



Written by [Kelly Holt](#) on March 1, 2011

Facts Reveal Juarez is Deadlier Than Afghanistan

On Friday, Feb. 25, CNSNews.com reported figures that show that 3,111 civilians were murdered in Ciudad Juarez in 2010, compared to 2,421 civilians killed in all of Afghanistan in 2010, according to the Congressional Research Service (CRS) report of Feb. 3.

By the end of 2010, the tenth year of the U.S. Middle East war, U.S. forces had suffered 1,358 casualties in Afghanistan. In 2010 alone, 497 casualties were reported. According to CRS, of the 2,421 civilians killed in Afghanistan in 2010:



more than 60 percent were killed by anti-government elements, which include the Taliban and other individuals or groups who engage in armed conflict with the government of Afghanistan or members of the International Military Forces. Pro-government forces caused 21% of the total civilian deaths.

Anti-government elements are also responsible for much of the violence in Juarez, a city across the border from El Paso, Texas. According to [Mexico's 2010 census](#), the city is home to 1,328,017 residents, while Afghans number 29,121,286, reports the [CIA World Factbook](#). That means a civilian was 30 times more likely to be murdered last year in Juarez than Afghanistan. Latin American Affairs analyst June Beittel noted in a [CRS report](#) dated Jan. 7, 2011 that the complexion of drug violence has changed drastically:

Although violence has been an inherent feature of the trade in illicit drugs, the character of the drug trafficking-related violence in Mexico seems to have changed recently, now exhibiting increasing brutality. In the first 10 months of 2010, an alarming number of Mexican public servants have been killed, allegedly by the DTOs [drug trafficking organizations], including 12 Mexican mayors and in July, a gubernatorial candidate. The massacres of young people and migrants, the killing and disappearance of Mexican journalists, the use of torture, and the phenomena of car bombs have received wide media coverage and have led some analysts to question if the violence has been transformed into something new, beyond the typical violence that has characterized the trade. For instance, some observers have raised the concern that the Mexican DTOs may be acting more like domestic terrorists. Others maintain that the DTOs are transnational organized crime organizations at times using terrorist tactics. Still others believe the DTOs may be similar to insurgents attempting to infiltrate the Mexican state by penetrating the government and police.

Warring drug cartels, chiefly the Gulf cartel and the Zetas, are battling for this major drug route into the U.S. Though other violent incidents occur with regularity near the California and Arizona borders with Mexico, Texas has the largest portion of the international border (over 1200 miles and 16 counties) and therefore a proportionally larger number of reported cases. Other areas experiencing near lawlessness are the Mexican states of Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon, and Coahuila, all bordering the U.S.



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from the Big Bend country of Texas to the Gulf Coast.

Since President Felipe [Calderon](#) took office in 2006, over 36,000 people have lost their lives in Mexico in violent murders presumed to be drug- or cartel-related. Of special importance to Americans are the deaths of Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agent [Jaime Zapata](#), missionary [Nancy Davis](#), and tourist [David Hartley](#), the latter of whose body has still not been recovered, although four [suspects](#) have been identified in that case.

What was once a pleasurable pastime for Texans — visits to charming and friendly border towns — has become a dangerous nightmare. Texans and other concerned Americans continue to urge that heightened border security be given top priority, as the predictable spillover of Mexican drug violence into the United States continues to escalate.



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