



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on August 13, 2012

Cartel Member Makes Startling Claim About Fast and Furious

The more information uncovered throughout the investigation of Operation Fast and Furious, the more incriminating and controversial it becomes. According to some recent [allegations](#) made by a high-ranking Mexican drug cartel operative in American custody, Fast and Furious was an agreement between the U.S. government and the Mexican Sinaloa Cartel to help take down rival cartels. Likewise, the operative indicates that drugs were permitted to be trafficked across the U.S. border from 2004 to 2009, incriminating both the Bush and Obama administrations, if proven true.



Operation Fast and Furious was a gun-running operation led by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (still known as ATF), wherein the ATF lost track of 1,700 guns. The operation resulted in the death of Border Patrol agent Brian Terry, and a number of the guns lost during Fast and Furious appeared at a variety of crime scenes. Investigation into the operation has been particularly incriminating for the ATF,

Jesus Vicente Zambada-Neibla, known as the “logistics coordinator” for the Sinaloa Cartel and a close associate of Sinaloa Cartel kingpin Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman (pictured), is now claiming that the strategy orchestrated between the United States and the Sinaloa Cartel through Operation Fast and Furious was one of “divide and conquer.” The United States allegedly financed and armed the cartel in exchange for information that allowed the Drug Enforcement Administration and Immigration and Customs Enforcement to take down rival drug cartels. Zambada-Neibla indicates that so long as the Sinaloa Cartel continued to deliver intelligence to those American agencies, drugs were permitted to be trafficked across the U.S. border.

Based on the alleged agreement “the Sinaloa Cartel under the leadership of defendant’s father, Ismael Zambada-Niebla and ‘Chapo’ Guzman, was given carte blanche to continue to smuggle tons of illicit drugs into Chicago and the rest of the United States and was also protected by the U.S. government from arrest and prosecution in return for providing information against rival cartels which helped Mexican and U.S. authorities capture or kill thousands of rival cartel members,” states a [motion for discovery](#) filed in U.S. District Court by Zambada-Niebla’s attorney in July 2011.

According to The Blaze, there is some data that could potentially corroborate Zambada-Niebla’s claims:

Zambada-Niebla was reportedly responsible for coordinating all of the Sinaloa Cartel’s multi-ton drug shipments from Central and South American countries, through Mexico, and into the United States. To accomplish this, he used every tool at his disposal: Boeing 747 cargo planes, narco-submarines, container ships, speed boats, fishing vessels, buses, rail cars, tractor trailers and automobiles. But Guzman and Zambada-Niebla’s overwhelming success within the Sinaloa Cartel



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was largely due to the arrests and dismantling of many of their competitors and their booming businesses in the U.S. from 2004 to 2009 — around the same time ATF's gun-walking operations were in full swing. Fast and Furious reportedly [began](#) in 2009 and continued into early 2011.

Zambada-Niebla's statements seem to imply that it was a result of a working relationship between the U.S. government and the Sinaloa Cartel.

Additionally, Zambada-Niebla's allegations are similar to those made by Guillermo Terrazas Villanueva, a spokesman for the Chihuahua state government in northern Mexico. According to Villanueva, the U.S. government does not care to "fight drug traffickers," but instead to "manage the drug trade."

"It's like pest control companies, they only control," Guillermo Terrazas Villanueva, the Chihuahua spokesman, told Al Jazeera last month at his office in Juarez. "If you finish off the pests, you are out of a job. If they finish the drug business, they finish their jobs."

However, more senior officials in Chihuahua State dismissed Villaneuva's claims as "baloney."

"I think the CIA and DEA [U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency] are on the same side as us in fighting drug gangs," Hector Murguia, the mayor of Juarez, told Al Jazeera during an interview. "We have excellent collaboration with the U.S."

But Hugo Almanda Mireles, a professor at the Autonomous University of Juarez and author of several books, has a differing view. "The war on drugs is an illusion," he observed. "It's a reason to intervene in Latin America. The CIA wants to control the population; they don't want to stop arms trafficking to Mexico, look at [Operation] Fast and Furious."

U.S. officials have acknowledged working with the Sinaloa Cartel in the past through informant Humberto Loya-Castro, who was indicted with Chapo and Mayo in 1995 for narcotics trafficking conspiracy. That case was dismissed in 2008 after Loya became an informant for the U.S. government.

Under the alleged agreement with U.S. agencies, "the Sinaloa Cartel, through Loya-Castro, was to provide information accumulated by Mayo, Chapo, and others, against rival Mexican Drug Trafficking Organizations to the United States government," a motion for discovery states.

But the federal government is denying that there is any truth to the claims made by Zambada-Niebla. Meanwhile, Zambada-Niebla's legal counsel has required records about Operation Fast and Furious, but that request was denied.

From [the defense motion](#):

It is estimated that approximately 3,000 people were killed in Mexico as a result of "Operation Fast and Furious," including law enforcement officers in the state of Sinaloa, Mexico, the headquarters of the Sinaloa cartel. The Department of Justice's leadership apparently saw this as an ingenious way of combating drug cartel activities.

It has recently been disclosed that in addition to the above-referenced problems with "Operation Fast & Furious," the DOJ, DEA, and the FBI knew that some of the people who were receiving the weapons that were being allowed to be transported to Mexico, were in fact informants working for those organizations and included some of the leaders of the cartels.

The official response to Zambada-Niebla's motion for discovery confirms that there are in fact "classified materials" regarding his case, but denies that those documents "support the defendant's claim that he was promised immunity or public authority for his actions."



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Congress is closely investigating the claims of Zambada-Neibla. The Blaze reports, "A source in Congress, who spoke to The Blaze on the condition of anonymity, said that some top congressional investigators have been keeping 'one eye on the case.' Another two members of Congress, both lead Fast and Furious Congressional investigators, told The Blaze they had never even heard of the case."

One of those congressmen, who must remain anonymous since criminal proceedings are still ongoing, indicated that the allegations are "disturbing" and that Congress would get involved after Zambada-Neibla's trial is concluded in the event that significant information is revealed.

"Congress won't get involved in really any criminal case until the trial is over and the smoke has cleared," he added. "If the allegations prove to hold any truth, there will be some serious legal ramifications."

Photo: In this June 10, 1993 file photo, Joaquin Guzman Loera, alias "El Chapo" Guzman, is shown to the press after his arrest at the high security prison of Almoloya de Juarez on the outskirts of Mexico City: AP Images



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