

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, an unprecedented tragedy has been unfolding in our community, and our entire region is in immediate risk of further violence, devastation and chaos; and

WHEREAS, over 1,600 people in our community were killed in Juárez in 2008; over 2,650 in 2009; and over 250 killed so far this year; and

WHEREAS, nearly 150 children have been killed, and just within these past two weeks fifteen people were brutally murdered while attending family parties in private homes-most were high school-aged students and the youngest was a thirteen year old girl; and

WHEREAS, in the past two years the violence in Juárez has lead to the closing of over 10,000 businesses, has left over 100,000 homes vacant, and over 100,000 Juarenses having already fled their city, including at least 30,000 who have moved to El Paso; and

WHEREAS, El Paso and Juárez maintain a unique and unbreakable historical, familial and economic connection that has resulted in a rich culture and vibrant economy. In 2008 alone, the economies of the United States and Mexico were bolstered by \$51.1 billion in trade, which passed through our ports of entry, accounting for 18% of all trade between these two countries; and

WHEREAS, Juarenses annually spend over \$1.2 billion in the El Paso economy, and over 60,000 jobs in El Paso are dependent upon economic activity in Juárez, contributing to an overall economic impact of well over \$2 billion in El Paso; and

WHEREAS, Juárez is the deadliest city in the world. The absence of public safety and the rule of law are devastating the lives of our sister citizens and endangering the future peace and prosperity of this entire region, including El Paso, Texas; and

WHEREAS the terror taking place in Juárez is of human origin and therefore can be remedied through a human solution; and

WHEREAS it is incumbent upon us to work towards a solution that restores justice and ends the violence, no matter how difficult or unpleasant, as lives and the future of our community and region are at stake; and

WHEREAS, it is understood that much of the violence is fueled by the various drug wars – those between cartels, those within cartels, and those between cartels and the governments of the United States and Mexico – wars that take the lives of members of drug trafficking organizations and those innocent of any involvement; and

WHEREAS, black market drug sales in the United States and Mexico fund the operations of the cartels, with marijuana comprising at least 50% of their revenues; and

WHEREAS, our country's forty year War on Drugs has been a dismal social, economic and policy failure. It has not achieved any of its goals and narco-related violence along the U.S.-Mexico border is raging at unprecedented levels with no end in sight; and

WHEREAS, this Council urges citizens on both sides of the border to refrain from buying and consuming illegal drugs that fund the cartel terrorism in our community; and

WHEREAS, important changes need to take place in Juárez and Mexico, including the restoration of public safety and the creation of a true respect for the law. But there are ways we can help on this side of the border, and we must act now – people are dying, the future of our community is at stake, and enough is enough.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:

THAT the beginning of a solution to regional drug violence will involve a bi-national effort centered on the following action statements:

- We call for an immediate meeting between United States President Barack Obama and Mexican President Felipe Calderon here, in the largest bi-national community in the world, to develop a coordinated strategy to bring an immediate end to the drug violence in our community.
- We urge comprehensive re-examination of our country's failed War on Drugs and we support drug policy initiatives that do not result in wasting government funds and empowering criminal gangs and trafficking organizations.
- We advocate the repeal of ineffective marijuana drug laws in favor of regulating, controlling and taxing the production, sale and consumption of marijuana by adults – a drug whose sale in the black market contributes to at least 50% of cartel revenues.
- We support a national campaign to encourage people to refrain from the use of illegal drugs by connecting their use to cartel-related terror.
- We oppose unsuccessful militaristic approaches like Plan Mérida, and demand that any future aid, whether tied to Plan Mérida or otherwise, involve a rigorous accounting of allegations of human rights abuses and have strict performance metrics.
- We support U.S. aid that is tied to social, educational and economic development in Mexico and support that country's fight to establish effective and just rule of law.
- We oppose current U.S. policy that deports Mexican nationals directly to Juárez instead of to their state and city of origin, a practice that is unjust and also serves to supply potential recruits and victims to the criminal organizations operating in Juárez.

- We support opening all potential humanitarian and asylum opportunities for individuals and families in Juárez who are threatened and live in fear for their safety.
- We demand that Mexico be made the number one foreign policy priority for the United States.

And by adoption of this resolution the above stated proposals are hereby included in the City of El Paso's Federal and State legislative agendas.

PASSED AND APPROVED this _____ day of February 2010.

CITY OF EL PASO

John F. Cook
Mayor

ATTEST:

Richarda Duffy Momsen
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Charlie McNabb
City Attorney

JOHN COOK
MAYOR



JOYCE WILSON
CITY MANAGER

CITY COUNCIL
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STEVE ORTEGA, DISTRICT 7
BETO O'ROURKE, DISTRICT 8

MAYOR AND COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Susie Byrd, City Representative, District #2
DATE: February 8, 2010
RE: Juarez Resolution

Dear Mayor and Council:

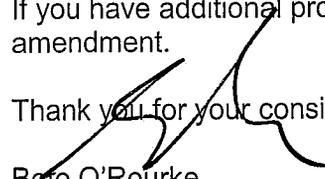
Attached is a resolution, fact sheets, and supporting materials regarding the violence in our sister city of Ciudad Juarez. The resolution will be on tomorrow's city council agenda for adoption.

As you know, the Juarez violence is the issue of the day for our region. History will judge our actions regarding the bloodshed across the border and will judge our resolve in addressing the issue. Inaction by the El Paso City Council in the midst of thousands of murders in our region is simply unacceptable.

The resolution, its language, and its proposals are imperfect – but they contain requests and ideas to improve a situation that is unsustainable.

If you have additional proposals to add, or delete, from the resolution then we are open to amendment.

Thank you for your consideration.


Beto O'Rourke
City Council Representative, District 8


Steve Ortega
City Council Representative, District 7


Susie Byrd
City Council Representative, District 2

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.
-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"You can be ignorant of the fact or you can say this is a unique place that has a unique economic dependency and **the two communities are going to sink or swim together.**"

-Dennis Soden,
Director of UTEP's Institute for Policy and Economic Development

A Failed Juarez is a Failed El Paso FACT SHEET

Jobs.

- In 2008 alone, the economies of U.S. and Mexico were bolstered by \$51.1 billion in trade which passed through our ports of entry, accounting for 18% of all trade between these two countries.¹
- 14,000 direct jobs in El Paso are related with the maquiladora activity in Ciudad Juarez²
- 30,000 indirect jobs in El Paso related with the maquiladora activity in Ciudad Juarez³
- Estimated that 3,800 retail jobs are created by spending by Mexican nationals in El Paso⁴

Business Opportunity.

- Federal Reserve Estimates that Mexican Nationals spend about \$1.7-1.8 billion⁵
- 54.5 percent of El Paso retailers have stated that at least half of their sales are to Mexican Nationals⁶
- 3,400-9,000 managers/engineers/executives live in El Paso and work in Ciudad Juarez⁷ --⁸

Taxes.

- \$15.7 million of this year's general fund budget comes from our location on the U.S. Mexican Border and includes bridge revenues and sales taxes from Mexican nationals. \$15.7 million is the equivalent of paying 203 police officers.⁹

¹ El Paso Regional Economic Development Corporation

² El Paso Regional Economic Development Corporation, REDCo (2005-2006 Labor Market Assessment by the Wadley Donovan Group)

³ El Paso Regional Economic Development Corporation, REDCo (2005-2006 Labor Market Assessment by the Wadley Donovan Group)

⁴ El Paso Regional Economic Development Corporation

⁵ El Paso Branch Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas

⁶ John Hadjimarcou, UTEP, survey done June 2006

⁷ 2005-2006 Labor Market Assessment by the Wadley Donovan Group

⁸ "Mexico: Why Big Business is Standing Its Ground", BusinessWeek, April 20, 2009 – "Each day, 9,000 managers cross the Ro Grande without incident from their homes in El Paso to the Juárez plants of Johnson Controls, Cummins, Emerson Electric, Visteon, Delphi Automotive, and others."

⁹ Analysis provided by the City of El Paso's Office of Management and Budget

Marijuana FACT SHEET

Relation to Violence in Juarez.

- More than 60 percent of the cartels' revenue -- \$8.6 billion out of \$13.8 billion in 2006 -- came from U.S. marijuana sales, according to the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.¹
- Customs and Border Protection (CBP) seized 169,696 pounds of illegal drugs at El Paso area ports of entry in Fiscal Year 2008, broken down as follows:
 - Marijuana – 168,900 lbs
 - Cocaine – 774 lbs
 - Heroin – 3 lbs
 - Methamphetamine – 5 lbs²
- Three former Latin American presidents – known for their conservative credentials – advocate reforming marijuana laws to help deal with drug violence (Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico; Cesar Gaviria of Colombia; Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil).³

Availability and Use Under Current U.S. Laws.

- In 2008 39% of 8th graders and 67% of 10th graders reported marijuana as being accessible. 84% of high school seniors reported the same.⁴
- 42% of U.S. citizens have tried marijuana at least once.⁵

Availability, Use and Crime in Countries Where Marijuana is Legal.

- In the Netherlands, 19,8% have used marijuana (compared to 42% in the U.S.)
 - Dutch children under the age of 15 have a 7% rate of use, compared to 20% in the U.S.⁶

¹ "Cartels Face an Economic Battle," Washington Post Foreign Service, October 7, 2009.
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/06/AR2009100603847.html>

² "The Border Case: Challenging the Forty-Year War on Drugs from the U.S.-Mexico Border", Kathleen Staudt, PhD

³ "Saving Mexico", Wall Street Journal, December 26, 2009.
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704254604574614230731506644.html>

⁴ Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J.E. (2009). Monitoring the Future national results on adolescent drug use: Overview of key findings, 2008 (NIH Publication No. 09-7401). Bethesda, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse, p. 12.
<http://monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/monographs/overview2008.pdf>

⁵ Degenhardt L, Chiu W-T, Sampson N, Kessler RC, Anthony JC, et al. (2008) Toward a Global View of Alcohol, Tobacco, Cannabis, and Cocaine Use: Findings from the WHO World Mental Health Surveys. PLoS Med 5(7):e141. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.0050141

⁶ Ibid.

- Since Portugal has decriminalized marijuana
 - Drug use among 15-19 year olds has decreased
 - Crime has decreased
 - Marijuana use is the lowest in Europe⁷
- Since California made medical marijuana legal
 - Crime is down across the state (note: making use of marijuana legal may not be the cause of lowered crime, but it certainly hasn't caused an increase)⁸

⁷ "Drug Decriminalization in Portugal," The Cato Institute, 2009.
http://www.cato.org/pubs/wtpapers/greenwald_whitepaper.pdf

⁸ FBI, 2008 Crime Statistics.
http://www.fbi.gov/page2/june09/ucr_statistics060109.html

The Washington Post

Mexico weighs options as lawlessness continues to grip Ciudad Juarez

By William Booth and Steve Fainaru
Washington Post Foreign Service
Sunday, December 27, 2009; A01

CIUDAD JUAREZ, MEXICO -- Senior Mexican officials have begun a sweeping review of the military's two-year occupation of this dangerous border city, concluding that the U.S.-backed deployment of thousands of soldiers against drug traffickers has failed to control the violence and crime, according to officials in both countries.

The multi-agency review, which has not been made public, represents a "serious reassessment" of President Felipe Calderón's anti-narcotics strategy and reflects growing alarm that Juarez, across from El Paso, has descended into lawlessness, U.S. officials familiar with the process said.

The war on Mexico's powerful drug cartels has been the defining policy of Calderón's administration, involving unprecedented cooperation with American political and law enforcement authorities. Failure in a high-profile battleground such as Ciudad Juarez would represent a major defeat for Calderón and for U.S. officials determined to curb the multibillion dollar flow of drugs across the border.

"There is an almost unanimous

consensus in the city that the strategy hasn't worked," said Hugo Almada, a sociology professor at the Autonomous University of Juarez who earlier this month organized a peace march of more than 3,000 people.

"The most terrifying question that everyone asks is, 'If the army comes in and can't control the situation, what happens to us now?' " Almada said.

Calderón declared Juarez the "tip of the spear" in the fight against the ultra-violent drug cartels, and it is here that the Mexican president has most militarized the fight. Calderón sent 10,000 soldiers and federal agents into the city of 1.3 million to bolster the local police and replace corrupt or incompetent elements. This month, for the first time in Mexico, the government

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distributed German-made assault rifles that fire up to 750 rounds a minute to hundreds of newly trained municipal police officers, also the first to receive urban combat training by the army.

But criminal outfits fighting over Juarez have overwhelmed even military authorities in this crucial port of entry into the world's largest market for illegal narcotics. With more than 2,500 homicides, Juarez accounts for more than one-third of the 6,000 drug-related murders in Mexico this year; since April, when a surge of federal troops brought a brief lull in the death toll, the city has resumed a pace of eight to 10 murders a day. The violence has also spilled over into the suburban neighborhoods of El Paso.

In a macabre daily ritual, assassins now appear to time their killings so that they get play on the afternoon and evening television news shows, according to Jaime Torres, a spokesman on public security for the Juarez government and former news director.

The city estimates that the violence has created 7,000 orphans and displaced 100,000 people, many of whom have fled across the Rio Grande to Texas. Most of the members of the business and political elite of Juarez, including the mayor, now either sleep or maintain a second home in El Paso. The chief human rights

advocate also retreated across the river.

Well-known prosecutors, professors, attorneys, doctors, executives and journalists have been assassinated. Victims also include a growing number of small-shop owners because extortion is rampant; earlier this week an elderly woman selling burritos at a busy intersection near the tourist zone was shot dead. Police counted 36 shell casings at the scene.

Mexican officials will weigh why the military has failed to stem the violence -- and what new options may be available. The soldiers have proved to be a blunt instrument; they lack experience handling criminal investigations and frequently have been accused of human rights abuses. Calderón has said the military will return to its barracks when federal and local police officers are ready, but reforms have moved slowly and may

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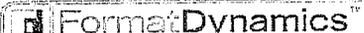
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be years away, U.S. and Mexican officials caution.

There is now widespread debate over the way forward in Juarez, with some officials and civic leaders proposing additional troops, and others a complete withdrawal. The head of the powerful business organization that represents the local assembly factories, or maquiladoras, recently called for the United Nations to send blue-helmeted peacekeeping soldiers to Juarez.

The new U.S. ambassador to Mexico, Carlos Pascual, abruptly canceled a fact-finding trip to Juarez this month after learning of the Mexican government's policy review. U.S. officials said they are waiting to learn whether the discussions will lead to a shift in Calderón's military-led strategy, which has come under fire even from members of his own party.

The United States backed that strategy under the 2007 Merida Initiative, signed by President George W. Bush. The bulk of the \$1.4 billion aid package funds Black Hawk and Bell 412 helicopters, CASA CN-235 surveillance planes, police training and inspection equipment.

But with the three-year initiative due to expire next year, U.S. officials have indicated that they plan to move from military assistance to a "softer" approach

focusing on issues such as institution building, judicial reform and support programs aimed at impoverished youths like those who are recruited by the thousands into criminal gangs. Two-thirds of those killed violently in Juarez are between 14 and 24 years old.

"It's more sustainable. A helicopter at best is going to have a 25-year life, but a human being in Mexico has a 75-year life expectancy," said John Feeley, the deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico. "If you can get to the children, you are not just giving assistance, you are contributing in the development of a person, of the society."

Calderón has resisted calls to alter his military strategy, saying it would be tantamount to surrender. But a growing chorus of civic leaders and lawmakers here has urged the government to focus on the roots of drug trafficking rather

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than efforts to eradicate the cartel leaders, who draw their power from billions of dollars in drug sales in the United States.

Ciudad Juarez Mayor José Reyes Ferriz said he recently requested an emergency "intervention" from the federal government to boost social services. He said the Mexican government is prepared to spend \$100 million to curb unemployment and improve opportunities for disadvantaged youths here.

"We have convinced the federal government that it is necessary," Reyes said of an effort that Mexican officials call "a social surge."

The U.S. State Department also plans to contribute to Juarez programs, American officials said.

Despite the military buildup, law enforcement in Juarez has become a dangerous, frustrating and increasingly futile endeavor for the thousands of soldiers and police who chase traffickers and their surrogates through the shantytowns that grow out of the city sprawl.

One evening this month, a police convoy of a half-dozen trucks set out from the station house in Delicias, a poor district on the west side of the city. Masked

officers sporting black, bulletproof vests and assault rifles stood in the backs of the trucks, which climbed into the hills overlooking the lights of Juarez and El Paso.

Every few hundreds yards, the convoy halted. Officers fanned out to grab and interrogate young men deemed suspicious. The officers sniffed their fingers for traces of marijuana or another drug, agua celeste, or heavenly water, a cheap, blue industrial solvent.

"They didn't do anything! They were just playing in the street!" shouted an elderly woman as police forced six boys, one of whom said he was 12, to stand spread-eagle beside a police truck while officers frisked them.

A call came over the radio, and the convoy suddenly sped off. The trucks raced downhill, screeching through the

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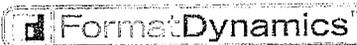
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curving streets, until they arrived at a busy intersection across from a gas station. A bullet-riddled police truck stood on the side of the road, its front wheels on the curb. The pavement was littered with glass and flooded with water and radiator fluid.

A Delicias commander had been ambushed, shot in the leg after stopping to get gas, police said. Two more officers in the city were attacked in the same night.

Thirty Juarez police officers have been killed this year; most were hunted down in their homes, according to police officials. Asked if the municipal police had sufficient resources, David Rivera Bretón, a retired general who heads the force, replied: "I think that question should be directed to other people."

"At the end of the day, the Mexican state, the rule of law, has to prevail," Bretón said in an interview. "The good guys have to win."

When the army descended on Juarez in March 2008, the soldiers were greeted as heroes. Calderón added another 5,000 troops in late March of this year, and the murder rate dropped into double digits for each month; on some days not a single killing was recorded, a fact that made newspaper headlines. Local police even said the cartels had been driven out

like "cockroaches" in the light of day.

Then, in June, the murder rate shot up 307 percent, and it has continued to rise. Bretón says the cartels, rather than being driven out, "went into hiding."

"They slowed down their activities," he said. "Later, they figured out what we were doing, how we were going about this, and, logically, they adjusted. We have to adjust as well."

Researcher Gabriela Martinez contributed to this report from Mexico City.

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