Testimony of Ambassador Earl Anthony Wayne
Before the Senate Committee on the Judiciary,
Subcommittee on Border Security and Immigration, regarding
"Narcos: Transnational Cartels and Border Security"
Wednesday, December 12, 2018
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 226 2:30 p.m.

Cooperation between Mexico and the United States regarding transnational crime is vital for the well-being of both countries. Both societies pay a high price for the illegal traffic in drugs, money, guns and people that cross our common border. The effective and efficient operation of the border itself is vital for the one million dollars a minute of commerce between the two countries and for the some one million legitimate border crossings each day between the United States and Mexico.

Taking bilateral cooperation to the most effective and productive level possible is well worth the investment and hard work necessary. Much progress has been made in that cooperation over the past ten years, but there is much more that is needed.

Mexico's new president, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador or AMLO as he is widely known, begins his six-year term with large majorities in Congress and bold ambitions for the transformation of Mexico. He has also signaled clearly that he wants to find ways to cooperate with the United States on key issues.

Both governments should protect and continue what works well in security and border cooperation, but actively take the opportunity to improve collaborative efforts against criminals on both sides of the border. We cannot afford to let bilateral cooperation languish, as happened for nearly a year following Mexico's presidential transition six years ago.

The two governments should undertake a rapid review of the range of security-related cooperation underway, as well as how that cooperation can mesh most effectively with the new multi-pronged approach to public security being developed by Mexican President Lopez Obrador and his team. Both governments should invest in deepening our joint efforts to augment the homeland security of each country.

Interagency cooperation within each country and bilaterally needs to be enhanced. It needs to consider increasing use of carefully vetted joint task forces targeted at specific groups, regions or problem sets (e.g. money laundering). There are significant steps that would augment and fortify risk management which could be taken, such as using new technology to capture and analyze additional data from border crossings in both directions. Another step could be to help Mexico's new government provide alternatives to opium cultivation in Mexico, if the new government desires. The U.S. and Mexico should without doubt continue efforts to better target the entire chain of operation of drug smuggling groups. This work would merit additional Merida funding.

Additionally, the U.S. should positively consider the offer of the new President of Mexico to address longer-term migration and security concerns in a broader regional context that includes Central America. The recent migrant caravan turmoil highlights the need for a better regional approach and cooperation. We should take advantage of AMLO's cooperative attitude to help forge such a regional approach that deals with the many layers of the problem. This kind a longer-term investment would go beyond the current Merida framework, but could be well worth it.

Congress has a vital role to play in assuring that reinvigorating U.S.-Mexico cooperation gets off to a good start with a comprehensive vision and plans that are sufficiently funded.

Merida Initiative as the Umbrella for Intensified Cooperation

Over the past ten years, bilateral law enforcement and security cooperation has taken place under the umbrella of the Merida Initiative. Presidents Bush and Calderon launched it in 2007. That program of intensified U.S. assistance and law enforcement/justice collaboration picked up significant momentum in 2011 and has progressed positively since. The priorities of both governments have evolved. Both sides have learned from experience during these years and expanded areas of mutual benefit for practical homeland security and law enforcement cooperation. Merida brought more order and coordination to U.S. assistance for Mexico and fostered networks of closer cooperation between law enforcement, justice, security and intelligence officials working against criminals involved in trans-border crime. The practical bilateral cooperation can be seen, for example, in the number of valuable agreements reached between the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Mexico's Interior Ministry (SEGOB) in recent years.

Merida assistance programs helped deepen trust and confidence as well as inter-agency cooperation between and among agencies of both countries. A big step forward in this broader government-to-government collaboration was the creation of the Security Coordination Group in 2014. This new forum brought together for the first time at the same table all the government actors in public security, justice, national security, and intelligence with the idea of enhancing coordination between both governments across all lines of action to fight organized crime and boost security. It illustrates the leap of trust made in each other in recent years by both governments in their joint struggle against organized crime.

I understand that the U.S. Congress has appropriated some $2.9 billion in Merida assistance since 2008 and that something around $1.8 billion has been spent. The State Department and USAID, however, would have more exact figures. The Mexicans have spent about ten times that much in their public security programs during these years.

We need to be frank: this cooperation has not yielded enough progress against drug trafficking, money laundering, gun running and the other trans-border criminal activities. However, it has made important headway and created an atmosphere in which most of

those working on these efforts accept that both countries have a shared responsibility to find solutions and that substantial progress is only possible if both countries work together. The Merida Initiative has become the cornerstone of that shared work. This change of perspective needs to be preserved and built upon will strong political will from the top in both countries. Hopefully, Mexico's new President will provide the needed commitment.

Rising U.S. Opioid Addiction and Increased Violence in Mexico

The rising opioid epidemic in the United States underscores the vital importance of more effective U.S.-Mexican efforts to reduce the flows of heroin and synthetic opioids from Mexico to the U.S. While the U.S. epidemic started with the abuse of prescription drugs, Mexican crime groups responded rapidly to the demand signals from the U.S. and increased opium and heroin production in Mexico. Mexican drug cartels also began importing large quantities of synthetic opioids like fentanyl from China into Mexico to then smuggle them into the U.S. While Mexico is not the only source of illegal opioids (a fair amount now reportedly arrives via mail and express delivery), Mexican criminal groups remain a major provider. Mexico also is a major source of Meth for the U.S. market.

This surge in opioid smuggling helped generate a welcome new U.S.-Mexico agreement in 2017 to go after the entire to chain of drug production more intensely, which explicitly accepted that the U.S. had to undertake better efforts to address the demand side of the problem via U.S. addiction-related programs and that issues surrounding production and eradication were key elements on the bilateral agenda. (See the attached slide.) That new plan did not take full effect, however, in part because of the negative reaction of Mexicans to U.S. harsh, critical words and actions regarding migration and the U.S.-Mexico border. Those words and actions generated significant popular backlash in Mexico. Mexico's Senate, for example, urged an end to security and migration cooperation with the U.S. earlier this year.

It is important to note that illegal drug sales in the U.S. have been estimated by the U.S. Justice Department and the DEA to provide some $20-30 billion in revenue to Mexican drug organizations. Some other estimates are lower but are still in the many billions of dollars. These profits allow criminal groups to buy guns in the U.S. to use in Mexico as well as to fund their operations and pay for corruption of officials in Mexico.

Drug smuggling groups also facilitate illegal cross-border migration, making lucrative profits from this activity. Criminal groups are estimated to make from $500 million to over a billion dollars a year in people smuggling fees per experts and officials from both countries. The Gulf Cartel is said to make up to $77 million a month along the south Texas border by "facilitating" border crossings, and the cartel often uses the migrant crossings to distract U.S. officials from the simultaneous shipment of drugs in another area, per a specialist speaking on background.

Inside Mexico, drug cartel activity fuels the massive upsurge in violence which Mexico has experienced. Through violent intimidation and corruption, they further weaken law enforcement institutions and rule of law.

Since 2014 or so, criminal groups in Mexico have become more violent, more geographically widespread and have diversified into other crimes such as gasoline theft. The federal government seems to have effectively lost control of the situation in many areas, with the number of violent homicides reaching the highest level ever recorded (since 1997) in 2017. July 2018 set the record for the deadliest month recorded. 2018 will likely establish another new record for violent homicides once all the data is in. (See attached slides.)

The new government of Mexico is faced with large clusters of violent crime in various parts of the country, which some experts argue amount to "criminal insurgencies" in various states. Federal and state law enforcement and justice institutions have been unable to bring the situation under control. The population has felt increasingly unsafe (see slide attached), and most see this as the top problem in the country. Not surprisingly, insecurity was a prime driver in the election of AMLO. He overwhelmed the candidates from the two established political parties, the PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) and the PAN (National Action Party), which are widely seen as having failed to tackle effectively crime and insecurity during their years in the presidency. AMLO has proposed a new multi-pronged strategy and he has the congressional majorities needed for legal changes.

While U.S. priorities and Mexico's agenda on fighting crime and enhancing public security are not exactly the same, there is important overlap. U.S. cooperation with and support for Mexican efforts to diminish Mexican criminal activities is essential, and U.S. programs to help build capacity and provide technical assistance can strengthen many of the steps that AMLO proposes to take.

It is very much in the interest of the United States that AMLO and his government succeed at reducing violence and crime. Mexico is a tremendously important neighbor and partner in a wide range of areas, including as the second largest buyer of U.S. exports.

AMLO's Eight Pillars

AMLO has suggested a new eight-pillar approach to restore social peace and law and order. His notion is to take a comprehensive approach and to attack crime and violence from multiple angles, including prevention and enforcement, and addressing causes as well as effects. AMLO's approach reflects ideas drawn from a range of experiences around the world and ideas from different parts of the political spectrum, including some ideas like the creation of a new militarized National Guard, which was not initially welcomed by parts of his own coalition or non-governmental organizations. The eight pillars are:

1) Eradicating corruption and achieving effective law enforcement;
2) Promoting employment, education and social efforts, prioritizing youth;
3) Respecting and enforcing human rights by police, soldiers & others;
4) Promoting civic culture, family values and ethics;
5) Reframing drug policies to include legalization, more addiction treatment;
6) Promoting "demobilization" and "reinsertion" of individuals involved in crime, as well as better care for victims and use of "transitional justice;"
7) Substantial prison reform;
8) Reorienting the public security structure by creating a new Secretary of Public Security to oversee enforcement efforts and the creation of a new National Guard as a service under the Defense Secretary to carry out law enforcement activities around the country. The National Guard would incorporate members of the Federal Police, the Army and the Navy and initially total some 50,000.

Much remains to be defined and debated in these proposals, which will require legal and constitutional changes. For example, one area of great weakness is Mexico's justice system and the chain of actions needed to bring an individual to trial and win conviction, which was given little attention in the eight points. How the new National Guard will work with a presumably revitalized justice apparatus is not clear. Similarly, unclear at this point is how the new National Guard will be trained to take on the responsibilities of a civilian police force (and how it will interact with state and city police forces). The notion of using "transitional justice" practices will need to be spelled out and put into law and practice, as will the consideration of which drugs to legalize or decriminalize, and, for example, whether there will be programs to help farmers currently producing opium poppies to transition to new endeavors. Legalizing opium production would raise other major challenges. A big question for all the proposals is where the funds would come from to carry out these programs effectively, given AMLO's promised budget austerity

Popular expectations are very high, however. The fresh approach to resolving Mexico's security crisis is welcome, but there are serious issues to work through. This includes defining how Mexico's new agenda will sync with promoting good US-Mexico collaboration going forward.

Merida's Four Pillars

The Merida Program has been organized around four pillars.

1) Disrupting Organized Crime;
2) Sustaining rule of law;
3) Creating a Twenty First Century Border;
4) Building Strong and Resilient Communities.

This has proved to be a flexible structure, which can accommodate a range of programs to reflect the priorities agreed between both governments. During the

years when I was U.S. Ambassador in Mexico, there were about 95 different programs underway. Programs were phased out and new ones introduced to better reflect the needs and priorities of both governments, as well as to correct for those not producing good results. Much effort was made to get better at measuring outcomes/results. There were disagreements to overcome along the way and much hard work to craft programs that would effectively support and reinforce bilateral cooperation.

Highlights of Merida programs include:

Pillar 1 Disrupting Organized Crime

- **Attacking Opium Production**: Reflecting the 2017 agreement's focus to go after the entire chain of the drug business model, more attention has been given to understanding the dimensions of opium/heroin production and eradicating it. This included supporting a UN-Mexico effort to verify opium poppy cultivation, yield and eradication figures using an international base line. The Mexican government supported the study, released on November 29, 2018, which found a 21% increase in poppy cultivation from 2015-17.
- **Precursor Chemicals and Drug Laboratory Destruction**: This has been an enforcement priority for some time. Merida helps fund the training and equipping of Mexican personnel for safe operations. Combined with U.S. law enforcement information sharing, this program has led to the identification and dismantlement of dozens of clandestine laboratories.
- **Training specialized units** for operating in the most difficult environments.
- **Anti-Money laundering**: training prosecutors and regulators on the best practices including seizing and effectively using assets. Disrupting the financial chain of criminal groups has been an area of limited progress on both sides of the border. The Mexicans can benefit from additional training, stronger legal authorities, and top level political will to go after the money even if linked to powerful figures. Both sides can benefit from more effective investigations and prosecutions.

Pillar II Supporting Rule of Law/Justice Sector

- **Police Professionalization**: This is a major need for police at all levels in Mexico. Merida supports establishing and implementing national-level certification programs so that for the first-time Mexico's states can now certify officers using consistent, required national competency criteria.
- **Training investigators, forensic experts to build lawful, judicial prosecutions.** One of the major institutional weaknesses in Mexico is collecting and presenting evidence in court to convict those arrested. After Merida supported training, one state had a 40% increase in successful prosecutions, I am told.
- **Support for Mexico's new criminal justice system with equipment and mentoring.** There was widespread support for the introduction of a new

oral, accusatory justice system in Mexico, but the necessary preparations for implementing the new system have been poor. There has been a dire need for training among all participants from law students to police to prosecutors and defense attorneys to judges in the new system, so they can function effectively in the radically changed judicial environment. Exchange programs and mentoring are important parts of showing how an adversarial justice system works in practice. This is a generational journey for Mexico, and it is in the U.S. interest to support this historic transition.

- **Technical assistance to anti-corruption institutions,** building on best international practices. This assistance is important (including to civil society groups focused on anti-corruption), but will have much more impact if the political will is present to pursue large scale and high profile cases.
- **Accredit federal prisons up to international standards** and work with select state prisons to the same ends. I am told there have been significant drops of violence and elimination of escapes from accredited prisons. Reported extortions and kidnappings from states that have accredited their prisons have dropped by up to 90%, per officials. This program can link to Lopez Obrador's focus on prison reform and human rights enforcement.

Pillar III 21st Century Border

- **Professionalization of Mexican Migration officials** (INAMI or INM): Provide programs to train Mexican officials according to international human rights standards for identifying and interviewing migrants; for detention and repatriation; for asylum policies and for provision of services to migrants. This training is very important if Mexico is to improve its management of Central American migrants headed northward. Mexico's immigration service has long been understaffed, poorly trained and underfunded. The Merida Initiative help set the first professional standards for migration officials from which the new government can benefit.
- **Provide new technology to Mexican land ports** to increase security and reduce wait times, diminish opportunities for corruption and increase bilateral information sharing, including joint review of data collected by the new technology. Such investment can yield very positive results for U.S. companies and Border States as well as for enhancing homeland security by identifying bad actors and illicit shipments. Most drugs are believed to enter the U.S. though formal points of entry. Significant infrastructure spending and staffing enhancements are also needed on both sides of the border.
- **Airports/Seaports: Provide modern detection technology** and training to facilitate identification of threats and sharing of information with U.S. counterparts. Provide enhanced support for Mexico's Navy, which overseas port security, to better detect pre-cursor chemicals and drugs.
- **Support creation of a southern border secure communications network**, so Mexican officials can better manage their border and trafficking threats.

- **Enhanced information collection and sharing**: These systems can allow officials of both countries to rapidly identify criminals, fugitives and special interest aliens attempting to enter and/or transit Mexico.

Pillar IV Building Resilient Communities

- **Gender Programs**: Gender-based violence training for police, and support for Women's Justice Centers.
- **Human Rights**: Improve policies and processes to help protect Human Rights Defenders, Anti-Corruption Activists, and Journalists, working with civil society groups and government. Journalists have suffered particularly lethal treatment for their vital work covering crime and corruption.
- **Alternative Courts**: Support drug treatment courts with alternative justice mechanisms, which help manage non-violent crime more effectively.
- **Missing children**: Support the Amber Alert system for rescuing abducted children.
- **Community-focused programs**: USAID developed such programs in Tijuana, Ciudad Juarez and Monterrey to support alternative solutions for youth in trouble neighborhoods in 2011-13. The Mexican government subsequently cut funding for such programs, but USAID continues community-focused programs with success in Central America. This type of program could be revisited to support AMLO's new strategy, given the importance of building local capacity to help prevent crime.

Problems and Challenges to Address

There have been many challenges along the way in agreeing upon and implementing Merida programs and in forging effective law enforcement and justice cooperation. Let me share a few observations.

- **Forge a coordinated overall strategy**: In 2011, when I arrived to serve in Mexico, my law enforcement colleagues often complained that the Mexican strategy often seemed like the game of "whack a mole," with the federal government's focus shifting from one cartel or region to another depending on the activity of groups in different parts of the country. There was also a great deal of mistrust and lack of coordination between various Mexican federal agencies, even as many of them performed with valor. There were also disconnects between federal, state and city level security forces. Nevertheless, the Mexican federal government began to focus efforts on the most violent of the cartels, invested heavily in its most effective units, and worked intensely agency by agency with U.S. counterparts. To the government's credit, violent homicides capped in 2011 and headed downward. Nevertheless, the lack of a fully developed public security strategy persisted over the last six years and contributed to the deteriorating situation since 2014. AMLO's new eight-pillar proposal is intended to produce a more holistic strategy.

- **Improve Federal-State cooperation**: One of the consistent challenges in Mexico has been effective state-federal coordination and the weakness of local community efforts to prevent and deal with crime. One example: the intention of the Pena Nieto government to create a unified law enforcement command in the states and bigger cities ("Mando Unico") ran into consistent and successful opposition. These issues were reflected in vastly different law enforcement capacities among Mexico's states and cities. They affected Merida programing and law enforcement cooperation. AMLOs new plan seems in part aimed at this problem by creating a National Guard and several hundred geographic security zones around the country where federal forces would apparently play a leading role. Building local preventive capacity is also very important.

- **Over-Reliance on High Value Targeting**: The administration of Enrique Pena Nieto (EPN) took office in December 2012. They decided to centralize control of all cooperation with the U.S., which led to a multi-month freeze, and a slowdown in cooperation. Cooperation eventually did resume, however, and improved. The EPN team decided to continue the previous administration's efforts to go after high-value targets, including those sought by the U.S. They effectively rounded up a good number of individuals identified. However, it was soon evident that only going after the bosses, left the rest of the organization to reorganize in smaller groups, often fighting among themselves for control of an area. The Mexican government did not focus on effectively strengthening law enforcement and justice institutions to take the remaining elements of a criminal gang off the field. Criminal groups proliferated, eventually going into a wider range of criminal activities than just drug trafficking and spread violence and crime to wider areas of Mexico. AMLO's multi-pronged strategy is aimed at taking a broader approach to dealing with criminal groups.

- **Overcoming an Ineffective Criminal Justice System**: As noted above, one of the major weaknesses of anti-crime efforts and strategy has been the persistent ineffectiveness of Mexico's justice system at the federal and state levels. Convictions remained notorious low, even if arrests were made. As the new (and improved) oral justice system came into effect, police, investigators and prosecutors were often unable to win prosecutions because of flawed cases and evidence. The system was stuffed with far too many cases under investigation and no effective means to prioritize among them. These developments took place alongside increasing public unhappiness over human rights violations and widespread public corruption. The most notorious case was the 2014 murder of 43 students from the Ayotzinapa teachers' college in Iguala, Mexico, likely carried out by drug gang members in coordination with officials in the area. The Mexican government's handling of the case, including its flawed investigation, has been widely criticized, and AMLO just ordered a new review. Public security

also steadily deteriorated over the next four years. With little fear of being convicted, criminal behavior and violence homicides spread to new previously safe regions of the country. The Federal government seemed at a loss about how to counter the spreading chaos. A special note about justice cooperation and extraditions: this was a consistently challenging area with some big successes but was often fraught with difficulty.

- **Vigorously Pursuing Corruption:** Corruption is a constant threat to bilateral cooperation. Criminal group penetration of law enforcement, justice and government institutions is a reality, including at senior levels. While certain institutions were more resistant to criminal influence than others, none were exempt in my experience. Criminal groups have been very effective at using intimidation and money to penetrate Mexican government entities and units. This made it very challenging for USG colleagues to build the trusting relationships necessary for cooperating to stop criminal groups. It also contributed to mistrust between Mexican government services. Bilaterally, we worked to overcome this challenge by using specially vetted units where more confidence was possible. This approach supported many successful operations, but did not help Mexico be more successful in the broader campaign against crime. Through a combination of measures, Mexico must find ways to reduce corruption and impunity in its law enforcement, justice and security institutions under AMLO's new plan.

- **More Professional training and career path for law enforcement and justice:** It has long been recognized that Mexico's law enforcement officers and justice experts need better training, better pay and better prospects for a fulfilling career. This remains a serious problem across the entire chain of justice in Mexico. The Merida program has helped make significant headway in recent years, leaving a situation ripe for further work under AMLO.

- **Better Human Rights Practices:** As noted by the case of the 43 students, human rights abuses undermine popular trust and harm effective law enforcement. Poor human rights practices have hampered cooperation with civilian and military entities. This is one of AMLO's eight pillars.

- **More effective steps against criminal finances:** One of the most frustrating areas during my years in Mexico was the lack of success in cutting off the money flows and financing of criminal groups, in seizing assets, and in winning convictions for money laundering. Part of the challenge is that tracking the money is just very hard to do. Mexico, however, could expand its legal authorities for seizing funds and assets linked to criminal activities or supporting such activities. The U.S. and Mexico should explore use of joint task forces to disrupt finance chains and win money-laundering convictions.

- **Judicialized wire/communications taps**: I understand that Mexico's law enforcement efforts suffer significantly from lack of necessary legal authority and private sector cooperation to effectively use this valuable tool.

- **Better Interagency coordination**: A key impediment at various moments during my years in Mexico was poor interagency coordination within both governments and with each other. At key moments, the lack of trust between agencies and competition among them undermined the chances of success. For this reason, the establishment of the Security Coordination Group held out promise for improved cross-government collaboration. This cooperation also has an international dimension, for example, reducing fentanyl and other pre-cursor imports from China and improving work with Central and other Latin American governments.

Keys to Future Successes

Representatives of the two governments urgently need to review the range of cooperative programs and practical arrangements addressing public security. This should include Merida assistance programs and day-to-day arrangements for fighting crime cooperatively. The two governments should agree on priorities for collaboration as well as areas for cooperation, building on what has worked well and identifying new areas for joint work.

It will be essential to build trust and interagency cooperation. Using joint task forces and working groups can help in this process. Solutions to short term priorities should be found in ways that strengthen longer-term cooperation. Mexico's new administration will be in office for six years.

The U.S. Administration and Congress should sustain funding for law enforcement and justice cooperation as currently provided under Merida. With lower appropriations in recent years, the Merida pipeline is thinning and Congress should consider augmenting funding to advance work to confront the pressing security challenges related to our southern border.

Careful consideration should be given to expanding funding to support aspects of AMLO's proposals. This could include, for example, programs supporting legitimate alternatives to criminal activity or alternative development programs, if sought by Mexico's new government, to help poor farmers move away from opium poppy production. At the same, the Unites States should stand ready to support the Mexican government's increasing efforts to eradicate opium poppy and thus reduce the amount of heroin produced in Mexico.

Serious attention should be given to providing additional funding to promote the use of cutting edge imaging and scanning technology as well as supporting IT systems for use along our common border and for the Mexicans to use in southern Mexico in order that illicit goods, including guns, money and drugs criminals and

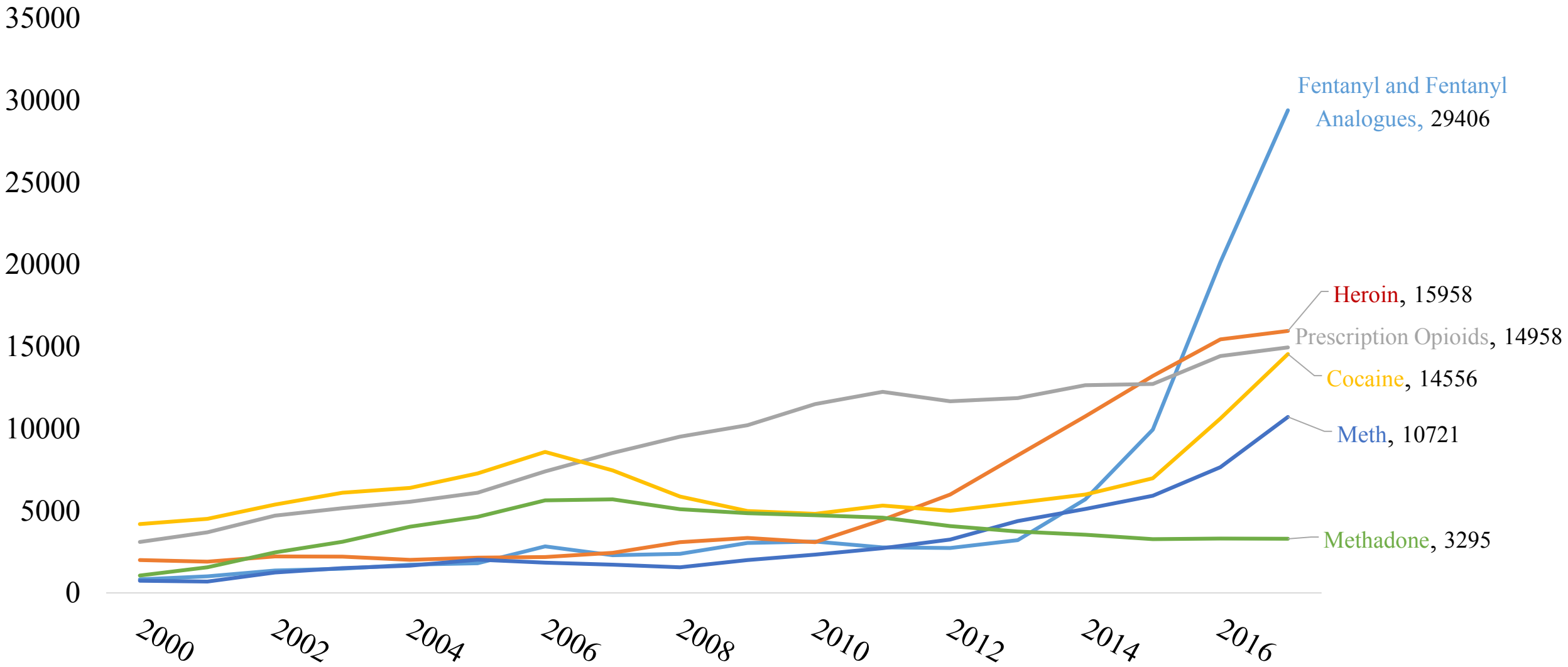
potentially dangerous third country nationals can be rapidly and effectively identified. The new technology, combined with AI and big data analytics, should be able to improve significantly the ability to secure borders against cross-border crime and to deepen security for both countries. The Merida Initiative is well placed to support this vision given the value of placing equipment in many cases in Mexico.

While not under the direct jurisdiction of this committee, there is a big opportunity for the United States to take up the offers by Mexico's new President to develop a region-wide effort to embracing Central America (and leveraging our programs and embassies in the region), which would include programs providing alternatives to migration and crime. The broad notion is to deal with the root causes of both, as well as to improve security and border management capacity in the south of Mexico and the northern three countries of Central America. The recent migrant Caravans underscore the need for a region-wide, multi-layered strategy.

In this connection, it is important to note that AMLO could propose renaming the Merida Initiative. As I am sure you understand, the key is sustaining and improving the bilateral cooperation, not preserving the name.

We face major challenges in dealing with cross-border criminal organizations and enhancing the security of our border. However, we have a solid foundation of cooperation with Mexico on which to build to take full advantage of today's opportunities to expand that cooperation for the mutual good of the United States and Mexico. With solid political will from the top in both countries, we can find successful ways forward together.

Urgency: US Drug Overdose Deaths Rising

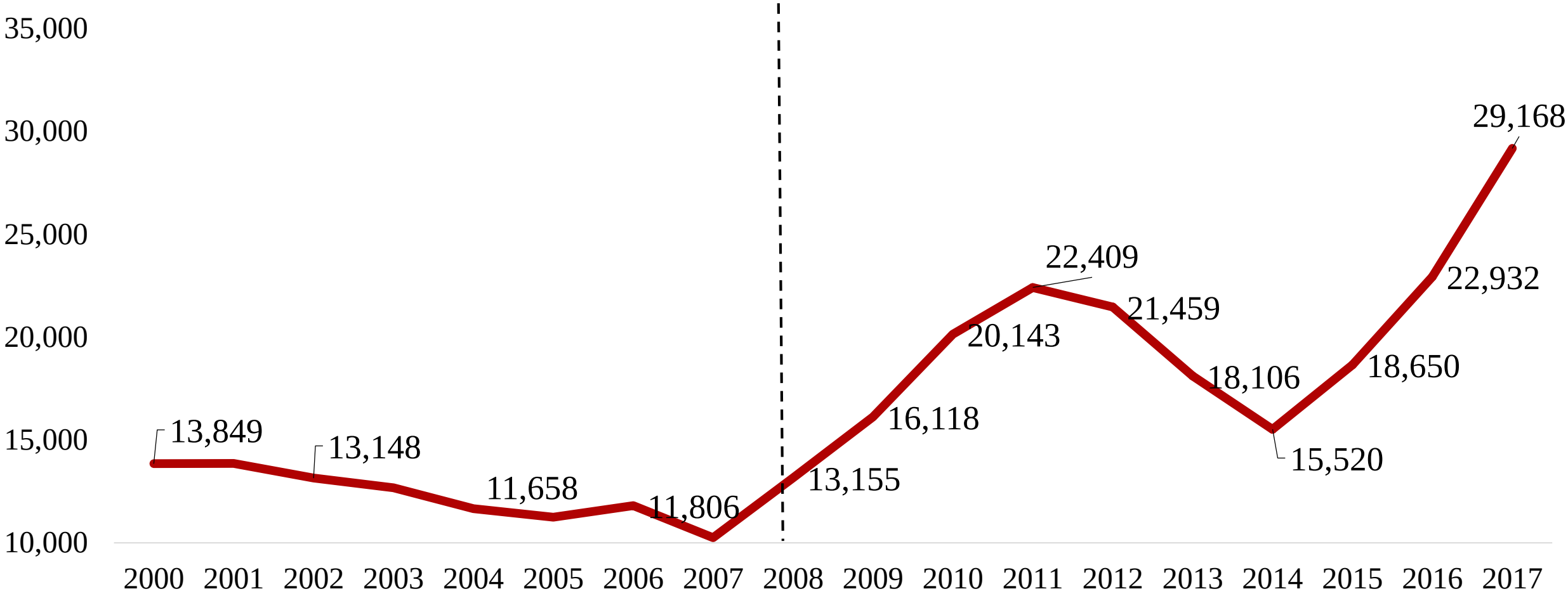


Source: CDC Wonder Database; CDC Provisional Counts of Drug Overdose Deaths as of 8/6/2017

2017 US-Mexico Agreements on Illicit Drugs

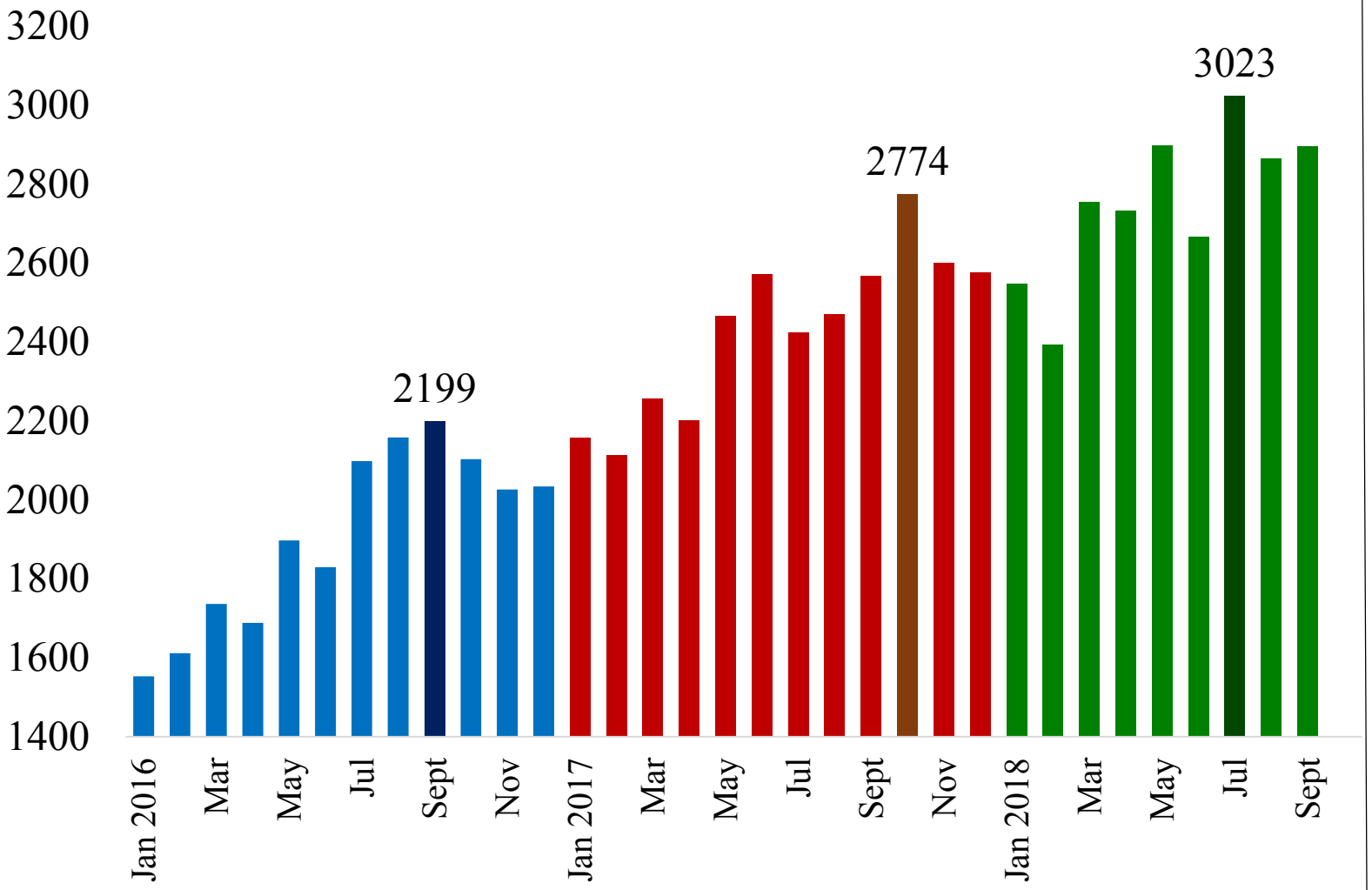
- Partner against criminal organizations – "Unprecedented" cooperation.
- Address the demand for illicit drugs among US citizens.
- Necessary tools: physical barriers, technology, patrolling, eradication, enhanced law enforcement cooperation, anti-addiction programs.
- Go after all elements in the chain: means of production, cross-border distribution networks, flows of profits, weapons procurement.
- AMLO has undertaken a review of Mexican policies and cooperation with the U.S.

Urgency: Rising Violent Homicides in Mexico



Source: Secretaria Ejecutiva de Seguridad Nacional, 2000-2017

Homicides in Mexico: Out of Control?



Source: Secretaria Ejecutiva de Seguridad Nacional, 2017; Reuters, 2017; El Pais, 2017.

29,168 killings in 2017; the most violent year since 1997.

July 2018: most violent month since 1997. Violence up in 2018.

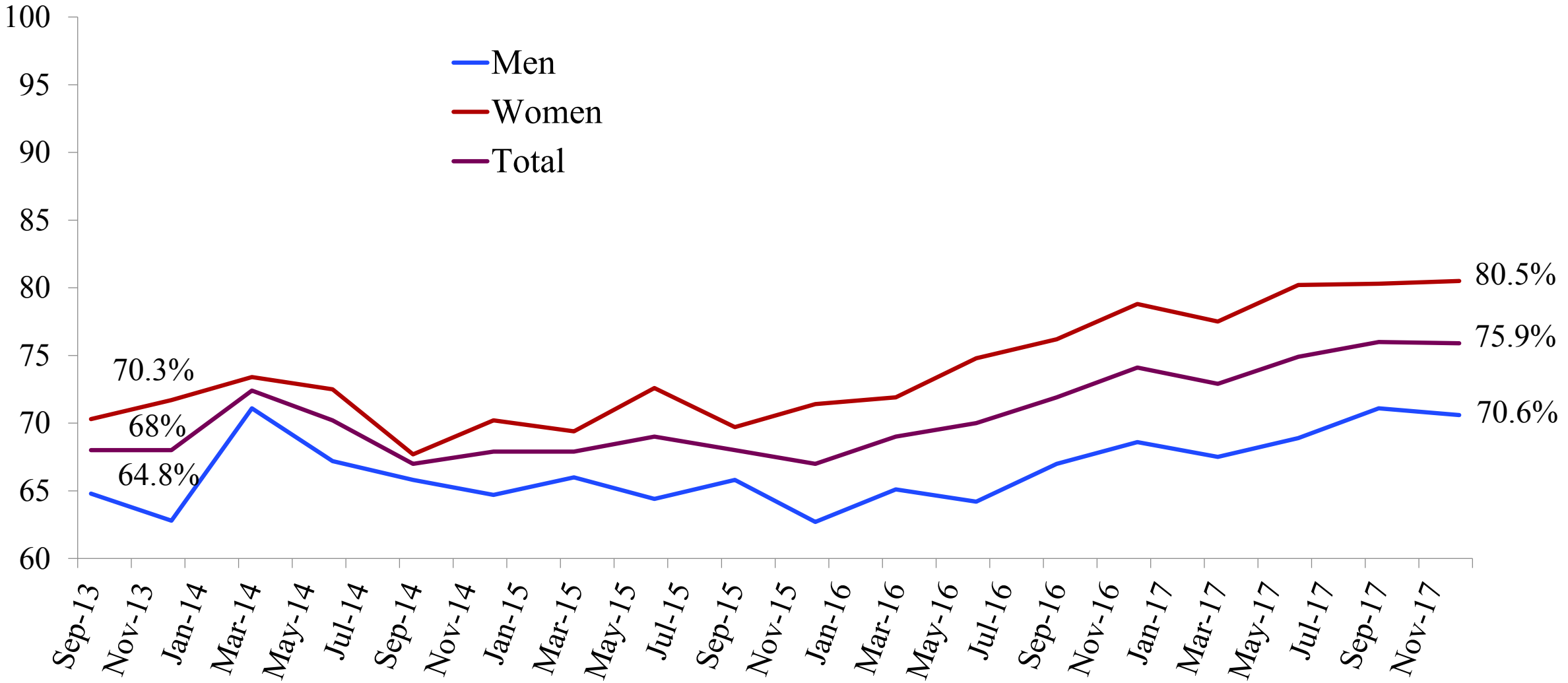
Law enforcement and judicial process overwhelmed.

Cartels fighting, but types of crime expanded & affects more states.

Crime cost up to 17.6% GDP.

U.S. travel warnings for resorts.

Percentage of Mexicans that feel unsafe



Source: INEGI, 2017