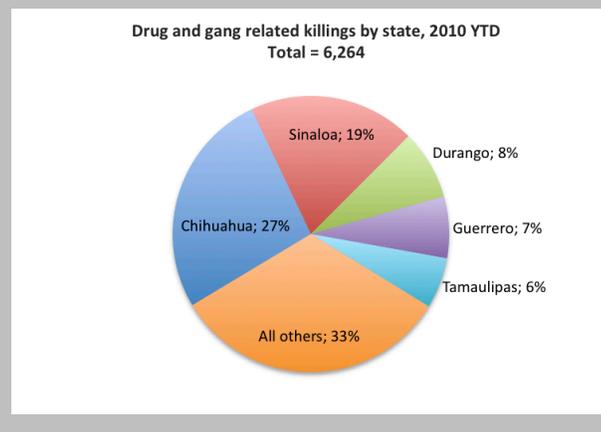
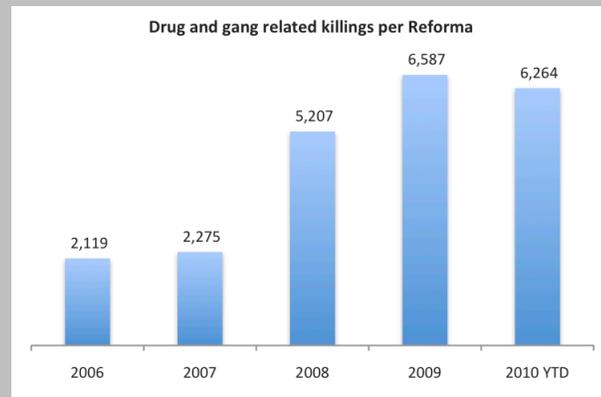


Alan Stoga, President
Daniel Wilson, Managing Director and Editor

Data

Killings keep record pace

Headlines were dominated by the massacre of 18 persons (with another 17 wounded) at a party in Torreón, Coahuila, which followed hard on the car bombing in Juárez, and a series of shootouts in Nuevo Laredo that left 12 dead and 21 wounded. Attorney General **Arturo Chávez** said the government's own toll in the drug wars since the beginning of the Calderón government reached 24,826, which is higher than the tallies kept by the major papers. Chávez said that a total of 78,000 individuals had been arrested on organized crime and drug charges, and 75,000 weapons had been confiscated. *Reforma's* weekly tally of gang-related killings was 286 last week, bringing the year to date total to 6,264—just shy of the total for all of 2009 (6,587). Just five of Mexico's 31 states (plus the Federal District) account for two-thirds of all killings.



Key Dates

- 9/1:** Presidential *Informe*; start of fall congressional session
- 9/15:** 200th Anniversary of Independence
- 11/15:** 100th Anniversary of the Revolution
- 11/29-12/11:** UN Climate Change Conference (COP-16), Cancún

President reshuffles cabinet, naming 4th Government Secretary

President **Felipe Calderón** reshuffled his cabinet and top staff in the office of the President, including the appointment of his fourth Secretary of Government. **Fernando Gómez Mont** resigned as Secretary of Government, and was replaced by **José Francisco Blake Mora**. Gómez Mont quit the PAN last February in protest of the decision to form electoral alliances with the PRD; his open disagreement with presidential policy ensured his departure sooner or later. Blake Mora has been Secretary of Government in Baja California. He is said to be a close friend of Calderón from the days when they were both members of the federal Chamber of Deputies (2000-2003). Blake Mora is largely unknown at the national level, but he is being given credit by some for reducing crime in Baja California through coordinating federal, state, and local police and security initiatives. However, he is also being blamed for the poor PAN performance in the July 4 elections, when the party lost mayoral races in 13 of 16 towns.

The fiercely partisan **Patricia Flores Elizondo** was ousted as head of the Office of the President in favor of **Gerardo Ruiz Mateos**, Secretary of Economy, who previously held the same job and has been one of Calderón's closest advisers during the campaign and over the first three years of his Government. **Bruno Ferrari**, the head of ProMéxico, the government's foreign investment promotion arm, takes over Economía. Finally, **Max Cortázar**, the head of communications in the Office of the President since the start of the Government, resigned, and is being replaced by his deputy, **Alejandra Sota**. There is speculation that Cortázar will head up communications at the PAN, but no announcement has been made.

New Government Secretary to focus on security

In this announcement of the appointment of **Francisco Blake Mora**, **President Calderón** said, "I have instructed him to head up the fight against organized crime and for public security—this fight against the principal enemy of our society and our institutions—as well as to take an active part in the dialogue that I have proposed with all the different political forces in the country and society as a whole, in order to strengthen the national strategy of security as a policy of the Mexican State." ([Milenio 7/16](#))

Car bomb in Juárez threatens escalation of drug war

A car bomb on a main street in downtown Juárez destroyed a Federal Police truck on patrol, killing four and wounding eight, in what appears to have been a planned ambush. The local army commander, General **Eduardo Zarate**, said that investigators had recovered C-4 explosive and a cellphone-activated detonator in the Ford sedan that blew up. The Ministry of Public Security said that the killings were a reprisal for the capture of a top local leader of "La Línea", the armed wing of the Juárez cartel.

President and Beltrones discuss legislative agenda; labor reform first?

President **Calderón** met with PRI Senate leader **Manlio Fabio Beltrones** to discuss the legislative agenda. The meeting marks a sharp break from the hostile interchanges between the Government and the PRI in the run-up to the elections, and occurred the day after PRI party president **Beatriz Paredes** said, "We will negotiate nothing." According to the *Bajo Reserva* column: "A bridge has opened. After the big confrontations with the PRI, Felipe Calderón met yesterday with the PRI Senate leader, Manlio Fabio Beltrones. And this was no casual encounter. It was in [the presidential residence] Los Pinos. It's known that they talked about the obvious: the pending structural reforms, insecurity, impunity, the war against the narcotics, the urgent need for dialogue among the political forces."

Subsequent comments by Beltrones and PAN Senate leader **Gustavo Madero** suggest that the stalled labor reform could be the first legislative package to be pushed forward. ([Universal 7/14](#), [7/19](#))