

INFORMATION PAPER ON SAN PEDRO LIMON, TLATLAYA INCIDENT

BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT (BLUF): (U) The Government of Mexico has detained and charged seven SEDENA personnel in conjunction with the killing of twenty-two individuals on 30 June 2014 in San Pedro Limon, Tlatlaya, Mexico State. The unit implicated is now ineligible to receive US assistance, and none of the alleged perpetrators previously received US-funded training. This incident has received extensive negative coverage in international press and, along with subsequent cases involving police, has prompted non-governmental organizations to lobby the US legislature to suspend security assistance to Mexico.

INCIDENT: (U) SEDENA members of the 120nd Infantry Battalion stationed in Santa Maria Ixtapan responded to an anonymous call in the early morning of 30 June, regarding the presence of armed suspects at a warehouse in Tlatlaya. A firefight ensued between the military and the civilians on site (suspected to be members of the Guerreros Unidos Cartel). According to the Mexican Attorney General (PGR), one soldier was wounded during the confrontation, and all 22 of the civilians were either killed or wounded. Four soldiers are accused of entering the warehouse after the conclusion of the firefight, and killing all remaining civilians. Evidence indicates up to fifteen of the twenty two civilians were killed after the firefight, and prosecutions are focused on these killings.

STATUS: (U//~~FOUO~~) In accordance with Mexico's 2014 Military Justice Reform Law, this case, as an alleged human rights violation, has been transferred from the military to the civilian justice system. SEDENA has turned over all information, and the case to PGR. Prosecution is pending.

AFTERMATH: (U) On 7 Oct, a mainstream Mexican magazine anonymously quoted (b)(6) that future Merida funding (from the U.S. to Mexico) will be dependent upon the outcome of the investigation into the Tlatlaya incident. DOS confirmed that (b)(6) requested information from DOS on the incident.

(U) Mexican President Peña Nieto received extensive criticism from the military community for turning his back on indicted soldiers "for just doing their jobs" and from the human rights community for not acting with appropriate speed to investigate the incident. Human Rights Watch publically dismissed the GoM's initial account that only three soldiers are responsible for the death of 22 civilians. AP and *Esquire* took lead roles in applying international media attention to the case.

(U//~~FOUO~~) The unit involved is SEDENA's 102nd Infantry Battalion. The Department of State has suspended U.S. funded assistance to this unit pending the results of the investigations. According to training records and INVEST database research, none of the seven service members charged have received US training.

(b)(6) (b)(6) 14 Jan 2015