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DRUG CARTELS IN MEXICO

Mexican drug cartels have been around for several decades, and since the 1970s, some of Mexico's government agencies have supported their activities. Mexican drug cartels intensified after the collapse of the Colombian drug cartels Medellinsky and Cali in the 1990s. Mexico is currently the main foreign supplier of cannabis, cocaine and methamphetamine to the United States, and Mexican drug cartels dominate the wholesale illicit drug market in the United States.[1]

The arrests of cartel leaders led to increased levels of violence, as they intensified the cartel's struggle among themselves for control of drug delivery routes to the United States. Forced disappearances in Mexico have also become a growing concern, and efforts to accurately count the missing or forcibly disappeared have been limited, a problem that is exacerbated by underreporting. Government estimates of the number of disappeared people in Mexico have varied over time, especially of those who are missing due to force and possible homicide. In the Gulf Coast state of Veracruz, in 2017, a vast mass grave was unearthed containing some 250 skulls and other remains, some of which were found to be years old.³⁰ Journalist watchdog group Animal Politico, which focuses on combating corruption with transparency, concludes in a 2018 investigative article that combating impunity and tracking missing persons cannot be handled in several states because 20 of Mexico's 31 states lack the biological databases needed to identify unclaimed bodies. Additionally, states lack access to the national munitions database used to trace bullets and weapons.

What assistance has the U.S.A. government provided? The United States has historically provided the bulk of its financial support to Mexico through the Merida Initiative, a security partnership launched in 2007 by President George W. Bush and Felipe Calderon. The two governments revised the partnership in 2011, placing a larger emphasis on institution-building, including reforms of the police and judiciary, economic development, and social programs. Last May, Lopez Obrador announced Mexico's desire to see Merida "completely reoriented" toward development programs.

In recent years, the U.S. government has sent CIA operatives and security contractors to train Mexican federal police, and Washington has also sent unarmed drones to collect intelligence on traffickers.

Many U.S. government officials and policymakers have deep concerns about the Mexican government's capacity to decrease violence in Mexico

and curb the power of the country's criminal groups. Many analysts have viewed as problematic a continued reliance on a controversial kingpin strategy. They note the kingpin strategy has not lowered violence in a sustainable way. Some analysts suggest a new strategy of targeting the middle operational layer of each key criminal group to handicap the groups' regeneration capacity. [2]

The United States is expanding its role in Mexico's bloody fight against drug trafficking organizations, sending new C.I.A. operatives and retired military personnel to the country and considering plans to deploy private security contractors in hopes of turning around a multibillion-dollar effort that so far has shown few results.

In recent weeks, small numbers of C.I.A. operatives and American civilian military employees have been posted at a Mexican police and military departments, where, for the first time, security officials from both countries work side by side in collecting information about drug cartels and helping plan operations. Officials are also looking into embedding a team of American contractors inside a specially vetted Mexican counternarcotics police unit.

Officials on both sides of the border say the new efforts have been devised to get around Mexican laws that prohibit foreign military and police from operating on its soil, and to prevent advanced American surveillance technology from falling under the control of Mexican security agencies with long histories of corruption.

"A sea change has occurred over the past years in how effective Mexico and U.S. intelligence exchanges have become," said Arturo Sarukhán, Mexico's ambassador to the United States. "It is underpinned by the understanding that transnational organized crime can only be successfully confronted by working hand in hand, and that the outcome is as simple as it is compelling: we will together succeed or together fail." [3]

Список використаних джерел

1. Illegal drug trade URL:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illegal_drug_trade
2. National Drug Assignment URL: <https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2018-11/DIR-032-18%202018%20NDTA%20final%20low%20resolution.pdf>
3. U.S. Widens Role in Battle Against Mexican Drug Cartels URL: <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/07/world/07drugs.html>