

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

Mexico that is located quite strategically for growing of several types of illicit crops such as opium poppy and cannabis leaf is one of the largest drug-producing countries to North America's countries. Illegal drugs industry has grown and evolved over time in Mexico. Authoritarian rule of the party that has ruled before, *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI), made this kind of industry was easy to develop. Corruption in the military and the police make drug distribution also easier. There are seven of the most powerful drug trafficking organizations (DTOs), or often called "cartels", in Mexico. They are the Sinaloa cartel, Juarez cartel, Tijuana cartel, Gulf cartel, Los Zetas, Beltrán Leyva Organization, and La Familia Michoacana. These organizations produce three kinds of drugs, namely Heroin, Marijuana, and Methamphetamine and distribute Cocaine that comes from South America. But lately two of these cartels, Beltrán Leyva Organization and La Familia Michoacana, have been disbanded.

Since the turn of the regime, from the PRI to the opposition party, *Partido Acción Nacional* (PAN), the Mexican government is getting serious about combating the growth and development of drugs in the country. The drug war was declared in December 2006 by the president who took office at the time, President Felipe Calderón. The Mexican drug war is an armed conflict taking place between drug cartels and

various organizations and government forces in Mexico. This drug war is a brave step that has full risk done by the Mexican government as casualties are not just of members of the cartel and the government but also civilians. Indeed, the presence of a drug trafficking organization is not only as producers and traffickers of illegal drugs, but also the cause of several criminal acts in Mexico. They are responsible for some criminal cases. They kidnap and murder any of Mexican citizens, not just the elite but also ordinary people. For example, in October 2008, a five-year-old boy who came from poor families were kidnapped from a market in Mexico City and killed by injecting fluid into his heart.

Various attempts have been made by the Mexican government to combat the cartels that increasingly powerful. Reform the system of government, international cooperation, law enforcement, and eradication of corruption are a few examples of his efforts. But the Mexican government still failed to reduce and even stop the production of illicit drugs. For example, in 2005 the production of 77.500 acres of marijuana has been hacked and burned, but after the drug war in 2006 it was only about 74.131 acres. And the production of opium poppy in 2005 was only 8.154 ha, but in 2006 it was increasing up to 12.355 ha.

Then the government started looking for other ways to beat the cartel which was to seek help from other countries. In 2007, during a visit by United States President, George W. Bush, President Felipe Calderón who represented the government of Mexico formally requested U.S. assistance to combat the DTO and to "win" the drug war. United States is considered important because it is the main market of the DTO, as

well as the country is also affected by this drug war. Through two well-known policies, the Mérida Initiative and Beyond Merida, the United States helped Mexico by providing funds and supplies for the Mexican police force. While the Merida Initiative focuses on strengthening security, Beyond Merida focuses more on institution-building. But unfortunately, this assistance has not been considered to be effective as well, because the victim was actually increased and the production of illegal drugs is still relatively high.

Given this reality, Mexico can be said as failed in combating the drug war because basically Mexico is a weak state in term of governance, security, and law enforcement. Judicial system is still weak, even though there has been reform as well as financial assistance from the United States. The facts about “double agent” or government officials who work for the drug cartels also make the drug-related problems become worse. The arrest of cartel members, in fact, is not end of the war because they are able to escape from the prisons even the one with the maximum-security. Weak law enforcement in some sector continues to show that Mexico is a weak state. So, no matter how many assistance come from another country, if Mexico still cannot solve its basic problems it would be useless. This could also be the reason why many Mexican citizens began to involve into the drug industry.

Combating the drug cartels actually needs to be done, but at least the government should also look at the basic reasons why people could get involved in the drug industry. The main purpose of the Mexican government should not only about combating the drug-trafficking organizations by killing people, but also about to bring

the government as an effective service provider and protector for its people. Basically, the drug problem in Mexico could be solved when everyone in Mexico has the opportunity to grow, when all children have access to attend a decent school, when everyone has enough food to eat without robbing, killing, or corrupting to get it. Finally, for further research I suggest to identify the possibility of new formation of Mexican drug cartels that have been disbanded or defeated by government, since there are some major drug cartels that are already disbanded. Also, the possibility of "balloon effect" if Mexican government success to combat the drug war. Balloon effects is like when you push down hard on one part of a balloon and another part will instantly increase in size and then the air from the flattened side having merely been moved somewhere else. It is possibly happened if Mexican and US government successfully push the drug cartels in one area, but then it creates another problem in another area.