



Written by [James Heiser](#) on May 5, 2011

## Drug Cartel Kidnaps 11 Mexican Police Officers

The city of Apodaca in the state of Nuevo Leon is the scene of the latest incident proving that the power of the drug cartels is far from broken; in fact, the circumstances of the kidnapping of Police Chief Milton Alvaredo Rojas and 10 of his bodyguards are hard to believe. [Borderland Beat reported on May 3](#) that the 11 men were actually captured in two separate incidents: First, the cartel captured three of the bodyguards, and then captured Alvaredo Rojas and seven other bodyguards while they were attempting to negotiate the release of the first three:



Three officers who served as bodyguards for Alvarado Rojas were kidnapped last Thursday, officials in Apodaca, a city in the Monterrey metropolitan area, told Efe.

One of the officers later called the chief and asked him to negotiate his release with an organized crime group at an address in the neighboring city of Juarez. Alvarado Rojas went to the address on Saturday with seven other bodyguards to rescue the kidnapped officers and the group has been missing since then.

Given the widespread chaos in Mexico, the kidnapping of the first three officers is, perhaps, not particularly surprising. The cartels have demonstrated time and again that they are both willing and able to conduct such crimes. What is hard to believe is that Alvaredo Rojas and another seven of his personal bodyguards would allow themselves to be taken, given the fact that they would have had every reasonable expectation that the criminals with whom they were negotiating might try to repeat their crime.

With a [municipal population](#) of over 420,000 in 2010, Apodaca has more extensive resources than some of the small border towns that have been plagued by cartel violence. The kidnapping of Alvaredo Rojas and his bodyguards is not the first such occurrence this year in suburbs of Monterrey. According to [Borderland Beat](#): “The latest kidnappings bring to 18 the number of police officers abducted this year in the Monterrey metro area by drug cartels. Seven state police officers were kidnapped on March 12 in Guadalupe, another suburb of Monterrey, the capital of Nuevo Leon.”

As reported previously for *The New American*, Mexico’s Public Safety Secretary Genaro Garcia Luna recently praised the “substantial” progress that has been made in the war against the drug cartels since President Felipe Calderon came to power in late 2006. Thus far, officials place the number of dead in this conflict at 35,000. Given the fact that 98.5 percent of all violent crimes are never published in a Mexican court, there is little sense of fear on the part of criminals that the government will ever punish them for their actions.

When 18 police officers are captured by drug cartels over the course of several months with little, if any, sign that the government will be able to bring the criminals to justice, the public will likely come to the conclusion that the government is simply incapable of protecting even its own police officers. How,



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then, can the police protect the citizens? Thus Mexico continues to give every indication of steady movement toward the status of being a “failed state.” And Americans have good reason to remain concerned for their own safety, as well, when drug cartels are kidnapping police bodyguards in a city less than two hours from our southern border.

Photo: AP Images



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