



Written by [James Heiser](#) on June 26, 2012

Cartel Violence Kills Three in Mexico City Airport

Conditions in Mexico continue to demonstrate that almost no form of violent criminal activity is impossible in that [failed state](#). Although the violent conflict between the Mexican government and the drug cartels has continued unabated, it has become increasingly rare for the American media to report on the conflict. The Mexican “drug war” began with President Felipe Calderon’s declaration of war in December 2006. But as that so-called war continues to drag on, the hopes which were expressed nearly six years ago for a quick victory have proven to be ephemeral.



One of the latest incident in the Mexican drug war took place in a terminal of the Mexico City International Airport (AICM). As reported in [an article for Borderlandbeat.com](#), an attempt to detain individuals who were purportedly transporting cocaine quickly turned violent:

The shootout that took place in Terminal 2 of the Mexico City international airport (AICM) was triggered when Federal Police agents tried to detain suspected drug traffickers, according to the an official report on the incident issued by the Federal Department of Public Safety (SSP).

In the report, they indicated that Federal agents were performing investigative duties and “proceeded to take into custody suspects linked with drug trafficking.”

The suspects (number unknown) were in Terminal 2 of the Mexico City International Airport and, “when the saw themselves surrounded by Federal Police, began shooting their firearms at the federal agents.”

Authorities within the agency indicated to El Universal that apparently the suspects were also Federal Police officers, which is why they were carrying weapons inside the terminal area, and they managed to fire their weapons to prevent being apprehended, although the investigation will continue to try to determine the aggressors’ identities.

According to reports, the exchange of gunfire resulted in the death of three federal police officers (presumably the suspects are not included in the roster of those officers who were killed). A [report for The Raw Story](#) indicated that Mexican officials went into publicity ‘damage control’ immediately following the incident:

The Ministry of Communications and Transportation issued a brief statement denouncing the “quarrel in an area of open access” of the airport’s Terminal 2.

Airline operations “are carrying on normally and this situation does not in any way affect operations,” the note said, omitting references to any people killed.

Police patrols have increased across the country ahead of Sunday’s presidential election.

Apparently, with Mexico’s presidential politics in full swing, and tourism season underway, bloody



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exchanges that leave three officers dead become 'quarrels.' In a few days, the Mexican electorate will determine the successor to President Calderon, and it seems likely that his party's candidate, Josefina Vazquez Mota, will lose to Enrique Pena Nieto of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), the party which ruled in Mexico from 1929 until 2000, when Calderon's National Action Party (PAN) came to power.

Reports have documented the cartels' [widespread infiltration](#) of the Mexican government. Even [optimistic assessments](#) from within the Calderon government estimated that it could be as late as 2018 before any significant inroads would be made against the power of the cartels. Part of the problem is expressed in the seeming inability of the Mexican government to actually punish criminal activity. As was [reported for The New American in November 2010](#), the conviction rate for violent crimes in Mexico is appallingly low: 98.5 percent of crimes are never punished by the Mexican legal system.

It is difficult to estimate the precise number of casualties in the Mexican drug war. An [official estimate](#) by the Mexican government put the number at 47,515 in January 2012, but Zeta Magazine recently put the number vastly higher. [As Borderlandbeat reports](#), if the published report is accurate, the actual casualties of the drug war could easily be more than 70,000 and could even exceed 100,000:

- 109,142 negligent or intentional homicides are classified by the federal Government as "Without data" and "Other".
- The 109,000 killings leave us perplexed, but on the other hand, leaves us in a situation in which there are probably many more, because we have many missing people we do not know where they are?" said sister Consuelo Morales, defender of human rights in Nuevo León.
- The contempt for the victims in the Calderon Government is astounding: The NHRC, which is directed by PAN representative Raul Plascencia, recognizes only 111 deaths of civilians in 2010 and 43 in 2011. ...

Pressed by Zeta, the Government of Calderón, through the Attorney General of the Republic (PGR), has only recognized the death of 47 thousand executions as of January 2012. However, the "preliminary" figures were at the end of September 2011. Indeed, the statistics of 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 of the national information system are legendary for being under reported.

The truth is that so many dead have not been accounted for. They are not in agreement with our numbers. None of the following institutions offer the same conclusions; the national system of public security (SNSP) or the National Institute of statistics, geography or Informatics (INEGI); none offer the real amount of intentional killings in Mexico during the Calderon Administration.

Just to cite one example: the national information system recognizes 60,148 intentional homicides that occurred between 2007 and 2010, while in the same period, the INEGI reported 70,968 intentional killings. While the Government of President Felipe Calderón claims only 10,820 intentional homicides that occurred between 2007 and 2010.

The incident at the Mexico City International Airport might actually seem minor — when compared to the mayhem which has transpired in Mexico for the past six years. Whether a transition between presidents can actually have a meaningful impact on such a situation remains to be seen.

And so, while President Obama has announced he will not enforce federal law and will be [allowing at least 1.4 million illegal aliens](#) to become exempt to deportation, chaos continues to be the order of the day in Mexico. Last year, the problem of cartels infiltrating the United States and [recruiting American](#)



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[children to serve as “expendables”](#) briefly received attention from the American news media. But as the American and Mexican elections loom closer, a thoughtful consideration of the perils of illegal immigration and Mexico’s failed drug war seems further away than it has been in years.

Photo: A federal police officer lifts a strip of crime scene barrier tape, as he leaves a marked-off area of Mexico City’s International Airport, where a shooting occurred on June 25, killing three federal policemen on an anti-drug mission: AP Images



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