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# **GSN -- Mexican Emergency National Security Cabinet**

**Topic A:** Addressing rising US-Mexico tensions regarding the drug trafficking crisis.

**Topic B:** Combating the socioeconomic impact of cartel violence and activity in the nation.

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# Letter From The Chair

Honorable Delegates,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the **Mexican Emergency Cabinet** at this year's Eton Model United Nations conference. We are Mauricio Candiani and Felipe Mendes and are thrilled to serve as your chairs in the cabinet. In this simulation, you will assume the roles of Mexico's most influential ministers, advisors, and security officials as the nation faces one of its most conflictive crises in recent history.

On October 18, 2025, Lieutenant General Jonathan Braga, a senior U.S. military advisor, was killed in a joint U.S.–Mexico counter-narcotics operation ambush in Michoacán, likely due to poor communication and jurisdiction conflicts rather than a targeted attack, causing a major diplomatic and security crisis. The incident has provoked international outrage and severe diplomatic strain, with Washington demanding immediate accountability. The Mexican government now stands at a – to balance the need for justice, sovereignty, and national stability under external pressure.

As members of the cabinet, your actions will shape Mexico's response to the crisis in real-time. You will decide whether to pursue direct confrontation or cooperation with the US, and how to secure our nation's sovereignty and security amid possible cartel violence and retaliation from the North. We look forward to witnessing your creativity, diplomacy, and determination as you navigate this urgent situation.

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Presidente del Senado de México

## Committee Overview

The Mexican Emergency Cabinet has been specially established to address the urgent and escalating

crisis of drug violence linked to Mexican drug cartels after the death of Lieutenant General Jonathan P. Braga. This cabinet serves as a high-stakes, rapidly evolving stage for imminent legislative action that effectively combats drug trafficking, cartel-related violence, and associated national security threats caused by these within the United States.

This cabinet is part of a Joint Crisis Committee (JCC). This means, the simulation features a dynamic interaction with a separate Emergency Congressional Committee representing the United States government. They will be responding to all actions taken by this committee through their own directives. This linkage means that every strategy or diplomatic move undertaken by the Mexican committee directly influences the course of debate, policy proposals, and actions of the U.S cabinet, and vice versa. This cooperation simulates the complexity of real diplomatic and cross-border security dependence where decisions are mutually impactful and must represent both sides of the conflict. Delegates may not directly communicate with others from the opposing cabinet without official directives mandating this. All communication should be through directives, which will be read to the opposing cabinet by a member of EMUN staff to guarantee an organized, fair debate.

Delegates will be challenged to negotiate, collaborate, and sometimes confront opposing priorities and interests, not just within their cabinet. The committee must balance internal political pressures with the need for international cooperation to form effective resolutions that address shared security, humanitarian, and law enforcement concerns stemming from the drug crisis.



**Topic A:** Addressing rising US-Mexico tensions regarding the drug trafficking crisis after the attack of Lieutenant General Jonathan Braga by the Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generación.

## Background of the Topic

U.S-Mexico relations have maintained complex dynamic throughout the last decades centering around cooperations and tension in combating organized crime. Drug trafficking and cartel violence have represented a shared challenge for both nations, often creating friction between the two. Increased militarization and peak in violence rates have intensified the stain as Mexican cartels broaden their influence and activity across borders and directly affected domestic security for Mexico's northern neighbor.

Both countries have sought to collaborate for decades to fight Mexican drug cartels, the main suppliers of most illegal substance networks in the U.S. This cooperation has included launching large scale operations like Project Reckoning, that targeted cartels like the Gulf Cartel, resulting in hundreds of arrests of high-level cartel members in both nations. American agencies like the CIA and Special Operations Division have worked closely with Mexican authorities in efforts of dismantling cartel structured and influence within both nations, prosecuting members on both sides of the border. The American government has often provided Mexican forces with large budgets to improve security cooperation frameworks, the purchases of military aircrafts, and other security equipment, attempting to aid the Mexican government to minimize effects on U.S territory and population.

However, political and diplomatic dynamics between both parties have been tense and complicated. Since the early 2000's, Mexican and American forces have attempted to collaborated to jointly end cartel reign and influence on both sides of the border. In 2006, Mexico adopted a militarized campaign to fight organized crimes, deploying army and navy units in coordination with U.S intelligence agencies like the CIA. Despite U.S-Mexican joint efforts, cartels remained resilient despite fragmentations, causing territorial disputes between cartel groups, ultimately creating a rise in violence rates and activity in Mexico. The 2019 "Culiacanazo" attack demonstrated the cartel power and forced Mexican retreats despite American collaboration.

Present American administration has added increased pressure on Mexican authorities for the control of the issue, proclaiming several cartels as Foreign Terror Organizations and advocating for direct military actions on Mexican soil by American forces to dismantle this criminal activity. However, Mexico has rejected the initiatives, emphasizing the protection of national sovereignty and territorial integrity, advocating for cooperative frameworks between the two nations. Although Mexico has accepted the security technology and equipment, they insist on controlling the tools used within Mexican territory; Mexican military and law enforcement personnel receive U.S. training and economic aid, but Mexico remains cautious about the implications of deepening U.S. involvement beyond intelligence and joint law enforcement actions, striving for a cooperative but limited American influence that respects Mexican legal systems and political decisions.

Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generación (CJNG) cartel is a powerful and violent criminal organization that surged from the fragmentation of the Milenio Cartel around 2010. The cartel was properly established in 2014, where it separated from the Sinaloa Cartel to operate independently under the leadership of Nemesio Oseguera Cervantes, known as "El Mencho,". Signaling their arrival through brutal massacres in Veracruz in 2011, the CJNG operations have now extended to at least 23 Mexican states, making it one of the most dominant criminal forces in the nation. The cartel is not only involved in drug trafficking, but also in extortion and arms and human trafficking. The cartel's net worth is estimated at over \$20 billion, and it is known for its militarized structure and use of extreme violence to maintain territory and intimidate rivals and local governments. They have also formed an alliance with the Tijuana Cartel to gain control of the trafficking routes towards the northern countries, intensifying violence in the U.S-Mexico border.

The organization has been identified as one of the most prominent threats to both American and Mexican soil, generating domestic instability in Mexico and flooding the U.S-Mexico border with lethal substances, undermining rule of law and public safety on both nations.

## Current Situation

In the early hours of October 18, 2025, a joint U.S.–Mexico counter-narcotics operation in the Mexican state of Michoacán ended in tragedy when Lieutenant General Jonathan Braga, a senior U.S. military advisor overseeing cross-border intelligence coordination, was killed in an ambush allegedly carried out by the Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generación (CJNG). Initial reports suggest that the attack was not a targeted assassination but a result of poor communication and conflicting jurisdiction between Mexican and U.S. forces. However, the death of such a high-ranking U.S. officer has triggered a severe diplomatic and security crisis.

In Washington, outrage has erupted across political lines. U.S. officials have demanded full cooperation from Mexico in the investigation and immediate extradition of those responsible. Several U.S. senators have publicly called for the designation of Mexican cartels as foreign terrorist organizations (FTOs)—a move that could authorize unilateral military operations across the border.

Mexico now finds itself under immense international and domestic pressure. President Claudia Sheinbaum's administration must manage mounting U.S. diplomatic demands while avoiding violations of national sovereignty that could trigger domestic backlash. The government faces internal division: some ministers advocate for closer U.S. cooperation to preserve bilateral relations and economic stability, while others warn that yielding too much control could set a dangerous precedent.

As both nations confront this escalating crisis, the challenge for Mexico's Gabinete de Seguridad Nacional lies in balancing the pursuit of justice and stability with the preservation of sovereignty and diplomatic integrity. The government must determine how to address U.S. pressure while maintaining domestic



unity and public trust. The decisions made in the aftermath of this event will define not only the future of Mexico's security strategy but also the trajectory of U.S.–Mexico diplomatic and political relation in years to come.

## Context of the Problem Worldwide

This attack could easily stain U.S-Mexico cooperation and international relations, jeopardizing joint operations and critical intelligence programs to combating criminal organizations in Mexico. If the Mexican cabinet fails to respond decisively, the U.S might impose sanctions, increase border security forces or consider unilateral action on Mexican soil, undermining national sovereignty. Globally, the cabinet's inaction could signal Mexico's inability to handle internal security, affecting national trade, foreign investment, and international aiding to handle domestic violence. This could potentially encourage other international trafficking organizations to challenge local authorities and other countries to lose confidence in cooperative anti-narcotics joint initiatives, destabilizing international drug control efforts and global security frameworks.

## Questions To Consider

- What measures can the cabinet take to ensure accountability and justice for the death of Lieutenant General Braga without escalating bilateral tensions?
- How can the administration address U.S. concerns regarding substance trafficking while tackling the root causes of cartel power domestically?
- What diplomatic actions can be taken to prevent the labeling of cartel organizations as Foreign Terrorist Organizations while demonstrating strong actions against domestic criminal forces?
- How can Mexico establish a balance between national sovereignty and necessary international cooperation with the U.S to counter cartel influence and activity?
- How can the cabinet act to safeguard civilian safety on both sides and minimize the effects of

cartel activity on both national and international settings?

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## **Topic B: Combating the socioeconomic impact of cartel violence and activity in the nation.**

### **Background of the Topic**

For the past decades, organized crime has become one of the most persistent threats to Mexico's stability and development, both social and economic. Cartel violence has not only targeted public safety but has also damaged the nation's economy and international reputation with the constant firings between cartel groups and Mexican authorities. Years of cartel conflict have led to significant increases of insecurity rates throughout Mexico, particularly in regions like Jalisco and Guanajuato, where cartel activity reaches its peak as a point of struggle for control over local governments between rival organizations. In 2024, the national homicide rate was 23.3 per 100,000 people, with many of these deaths linked to organized crime.

Over the last years, organized crime has intensified, with cartels not only trafficking drugs but engaging in a larger range of criminal activities, including kidnappings, human trafficking, extorsions, and others. All minor and major businesses who find themselves at cartel epicenters are often forced to pay "protection money" to cartels to avoid punishments from the formers, creating a constant environment of fear, where citizens feel bound to comply with the demands of the criminal organizations to safeguard their security and their families.

In countless rural regions, illegal drug businesses have replaced legitimate live hoods and institutions, forcing local populations to depend on cartel activities for income and security. Education and healthcare services are interrupted, perpetuating the cycle of poverty and vulnerability of countless families. Young

individuals particularly find difficulty in obtaining legitimate labor prospects, expanding their vulnerability to recruitment criminal organizations, and following the cycle of violence with younger generations. Furthermore, the increases in hostility and concerns for cartel retribution have led to massive displacements of families fleeing their homes to escape the violence. This displacement has created overcrowding in urban areas, staining the infrastructure, and overflowing the public services and institutions.

The influence of organized crime extends beyond security issues, taking significant blows to the national economy. The constant instability and insecurity have deterred both domestic and foreign inversion, slowing economic growth. Industries like agriculture and tourism often suffer in areas with cartel presence, operating in constant alarms or often withdrawing from the markets. This, along with the disruptions in infrastructure and social repercussions, have shown effect on Mexico's GPA, representing a loss 18% in 2024 of the national economy, and deepening inequality.

## Current Situation

The Mexican authority responses towards this issue have evolved significantly over the past few decades. Under President Felipe Calderon's rule, the administration declared a "war" against the criminal enterprises, launching a militarized campaign targeting cartel members and activities. Thousands of military personnel were assigned to aim or capture critical cartel leaders through a "kingpin" strategy. This aggressive approach did eliminate many central figures in the cartels; however, this resulted in the creation of smaller and more violent groups, intensifying competition, and unpredictability in their activity.

In 2018, reforms were pushed over aiming for strengthening federal police and judicial institutions to enhance law enforcement and reduce impunity rates, reducing corruption and slowly dismantling cartel groups.

More recent administrations have sought to root out the "source" of the problem by broadening their combat approach. Acknowledging cartel violence cannot be solved by security measures alone. In 2024,

Sheinbaum presented the security plan for the term, setting prevention and attention to causes as the pillars of their approach.

With the implementation of programs focusing on public safety and factors leading to potential recruitment of vulnerable population, the president attempts to reduce the growth of criminal organizations nation-wide and violent activity. Social programs targeting education, job training and poverty mitigation seek to reduce the extreme conditions forcing individuals, particularly young ones, to fall into the cartels' sphere of influence. Civil initiatives have also been incorporated, offering victim support and promoting community-led peace initiatives. Programs such as *Jovenes Construyendo el Futuro* provide over 65,000 scholarships and training opportunities for unemployed or unexperienced individuals of marginalized communities. However, the effectiveness of these measures remains uncertain, as corruption, limited resources, and lack of coordination between federal and local authorities continue to hinder progress.

Also, the government has attempted to consolidate the National Guard to participate in the struggle against criminal activity and improve the intelligence and investigation systems to target localized activity centers. Starting last year, campaigns like *Operacion Enjambre* have led to the arrest of dozens of individuals belonging to powerful criminal organizations like the Jalisco New Generation Cartel. Authorities have concentrated their efforts on epicenter of cartel activity in states like Sinaloa to regain control in regions dominated by organized crime.

## Context of the Problem Worldwide

Cartel operations constitute a constant challenge for development, peace, and government advancing. Criminal organizations operate across all borders, trafficking individuals and transporting harmful drugs, corrupting institutions, slowly incorporating into economies and perpetrating social inequality. These criminal organizations disrupt communities through constant violence, undermining rule of law, and destabilizing local economies by fostering corruption and illegal markets. The constant fear they emit throughout different regions limits access to education, employment, and essential services, giving

continuation to cycles of poverty and inequality in the nation. Governments often struggle to effectively administer resources as cartels divert public funds and weaken institutions meant to support growth and provide security. This complex issue demands coordinated strategies to restore safety, promote economic development, and rebuild social trust in affected regions worldwide, particularly the Americas, where cartel activity and violence reach its peak.

## Questions To Consider

- What specific economic reforms or incentives could help replace cartel-driven local economies with sustainable legal industries?
- How can the government improve coordination among security forces, local authorities, and social institutions to offer a unified response to the issue?
- To what extent should the military forces be involved in combat against the cartel forces in civil areas?
- What economic initiatives could be implemented to mitigate the negative impacts of cartel-related instability in businesses and local markets?
- What balance should be established between social and economic programs and security measures to effectively stand cartel activity and violence?

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## Terms and definitions

CJNG: Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generacion

Cartel: criminal organization of drug-trafficking groups that control the production, transportation, and distribution of narcotics.

Kingpin strategy: law enforcement approach that targets key leaders of criminal organizations to dismantle the entire structure.

## Members

- Claudia Sheinbaum- President

- Juan Ramon de la Fuente- Secretary of Foreign Affairs
- Marcelo Ebrard- Secretary of Economy
- Omar García Harfuch- Secretary of Security and Civilian Protection
- Ronald D. Johnson- U.S Ambassador
- General Ricardo Trevilla Trejo- Secretary of National Defense
- Ernestina Godoy Ramos- Legal Counsel to the President
- Rosa Icela Rodríguez-Secretary of the Interior
- Alejandro Diaz- Director of Federal Intelligence Agency
- Sofía Navarro- Special Advisor for U.S Relations and Security Cooperation.

## Sources and Further Reading

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