

The United States, Mexico and the Mexican Drug Cartel

An Analysis of Future Possibilities

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## **Introduction**

The proximity of the United States to Mexico makes domestic matters in Mexico important to the United States. These two nations are tied together, and share many ramifications. Some of the issues facing the United States presently are the economy and the high unemployment rate. The United States has been dealing with this since the last part of 2006. It is an important issue and brings heated debates along the political spectrum, but it is only one of many issues that are plaguing the United States. However painful these issues are, the United States and Mexico are dealing with problems with the Mexican drug cartels which are straining everyday society. The cartels are unabashed in trying to continue to run their drug smuggling operations. Because of this, the Mexican people have had to endure a high number of homicides in their country. Some of these people killed were innocents who were at the wrong place at the wrong time and were caught in cartel related crossfire. But many of the homicides were intentional as drug cartels often send messages to people warning others not to interfere in their businesses. Mexican law enforcement officials are killed by the cartel in hopes of serving a message to others that the cartels are to be feared.

Law enforcement of these two countries can be seen as a dichotomy. In the United States when one breaks the law they are issued a citation and are scheduled to appear in court to pay a fine. In Mexico, when one is pulled over by Mexican law enforcement, they often times ask for a bribe which one can pay and quickly be on their way. In Spanish, the bribe is called a “mordida” translated it means a bite. This is one reason why this writer never visited Mexico, as many of his classmates did. It is desired that the bribe is on its way out of Mexican culture with President Felipe Calderon’s new administration. He has implemented a new way so that drug cartels cannot infiltrate the Mexican Police force, which had been compromised for years.

In 2010, the Mexican drug cartel problem has begun to affect Americans. One such victim was an assistant high school principal who was kidnapped, then shot to death while visiting family in Mexico in December of 2009. Another incident occurred in the past two weeks as an American couple with ties to the American Consulate in Mexico was gunned down by drug cartel gangs. Now that Americans are under fire, and with the long reach of the drug cartels trying to gain a foothold on American soil, it has become a national security matter. The United States is helping Mexico in many ways, but at the present time, the help comes mainly from funding.

The Mexican drug cartels are attempting to push and have an expanded role in Mexican culture, and the fact that they are making huge sums of money in the United States makes them more brazen to expand and operate within the United States border. This cannot happen and both the United States and the Mexican governments have to work in tandem with corrective measures if they are to stop the drug cartels expanding influence into both countries.

The reason why this study is so important is that Mexican drug cartels have become more blatant in their use of violence including innocent Mexican citizens, Mexican police and military and now American citizens are being attacked and even murdered. For this very reason, a predictive analysis needs to be conducted so see the different scenarios which can be hypothesized so that the American and Mexican governments are not caught unaware in the Mexican drug cartels attempt to tip the balance of power that will benefit them. With these issues in mind, the following questions will help guide this study:

1. What are the reasons for the violence that the drug cartels are perpetrating in Mexico?

2. What measures is Mexico taking to quell the cartel violence?
3. What actions could the United States and Mexico take to foil the drug cartels plans of expanding both their operations and their base?

This study will attempt to answer the above questions and create scenarios along with predictive analysis which will answer the above questions.

### **Literature Review**

The issues for this paper will be three-fold. One issue is how Mexican drug cartels operate and the steps they are taking to be a force for the Mexican government to have to deal with. Another issue is the steps that the Mexican government is taking in order to neutralize and deflect the attempts that the drug cartels are trying to force down the Mexican governments throats. The last concern is how the United States government is dealing with the “cartel” issue, and the mechanisms that are in place to assist Mexico with the serious issue of having to deal with a militarized, and blatant segment of society that puts both innocent Mexican an American citizens at risk.

The citizens of the United States are used to having law and order in their lives, and even when a few rouge officers skirt over the line, people understand that those law enforcement personnel will have to deal with the consequences of abusing their authority. The Mexican people have no such illusions. This is why the drug cartels have flourished in Mexico and other countries in the area; the unraveling of law and order in Mexico can be blamed on the lack of ethics that are prevalent in Mexico. Loyola (2009) explains the lack of control of government institutions that rise all the way to the top and affect even the issues of security of the President of Mexico. Loyola writes, “The organization of the Beltrán Leyva brothers---another major

cartel---is infamous in this respect; a member of president Calderón's bodyguards was recently indicted on charges of spying for the brothers on a monthly retainer of \$100,000" (37). It is inconceivable for any American to ever think that anyone on President Obama's guard detail could attempt to do such a thing here in the United States.

Another concept that Americans cannot grasp is how unashamed the cartels and the actors of the cartels can be. Becerra (2009) points out that one member of the Mexican drug cartels, the Zeta's, are mainly comprised of military deserters from elite military units (1). Americans cannot grasp this action because the American people view desertion as a kick in the groin to the country and it brings shame to those committing it and their families as well. That is not the case in Mexico, where it is seen as a financial move in which it provides financial security as well as self preservation as many law enforcement as well as military troops have been in the crosshairs of the cartels. Looking at the cultural differences between Americans and Mexicans shows how the lawlessness can happen south of the United States border, and how hard it is for the Mexican government to get back control. This is a serious national security issues for both of these countries.

The Mexican drug cartels are dangerous and have little regard for anyone but themselves and their operations. The images that have been portrayed in the media are those of weapons wielding thugs who shoot indiscriminately and hoping to cause chaos. While some people would enjoy this line of work, the truth is that to be able to carry out this mayhem, recruitment needs to take place. In the second source by Becerra, he reports that some recruitment comes from absorbing local criminals into the cartels and they join to avoid being killed, or "Recruitment is also via the use of drug rehabilitation centres in the state, where drug addicts may be recruited to conduct some criminal activities, such as assassinations or drug distribution

in the streets” (4). This shows how the cartels will use any means to try and manipulate people for the growth of their drug organizations. The bottom line is to make money and eliminate any person that gets in the way. This is their standing operating procedure and shows what their true interests are.

The three sources used here will help to present the motives of the Mexican drug cartels and show the dangers to both the United States and Mexico. This information plays right into how dangerous these drug cartels are and how different scenarios could come about. The three sources all use the qualitative method as they utilize case studies done on the drug cartels.

The Mexican government is not sitting on the sidelines and letting the drug cartels take over their government. As a matter of fact, President Calderon and his predecessor, Vicente Fox should be praised for taking on a social institution that had been firmly entrenched deep inside the Mexican Government. The violence that has occurred in the last few years is because Fox and Calderon took on the status quo. Agren (2009) writes of the steps that the Mexican government is taking to try to eliminate the political advantage that the cartels used to enjoy by bribing politicians to look the other way, but it still is rampant. In his report, Agren writes of President Calderon’s attempts to clean house and the objections of state governors. Agren states, “Michoacán Gov. Leonel Godoy, of the PRD, objected to masked federal agents bursting unannounced into state government offices to arrest senior judicial advisors, calling it ‘a hostile act.’ He later claimed that the federal government never gave him a courtesy call to inform of the crackdown” (2). The above quote shows that it is no easy task in order to change behavior, and perhaps that is why drug cartels have always had their hands inside the politicians’ pockets, and as Fox and Calderon found out, the reach of the cartels is insidious, taking vast amounts of energy to right the ship. But that is what Calderon is doing, and if he had to take down half of

the politicians, well that is what he will have to do. It is important to note that what Fox started and what Calderon is trying to do presently is trying to change Mexico from within.

Another example of Mexico fighting back and showing the Mexican drug cartels that they is serious is by extraditing high profile drug traffickers to the United States. It used to be that if drug traffickers were brought to justice in Mexico, they would have plush accommodations or just escape. Calderon's actions show the cartels that those days are over. In another of Becerra's sources, he writes, "By agreeing to the extradition of these men (captured drug traffickers) the Calderon administration is sending a clear signal to the U.S. that co-operation on the counter-narcotics and **SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME** can be expected to increase under the current Mexican government" (2). These two examples offer a clear-cut view that the party is certainly over for the way the drug cartels could operate freely and with no fear of arrest.

Both of these examples show that Mexico is serious about taking back their country from the drug cartels. One reason for that is that too many innocent victims are being killed in either gang cross fires or just plain arrogance. Mexico is making an honest attempt to change for the better. This is a welcomed change as in the past; Mexico was viewed as one of the most corrupt nations in the world. Some still view it that way, but slowly it is changing and the drug cartels are facing a different government now.

These last two sources that were written about provide a concrete example of the way the Mexican government has changed the way they face the cartels. The sources help to show the significant changes in how Mexico is trying to handle their counter narcotics policy. Both of the sources are written in the qualitative method. They again use case studies and use the

advocacy/participatory worldview. Both of these sources are intertwined in politics and could be used as part of a political agenda. Both of these sources will be used to illustrate the thesis of this report, and will help to show some of the measures that the Mexican government is taking in order to contain the drug cartels from becoming even more powerful.

The points of view of the Mexican drug cartels and the Mexican government have been shown, and now it is time to show the American side of this drug war, since Americans have been victims of these ruthless cartels. The best way to combat the reach of the Mexican drug cartels is to understand their own way of thinking. One such way is how see how law enforcement intelligence compares to intelligence capabilities of the cartels. Kenney's (2002) article comparing how law enforcement in the United States works and compares them with the drug cartels. This source gives example of the types of intelligence there are and compares and contrasts the differences of law enforcement versus the intelligence apparatus of the cartels. Kenney states, "The El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) is the primary counter-drug tactical intelligence center in the U.S. drug enforcement system" (219). Kenney's source is valuable as it gives an organizational chart which shows how the United States uses intelligence in their counter-drug actions. This is a strong source as it goes into detail as to how interagency cooperation helps to fight the drugs that the cartels attempt to bring into the United States. Another important part for using Kenney's work as a source is how drug cartels use intelligence to keep one step ahead of law enforcement. As stated, Kenney's work illuminates the factors and attitudes that the cartels have, the downside of this source is the cartels that he is talking about are from Columbia and not Mexico; however, Kenney's work is still beneficial as a look into the mind-set of the cartels, even if they are Columbian, still show how they attempt to stay ahead of the law.

Kenney's work is in the qualitative method again and uses case studies from both American law enforcement agencies and those of drug cartels who try and circumvent the laws of the land. As stated earlier, Kenney's source would have been more of value if he had used the Mexican drug cartels instead of Columbian, but in looking at the year, 2003, the Mexican drug cartel had no need to be brazen since they had politicians and law enforcement eating from the palms of their hands during this time.

Another example of how the U.S. is fighting drug cartel incursions into the United States is the information sharing from various intelligence and law enforcement agencies. What is being done shows how the U.S. is doing what it can to combat the illegal drugs coming into the country. One example is the fusion centers that are connected to one another to monitor illegal activities that are occurring in this country. Gardner and Killebrew (2009) state "Fusion centers tie together all agencies necessary to integrate information about terrorist suspects, locations, and equipment that could be used in the planning or commission of a crime or terrorist act" (71). The fact that these centers exist shows how bold the cartels are that they would not only skirt Mexican laws but those of the United States. This information source is useful for this study as it is a prime example of what the Mexican drug cartels engage in, in order to bring their criminal enterprise into another country. The U.S. formulation of these fusion centers demonstrates how they will go to great lengths to capture both drug traffickers and their illegal contraband. The fusion centers help to put information of these illegal activities into data, so that law enforcement in other areas do not have to duplicate what is already inputted into data mining systems.

The Gardner and Killibrew source is written in article form. It also employs the qualitative method of research and is from the participatory worldview, since it is part of the political agenda to do what needs to be done in order to keep American citizens safe from harm.

The information from these two authors' will play a crucial part in this study to show what procedures the American government are taking in order to stem the flow of illegal drugs and other illegal activities into their border. The information provided by Gardner and Killibrew illustrates how important interagency cooperation can be on the war on drugs.

One can see how law enforcement and intelligence agencies are doing their part to keep American citizens safe from the lawlessness of the Mexican drug cartels with the shipments of illegal drugs as well as the violence that occurs with these dangerous illegal activities. The following information is from the United States General Accounting Office (GAO) written on Drug Control: An Overview of U.S. Counterdrug Intelligence Activities (1998). This report shows which agencies are involved and some of the duties they have. For example, this report shows the different ways the U.S. government produces counter drug intelligence. The three ways are through strategic intelligence, which consists of keeping track of illegal shipments, and including the tracking of, "Financial, transportation, structure and other workings of major drug trafficking organizations" (8). Tracking a cartels finances are important because if the U.S. could confiscate monies illegally obtained, money that was to finance another drug operation, then it could scuttle that upcoming operation or at least upset the balance of monies that were allocated for another illegal venture.

Another example of how the U.S. government is helping to curb illegal shipments from entering the United States is through operational/investigative intelligence. This can include, "Information that can be used to provide analytic support to an ongoing criminal investigation or prosecution or can be useful in resource planning" (8). This also shows that the U.S. government is doing what they can to track and assist in the criminal prosecution of the drug cartels and to end their illegal operations.

The last of these intelligence operations is tactical. The report defines tactical intelligence as, “Information that is of immediate use in supporting an ongoing drug investigation; positioning federal assets to monitor the activities of suspected traffickers; or positioning federal, state or local law enforcement assets to interdict, seize, and/or apprehend a vehicle or other conveyance and/or person suspected of trafficking in drugs” (8-9). Tactical means immediate or real time. This report shows the different operations that the United States employs to stop the Mexican drug cartels. It shows a government that understands the importance of having operations in place to help with the confiscation and/or arrests of criminals trying to smuggle illegal drugs into the United States.

The GAO source for this study is written in the qualitative method. It has an advocacy/participatory world view, and has a political agenda. If there is a weakness to this source it is that it was written twelve years ago. The report is still valuable and can be learned from, but perhaps an up to date report on Drug Control could be of more value, as recent problems from inside Mexico could help add other procedures in each of the intelligence sections of this report. Despite that this report is twelve years old, it offers a great insight to how the intelligence process works and all the duties that are entailed in this process. One thing can be sure of is that the United States has processes that they employ to keep an eye on illegal activity, and more importantly, to help in the protection of its citizens.

The sources that were used for this literature review, and those that will be used in this study, will show how the Mexican drug cartels, and the U.S. and Mexican governments have employed measures which will allow them to be successful; these same sources also will illustrate how these scenarios can take place. Please note that while each cartel has its own set of motives and operational planning, all have the same goal of continuing their operations at

whatever cost to those that try and interfere. According to Stratfor Analysis (2009) for the study of the Mexican drug cartels, it should be noted that there are seven identified drug cartels operating in Mexico, La Familia; the Gulf Cartel; Los Zetas; the Beltran Leyva Organization; the Sinaloa Cartel; the Vicente Carrillo Fuentes Organization/Juarez Cartel; and the Arellano Felix Organization/Tijuana Cartel. For the study, all the cartels will be placed in one section, and will be identified as “The drug cartel.” The reason for this is while they all operate as their own entity; they still have the same goal of upsetting the balance of power in both Mexico and the United States.

**Step 1: The issue for which we are trying to predict the most likely future.**

What will happen with the country of Mexico if it keeps being attacked by the Mexican drug cartel? What will be the implications of the continued assault by the Mexican drug cartels to Mexico’s ability to run day to day State Affairs?

**Step 2: Specify the National Actors Involved.**

The actors in this study consist of The United States Government, the Mexican Government, and the Mexican drug cartels. The major cartels have been listed above, and they are all tied to the same goal as doing whatever they can to keep their drug profits going and continuing their operations. The U.S. Government actors will include the Obama Administration as well as the drug agencies that have been in place for years. The actors in Mexico will be President Felipe Calderon, and those in the Mexican law enforcement who try and dictate policy. For this study the seven Mexican drug cartels have been placed as one group in order to play their potential scenarios to those of the American and Mexican Governments.

**Step 3: Perform an in-depth study of how each actor perceives the issue in question.**

## **The United States**

The United States has been built on democracy and is governed by the United States Constitution. The U.S. is governed by three different branches, the legislative, the executive and judicial. This was done so that no one power can exert its will on the others ([www.abanet.org](http://www.abanet.org)). With this in mind, every citizens of the United States can have their civil liberties protected. The United States is ruled by law and people understand that they can face their accusers in a court of law.

The American people believe in law and order, which is to say, they understand that there are consequences for bad decisions, and rewards for following the law. The American way of life views law enforcement as a safeguard for their protection. Americans understand that sanctions are placed on people who do not conform to the laws of the land.

The leader of the U.S. is President Barack H. Obama, who was elected to the office in November of 2008; he took office on January 20, 2009 as the forty-fourth President of the United States. Since the American people believe in law and order, it would make sense that the United States Government would have a Drug Policy for the interdiction of illegal drugs. Along with the eradication of illegal drugs, the United States employs agencies that deal with counterdrug intelligence. Some of those agencies include the Department of Justice (DOJ), with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC). The Department of Treasury assists with the U.S. Custom Service, Customs' Domestic Air Interdiction Coordination Center (DAICC), and Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN). The Department of Transportation uses the U.S. Coast Guard in their fight to keep

illicit drugs out of the United States (GAO Drug Control Report, 1998). The use of all of the listed agencies shows just how important the war on drugs is in the United States. Each agency works on their own tasks but the work that they do leads to disrupting the drug traffickers operations.

To show how this is a team effort, the Office of Naval Intelligence also has a Counterdrug Intelligence Organization and Role. According to the GAO Report on Drug Control (1998) “The Counterdrug Division provides strategic and tactical maritime intelligence primarily to federal law enforcement and DOD counterdrug agencies” (33). One can see the importance the United States puts in its attempts at drug interdiction.

An approach as to how the United States takes in fighting drug smuggling from Mexico can be seen in the in a 2007 CRS Report for Congress. According to Cook (2007) “Current U.S. counternarcotics policy toward Mexico focuses on the interdiction and eradication of drug shipments, primarily through the border security screening efforts along the U.S.-Mexico border” (14). The United States is serious about combating illegal activities and the large amount of agencies to assist with drug interdiction demonstrates that it will use any number of personnel as needed to assist in combating drug smugglers.

The United States regards the Mexican drug cartels as a danger not only to Mexico but to the American people as well. That being the case, the United States helps to fund Mexico in fighting the drug cartels. Olson and Wilson (2010) states, “In March 2008 President Bush met with President Calderón in Mérida, Mexico, and they agreed to significantly increase cooperation in the hemispheric fight against drug trafficking. The so-called Merida Initiative included a U.S. commitment to provide \$1.4 billion in equipment, training, and technical assistance to Mexico

over three years” (1). This is a huge commitment but an important one since an unstable Mexico, can have rumbling in the United States. The U.S. needs for Mexico to be a strong partner and with Mexico having to deal with violence perpetrated against law enforcement and its citizens; the U.S. has funded ways to help its Southern neighbor. According to a U.S. Department of State fact Sheet (2009), “The Merida Initiative is a partnership, and the United States respects its individual partners’ sovereign decisions and their different authorities. Close collaboration with Merida counterparts has been a hallmark of all issues concerning support, training, technical advice, and funding” (1). The evidence from this fact sheet clearly states that the U.S is supplying the funding and knowhow, but this is Mexico’s fight. It has to be or Mexico will lose its authority to its own people. The best situation for the United States is to finance Mexico so they can solve their cartel problem, since a more stable Mexico makes for a stronger United States. If Mexico can tackle its cartel crisis it will bode well for the U.S. as there would be a buffer in which the Mexicans could handle and help eradicate the drugs and/or stop drug trafficking operations from entering into the United States.

The United States is providing support to help Mexico stand up to the drug cartels. Both the U.S. and Mexico are working towards the same goal and each country is hopeful that through cooperation they will be successful. The U.S. hopes that the Merida Initiative will work which will be a benefit to the U.S. since the weaker drug cartel would mean less illicit drugs would be coming into the United States.

## **Mexico**

The country of Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1810. They ratified their constitution in 1917. There are thirty one states in the country of Mexico. The President of

Mexico is Felipe Calderon; he was elected in 2006 and will serve until 2012. Calderon was elected with 35.89% of the vote ([www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov)).

The politics of Mexico is littered with corruption. The election of Vicente Fox in 2000 was the first time the president did not come from the Industrial Revolutionary Party (PRI) in seventy-one years ([www.newsweek.com](http://www.newsweek.com)). This is one of the reasons why the Mexican drug cartels could flourish, since all they had to do was bribe high ranking officials and continue their smuggling operations. The PRI was in power so long that drug trafficking became part of the status quo; all they had to do was make sure these high ranking politicians got their tribute and all was well. It was not until the National Action Party (PAN) came to hold the highest office where there acts of violence on Mexican law enforcement and the Mexican people.

The corruption was so pervasive during the long reign of the PRI that it touched the highest levels of the Mexican Government. In 1997, the U.S Department of Justice filed a suit which included the ex-Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, plus his sister and brother and his father of drug trafficking ([www.pbs.org](http://www.pbs.org)). It would be incomprehensible for this to happen in the United States, and this corruption was running rampant during the time of the PRI. When Fox was elected, he chose to end this so called corruption, yet it is still prevalent deep inside of Mexican politics. According to Agren (2009), "The recent arrests of 28 local officials, including 10 mayors, for alleged links to the drug cartel La Familia has raised concerns among opposition politicians and political observers, who worry that the operation may have been motivated by electoral politics" (1). It is this type of thought process where everything is politicized, every action analyzed, but the truth of the matter is that many of these Mexican politicians have forgotten that they were put in office to serve the people of Mexico. Instead of

praising efforts to rid the elected offices of people with their hands inside the cartels' cookie jar, the politicians instead seem to focus on the mudslinging of politics.

Now that the PRI is no longer in power, Fox and Calderon have shown that the days of the cartels running drug operations with no interference are over. An example of this can be seen when just days after taking office, President Calderon launched a federal counter-narcotics campaign on a scale unprecedented in Mexico ([www.jir.james.com](http://www.jir.james.com), 2007). This direct action was a wake-up call that the cartel version of the status quo, drug smuggling without any hindrance, was no longer going to be ignored. This is why the violence has escalated and the United States is funding the Merida Initiative. Mexico is moving in the right direction, as can be seen when Genaro Garcia Luna, the Federal Public Security Secretary, the equivalent of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, went before the Mexican Congress to announce the federal counternarcotics strategy that Mexico was going to implement (Stratfor.com). This is a clear sign that the Mexican Government is getting a handle on the drug cartel situation, but it is by no means easy to erase an attitude that has lingered in Mexico since its inception as a country.

The Calderon Administration is doing a good job in keeping the cartels off balance. One positive for the Mexican Government is that the cartels are not only doing battle with government troops, but also with rival gangs trying to flex their muscle and prove that they are the most feared cartel. According to Stewart, (2010), "The weakening of the traditional cartels was part of the Calderon administration's publicized plan to reduce the power of the drug traffickers and to deny any one organization or cartel the ability to become more powerful than the state" (5). Even though the Mexican law enforcement and military are taking huge losses, the fact that they risk their lives to confront these cartels show them to be brave people, as there have been gruesome executions by beheadings.

The Mexican Government thought process in their fight against the drug cartels is that they need to face them down and show the cartels that they can no longer operate freely, and that there will be consequences for trying to defy the laws of the land. They also need to battle the cartels to show its citizens that they are up to the task, so that their citizens will understand that they are engaging the cartels to protect its people. Fighting the cartels gives the Mexican citizens a psychological boost since they may think that their government is risking their military and their law enforcement for them. This is the main reason why Mexico is doing battle, to show the cartels that the Mexican Government really runs the nation and to show the people that they are up to the task of protecting its citizenry. A secondary reason for taking on the cartels and trying to stop smuggling is to show the United States that they are able to control their own country. Mexico does not want the U.S. to worry about one day having to send American troops in to Mexico, so the government are taking on the cartels in order to show that it is capable of providing security for its citizens, while reminding the people that the old customs of politicians lining their pockets with bribes from drug smuggling are a thing of the past. This will be one of the hardest things to change, since the concepts of getting into politics to help the public is something foreign for a lot of Mexican politicians.

To conclude, the Mexican Government would like the violence against its citizens, law enforcement and military to stop. There could be a truce with the cartels but Mexico would have to give some concessions to the cartels.

### **“Drug Cartel”**

For this study, the seven Mexican drug cartels will be portrayed as a loosely based drug organization, since they fight the government to protect their assets. The main goal of the cartel

is to continue like they have in the past, where operations could continue by paying off local law enforcement officers in return for an uninterrupted getaway. The main goal of the cartels is to continue their operations and collect their money to finance another operation.

The Mexican drug cartels have been around probably since the inception of the PRI, but have gotten stronger since the Columbia cartels; those of the Medellin and Cali factions have lost their power. The “gangs” or cartels of Mexico have operated since the last 40 for 50 years. “The gangs operating on the northern border of Mexico are long-time, well established ‘generational’ that is, consisting of Mexican grandfathers, sons and grandsons” (Manwaring, 2007, 12). The reason for the present day struggles with drug cartels occur is that for some people it is a way of life, just like some people inherit the family business. In the U.S., most gangs try and operate in a low key fashion; however, in Mexico, these cartels have operated openly and with little fear of law.

As was explained in the section of the Mexican Government section of this study, the drug cartels of Mexico now have had to change the way they operate since the government has begun to challenge them. According to Becerra, (2009), “La Familia has benefited from Mexico’s crackdown as the turf war with other cartels has made La Familia stronger. La Familia is based in the Mexican State of Michoacán” (1). As can be seen, the cartels are battling on two fronts. One is against rival cartels for control of important drug smuggling corridors which is a war of familiarity; the other is an unfamiliar war with the government. The cartels had been accustomed to pay law enforcement off with bribes which were probably in their operational budgets as the price of doing their lucrative business, but times have changed. Because of this new war with the government, the cartels such as the Beltran Leyva Organization have employed the Zetas. The Zeta cartel are the best trained and “Is the first criminal organisation in the

Americas to have been formed by former military personnel and defectors from the regular army” (Becerra, 2009, 1). The Zeta cartel is dangerous to the Mexican Government because this cartel is fully trained to understand and have proficiency with these weapons, which makes the Zeta’s all the more dangerous.

The aim of the cartels is to try and keep business as usual, which it to continue to smuggle drugs into the U.S. border. They do this because it is lucrative; however, the tactics have changed. In order for the status quo to continue, the cartels have to create fear in the Mexican people along with law enforcement and the military. Dailey battles take place where the cartels take on the Mexican military. An example of this can be seen from a Los Angeles Times article dates on April 2, 2010. “Drug traffickers fighting to control northern Mexico have turned their guns on the Mexican army, authorities said, in an apparent escalation of warfare that played out across multiple cities in two border states” (1). The battles that unfold everyday between the Mexican military and the drug cartels are part of the new approach the cartels have to take. This is the new way of survival for the cartels if they want to continue to continue with their drug running business.

To understand why the drug cartels do what they do, one has to understand why they do it. The cartels deal in drugs, human smuggling, prostitution and many other operations that most people would find depraved. So what makes them do it? That is a good question and it seems as they are in conflict. In regards to La Familia cartel, it is said that “Its leaders reputedly paved roads, and pay hospital bills in the impoverish pueblos, talk up the law and order and even preach a homespun version of the gospel from a text authored by a cartel capo that goes by the handle El Mas Loco, or The Craziest One” ([www.ottawacitizen.com](http://www.ottawacitizen.com)). These actions appear to show some kind of guilt for what they do and to clear their conscious, they help the less

fortunate. The same article states that this goes on in other cartels as well. “Displays of religiosity are nothing new for Mexico’s narcotics kingpins; it’s alleged they donated big to the Catholic Church- a charge denied by church officials- and adore Jesus Malverde, a Robin-Hood-like figure they claim as their patron saint” ([www.ottawacitizen.com](http://www.ottawacitizen.com)). This steal from the rich to give to the poor attitude is not true, they may help the poor, but these cartels certainly fill their own pockets as well.

As has been already stated, some members of the Mexican drug cartels have grown up in the narcotics business all of their lives, but this is not the case for all cartel members. Part of what makes people join the drug cartels are because the kingpins are glorified for having the wealth and the materialistic possessions that their money can buy. The narcoballads or narcocorridos are another recruitment tool that the cartels to retain their members for their cartels. “Members of powerful cartels are idealized to the point of making them immortal” (Garcia, 2006, 208). Even after they have died, these kingpins live on through music, as with Amado Carrillo Fuentes, where rumors that he is still alive surface from time to time. Garcia writes about the psychology of the cartels:

These types of rumors and conspiracy theories help create a world of fantasy for current and future members of the drug cartels that keeps them motivated, clinging to a false sense of security... These songs create a belief that if they hang on a little longer, a much brighter future awaits them” (209).

Garcia is correct in his assessment. Looking at the cartel hierarchy, these narcoballads help to motivate the low ranking members of the cartel with images that they too could become immortal. It matters little to the kingpins that this is indeed a fantasy and that the low ranking members will for all intents and purposes have a short life span. Just like one cannot start at the top of a Fortune 500 company without having to work their way up, the low ranking members of

the cartels have to start at the lowest level, which carries the most danger, and most likely will not make it to the top echelon of their cartels; however, the narcoballads do make an impression on those who want to attempt to climb the cartel ladder.

In summary, the Mexican drug cartel would like to continue with the status quo of being able to go on with their smuggling business with as little attention as possible. As of the present time, that is no longer possible so they must continue with their fight against the Mexican Government. Either they must make an arrangement with the Mexican Government or they must continue to battle government forces.

## **Research Design**

The Research Design method for this study will show how it is possible to come up with different scenarios for each country. According to Lockwood and O' Brien Lockwood (1994), "The general formula is:

$$X^y=Z$$

Where X equals the number of courses of action open to each actor, and y equals the number of national actors involved (assuming that each actor has the same number of courses of action open to it) Z will equal the total number of alternate futures to be compared" (38).

Here are the steps to use in the Lockwood Analytic Method for Prediction Technique (LAMP).

1. Determine the issue (behavior) for which you are trying to predict the most likely future.
2. Specify the "actors" involved in the issue (This tips you that LAMP is principally an agency or "free will" approach using rational choice.
3. Perform and in-depth study of how each actor perceives the issue in question.

4. Specify all possible courses of action for each actor. List your assumptions.
5. Determine the major scenarios (changing environments/conditions within which you will compare the alternative futures.
6. Calculate the total number of permutations of possible “alternate futures for each scenario.
7. Perform a pair “wise comparison” of all the alternate futures to determine their relative possibility.
8. Rank order the alternate futures for each scenario from the highest relative probability to the lowest based on the “votes” received.
9. Assuming that each scenario occurs, analyze the possible futures with the highest relative probabilities in terms of their consequence for the issue in question.
10. States the potential of a given alternative future to “transpose” into another alternate future.
11. Determine the “focal events” that must occur in our present in order to bring about a given alternate future.
12. Develop indicators (measures) for the focal points  
(Lockwood and O’Brien Lockwood, p. 3-5).

For this particular study, there are three national actors. The first is the country of the United States, the second is the Mexican Government and the third are the Mexican drug cartels which for the intents of this study will be said to work as a cohesive group.

The set up will be as followed:

Lockwood and O’ Brien Lockwood state:

“A pairwise comparison analyzes the alternate futures two at a time, always assuming that the two futures compared at the moment are the only ones that exist...Future number 1 is compared to future number 2...Future number 1 is then compared to future number 3, number 4, and so on in the same way until it has been compared to all futures within the scenarios. You then begin the process again with future number 2” (40).

The process starts all over again, but since the first and second scenario has already been pair ranked, scenario number 3 would be ranked on down the line.

According to Lockwood and O’ Brien Lockwood (1994), the formula for the number of pairwise comparisons is expressed as follows:

$$X=(n-1)+(n-2)...+(n-n)$$

Where  $n$  equals the total number of alternate futures to be analyzed, and  $X$  equals the total number of alternate futures to be analyzed, and  $X$  equals the total number of pair-wise comparisons that must be performed (40-41).

The last step of the process is to rank the alternate futures for each scenario from the highest relative probability to the lowest based on the number of votes received (Lockwood and O'Brien Lockwood, 43).

#### **Step 4: Specify all possible courses of action for each actor:**

There are three general courses of action that the three actors could follow:

##### Course of actions for United States

1. Status Quo—Let things stand the way they are. The stance that the U.S. takes is to give time for the Merida Initiative to take effect, while instructing Mexican law enforcement on the best ways to get intelligence on the drug cartels.
2. Broker a deal with Mexico and the cartels. This scenario would be hard to fathom since it would entail dealing with dealing the criminal element.
3. Send US Troops into Mexico. This is not what the U.S. Government wants to do because this would appear to the Mexican people and the world that the U.S. has flexed their military might yet again. It is also too dangerous as the close proximity to the U.S. could trigger terrorist activities in the United States.

##### Course of actions for Mexico

1. Status Quo---Keep fighting the cartels. This is the only way to confront the cartels and it serves three purposes. It shows the cartels that if they want to do their drug smuggling, that cartels will pay a heavy price; it shows the Mexican citizens that their government is trying to protect them, and three, it shows the U.S. that the Mexican Government will not lay down for the cartels.
2. Have a peace treaty with the cartels. After a war of attrition, where many Mexican law enforcement and military deaths, along with the same high death rate for the cartels, the two sides agree for to a peace treaty.

3. Revert back to how it once was. This means going back to have cartels paying off law enforcement and politicians and violence ends. This is the least probable since it would mean that all the previous people who died would have been in vain.

Courses of actions for the Cartels:

1. Status Quo-Keep fighting the Government. This means to continue and expand the war on the Mexican Government.
2. Stop the violence and lose drug profits. This would mean that the cartel would just stop their drug smuggling. Of these three, this would be the least plan of action.
3. Keep fighting Mexico and bring violence to the US. This means that all of the escalated violence is to bring U.S. military troops into Mexico so they could help broker a peace treaty.

**Step 5: Determine the major scenarios within which the future alternatives will be compared.**

**The United States continues the status quo by funding the Merida Initiative so that Mexico can continue fighting the drug cartels.** Based on the number of possible courses of action open to the U.S., Mexico and the Cartels, there are  $3^3$ , or 27 possible futures which can be done under this scenario.

**Mexico continues the status quo and continues to fight the Cartel.** Based on the number of possible courses of action open to the Mexico, the U.S. and the Cartels, there are  $3^3$ , or 27 possible futures which can be done under this scenario.

**The Cartel keeps the pressure on Mexico trying to force a truce.** Based on the number of possible courses of action open to the Cartel, U.S. and Mexico, there are  $3^3$ , or 27 possible futures which can be done under this scenario.

**Step 6: Calculate the total number of permutations of possible “alternative futures” for each scenario.**

The general formula for computing the number of alternative futures is:  $X^Y=Z$

Where X equals the number of courses of action open to each actor, which is 3. Y equals the number of actors involved, which is 3 (it is assumed each actor has the same number of courses of action open to it). Z equals the total number of alternate futures to be compared for  $3^3 = 27$  possible alternative futures.

**Step 7: Perform a pairwise comparison of all “alternative futures” to determine their relative probability.**

A “pair wise comparison” is comparing the likelihood of each alternate future two at a time. This is accomplished by comparing alternate future number 1 to alternate future number 2, and determining which is more likely to occur. The one that is more likely to occur (the winner) is given one vote. Then one compares alternate future number 1 to alternate future number 3, again to determine which is most likely to occur. This continues until all possible futures have been compared to each other. The total number of votes is a function of the number of alternate futures to be analyzed. The number of pair wise comparisons, V, is obtained from the formula:

$$V = n(n-1)/2,$$

where n equals the total number of alternate futures, i.e.

$$V = 27(27-1)/2 = 351 \text{ votes.}$$

Table 1 shows all 27 alternate futures and the number of votes each alternate future received from the pair wise comparisons. The number of votes indicates the alternate future most likely to occur.

<b>Table 1 Alternative Futures and the corresponding votes they received.</b>				
Scenarios	US	Mexico	Cartel	Votes

1	SQ	SQ	SQ	24
2	SQ	SQ	P	23
3	SQ	SQ	W	16
4	SQ	P	SQ	20
5	SQ	P	P	21
6	SQ	P	W	19
7	SQ	W	SQ	14
8	SQ	W	P	13
9	SQ	W	W	9
10	P	SQ	SQ	20
11	P	SQ	P	25
12	P	SQ	W	14
13	P	P	SQ	18
14	P	P	P	26
15	P	P	W	15
16	P	W	SQ	12
17	P	W	P	14
18	P	W	W	11
19	W	SQ	SQ	5
20	W	SQ	P	5
21	W	SQ	W	4
22	W	P	SQ	8
23	W	P	P	8
24	W	P	W	3
25	W	W	SQ	1
26	W	W	P	2
27	W	W	W	0

SQ=Status quo

Total Votes: 351

P=Peace

W=War

**Step 8: Rank the alternate futures from highest relative probability to the lowest based on the number of votes received.**

The next step in the analysis is to rank the alternate futures from the highest relative probability to the lowest, based on the number of votes received. Table 2 shows the alternate futures arranged in terms of the votes they received from “most likely” to “least likely”.

**Table 2:** Alternate futures ranked by the number of votes each received.

Alternate Futures	United States	Mexico	Cartel	Votes
14	P	P	P	26
11	P	SQ	P	25
1	SQ	SQ	SQ	24
2	SQ	SQ	P	23
5	SQ	P	P	21
4	SQ	P	SQ	20
10	P	SQ	SQ	19
6	SQ	P	W	19
13	P	P	SQ	18
3	SQ	SQ	W	17
15	P	P	W	15
7	SQ	W	SQ	15
17	P	W	P	14
12	P	SQ	W	14
8	SQ	W	P	13
16	P	W	SQ	12
18	P	W	W	11
9	SQ	W	W	9
22	W	P	SQ	8
23	W	P	P	8
19	W	SQ	SQ	5
20	W	SQ	P	5
21	W	SQ	W	4
24	W	P	W	3
26	W	W	P	2
25	W	W	SQ	1
27	W	W	W	0

SQ=Status quo

Total Votes: 351

P=Peace

W=War

**Step 9: Assuming each future occurs, analyze each alternate future in terms of its consequences:**

With the LAMP method, most decisions/policy makers will only be interested in three to five most likely futures. As in all probability, one can only assume the possible outcomes.

Assuming that each alternate future actually occurs, and each actor take the course of action of

that particular future, the five most likely futures considered are alternate scenarios, 14, 11, 1, 2, and 5.

**First Alternate Future #14 (26 Votes).**

The United States, Mexico, and the Cartel all want peace. It is easy to see that both governments would want peace, but the cartel also wants peace, but it is on their terms. They want Mexico's law enforcement and the military to ease up and not challenge their operations. In looking at the aspect of peace, for the United States, peace would be ending the targeting of Americans in Mexico. Peace would also entail the ending of threats against American law enforcement. For Mexico, people would see the curtailment of violence against Mexican citizens, Mexican law enforcement and the Mexican military. For the Cartel, peace could come in reverting back to the PRI political attitudes where the Cartel could bribe its way to uninterrupted drug smuggling.

This alternative future would turn back the clock to when the Cartel smuggling operations went unimpeded. It would not be good for the country of Mexico because of the changes that have occurred since the PRI was driven out of office. It would be a step backwards, and worse than that, it would forever tarnish the image of a changing Mexico.

**Second Alternate Future # 11 (25 Votes)**

The United States is at peace, which means that Americans are not being targeted in Mexico and American law enforcement are not in the Cartel's gun sights. The Mexican Government is continuing with their improvements and the changing of their culture to a more

law and order society. During this time Mexico has improved its law enforcement ranks where they have purged all the law enforcement that used to be on the take. Mexican citizens finally begin to trust their government. The cartel is at peace, which means that something has happened that lead to a brokered peace treaty. The violence stops and calm returns to Mexican.

This alternate future is not detrimental to Mexico. This United States looks favorable to this outcome since American citizens are no longer being murdered. The U.S. is also pleased that the Mexican Government is able to take care of its own people and handle their problems without having to send American troops into Mexico. The cartel is at peace and one can assume that they are content in getting a deal to continue their smuggling operations but on a much lower scale.

### **Third Alternate Future # 1 (24 Votes)**

This Alternate Future is listed as status quo for each of the three actors. This means that the alternate future would be what each actor is doing at the present time. The United States is funding Mexico with the Merida Initiative, which provides for financial assistance so that Mexico can improve law enforcement operations as well as improving their domestic intelligence activities. In this alternate future, Mexico is working to confront the cartel head-on. They are also ridding themselves of corrupt law enforcement and well as tainted politicians. It is not an easy road, and given the history of Mexico and the way drug smuggling is generational, they still have a long road ahead, but they should be complemented for taking that first hard step. In this alternate future, the Cartel is reeling not only from within the different cartels but from battles against the Mexican law enforcement and military.

The alternate future which is also occurring in the present will either be a prelude to some kind of peace treaty between Mexico and its Cartel, or it is going to escalate and bring the United States in the mix. The United States would rather that Mexico take care of their own problems if Mexico can keep Americans from getting killed. If Mexico had a choice of keeping things the way they are now, or having the U.S. enter the fray, Mexico would choose the former. Of all three, the Cartel would probably want to escalate matters so that the U.S. could broker some kind of peace treaty.

#### **Fourth Alternate Future #2 (23 Votes)**

The fourth alternate future involves the U.S. doing the status quo. Again, the U.S. would rather have Mexico take care of all its internal conflicts rather than having to send troops into Mexico. The U.S. holds this position because they are already in a two front war, and to send troops into their southern neighbor's territory is something they would rather not do. Again, the U.S. is counting on the Merida Initiative to help the Mexican Government take care of their problems.

In this fourth alternate future, Mexico is also doing the status quo. They want peace in the area, and they want their citizens to trust the government to be able to provide for their security. The reason for this is that a citizenry that feels unprotected in its own security will lose trust in the government, which could open up a political Pandora's Box. Mexico also wants to show its northern neighbor that they are up to the job of protecting their own people, which in turn shows the United States that Mexico can hold its own.

In this fourth alternate future, the Cartel is at peace, which means they have stopped fighting the Mexican Government and Mexican citizens are no longer being killed by crossfire or

on purpose. This would mean that there has been a treaty of some sort. Perhaps a corridor can be open between two and four in the morning where the Cartel can cross through uninterrupted. This would seem preposterous, but treaties have occurred before between governments and war lords in other countries. The United States is currently doing the same thing in Afghanistan, so it is not out of the realm of possibilities.

### **Fifth Alternate Future #5 (21 Votes)**

In this fifth alternate future, the United States is at status quo, and Mexico and the Cartel are at peace. This alternate future is not bad, and it is something that the U.S. could live with. The U.S. would continue to fund Mexico's and help it to continue and improve. Mexico would enjoy peace and its citizens would no longer be targeted. For the Cartel, to have peace would mean that there was a deal made where they could still run their drug smuggling business only again, in a more discrete manner.

The fact that the Cartel would still be smuggling drugs would not be viewed on as favorable for the United States, but when looking at the peace that the Mexican people would enjoy, it would not seem as bad. The real prize in this alternate future for the U.S. would be a stronger Mexico, and a stronger Mexico means that the United States feels more secure that the southern neighbor can take care of their affairs. Mexico would view this alternate future as a success as well since they would have confronted the Cartel and would have shown the people of Mexico that they took on the Cartel head-on to provide security for its citizens. This could be a political gift for the next presidential candidate from the PAN.

**Step 10: Determine the ‘focal events’ that must occur in our present in order to bring about a given ‘alternate future’.**

The LAMP technique defines a “focal event” as a major occurrence that changes the relative probability of alternate futures. This means what needs to happen in at the present time for the alternate futures to occur. The desire of the U.S. and Mexico is to be able to run their countries with the minimal amount of distractions, in this case, the killings of innocent civilians; the Cartel wants to be able to run their drug smuggling operations without any outside interference. For the five alternate futures discussed, certain events must occur in our present to create the alternate future.

#### **Focal event for the first alternate future #14**

For alternative future #14 to occur, all actors are in the peace category.

- ▶ The U.S. would stop end the Merida Initiative funding, which is a possibility as Mexico becomes proficient and is no longer needed.
- ▶ Mexico would have a peace treaty with the Cartel, and could be give permission to continue their drug smuggling operations but to be done at night and with no killing of either Mexican or American citizens.
- ▶ The Cartel would have to stop their assaults on Mexican citizens, law enforcement and military.

#### **Focal event for the second alternate future #11**

- ▶ The United States would stop funding the Merida Initiative, and again, this could be possible in a few years as Mexico becomes fully competent.
- ▶ Mexico would not have to change in this alternate future. It could continue to do what it is doing with the Cartel.

- ▶ The Cartel would be at peace, since they are currently at war with the Mexican Government they would have to abide by Mexico's wishes.

### **Focal events for alternate future # 1**

There are no focal points since all actors are in the status quo category, so there is no focal event to change.

### **Focal events for alternate future # 2**

For this alternate future, the only change would come from the Cartel, since the U.S. and Mexico would be in the status quo category.

- ▶ The Cartel would have to stop their violence against Mexico's citizens, law enforcement and military. This would be done for them to get concessions from the Mexican Government.

### **Focal events for alternate future #5**

For alternate future #5, only Mexico and the cartel would have a focal event as the U.S. is still in the status quo category.

- ▶ Mexico would offer a peace plan to the Cartel where both could coexist. Mexico would demand the end of the violence and the Cartels drug smuggling operations would be discreet.
- ▶ The Cartel would also be at peace by ending the violence in Mexico. They would also be discreet and be more unassuming.

### **Step 11: Develop indicators for the focal events.**

For each focal event associated with an alternate future a list of indicators for each event

is developed. Indicators are a subset of focal events that may signal the emergence of a particular focal event.

**Focal Event for First Alternate Future:**

All actors are at the peace stage.

**Key Indicators:**

- ▶ The United States stop stops the Merida Initiative funding.
- ▶ The U.S. remove its law enforcement that are training Mexican law enforcement on tactical intelligence.
- ▶ Mexico stops their war against the Cartel
- ▶ Mexico also reaches out to the strongest Cartel and offers them a deal to end the violence.
- ▶ The Cartel ends violence against the citizens of Mexico, visitors of the United States, and Mexican law enforcement and military.

**Focal Events for Second Alternate Future:**

The U.S. is at peace, Mexico is status quo, and the Cartel is at peace.

**Key Indicators:**

- ▶ The United States stop stops the Merida Initiative funding.
- ▶ The U.S. remove its law enforcement that are training Mexican law enforcement on tactical intelligence.

- ▶ Mexico keeps the pressure on the Cartel, by obstructing their drug smuggling operations.

- ▶ The Cartel, seeing that Mexico has not stopped its offense acquiesces and stops the violence leading to the initial battle with the Mexican Government. They feel this is the best way to create peace and coexist within the country of Mexico.

#### **Focal Event for the Third Alternate Future:**

There are no focal events for this alternate future as all three actors are in the status quo category.

#### **Key Indicators:**

The indicators are what each actor is presently doing.

#### **Focal Event for the Fourth Alternate Future:**

The U.S. and Mexico is in the status quo, while the cartel is at peace.

#### **Key Indicators:**

- ▶ With the U.S. and Mexico continuing in the status quo, the Cartel understands that their war on Mexico has failed, and enters into secret meetings to end the violence and try and gain a concession.

#### **Focal Event for the Fifth Alternate Future:**

The U.S. is doing the status quo while Mexico and the Cartel are at peace.

#### **Key Indicators:**

- ▶ Mexico stops their war against the Cartel
- ▶ Mexico also reaches out to the strongest Cartel and offers them a deal to end the violence.
- ▶ The Cartel ends violence against the citizens of Mexico, visitors of the United States, and Mexican law enforcement and military.
- ▶ The Cartel is allowed to continue its drug smuggling business on a much smaller scale.

**Step 12: State the potential of a given alternate future to “transpose into another alternate future.**

The transposition of one alternate future to another is an abstract concept. It will happen if an actor’s action changes, so the perception of the other actors will change as well. Thus, these changes will “transpose” one alternate future to another, hence changing the relative probability of all possible futures.

Alternate future #14 where the U.S., Mexico and the Cartel are at peace can change to alternate future # 11, in which the United States and the Cartel is at peace while Mexico is in the status quo category. Alternate future #11 is where an actual peace can come for all involved, in which alternate future # 11, turns back into alternate future #14. This is where all three actors would like to be at. A change from one actor, in this case Mexico from status quo back into peace, can lead to a brokered deal where the violence ends and all things gets back to normal in a sense.

It is important to qualify what was stated in the preceding paragraph. Going back to normal for the Cartel is that the drug smuggling operations can resume, only it would be done by the most powerful Cartel, not by all of them.

## **Conclusion**

This LAMP study was done on the United States, Mexico and the Cartel, with the Cartel being elements of the existing cartels in Mexico. The results from this study show that peace is what all the actors want. Law enforcement in the United States would want the Mexican Government to annihilate the Cartel, but that is not going to happen. How can U.S. law enforcement want the country of Mexico to rid themselves of the drug cartels when even in U.S. prisons, inmates still use illicit drugs, so it would be unfair to demand the country of Mexico to do what even the United States cannot do?

Another point to make is the drug use that occurs in America. This is a serious problem and one that the U.S. has not done well to end. Not to say that the cartels are innocent in this action but the U.S. needs to do something to curtail the drug appetites of its people. With less demand for drugs perhaps the cartels could start sending their supply to other countries. The bottom line here is the U.S. has a serious drug issue and the sooner the U.S. Government takes steps to address it, the sooner the cartels will be sending their drugs elsewhere.

This study shows that all actors in this study want peace. The U.S. Government does not like the cartels smuggling in drugs into the United States, but they would take that if somehow the violence that is occurring in Mexico would cease. The reason for this is the United States sees the violence as weakening the security of Mexico and the southern United States border. The U.S. is already fighting a two front war so a possible third front is something that Americans

do not want to see, and the government wants to avoid. This is the reason why the U.S. is funding the Merida Initiative, so that Mexico can learn to take care of their affairs. The U.S. does not mind funding this Initiative since the investment will make a stronger Mexico.

Mexico would also like to end the violence. At the present time, they are in armed conflict with the cartel to show the cartels that they are not intimidated by them. This is important because if cartels smell weakness they will pounce on the government and will be able to dictate what they will do and when they will do it. Mexico also has to fight the cartel to show the Mexican people that they can provide security for them. This is crucial because at this moment, the citizens understand that Mexican law enforcement and military are risking their lives to protect its people, which in turn show the citizens that they are still a priority to the government. Plus, Mexico also wants to show the U.S. that they can take care of their own problems.

The Cartel is doing what it can to resume its drug smuggling activities at the same rate as before the PAN came into office, though that is probably not going to happen with the new direction Mexico is taking. It would be naive to think that Mexico would put the cartels out of the drug business, but it certainly will change them. At this point the cartels are using intimidation to telegraph their point that they are here to stay and are not going anywhere. That may be true but there is going to come a time when the cartels will have to do a cost effective analysis and understand that some kind of deal has got to be made because both the cartels and the country of Mexico cannot sustain this rapid pace of murder. Both the U.S. and Mexico could live with cartels continuing their smuggling operations at a smaller scale.

This LAMP study has shed a little light as to where these three actors could be going in the future. As stated, all could co-exist if all would be willing to offer some concessions to each other, either out of need, or because of necessity.

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