



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on October 5, 2012

## Stratfor Sources: U.S. Troops in Mexico as Feds Aid Cartels

Federal authorities in the United States have been quietly supporting certain Mexican criminal empires, especially the Sinaloa drug cartel, in a bid to solidify the syndicates' reign as dominant powerbrokers in particular territories, according to [leaked e-mails](#) from a U.S.-based Mexican diplomat to the private intelligence firm Stratfor. If cartel chiefs cooperate with authorities, "governments will allow controlled drug trades," the diplomatic source [wrote](#).



Other information unearthed so far in the leak, much of it coming from a variety of sources, was equally explosive. One 2011 e-mail from an individual described by Stratfor as "a US law enforcement officer with direct oversight of border investigations," for example, indicated that American troops were already operating in Mexico under the guise of the drug war.

"U.S. special operations forces are currently in Mexico. Small-scale joint ops [operations] with Mexico's [special forces], but they are there," [the document claimed](#), citing the federal law enforcement supervisor identified as US714. The allegation in the e-mail was echoed by the Mexican diplomat and served to confirm previous reports of U.S. military operations in Mexico based on other sources.

Also troubling were Stratfor documents detailing "surgical strikes" by Mexican special-operations troops — backed by U.S. taxpayer money and the Obama administration — which analysts [equated with "death squads."](#) Essentially, then, Mexican troops have gone on a killing spree taking out certain troublesome "cells," multiple sources, including those working for Stratfor, suggested.

Another bombshell uncovered in the leaked e-mails indicated that the U.S. federal government had deliberately allowed cartel hit men to murder people inside the United States if they agreed to offer their services to Washington. "Regarding ICE [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement] screwing up informants: They [ICE] were handling big hit men from Juarez and letting them kill in the U.S.," the same federal law enforcement supervisor [wrote in an e-mail](#).

While the claim is certainly explosive and hard to understand, analysts who follow the drug war closely say it would not be the first time the U.S. government had authorized similar insanity. "Though Stratfor source US714's revelation may seem too dark to be true, *Narco News* has already documented, via the multi-year [House of Death](#) investigative series, that ICE, with the approval of US prosecutors, allowed one of its informants to participate in multiple murders inside Mexico in order to make a drug case," [wrote](#) investigative reporter Bill Conroy, one of the premier journalists covering the issue.

The latest revelations about government support for certain cartels, first reported by *Narco News* after WikiLeaks [released hacked e-mails from Stratfor](#), would appear to confirm accusations made last year by a top Sinaloa operative. Jesus Vicente Zambada-Niebla, allegedly the "logistics coordinator" for the Sinaloa Cartel, [claimed in federal court filings](#) that the U.S. government had [offered his criminal syndicate virtual immunity to import multi-ton quantities of drugs](#) across the border.



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“El Vicentillo” also suggested that in exchange for information on rival cartels, the U.S. government armed the Sinaloa cartel while helping the organization avoid Mexican authorities. More than a few experts have drawn a link to the Obama administration’s [Fast and Furious scandal](#), which put thousands of U.S. weapons into the hands of Mexican cartels under the guise of [targeting two “drug lords” that already worked for the FBI](#).

The unnamed Mexican diplomatic source, dubbed MX1 in the leaked documents, suggested that the reason U.S. authorities were willing to help certain cartels was to minimize the level of violence. In one 2010 e-mail to Stratfor Vice President of Intelligence Fred Burton, the Mexican diplomat outlines part of his government’s strategy to deal with cartels — essentially a hands-off, “look the other way” approach unless and until violence breaks out.

“[If] they [a big narco-trafficking group] bring [in] some drugs, transport some drugs, they are discrete, [and] they don’t bother anyone, [then] no one gets hurt,” wrote MX1, identified by *Narco News* as a U.S.-educated lawyer and Mexican diplomat stationed in the Southwest named Fernando de la Mora Salcedo. “[And the] government turns the other way.”

On the other hand, if a smaller criminal group arrives on the scene and engages in violence, the Mexican government allows more powerful cartels to “do their thing” before taking down the new arrivals. MX1 goes on to explain that his bosses’ official strategy is to not negotiate with the cartel leaders. However, he said the U.S. government does in fact deal with them, oftentimes by sending subtle “signals” urging cartel chiefs to do something.

“I think the US sent a signal that could be construed as follows: ‘To the [Juárez] and Sinaloa cartels: Thank you for providing our market with drugs over the years. We are now concerned about your perpetration of violence, and would like to see you stop that. In this regard, please know that Sinaloa is bigger and better than [the Juárez cartel]. Also note that [Ciudad Juárez] is very important to us, as is the whole border. In this light, please talk amongst yourselves and lets all get back to business. Again, we recognize that Sinaloa is bigger and better, so either [the Juárez cartel] gets in line or we will mess you up,’” MX1 wrote in a 2010 e-mail.

In the end, the Mexican diplomat concluded that the U.S. government had put its weight behind the Sinaloa Cartel. “In sum, I have a gut feeling that the US agencies tried to send a signal telling the cartels to negotiate themselves,” he wrote. “They unilaterally declared a winner, and this is unprecedented, and deserves analysis.”

In a separate e-mail later that year, MX1 reveals even more astounding information. He claimed, among other explosive statements, that law enforcement agencies in both Mexico and the United States have been negotiating deals with the cartels and openly tolerating major drug trafficking operations while helping the big cartels eliminate smaller competitors.

“I found out that there is a group of US and Mexican LE [law enforcement] that discretely attempted, and succeeded, in brokering a deal in Tijuana.... It was this same group of guys that presented their ‘signaling strategy’ and attempted it for CDJ [Juarez],” MX1 [wrote](#).

If the drug kingpins cooperate, business can go on. “It is not so much a message for the Mexican government as it is for the Sinaloa cartel and VCF [the Juarez Cartel] themselves. Basically, the message they want to send out is that Sinaloa is winning and that the violence is unacceptable. They want the CARTELS to negotiate with EACH OTHER. The idea is that if they can do this, violence will drop and *the governments will allow controlled drug trades*.” [Emphasis added.]



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In other words, if the major cartel bosses cooperate with authorities on both sides of the border, governments will allow them to continue doing business shipping drugs into the United States. Incredibly, it gets worse though, with MX1 claiming that the drug trafficking organizations have already reached agreements with the U.S. federal government on protecting their criminal empires.

The Mexican government, meanwhile, was discreetly prodded by American officials into allowing certain shipments of narcotics belonging to U.S. government-favored cartels while attacking their competitors. “Unfortunately, CDJ [Juarez] is not ripe for this kind of activity, as the major routes and methods for bulk shipping into the US have already been negotiated with US authorities,” MX1 claimed, echoing [allegations made by U.S. and Mexican officials, drug cartel leaders, and analysts for years](#).

“In this sense, the message that Sinaloa was winning was, in my view, intended to tell SEDENA [the Mexican military] to stop taking down large trucks full of dope as they made their way to the US,” MX1 wrote about his analysis of the situation. “These large shipments were Sinaloa’s, and they are OK with the Americans. The argument is that most of the violence [in Juarez] remains related to the local market, and that SEDENA should focus on smaller gangs and fringe groups that try to cross smaller quantities.”

It should be noted that the quality of Stratfor’s “intelligence” has been criticized and even ridiculed by some commentators following the massive leak of its e-mails. Others have called the company a sort of “private CIA.” However, many of the revelations uncovered in the documents so far have merely served to re-confirm what experts and analysts had suspected all along.

Essentially, then, the drug war, aside from being unconstitutional, is a fraud at best. In a best-case scenario, the U.S. government is simply out of control, assuming that it has just given up and that something more sinister is not going on. On the other hand, officials on both sides of the border have said that the U.S. government’s involvement in the drug trade, [especially through the CIA](#), runs much deeper than just looking the other way.

Tens of thousands of innocent Mexicans, meanwhile, have paid for the drug war with their lives in recent years. The Obama administration and Attorney General Eric Holder are engaged in a frantic ongoing cover-up surrounding [DEA money laundering for cartels](#), [ATF sending heavy weapons to the cartels](#), and much more. Whether or not the whole truth will ever come out remains unclear, but activists and victims are not giving up yet.

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*Photo: The home page of the Stratfor website is seen on a computer monitor in London, Jan 11, 2012: AP Images*



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