



INTERNATIONAL

Stop weapon trafficking to Mexico

By Juan Carlos Mendoza and Fabián Medina

CONSUL GENERAL OF MEXICO IN LAREDO AND HEAD OF THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF MEXICO

Every day it becomes more evident that the violence unleashed by organized crime in Mexico cannot be controlled if its fire capacity is not reduced. However, that task cannot succeed if Mexico faces it alone, because the bullets and weapons used by organized crime to shed blood are produced outside the country. About 70% of the weapons confiscated by Mexican security forces in 2019 entered Mexico illegally by land from the United States. Therefore, it is clear that we are facing a problem of shared responsibility that can only be resolved with binational actions.

The fight against organized crime, officially initiated during the presidency of Felipe Calderón, has proven to be a failed strategy because neither the financial power of the criminal groups nor their fire capacity has diminished. These criminal groups have grown as well as the number of homicides, which is why the new strategy to confront them makes it essential to reduce their fire capacity and financing.

Indeed, international organizations, such as the Small Arms Survey, recorded in 2016 that 50% of violent killings in the world were carried out with firearms, with Mexico ranking at 11 and the United States at 23. In the case of our country, the increase in the statistics of mortality from armed violence is alarming. In 2006, there was a record of 5,735 deaths, equivalent to 54% of the total homicides; in 2018, it increased to 24,349 people, 67.7% of the total homicides, according to

data from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico.

It is of no use that Mexican security forces confiscate weapons from criminals and lose their lives in the process, if these seizures are immediately compensated with new illegal income from weapons and ammunition from the United States. As Christopher Landau, U.S. ambassador to Mexico, said during his participation in the Guadalajara International Book Fair on Dec. 1, "it is something we have to work toward together because none of the countries can solve it alone."

Although data on the illicit flow of firearms across our northern border are scarce, the Center for American Progress estimates that more than 230,000 weapons from the United States cross into Mexico every year, while 300 million circulate in its market. More than 60% of illegal weapons come from a U.S. manufacturer or distributor. The data also includes a growing number of firearm pieces that are assembled and modified in Mexico.

According to various official estimates from Mexico, between 2006 and 2019, authorities secured almost 22,000 weapons: 59% were long (rifles, carbines and shotguns) and 41% were short (guns and revolvers); as well as 4,000 grenades and 5.6 million rounds of ammunition, primarily in Tamaulipas, Michoacán, Sinaloa, Guerrero and Chihuahua. The weapons involved in the crimes in Mexico come from Texas (41%), California (19%), Arizona (15%) and the rest from the U.S. (25%). Also, 46% of gun licenses are concentrated in Texas, 35% in California, 14% in Arizona and 5% in New Mexico.

To reduce the trafficking of arms and ammuni-

tion to Mexico from the United States, it is required that the government of that country include the issue in its domestic agenda, just as Mexico has included priority issues for the United States, such as the fight against trafficking, of drugs and greater control over the flow of undocumented immigrants from other countries seeking to enter the United States through Mexico.

While the flow of drugs and migrants from Mexico to the United States have decreased by around 70% as a result of Mexican cooperation, the flow of illegal weapons from the U.S. to Mexico continues. Official Mexican sources reveal that between December 2018 and October 2019, 7,432 weapons have been secured, all of them coming from the United States, among which high-caliber weapons stand out for their greater capacity to cause damage. Among those arrested for arms trafficking are Americans who acquired them in authorized stores and introduced them to Mexico by land.

The United States has a sovereign right to exercise its laws in its territory and its citizens the constitutional right to acquire weapons. What the Mexicans demand of the United States is that they recognize their co-responsibility in the illicit trafficking of U.S. weapons to Mexico, as a sine qua non condition to weaken the firepower of organized crime.

It is time to add voices in favor of the restoration of the legislation repealed in 2004 that prohibited the production, transfer or possession of assault weapons and semi-automatic rifles for civil use - the Public Safety and Recreational Firearms Use Protection Act or Federal Assault Weapons.

Since then we have witnessed murders in the United States perpetrated by minors who have shot children in their schools or massive attacks by individuals who buy unrestricted weapons of public sale. Under this laxity, transnational criminal organizations have also been able to have enormous firepower, which affects both Mexico and our northern neighbor.

In October 2018, a Pew Research Center survey revealed that six out of every 10 adults in the United States are in favor of strengthening gun legislation, and 47% of adults believe there would be fewer school shootings with stronger gun regulation. Similarly, the survey concludes that both Democrats and Republicans agreed that measures must be strengthened to prevent the sale of weapons to people with mental illness, or that they are registered on government observation lists.

A change of approach towards one that recognizes the commitment that both nations have in favor of our mutual security, would allow more collaborative actions, coordination at the border with non-intrusive technology and random physical reviews that discourage the illegal passage of arms to Mexico, in particular those of massive impact. Because it is a binational problem, Mexico cannot do the job alone; it is a matter of shared responsibility.

U.S. law enforcement agencies estimate that there are more than 56,500 armories in America. In the four

states that border Mexico alone, there are more than 9,000 legal stores. In addition, more than 22,000 licenses to sell weapons are registered in the border area, which can be purchased at fairs, supermarkets or online, making it a total of 133,753 licenses in the United States.

Compared to the economic capacity of the country, the profits that come to the United States through the trafficking of arms and ammunition to Mexico are crumbs. In 2018, approximately 13.1 million weapons were sold in the United States, according to the National Shooting Sports Foundation. 2.2% of these arms sales reached Mexico, a very small number compared to the enormous extent of damage in Mexico.

Moreover, the violence that organized crime generates in Mexico potentially affects the security of more than 1.5 million Americans permanently living in Mexico, as well as stimulating drug trafficking and that of undocumented immigrants to the United States. It also protects other actions of organized crime, such as the trafficking of people, wildlife, or cultural

property.

Thus, for example, the magnitude of the damages in Mexico due to the weapons of organized crime has not been limited to the regrettable and growing homicides. Between 2012 and 2016 alone, 92,541 malicious crimes were committed. In 56% of cases a firearm was used.

What Ambassador Christopher Landau already recognized in Guadalajara, there needs to be an immediate launch of coordinated operations at the border to detect and discourage the illicit passage of weapons and ammunition that feed organized crime in Mexico. Because geography is destiny, a new approach of co-responsibility to confront this binational problem in a coordinated manner would result in benefits for the populations of both countries.

Throughout history, Mexico and the United States have had many battles together, always with successful results. It is time to work together to stop the arms and ammunition traffic to Mexico. The rest of the work to restore tranquility in the country is the responsibility of the Mexican government.

Las solicitudes para ingresar al programa especializado de preparatoria para el ciclo escolar 2020-2021 ¡ya están disponibles!

Preparatoria Alexander	Programa Especializado de Salud y Ciencias	Fecha límite de solicitud: miércoles 22 de enero de 2020.
Preparatoria United	Programa Especializado de Ingeniería y Tecnología	
Preparatoria United South	Programa Especializado de Empresas Globales y Tecnología Avanzada	

Criterio de elegibilidad

- Residir dentro de los límites de la zona de asistencia escolar de United ISD (con prueba de inscripción).
- Ser estudiante de 9no grado en el ciclo escolar 2020-2021.
- Tener un promedio de B (80%) en (matemáticas, ciencias, inglés, lectura y ciencias sociales) la boleta final de calificaciones de 7mo grado y basado en 8vo grado con la boleta de calificaciones de enero de 2020 con la excepción de lectura.
- Obtener una calificación dentro del rango pertinente en la Prueba de Habilidades Cognoscitivas (CogAT) según la clasificación de todos los solicitantes.

Fechas y lugares del examen

La inscripción inicia a las 8:30 A.M. El examen inicia puntualmente a las 9:00 A.M.

- Sábado 1 de febrero 8:30 A.M. - 12:00 mediodía en las escuelas de 9no grado de la preparatoria United, Alexander, LBJ y United South
- Sábado 8 de febrero 8:30 A.M. - 12:00 mediodía en las salas 1 y 2 de SAC
- Sábado 15 de febrero 8:30 A.M. - 12:00 mediodía en la escuela de 9no grado de la preparatoria United

Para más información comuníquese con:

- Decano del programa especializado de la preparatoria United (956) 473-5627
- Decano del programa especializado de la preparatoria Alexander (956) 473-5866
- Decano del programa especializado de la preparatoria United South (956) 473-5440
- Decano del programa Early College de la preparatoria LB Johnson (956) 473-5350

¡Atención próximos estudiantes de 9no grado!

SE LLEVARÁN A CABO JUNTAS DE ORIENTACIÓN PARA PADRES DE ESTUDIANTES QUE DESEEN INGRESAR AL PROGRAMA EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL & BIOTECHNOLOGY AND LIFE SCIENCES INNOVATIVE ACADEMY (CLASES DE COLEGIO EN PREPARATORIA Y ACADEMIA INNOVADORA DE BIOTECNOLOGÍA Y CIENCIAS BIOLÓGICAS)

Los padres pueden elegir asistir a la sesión 1 o 2

SESIÓN 1 Miércoles 15 de enero de 2020 6 pm en la cafetería de la preparatoria Lyndon B. Johnson 5626 Cielito Lindo Blvd.	SESIÓN 2 Martes 21 de enero de 2020 6 pm en la sala 2 del Complejo de Actividades Estudiantiles Bill Johnson (SAC) 5208 Santa Claudia Lane
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