

# Research paper on development of gendarmerie in mexico

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this research is to investigate the development of gendarmerie in Mexico. It is a special military body that serves as a fully armed, auxiliary police bureau and created with the purpose to maintain law and order in public. The first part of this research consists of the political situation in Mexico and reasons that led to the creation of the additional police force. The final stage of the research will be concerning the positive and negative influences of this political and social phenomenon. This information might be useful for people that are not indifferent in current political and social condition of the state.

Mexico – is a country with fast growing urbanization processes where rich and poor live side by side with rich natural resources. Among all the countries in Latin America it holds the second place in being the largest economy developed country, due to the exporting natural resources such as oil. Disregarding the fact that extraction has decreased during last couple of years, the government's revenue is directly connected with industry, 1/3 of it comes exactly from it. The main importer of it is the US. Although, the country is changing constantly, has all the resources and conditions to develop in a country of the first world, the majority of the Mexicans live beyond the poverty. Whilst at the same time social and economic gap is only widening. Rural areas are flouted. As a result – a lot of people seek better luck across the border in America.

Another well-known fact that contributes to the creating of the new police force is Mexican drug war. In fact, this is the primary reason for creating the gendarmerie. According to the governmental views – soldiers within the

army are not appropriate for the law enforcement purposes. The usage of soldiers in this sphere has resulted in indictment of abusing human rights and freedoms, which directly resulted in criticism and pressure on the Presidential administration of Felipe Calderon. The administration has used military divisions in drug war quite often. Recently, the government of Mexico was forced to use military to fight the drug cartels due to the violent and inhumane nature of drug-related crimes as well as frequent corruption in municipal and state police departments. In less than 5 years more than 48, 000 people were killed in drug-related instances. In fact, during the first 3 quarters of the recently bygone 2011 – 13, 000 people were murdered. Moreover, 5, 000 have disappeared and announced to be missing, according to the National Human Right Commission. Besides these numbers, the statistics does not include thousands of children that lost their parents and became orphans.

All the mentioned crimes such as murder, kidnapping, drug and human trafficking made President Pena Nieto, who officially entered the office on December 1, 2012, to come up with a new security strategy: to create the gendarmerie. According to the president the new police force could comprise of up to 40, 000 members. They will have to proceed with the military training and after that – police training.

The idea to fight back the drug cartels with forming a new paramilitary force will allow to remove the regular military out of the political and law enforcement operations. Moreover, it would reduce the state police powers which will result in reduction of corruption. The formation of a new force division seems to resolve the problem with military involvement in law

enforcement functions, although, this reformation will be very expensive and the consensus of both houses of the Congress is mandatory. But perhaps the most difficult task which is connected with gendarmerie will be the removal of corruption, which has been a well known fact so far.

This has been announced for a couple of months already and has become the national pact. Furthermore, the new administration with the main opposition parties, will try to create a fresh federal police called the National Gendarmerie. They would perform the task of territorial control body that implements the sovereignty of the Mexican government everywhere in the state, disregarding the distance, whether it is a rural or suburban location or the influence of the region.

On the one hand the new formed police force would resolve a lot of problem and will help fighting drug war cartels, which seems to be a weighty argument. But still, on the other hand there are a lot of disadvantages of such a reform, moreover, it is not proven to be efficient yet. There are a lot of questions that arise with the reformation process. For what purpose would we need another rural police department? Yes, that might sound strange, however, the gendarmerie is a well known history occurrence.

In France and Spain same military organizations were formed back in 1791 and 1844 respectively. Usually, gendarmerie is created as a militarized body that serves in a remote towns, rural locality. Where the communicational infrastructure, transportation is at primitive stage of development. That is why a different relocated police subdivision was required in these cases. Mexican one, however, is slightly different. Mexico is urban country, with a steady rate of urbanization in the 21st century. Moreover, according to the

criminal statistics 95% of crime and 80% of murderers take place in urban areas of the country. Additionally to this fact, Mexican issue is in 21st century, this is nothing in comparison with the 18th and 19th century in Spain and France. With the technological progress (computerized systems with internet, cameras, license plate recorders) as well as transportation and infrastructure that is present at our disposal, it is much easier to deploy an emergency personnel to the specific zone. This puts a huge question mark on why do we need rural police force?

Another fact is connected with the gendarmes staff. Who would be recruited and how will they work? According to the President it will be comprised of military personnel. Will they be the same troops that are already in action at the moment, those that are responsible for public security? If it is so – they will have the same tactics and leadership but will be wearing different uniform, but who will cover the “hot spots” such as Monterrey, Veracruz, Terron and so on? If they will be involved in municipal and drug war affairs. The resources, that are about to be devoted to the Gendarmerie, are spiraling. From the 2013 proposed budget the sum of \$117 million US dollars will allow only 2, 000 gendarmes. If we calculate the real price for the 40, 000 Gendarmerie organization, the costs will grow drastically.

The last question that is difficult to understand is why would Mexican government create a wholly new police body rather than modernizing the regular police departments by implementing new tactics, strategies, funding, internal as well as external controls? It would be much more cost efficient and will not create the misunderstanding between these two organizations: regular police force with the new gendarmerie organization!

Finally, the problem with drug war and terrorism is on the agenda in Mexico right now. Personally I do not think that creating a new military body will resolve the problems that the new administration is facing at this moment. Furthermore, corruption is a well known factor in Mexican government, and the real costs that will be dedicated to the formation of gendarmerie will probably significantly differ from the money spent.

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