

Abstract

Mexico and the United States share not only an approximately 3000 km border but also important roles concerning drug traffic. With the U.S. as the major consumer and Mexico as its principal supplier, they make the perfect supply and demand equation. As a result, they share the threats related to drug traffic which affects the political, social, and economic level of both countries. During the last decade, the Mexican drug cartels have gained control of the drug entering the United States, so Mexico is a crucial issue in drug matters to their American neighbors. Currently, both nations accepted a shared responsibility in drug traffic cases and are working hand in hand to limit the capabilities of DTOs, but there remains the open question if such efforts are significantly useful. This thesis presents an analysis of the U.S. influence on the escalation of the fight against illicit drugs in Mexico during Bush and Obama administrations and the effectiveness of the counter-drug assistance program: the Merida Initiative. I argue that the Merida Initiative has been successful improving the U.S.-Mexican relations regarding bilateral counter-drug policies. However, the Mexican drug cartels have reached their momentum and seem to be leading the drug market. Besides, it is necessary to pursue a critical assessment of Merida programs including clear indicators to determine the Initiative's achievements. It is the time to open room for alternative methods that will put an end to the War on Drugs.