html).
Testimonies provided by Mexican asylum seekers at the U.S.-Mexico border to advocates and the press reflect the combination of these varying factors driving violence. (See for ex. Recent reports from HRW, LA Times, AP News)

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22 http://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/mexico


27 https://lopezobrador.org.mx/2019/10/14/presentan-informe-nacional-de-seguridad-publica/


