CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

The United Mexican States (Spanish: *Estados Unidos Mexicanos*), commonly known as Mexico, is a federal constitutional republic in North America. It is bordered by the United States in the north and to the southeast are Guatemala, Belize, and the Caribbean Ocean. To the south and west is the Pacific Ocean and to the east is the Gulf of Mexico. Mexico is a federation comprising thirty-one states and a Federal District as the capital city. It is the third largest country in Latin America and also the most Spanish-speaking country. Mexico was under the Spanish colonization until it got independence in September 27, 1821.

Mexico is a democratic country. The 2000 presidential election remarked the truly democracy in Mexico when President Vicente Fox became the first-elected president from the opposition party of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) that has ruled Mexican for centuries. That also marked the first time of government priority in solving the illicit drug problem with war. The Mexican drug war is an armed conflict taking place between various drug cartels and organizations and government forces in Mexico. Although Mexican drug cartels, or also known as drug trafficking organizations (DTOs), have existed for a few decades, but then it

became more powerful since the demise of Colombia's Cali and Medellin cartels in the 1990s. The Mexican government, led by President Vicente Fox in 2000, has waged a war with major cartels as a means to cope with international pressure and enhancing the wellness of the Mexican population. Mexico that is famous for its drug production and transit area and used as a transshipment point from Colombia to the U.S. now dominate the wholesale illicit drug market in North America.[1]

Mexico plays an important role in the drug production and distribution as well. Formerly, in Mexico there has been no drug cartel. But since the arrival of a cartel of Columbia in the 1980s, drug cartels in Mexico began to stand by its first leader, Miguel Ángel Félix Gallardo, who is a former federal police in Mexico. At that time Mexico became a liaison between the cartel Columbia who want to sell drugs to the United States. Gallardo started off by smuggling marijuana and opium into the United States, and was the first Mexican drug chief to link up with Colombia's cocaine cartels in the 1980s. He was known as "the Godfather" of Mexican drug cartels. Then another drug cartels started to grow in Mexico to produce drugs for export to several countries in Europe and America as its main market.

After seeing the rapid growth of drug cartels in Mexico, the government began to take firm steps. The high-level leaders and other figures in the drug trade were arrested by the government to crack down the drug cartels, but as some cartels are dismantled or become leaderless due to arrest or death, often more violent power

[1] Cook, Colleen W., ed. "Mexico Drug Cartels". *CRS Report for Congress*. Congressional Research Service. p.7. (October 16).

struggles begin over leadership of the cartels. The Mexican government, led by President Felipe Calderón ordered a force of 25,000 troops and federal police across the country in December 2006 to stop the increasingly violent warfare between rival drug cartels. The same thing had been done by Calderón's predecessor, Vicente Fox. Vicente Fox also had involved the military in counter-narcotics operations, but the scale, intensity, and commitment of Felipe Calderón's internal war dwarfs any of Fox's efforts. This became the official declaration from Mexican government that the drug war has begun. Unfortunately, the cartels responded with violent attacks on Mexican police and military forces. Many people have been killed in this war since it was declared and the number of victims is increasing every year.

Worse, it was also indirectly impact on the United States. Mexico is well-known both as a major transit and source country for illicit drugs coming to the United States. The country's location makes it an ideal transit point for drug smuggling into the United States. It is famous for its drug production and transit area and currently become the main foreign supplier of marijuana and a major supplier of methamphetamine to the United States. Mexico has produced large quantities of drug. In 2005, Mexico cultivated 3,300 hectares of opium poppy with a potential yield of 8 metric tons of pure heroin and 17 metric tons of "black tar heroin". In the same year, drug producers also cultivated 5,600 hectares of marijuana with a potential production yield of 10,100 metric tons[2]. Since Mexico supplies a large share of the heroin, it becomes a main distributor for illegal drugs flowing into the

[2] "CIA World Factbook—Mexico," Central Intelligence Agency. June 10, 2011. (https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mx.html) accessed 15 June 2011.

United States. Drug cartels in Mexico control approximately 70% of the foreign narcotics that flow into the United States. And about 90% of the cocaine is destined for the USA, 7% is destined for Europe (often by air to Spain, Belgium, Germany, France and Italy) and 3% is for local consumption[3]. In general, these drugs are produced in remote areas of the country where detection and eradication are difficult and the federal government has a minimal presence.

The location that is far away from government control, of course make this industry can grow and develop. Benefits earned from the drug business are very large. Economist estimate that the industry brings in Between US $ 25 billion and US $ 50 billion every year[4]. This is one reason the industry are finally taken by the population of Mexico. Around half a million people make a substantial portion of their income through the Narcotics business[5]. These people mostly also work with the drug cartels. Sadly, the drug cartels are not only responsible for supplying illicit drugs to the consumer but also doing criminal acts in Mexico.

The escalating level of violence in Mexico due to the drug wars has led to deep concern among U.S. officials that the violence will soon affect the United States. Although the violence from the warring drug cartels occurs in many regions of Mexico, some of the most brutal and horrible violence has been witnessed along the approximately 2.000 mile border that the U.S. shares with Mexico. The Mexican cartels are the single greatest drug trafficking threat to the United States. The

[3] United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "World Drug Report 2008" (United Nations: Vienna, Austria, 2008), p. 77.

[4] Colin Gray. The Hidden Cost of the War on Drugs. May, 2010. Retrieved from Stanford Progressive http://www.stanford.edu/group/progressive/cgi-bin/?p=521 (March 24, 2012)

[5] David A. Shirk. The Drug War in Mexico: Confronting a Shared Threat. 2011.

Mexican organizations have operations in every region of the United States and are expanding into more rural and suburban areas[6]. In response to this violence, United States has increased its border security. For example border patrols that are already costing the country more than $3 billion per year[7].

However, the United States shares many interests with Mexico in some sectors such political, economy, and national security. Mexico long ago became the principal transit route for cocaine and is an important producer in its own right of the heroin, marijuana, and methamphetamine consumed in the United States. It is a priority for the United States to support Mexico's efforts to reform its justice system and improve security along the shared border and throughout the nation.

Historically, the governments of Mexico and the United States have cooperated on counternarcotics and security-related issues, and have had some success sharing information and coordinating law enforcement and military efforts. Additionally, the U.S. has aided in the fight against DTOs by providing Mexico with training, equipment, and information technology assistance[8]. Mexico is also an active participant in the Multilateral Counterdrug Summit, which includes the participation of the U.S., Panama, Colombia, and Ecuador working towards regional counternarcotics interoperability.

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[6] Carol Cratty. "Mexico drug cartels extend reach in U.S.". March 26, 2010. http://articles.cnn.com/2010-03-26/us/drug.trends_1_drug-cartels-mexican-border-drug-violence?_s=PM:US (accessed on December 13, 2011)

[7] David A. Shirk. "The Drug War in Mexico: Confronting a Shared Threat". *Council on Foreign Relations. Council Special Report No. 60.* March 2011. p. vii

[8] Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, United States Department of State. "International Narcotics Control Strategy Report: Volume I Drug and Chemical Control". March 2010. p.437

Actually there are many more agreement and cooperation done by Mexico and United States, especially in the sector of security assistance programs. One of the commitment related to drug war could be seen in "The Mérida Initiative". The Mérida Initiative is the statement issued by the United States and Mexico in order to combat drug trafficking and other criminal organizations in Mexico and Central America. This statement was made firstly by these two countries on October 22, 2007. The name of "the Mérida Initiative" was taken from the location of a March 2007 meeting between George W. Bush and Felipe Calderón. They agreed to expand bilateral and regional cooperation to combat organized crime, DTOs, and criminal gangs.

Later on, Mexico and the United States made new agreement named "Beyond Mérida" in 2010. While the Mérida Initiative focused on providing "hard-side" assistance, Beyond Mérida concentrates more on assistance of government institutions. Since the situation is getting worse in Mexico, the assistance of the United States to combat the drug war is needed, as United States government reports have characterized Mexican drug trafficking organizations as representing the "greatest organized crime threat" to the United States today[9]. Surprisingly, Mexico's drug war still becomes a serious problem because the number of homicide is getting higher and even though the United States has already assisted Mexican government. The number of opium poppy and cannabis leaf cultivation has also increased year by year. That number once declined in 2007 as the Mérida Initiative began to run, but in

[9] NDIC, *2009 National Drug Threat Assessment*, December 2008.

the following years it is increasing again and even higher. It showed that Mexican government is still dealing with the drug problems in Mexico even the war has already declared.

B. Research Question

From the background of the problems mentioned above, the main problem can be formulated as follows:

"Why is Mexico fail in combating drug war even though it is assisted by the United States?"

C. Purpose of the Research

This research aims to provide information about the drug war that occurred in Mexico and how Mexican government try to resolve the issue with the assistance of the United States. In this research I will present the reasons why Mexico is fail in combating the drug war even though it is assisted by the United States.

D. Theoretical Framework

To analyze the research question, the writer use theory of weak states. There are some theories proposed by some scholars related to weak state phenomenon. Observing the definition of Robert Rotberg, weak states include a broad continuum of states that are: inherently weak because of geographical, physical, or fundamental economic constraints; basically strong, but temporarily or situationally weak

because of internal antagonisms, management flaws, greed, despotism, or external attacks; and a mixture of the two. Weak states typically harbor ethnic, religious, linguistic, or other intercommunal tensions that have not yet, or not yet thoroughly, become overtly violent. Urban crime rates tend to be higher and increasing. In weak states, the ability to provide adequate measures of other political goods is diminished or diminishing. Physical infrastructural networks have deteriorated. Schools and hospitals show signs of neglect, particularly outside the main cities. GDP per capita and other critical economic indicators have fallen or are falling, sometimes dramatically; levels of venal corruption are embarrassingly high and escalating. Weak states usually honor rule of law precepts in the breach. They harass civil society. Weak states are often ruled by despots, elected or not[10].

To distinguish between failed states with weak states, Stuart Eizenstat, John Porter, and Jeremy Weinstein measure it based on three needs: (1) security, (2) provision of basic services, and (3) protection of essential civil Freedoms[11]. Failed states have no effectiveness in ensuring all these needs. Meanwhile, weak states could only provide one or two of the three needs.

However, in order to analyze the case the writer use the theory of weak states based on Susan E. Rice and Stewart Patrick. According to Rice and Patrick,

[10] Robert I. Rotberg. "Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators". 2003. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
[11] Stuart Eizenstat, John Edward Porter, and Jeremy Weinstein. "Rebuilding Weak States". January/February 2005

weak states appear to have economic structures, political, social and stronger than failed states. They define weak states as:

> *"countries that lack the essential capacity and/or will to fulfill four sets of critical government responsibilities: fostering an environment conducive to sustainable and equitable economic growth; establishing and maintaining legitimate, transparent, and accountable political institutions; securing their populations from violent conflict and controlling their territory; and meeting basic human needs of their population."*[12]

Weak states are weak because of economic hardship, geographic constraints, and infrastructure constraints faced. However, the difference between failed and weak states appear overlapped. Although it has a high structural strength of economic, political, and social groups, but the general population of failed and weak states classified as poor and malnourished, living with chronic illness and die young, do not get an education and basic health care, suffer gender discrimination and lack of access to modern technology[13].

Rice and Patrick measure it based on four indicators: (1) economic, (2) political, (3) security, and (4) social welfare. Economic indicators measured by the ability of countries to provide stable economic environment that stimulate sustainable economic growth for their citizens. Political indicators measured by the quality of political institutions in fulfilling public accountability to reduce the level of corruption, guarantee freedom of expression, and perform government functions

[12] Susan E. Rice and Stewart Patrick. "Index of State Weakness in the Developing World". Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution. 2008.
[13] Patrick, Stewart. "Weak States and Global Threats: Fact or Fiction?." The Washington Quarterly. 2006.

in an effective, independent, and responsive. Security indicator is measured through the state's ability to provide physical security for its citizens by measuring the intensity of violent conflict as well as its impact on the people. Social welfare indicators measured by the ability of countries to meet the basic needs of citizens in health care, education, and access to clean water.

In particular, there are 20 more specific indicators to be measured, which are:

Table 1.1

Indicators of weak states

ECONOMIC	POLITICAL	SECURITY	SOCIAL WELFARE
1. GNI per capita, 2006 (World Bank, World Development Indicators) 2. GDP growth, 2002-2006 (World Bank, World Development Indicators) 3. Income Inequality, 2006 (World Bank, World Development Indicators) 4. Inflation, 2002-2006 (International Monetary Fund, International Financial Statistics) 5. Regulatory Quality, 2006 (World Bank, Governance Matters VI)	6. Government Effectiveness, 2006 (World Bank, Governance Matters VI) 7. Rule of Law, 2006 (World Bank, Governance Matters VI) 8. Voice and Accountability, 2006 (World Bank, Governance Matters VI) 9. Control of Corruption, 2006 (World Bank, Governance Matters VI) 10. Freedom Ratings, 2006 (Freedom House)	11. Conflict Intensity, 1992-2006 (Center for Systemic Peace, Major Episodes of Political Violence) 12. Political Stability and Absence of Violence, 2006 (World Bank, Governance Matters VI) 13. Incidence of Coups, 1992-2006 (Archigos 2.3 and Economist Intelligence Unit) 14. Gross Human Rights Abuses, 1992-2006 (Political Terror Scale) 15. Territory Affected by Conflict, 1991-2005 (Political Instability Task Force)	16. Child Mortality, 2005 (UNICEF, State of the World's Children) 17. Primary School Completion, 2005 (World Bank, World Development Indicators) 18. Undernourishment, 2004 (Food and Agriculture Organization) 19. Percent Population with Access to Improved Water Sources, and with Access to Improved Sanitation Facilities, 2004 (World Bank, World Development Indicators) 20. Life Expectancy, 2005 (World Bank, World Development Indicators)

Source: Index of State Weakness in the Developing World

According to Rice and Patrick's theory, in the case of Mexico's drug war these indicators are not fully provided. They describe state weakness based on security and state effectiveness could be measured by the unemployment and crime rates. Mexican crime rates are very high and Ciudad Juárez is known as one of the most dangerous city in the world[14]. One of drug cartels which exist there is the Sinaloa. The leader of this cartel, Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, is mentioned as the "world's most wanted man" after Osama Bin Laden was killed by US forces in Pakistan last year. "El Chapo" was jailed in 1993 but he was success to escape from a maximum-security prison in a laundry basket eight years later. Also, the rampant corruption in Mexico can be included in the political indicators. Corruption is like normal thing in Mexico. Communist Party founder Lombardo Toledano (1952) stated

> "*We live in muck. The bite, the stickup, the final ploughing, the stuffing, the little sip, a string of names that have been invented to describe this immoral process. Justice has to be bought, first from the policeman, then from the prosecuting attorney, then from the judge, then from the mayor, then from the Congressman, then from the governor, then from the minister...*"[15]

In fact, utilization of the military for domestic law enforcement may backfire on the government, as human rights groups have not been shy in highlighting the numerous human rights abuses that the Mexican armed forces have been accused of

[14] "Ciudad Juárez, Mexico: The world's most dangerous place?" reported by Andrew Chung on May 21, 2010 (Accessed from http://www.thestar.com/news/world/article/812757 on January 18, 2012)
[15] Enrique Krauze. Mexico. "Biography of Power: A History of Modern Mexico 1810-1996". New York: Harper Perennial. 1998

the course of their counter-narcotics operations[16]. Additionally, the more the Mexican military involves itself in the drug war, the greater the chance that cartels will subvert and corrupt it.

Meanwhile, in economic indicator, Susan E. Rice and Stewart Patrick explain GNI per capita, Growth in GDP, Inflation, Income Inequality, and Regulatory Quality. These will capture key aspects of national economic performance. For Mexican case, income inequality would become the most visible indicator. In 2002, "more than two thirds of the poorest countries of the world were in conflict," according to the OECD (the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). By comparison, middle-income countries are less prone to violent civil conflict, and wealthy countries have little risk of experiencing internal conflict[17]. According to World Bank, Mexico includes in upper-middle income country[18] which may lead to have internal conflict. The National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy reported that the number of Mexicans living in poverty grew to 52 million in 2010, up by more than 3 million people from two years earlier. That means 46.2% of the population lives in poverty[19].

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[16] "Military Injustice: Mexico's Failure to Punish Army Abuses". New York: Human Rights Watch. December 2001. (http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/mexico/) Accessed June 10, 2011.

[17] Susan E. Rice, Corinne Graff, and Janet Lewis. "Poverty and Civil War: What Policymakers Need to Know". Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution. December 2006.

[18] Country and Lending Groups by World Bank. Retrieved from http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-classifications/country-and-lending-groups on January 18, 2012.

[19] Wilkinson, Tracy. (2011, July 29). "Poverty grew in Mexico to nearly half the population, study finds". Retrieved January 17, 2012 from http://articles.latimes.com/2011/jul/29/world/la-fg-mexico-poverty-20110730

Mexican drug war is the result of Mexico's state weakness in handling its internal problem that linked to transnational crime. The category "transnational crime" encompasses a vast array of activities, not limited to narcotics trafficking, alien smuggling, counterfeiting, financial fraud, high-technology crime, and money laundering[20]. One manifestation of the Mexican state's weakness is its burgeoning private security industry. At the turn of the millennium, Mexico's guns for hire contained an estimated 10,000 firms totaling at least 153,885 personnel, only 20% of which were registered. As in Russia, these private security forces have become private armies for the powerful, and implicated in the country's criminal violence. In some border regions of Mexico, private security firms decisively outnumber uniformed police officers and probably are better armed[21]. That is why sometimes the local police could not do much to fight these kind of private armies. And it was found that some drug cartels now have their own tank like in military.

It seems that Mexico is a weak state troubled by a history of authoritarian domination. As a nation with high unemployment, low real wages, systematic corruption, and extensive racial discrimination against its large Amerindian (American-Indian) minority, Mexico has seen numerous revolutions and changes of government and often resulting not much[22]. Mexican historian, Enrique Krauze, argues that Mexico's current troubles stem from the rule of authoritarian

[20] Patrick, Stewart. "Weak States and Global Threats: Fact or Fiction?". The Washington Quarterly. 2006.
[21] Graham Hall Turbeville Jr.. "Outlaw Private Security Firms: Criminal and Terrorist Agendas Outnumber Private Security Alternatives."
[22] John P Sullivan. "State of Siege: Mexico's Criminal Insurgency". 2008 (downloaded from smallwarsjournal.com/blog/journal/docs- 84-sullivan.pdf)

strongmen[23]. Close to seventy years of one-party rule by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and a socialist command economy have created a governmental culture of bribery, injustice, and impunity, particularly among internal security forces. Free trade, political reform, and the breaking of the PRI's oligarchic power have made Mexico more dynamic, but wealth and political power remain concentrated in the hands of a few[24].

Another indicator showing the weakness of Mexico is its weak policy. Mexico is known as major drug-producing nation and cultivation of opium poppy in 2007 rose to 6,900 hectares yielding a potential production of 18 metric tons of pure heroin, or 50 metric tons of "black tar" heroin, the dominant form of Mexican heroin in the western United States. Marijuana cultivation increased to 8,900 hectares in 2007 and yielded a potential production of 15,800 metric tons which government conducts the largest independent illicit-crop eradication program in the world. Because it is bordered by United States in the north, it continues as the primary transshipment country for US-bound cocaine from South America, with an estimated 90% of annual cocaine movements toward the United States stopping in Mexico. Major drug syndicates control the majority of drug trafficking throughout

[23] Enrique Krauze. Mexico. "Biography of Power: A History of Modern Mexico 1810-1996". New York: Harper Perennial. 1998.

[24] John P Sullivan. "State of Siege: Mexico's Criminal Insurgency". 2008 (downloaded from smallwarsjournal.com/blog/journal/docs- 84-sullivan.pdf)

the country and major supplier of heroin and largest foreign supplier of marijuana and methamphetamine to the United States market[25].

The United States that has the closest relation with Mexico have shared responsibility for drug-related activities. Since the 1970s, the United States has collaborated with Mexican authorities and provided assistance to Mexico for counternarcotics program and activities[26]. "War on drugs" has been launched by President Richard Nixon in the early 1970s. This policy has target to eradicate the opium crops and marijuana in Latin America, especially in Mexico as a key site. Surprisingly, Mexico's drug war still becomes a serious problem because the number of homicide is getting higher and even though United States has already assisted Mexican government. That number had declined in 2007 as the Merida Initiative began to run, but in the following years it is increasing again and even higher.

E. Hypothesis

Based on the problems and supported by the theoretical framework that has been stated above, I draw the following hypothesis:

Mexico is fail to combat drug war even though it is assisted by the United States because Mexico is a weak state in term of governance, security, and law enforcement.

[5] Taken from http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/cri_ill_dru-crime-illicit-drugs (Accessed on November 23, 2011)

[6] "DRUG CONTROL: U.S. Assistance Has Helped Mexican Counternarcotics Effects, but Tons of Illicit Drugs Continue to Flow into the United States". US GAO Report. August 2007. p. 6

F. Range of Research

The Drug War has been happening in Mexico since the first elected president from the opposition party (Party National Action), Vincent Fox, led the country in 2000 until nowadays when it is took over by Felipe Calderón, the second elected president. But, in order to get better understanding and accurate research results, I limit the range of writing by simply analyzing the Drug War in Mexico that occurred from 2006, since it was declared officially by President Felipe Calderón up to present, near to the end of his leadership in November 2012.

G. Research Methodology

As studies are often encountered in social science, in search of data required to support the writing of this, the technique used by the authors is to study literature sourced from the literature that relates to research to be conducted, whether it be books, journals scientific, research reports, newspapers and magazines related to the drug war that occurred in Mexico. In addition, the data search was also conducted by searching on various sites on the Internet.

H. System of Writing

Chapter I : Explaining the Background, Research Question, Purpose of Research, Theoretical Framework, Hypothesis, Range of Research, Research Methodology, and System of Writing.

Chapter II : Explaining the development of drug in Mexico until it become threat for the country.

Chapter III: Describing what the United States assistance to Mexico.

Chapter IV: Explaining why Mexico is fail in combating the drug war.

Chapter V : Describing the conclusions and suggestions.