Introduction

The problem analyzed here is complex in several senses. It is a rapidly changing and adaptive one, and has many ramifications.

To begin with, is certainly a problem derived from globalization. Terrorist, security, and narcotic threats are global problems. They do not affect single countries or have their roots exclusively in one of them, but they are international. Thereof, the policies to fight crime must be bi-, multi-lateral or global rather than national.

The security crisis in not one that only affects people and their belongings. It is also a threat to the Mexican state itself. Crime shows the limitations that the Mexican state has to monopolize violence, protect the population under its jurisdiction, enforce the law, and has consequences on economic growth and foreign investment.

The security crisis has domestic and international roots. It has escalated in the last three years or so as a response to the Calderon Administration war on organized crime. But the extent of the Mexican security crisis is uncertain. There are no reliable data on organized crime activities. For sure there is a real and present threat, but the drug cartels have staged a strategy of making themselves more visible in order to send messages to different publics (the authorities and their competitors) and the Mexican media (followed by the international media) has cooperated in increasing their visibility. Almost every day Mexican newspapers publish a front page note about crime. There is news radio broadcast that presents the daily information as coming from different battle fronts. “From the Michoacán front our correspondent…” they say, and the give the figures of how many people have been found murdered. It provides and image of a country engaged in a true civil war. This makes the security crisis appear larger than it may be. Thus, the first goal of this paper will be to trace the contours of the security crisis with hard data, since most anecdotal and media information seems to grossly exaggerate the phenomenon, providing no point of reference.

The first part of this paper will describe the contours of the Mexican security crisis based on available data in a comparative perspective, when possible. Official data are scarce. There are an undeterminate number of cases that are not denounced because the victims and their relatives do not trust the authorities and prefer to negotiate with the criminals directly. This section will present, evaluate and discuss data on:

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* 1st draft for discussion. Chapter 10 of North America in Question: Regional Integration in an Era of Political Economic Turbulence. Jeffrey Ayres and Laura Macdonald, Editors. DO NOT QUOTE WITHOUT PERMISSION.

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• The extent of crime in Mexico (Zepeda Lecuona 2009)
• Murder
• Kidnappings (CIDAC 2009; ICESI)
• Drug trafficking
• Arms trafficking (GAO 2009)
• Money laundering (González Rodríguez 2009)
• Law enforcement (Sociedad en Movimiento and Siftung 2009)
• Public perceptions on the extent of crime (Arellano Trejo 2005)

Second, once the profile of the Mexican security crisis has been established with available data, this paper will discuss how and in what extent the security crisis may affect Mexican politics. The security crisis affects the same states ruled by the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN), and the Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD). This section will present, evaluate and discuss data on:

• Documented links among organized crime and high ranking officials, police and army members (Sánchez Rebolledo 2006)
• The extent of the corruption (KPMG 2008)
• The threat to human rights

Third, we briefly discuss the implications of the Mexican security crisis on the North American Community
G-1: denuncias presentadas ante las procuradurías de justicia penal en México

**FUENTE.** Denuncias: SNSP y procuradurías de justicia de los estados a través de los anuarios estadísticos de las entidades federativas publicados por el Instituto Nacional de Geografía y Estadística (INEGI); población: proyecciones del Consejo Nacional de Población, divulgadas por INEGI.
References