

## **Abstract**

After the end of the Cold War global security environment changed significantly. Major threat of global nuclear conflict was replaced by a number of less challenging security concerns. One of them is transnational organized crime. The phenomenon of organized crime, traditionally more of an internal security issue of individual states, expanded to global stage taking advantage of new opportunities raised by globalization of international environment. Relative shortage of distances, easier communication and transfer of financial sources, all this contributed to successful upgrade of organized crime to international level. The thesis "Mexican Drug Cartels: Dynamics of Transnational Organized Crime" explores one specific representative of the phenomenon, that is, Mexican drug cartels. The main argument here is that Mexican drug cartels became such a threat for Mexican state sovereignty, because they took the full advantage of opportunities offered by the changing international environment during 1990's and adapted both its vertical and horizontal structure to maximize effectiveness of the illicit drug business minimizing potential risks at the same time. In order to secure the operational environment cartels expanded their activities and engaged in arms-trafficking trying to gain means to protect their interests. They explored new business opportunities as well. Nowadays, smuggling immigrants across the US-Mexican border brings a revenue comparable to the illicit drug trade itself. Qualitative development of cartels is further stimulated by the competition in the drug business, where self-improvement became essential requirement for survival. Evolution of Mexican drug cartels reached the point, where they can successfully resist Mexican federal authorities trying to suppress them. There is a serious doubt whether the Mexican federal government will prevail in the current drug war.