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RELEASED IN PART
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ACTION WHA-01

INFO	LOG-00	MFA-01	NP-00	AID-00	CA-02	CIAE-00	DODE-00
	DOEE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	ED-01	FBIE-00	UTED-00	FBO-01
	HHS-01	H-01	SSA-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	LAB-01	L-00
	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OCS-03	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00
	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00
	SS-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	ASDS-01	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01
	DRL-02	G-00	SAS-00	/020W			

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R 201354Z JAN 00
FM AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0865
INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO
ALL USCONS MEXICO 0084

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 CIUDAD JUAREZ 0189

SENSITIVE BUT INCLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: ASEC, CASC, PGOV, SOCI, MX
SUBJECT: 1999 HOMICIDE RATES IN JUAREZ RELEASED, DISPUTED
REF: (A) CIUDAD JUAREZ 2518, (B) CIUDAD JUAREZ 2336 (NOTAL)

1. (U) SUMMARY: IN A YEAR WHEN JUAREZ MADE INTERNATIONAL HEADLINES FOR THE DISCOVERY OF MASS GRAVES, HOMICIDES AND ASSAULTS WERE REPORTEDLY LOWER IN 1999 THAN IN 1998.

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DESPITE THIS RECENT NEWS, COMMUNITY LEADERS EXPRESS DOUBTS ABOUT THE STATISTICS DEPLOYED BY LOCAL OFFICIALS, WHOSE PREVENTIVE MEASURES HAVE BEEN CRITICIZED AS INEFFECTIVE AMIDST A PERCEIVED UPSURGE IN CRIME. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) THE RATE OF HOMICIDES AND ASSAULTS IN JUAREZ FELL IN 1999 ACCORDING TO FIGURES RELEASED BY LOCAL OFFICIALS ON JANUARY 5. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF HOMICIDES COMMITTED AGAINST MEN DECREASED FROM 202 IN 1998 TO 153 IN 1999, DESPITE THE CITYQS RAPID POPULATION GROWTH IN THE LAST YEAR. [HOMICIDE RATES FOR WOMEN ARE COMPILED SEPARATELY IN CHIHUAHUA AND ADDRESSED LATER.] THE COLEGIO DE LA FRONTERA NORTE (COLEF) COMPILES THE MOST COMMONLY USED POPULATION FIGURES. ACCORDING TO COLEF, THERE WERE OVER 1 MILLION 3 HUNDRED 33

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: NORMAN M BOUTON
DATE/CASE ID: 30 JUN 2006 200502506

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THOUSAND RESIDENTS IN JUAREZ IN 1998. FOR 1999, THAT FIGURE JUMPED TO ROUGHLY 1 MILLION 4 HUNDRED 62 THOUSAND. AS A RESULT, JUAREZQS HOMICIDE RATE DROPPED FROM OVER 15 PER 100,000 IN 1998 TO 10.5 PER 100,000 IN 1999. THESE RATES ARE HIGHER THAN SISTER CITY EL PASO, TEXAS, WHICH AVERAGED 3 HOMICIDES PER 100,000 IN BOTH 1998 AND 1999.

OTHER CRIMES RAGE ON

3. (U) IN STARK CONTRAST, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ROBBERIES AND KIDNAPPINGS IN JUAREZ NEARLY TRIPLED LAST YEAR. STATE AND CITY SOURCES ALLEGE THESE CRIMES STEM LARGELY FROM GANG ACTIVITY IN JUAREZ. ALEJANDRO ASTUDILLO, THE JUAREZ REPRESENTATIVE OF THE STATE PROSECUTORQS OFFICE, ESTIMATED THAT GANGS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR 50 TO 60% OF ALL HOMICIDES

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COMMITTED AGAINST MEN AND AN EVEN HIGHER PERCENTAGE OF KIDNAPPINGS. THE CHIEF OF THE HOMICIDE DIVISION FOR STATE POLICE, VIDAL BARRAZA, CONFIRMED THESE FIGURES, ADDING THAT A LARGE NUMBER OF THE SUSPECTED MURDERERS ARE TEENAGERS. [SEE REF A] ACCORDING TO AN OCTOBER 1999 ARTICLE FROM THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER, NORTE, CITY OFFICIALS CITED 34 GANGS AS REPEATEDLY INVOLVED IN CRIMINAL ACTIVITY. DESPITE AN ONGOING BATTLE, POLICE COMMISSIONER JAVIER BENAVIDES CLAIMS 1999 A SUCCESS SINCE POLICE HIRING DID NOT KEEP PACE WITH THE POPULATION GROWTH. BENAVIDES ESTIMATES THAT THE JUAREZ FORCE NUMBERED 1,000 OFFICERS LAST YEAR, A SMALL INCREASE FROM 1998.

STATE CLAIMS QZERO TOLERANCEQ PROGRAM A SUCCESS

4. (U) CHIHUAHUA GOVERNOR PATRICIO MARTINEZ INTRODUCED A QZERO TOLERANCEQ PROGRAM LAST YEAR IN CONCERT WITH PRESIDENT ZEDILLOQS EFFORTS TO CURB CRIME THROUGHOUT MEXICO. [SEE REF B] IN JUAREZ, THE PROGRAM HAS FOCUSED ON REDUCING ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION, PARTICULARLY BY TEENS. DROVES OF U.S. COLLEGE STUDENTS DESCEND UPON JUAREZQS BARS AND DANCE CLUBS EACH WEEKEND FROM NEIGHBORING EL PASO AND LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO. HECTOR MEJIA, ONE OF THE GOVERNORQS TOP ADVISORS, POINTS TO THE SHUTDOWN OF BARS LAST SUMMER AS SPECIFIC PROOF THAT THE PROGRAM HAS TACKLED

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	SS-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	ASDS-01	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01
	DRL-02	G-00	SAS-00	/020W			

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FM AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ
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UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 03 CIUDAD JUAREZ 0189

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TAGS: ASEC, CASC, PGOV, SOCI, MX
SUBJECT: 1999 HOMICIDE RATES IN JUAREZ RELEASED, DISPUTED

UNDERAGED DRINKING. MEJIA EMPHASIZES THAT QZERO TOLERANCEQ
TARGETS PUBLIC SAFETY AND NOT ONLY CRIME; MANY JUAREZ
ESTABLISHMENTS LACKING FIRE EQUIPMENT AND EMERGENCY EXITS
WERE FORCED INTO COMPLIANCE TO CONTINUE OPERATING.

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NGOS SKEPTICAL OF TOUTED CRIME RATES AND PREVENTION

5. (SBU) FOR MANY COMMUNITY LEADERS, HOWEVER, NOT ENOUGH HAS BEEN DONE TO MAKE THE CITY SAFER. [REDACTED] B6

[REDACTED] A SHELTER AND COMMUNITY CENTER FOR BATTERED WOMEN AND ABUSED CHILDREN, STATES [REDACTED] CRISIS CENTER B6

SAW A STEADY INCREASE IN ITS CASELOAD THROUGHOUT 1999. NEARLY ONE-THIRD OF THESE CASES INVOLVED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. CHAVEZ POINTS TO THE LARGE MIGRATION INFLUX TO JUAREZ FROM POORER SOUTHERN STATES AS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INCREASING B6

QDISINTEGRATIONQ OF FAMILY LIFE. [REDACTED] CLAIMS THAT THE CITY DOES NOT PROVIDE SUFFICIENT HOUSING AND HEALTH CARE FOR NEW MAQUILADORA WORKERS, WHO ACCOUNT FOR A SUBSTANTIAL

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NUMBER OF JUAREZQS IMMIGRANTS. ANOTHER COMMUNITY LEADER, [REDACTED] OF THE CENTER FOR THE WORKING WOMAN, ADDS THAT MAQUILADORAS DO NOT PROVIDE ADEQUATE CHILD CARE FOR THEIR EMPLOYEES, MANY OF WHOM ARE YOUNG MOTHERS. [REDACTED] SEES A CONNECTION BETWEEN THE STRUGGLING FAMILIES AND THE INCIDENCE OF TEEN DRUG USE. [REDACTED] VIEWS THE LOCAL MEDIA AS WILLING PAWNS OF THE LOCAL POLICE, PUBLISHING WHATEVER STATISTICS THEY ARE TOLD. THIS VIEW SEEMS WIDELY HELD IN JUAREZ SINCE THE TWO MAJOR DAILIES ARE KNOWN FOR RACING TO REPORT MAJOR ARRESTS WHILE OFTEN FAILING TO EXAMINE DETAILS OF THE INVESTIGATIONS.

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SPECTER OF DISAPPEARED AND MURDERED WOMEN STILL HAUNTS

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6. (SBU) ANOTHER COMMUNITY LEADER, [REDACTED] QWOMEN FOR JUAREZ, Q CHALLENGES THE CITYQS 1999 FIGURES FOR DISAPPEARED WOMEN. [REDACTED] CLAIMS THAT LAST YEAR OVER THIRTY WOMEN DISAPPEARED AND ARE STILL MISSING WITH CITY POLICE YET TO FULLY INVESTIGATE. THE SPECIAL STATE ATTORNEY FOR CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN, ZULEMA PONCE, COUNTERS THAT HER DIVISION SOLVED OVER 95% OF ITS DISAPPEARANCE CASES. PONCE CLAIMS THAT ON AVERAGE 560 WOMEN DISAPPEAR ANNUALLY AND THAT LAST YEAR VIRTUALLY ALL OF THEM WERE SAFELY RETURNED TO THEIR FAMILIES. THE 1999 STATISTICS FOR HOMICIDES COMMITTED AGAINST WOMEN ARE, HOWEVER, DIFFICULT TO VERIFY. ACCORDING TO STATE FIGURES OBTAINED ONLY AFTER POSTQS REPEATED REQUESTS, THERE WERE 18 HOMICIDES INVOLVING WOMEN IN 1999 WITH 15 OF THESE CASES ALLEGEDLY SOLVED. THESE FIGURES REPRESENT A DROP FROM THE 30 HOMICIDES INVOLVING WOMEN COMMITTED IN 1998, 19 OF WHICH WERE ALLEGEDLY SOLVED. PONCE HAS BEEN UNDER FIRE FROM NGOS FOR REFUSING ACCESS TO HER DIVISIONQS FILES, WITH SOME GROUPS CALLING FOR HER RESIGNATION. BUT ALMOST ALL OBSERVERS AGREE THAT APPROXIMATELY 200 WOMEN HAVE BEEN MURDERED IN JUAREZ SINCE 1993. OF THESE 200, FEWER THAN HALF, 87, OF THE CASES HAVE BEEN REPORTED SOLVED BY THE STATE POLICE.

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7. (SBU) COMMENT: THE ACCURACY OF THE RECENTLY RELEASED CRIME STATISTICS ARE DIFFICULT TO CONFIRM AND SUBJECT TO MANIPULATION BY VARIOUS INTERESTED PARTIES. INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ATTENTION IN THE MID-1990S BROUGHT TO LIGHT THE DISAPPEARANCE OF NEARLY 200 PEOPLE IN JUAREZ AND FOCUSED INTENSELY ON THE GRISLY MURDERS OF WOMEN IN THE CITY, SUBSTANTIALLY EMBARRASSING CITY LEADERS AND BUSINESSMEN WHO FEAR ITS INHIBITING EFFECT ON TOURISM. WITH THE DISCOVERY

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OF MASS GRAVES NEAR JUAREZ LATE LAST YEAR, LOCAL LEADERS
HAVE LAUNCHED A NUMBER OF INITIATIVES TO SALVAGE THE CITY'S
TARNISHED IMAGE. THE CITY TOOK OUT A FULL-PAGE AD IN THE
WASHINGTON POST TO DENOUNCE JUAREZ'S IDENTIFICATION WITH
THE JUAREZ CARTEL AND STAGED A POORLY ATTENDED RALLY
DEMANDING DIGNITY FOR JUAREZ. MOST RECENTLY, THE CITY
PERSUADED ATTORNEY GENERAL JORGE MADRAZO TO INSTRUCT HIS
TEAM OF MASS GRAVES INVESTIGATORS TO RESPECT MAYOR GUSTAVO
ELIZONDO'S REQUEST THAT LOCAL DRUG TRAFFICKING NOT BE
REFERRED TO AS THE JUAREZ CARTEL. SUCH SPIN CONTROL,
HOWEVER, HAS NOT ALLAYED EVERYDAY CITIZEN'S FEARS THAT THE
CITY IS LESS SAFE AND NOW SUFFERS FROM MORE CRIMES, SUCH AS
PROPERTY CRIMES THAT OFTEN TURN VIOLENT. IT ALSO DOES
LITTLE TO CALM CITIZEN FEARS AND CYNICISM WHEN POLICE

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	DRL-02	G-00	SAS-00	/020W			

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UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 03 CIUDAD JUAREZ 0189

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SUBJECT: 1999 HOMICIDE RATES IN JUAREZ RELEASED, DISPUTED

CONSIDER A CRIME TO BE SOLVED IF THEY IDENTIFY WHO THEY
BELIEVE TO BE THE CULPRIT BUT ARE UNABLE TO MAKE AN ARREST.
POST WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE CRIME SITUATION IN

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JUAREZ, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE UPCOMING PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION.

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