

ACTION DRL-00

RELEASED IN FULL

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	A-00	CCO-00	CIAE-00
	CTME-00	INL-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	WHA-00	DS-00	EB-00
	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VC-00	OBO-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	CAC-00	VCE-00	M-00	AC-00
	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OCS-00	OIC-00	OMB-00	OPR-00	PA-00
	PM-00	GIWI-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SCT-00	SP-00
	IRM-00	SSO-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USSS-00	FMP-00	R-00
	SCRS-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00

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R 112318Z FEB 05
 FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1341
 INFO ALL US CONSULATES IN MEXICO COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS MEXICO 001116

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR DRL
 STATE FOR WHA/MEX

E.O. 12958: N/A
 TAGS: PHUM, PGOV, PREL, MX
 SUBJECT: THE CIUDAD JUAREZ MURDERS -- SYMPTOM OF A LARGER
 PROBLEM

REF: A. 04 MEXICO 4359
 B. 04 MEXICO 9107

1. (SBU) Summary: The murders of 349 women in Ciudad Juarez (CJ) from 1993 to the present have focused public opinion on the city, the women, and their families. While the murders of women in CJ have been brutal and some remain unsolved, CJ is only the symptom of the larger problem of violence against women in Mexico. Furthermore, CJ is not the leader in violence against women. Violence against women is worse in larger cities, as well as on the southern border. Mexico's culture of violence and the low status of women lead to crimes against them. End summary.

2. (SBU) The murders of women in Ciudad Juarez have garnered international attention. However, officials in the Attorney General's (PGR) office say there is more violence against women in Mexico City, the State of Mexico, and the State of Jalisco (Guadalajara). Media reports indicate (although statistics are not available) that more women are being

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: NORMAN M BOUTON
 DATE/CASE ID: 06 JUL 2006 200502506

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murdered on the southern border with Guatemala. In CJ, many more men have been murdered during the same time span. Contacts in the PGR's Office for Human Rights said the ratio of men to women murdered since 1993 in CJ is 5 to 1. Also, they reiterated what PGR Special Prosecutor Maria Lopez Urbina said in her first report (Ref A) that there is no evidence of a serial killer at work in CJ.

4. (SBU) NGOs have alerted us to the increasing presence of more vulnerable migrants (unaccompanied women and minors) passing through Mexico. This is especially true on the southern border where there is a massive wave of Central American migration. The increasing presence of the Salvadoran gang Mara Salvatrucha ("Maras") make this region more dangerous than ever. The migrants are easy prey for the Maras and horrific stories abound about how they prey on the migrants while they board freight trains in Tapachula, Chiapas. Vulnerable women are an easy target and many are being raped and murdered in the southern border region.

5. (SBU) A general culture of violence against women that agitates the problem nationwide. In 2004, the Mexican statistical agency (INEGI) published a study saying 47 percent of women have suffered some form of domestic abuse in their lives. Many of the murders in CJ have been found to be domestic violence, often instigated by drug and alcohol abuse, instead of a serial murderer. A contact in the National Women's Institute (INMUJERES) told POLOFF recently that CJ has been overpoliticized but the attention has been helpful in two ways: 1) it exposed the culture of violence that exists against women, and 2) it exposed major flaws in the Mexican justice system.

6. (U) The news is not all bad. First, the Fox administration created INMUJERES in 2001 to promote the cause of women nationwide. The same contact at INMUJERES mentioned that they have been successful in putting abuses into the public discourse. Once that happens, it becomes impossible to ignore and an example is the CJ murders. Also, First Lady Marta Sahagun de Fox has been very proactive in this area. In November, she opened the GOM-sponsored International Seminar on the Trafficking of Human Beings (TIP, another form of violence against women) and urged that silence be broken on this issue and that the impunity end.

7. (SBU) Comment: CJ is not all there is to violence against women in Mexico. Unfortunately, more women are killed in the larger Mexican cities (anecdotally, the PGR and Embassy law enforcement officials believe the number of people killed in Mexico City is much higher-not surprising for a city of 22

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million) and possibly on the southern border each year. More troublesome is the culture of violence that dehumanizes women and tacitly condones violence against them. While there are positive signals that a change could be coming, the INEGI study and some of the murders in CJ indicate that this attitude is still pervasive. Equally troubling is the larger culture of violence in Mexico exhibited by the wave of narco-violence in the northern states. End comment.

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