MIRANDA INTELLIGENCE

Security Chatter

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Mexico confronts multifaceted security challenges spanning the physical and digital domains. The country recorded 33.5 million crimes in 2024, costing $269.6 billion pesos (1.07% of GDP), with fraud, robbery, and extortion predominating, according to figures from INEGI. Criminal organizations have evolved beyond conventional drug trafficking, leveraging artificial intelligence for extortion, recruitment, and financial crimes that potentially exceed narcotics revenues. Additionally, high-profile arrests include Hernán Bermúdez, former Tabasco Security Secretary and alleged "La Barredora" leader, detained in Paraguay. Environmental crimes persist, with organized groups devastating 40% of the Gran Bosque de Agua's forest coverage through illegal logging. Institutional responses include U.S. Deputy Treasury Secretary John Hurley's visit to cooperate on anti-cartel financial intelligence efforts and Mexico's Navy allocating 11 billion pesos for port surveillance operations. However, authorities reportedly lack adequate technological capabilities to counter AI-enhanced criminal enterprises, while 93.2% of crimes remain unreported, reflecting profound institutional distrust.

INEGI Reveals Mexico's Multi-Million Dollar Losses from Insecurity in 2024.

Mexico recorded 33.5 million crimes in 2024, according to INEGI's National Survey on Victimization and Public Security Perception (ENVIPE). These crimes cost the country $269.6 billion pesos, equivalent to 1.07% of GDP, representing massive economic losses from insecurity. The average economic impact per victim reached $6,226 pesos. Of the total cost, 62% ($91.8 billion pesos) corresponded to victimization losses, while 34% ($177.8 billion pesos) was spent on preventive measures like changing locks (22.8%) and replacing doors or windows (18.8%). The most frequent crimes were fraud, street or public transport robbery, and extortion. A staggering 93.2% of crimes went unreported or uninvestigated, indicating profound institutional distrust. Among reported cases, 79.9% received no effective resolution. Mexico City led victimization rates with 54,473 crimes per 100,000 inhabitants, followed by Estado de México (48,426) and Querétaro (45,107). Nayarit showed the lowest rate at 21,727 per 100,000 inhabitants.
ADN Noticias, 8/19/25, Ximena Ochoa: Inegi revela las pérdidas millonarias que tuvo México en 2024 por la inseguridad.

From Extortion to Recruitment: Cartels Use AI to Expand Operations.

Mexican criminal organizations including the Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG), Sinaloa Cartel, and Gulf Cartel are leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) to revolutionize their operations, generating profits that now may exceed drug trafficking revenues. Cartels employ AI for extortion, identity theft, virtual kidnappings, financial fraud, recruitment, and evading authorities. They use deepfake technology to create realistic images and voices for scamming migrant families, while Large Language Models facilitate phishing attacks and automated operations. According to cybersecurity experts, digital crimes have surpassed drug-trafficking income due to lower operational costs compared to traditional criminal logistics. The technology enables sophisticated surveillance, facial recognition, and forced recruitment

through video games and social media platforms. Approximately 35,000 minors fall victim to forced recruitment annually. Experts warn that Mexican authorities lack adequate technological capabilities to combat these AI-enhanced criminal enterprises, while cartels continue investing heavily in cutting-edge technology and specialized programmers.

Expansión, 9/22/25, Lidia Arista: De la extorsión al reclutamiento: Cárteles usan IA para extender actividades.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of Financial Intelligence Visited Mexico on September 18th.

The U.S. Treasury Department announced that John K. Hurley, Deputy Secretary for Financial Intelligence and Counter-Terrorism, would visit Mexico on September 18th to meet with government officials and industry representatives. The discussions focused on joint strategies to combat illicit finances, drug trafficking, and cartel operations. This marks Hurley's first international visit since assuming office, highlighting the Trump administration's priority on dismantling transnational criminal organizations. The visit coincided with Washington's efforts to disrupt Mexican drug cartels and reduce fentanyl flow into the United States. The Treasury emphasized its commitment to preventing "terrorist cartels" from accessing the U.S. financial system. Hurley met with Mexican security, finance, and intelligence authorities, as well as strategic industry representatives, to strengthen bilateral coordination and ensure international financial mechanisms aren't exploited by criminal organizations.

La Jornada, 9/17/25, Arturo Sánchez Jiménez & Emir Olivares: Subsecretario de Inteligencia Financiera de EU visitará México este 18 de septiembre.

Preventive Detention Ordered for Hernán Bermúdez, Alleged Leader of "La Barredora"; Will Remain at El Altiplano.

Former Security Secretary of Tabasco and alleged leader of criminal group "La Barredora," will remain in official preventive detention. The ex-official appeared before a Tabasco judge on charges of criminal association, extortion, and express kidnapping, though he reserved his right to testify regarding the accusations. Bermúdez will remain at El Altiplano maximum-security prison in Estado de México. Tabasco's Prosecutor stated the alleged criminal leader could face up to 158 years in prison if convicted of kidnapping, criminal association, and extortion. Bermúdez was arrested in Paraguay on September 12th for clandestine entry and is accused of attempting to establish a criminal network there. President Claudia Sheinbaum confirmed no extradition trial was necessary due to his illegal entry into Paraguay. Bermúdez allegedly has ties to La Barredora, reportedly associated with the Jalisco New Generation Cartel operating in Tabasco.

Animal Político, 9/19/25, Redacción: Dictan prisión preventiva a Hernán Bermúdez, presunto líder de “La Barredora”; permanecerá en el Altiplano.

Criminals Besiege the Gran Bosque de Agua; Illegal Logging Devastated 40% of Its Coverage.

Illegal logging has transformed the Gran Bosque de Agua into a battleground besieged by organized crime. Over 30 years, this biological corridor connecting Mexico City's Ajusco Sierra, Estado de México's Zempoala Lagoons, and Morelos' Chichinautzin Flora and Fauna Protection Area has lost 40% of its forest

coverage. Criminal groups target pine, oyamel, and mahogany trees for black market sales. Despite federal and local operations, Morelos remains a critical zone, with Huitzilac experiencing violence outbreaks. This 235,000-hectare ecosystem provides essential services to 25 million inhabitants across 37 municipalities, supplying 70% of water consumed by Mexico City, Cuernavaca, and Toluca metropolitan areas. The forest harbors 10% of Mexico's biodiversity, including over 3,000 plant species. In January, Mexico City, Estado de México, and Morelos governments signed a protection agreement, seeking "national security water reserve" status for enhanced long-term conservation.

Excélsior, 9/21/25, Erneste Méndez: Criminales asedian al Gran Bosque de Agua; tala ilegal arrasó con 40% de su cobertura.

Operation of 10 Navy Surveillance Bodies Costs 11 Billion Pesos.

The operation of ten maximum surveillance and control bodies within Mexico's Navy Ministry costs the federal treasury over 11 billion pesos annually. These units are responsible for monitoring, detecting, and combating fiscal fuel theft across various national ports. The agencies include Naval Intelligence Unit, Special Operations Unit, General Inspection and Control, Naval Police, High Command General Headquarters, Admiral Board, Naval Board, and General Port and Merchant Marine Coordination. The 2026 budget projection maintains similar allocations, with some units receiving slight increases while Naval Police and Naval Intelligence face minor reductions. The Mexico City Airport Group, now under Navy command, will see increased funding.

El Financiero, 9/22/25, Víctor Chávez: Cuesta 11 mil mdp la operación de 10 órganos de vigilancia de Semar.

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