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18 February 2003

MEX41039.E

Mexico: Functions of the Federal Attorney General Office (Procuraduría General's de la República, PGR), and whether an officer or employee of the PGR would do spot checks for drugs and arms outside a city
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

Detailed information on the functions and responsibilities of the Federal Attorney General Office (Procuraduría General de la República, PGR), including a description of the range of duties and areas of activity can be found on the website of the PGR at <<http://www.english.pgr.gob.mx/home.htm>>.

Within the extensive information it provides on the roles and activities of the PGR, the website indicates that, in regards to its recent counter-narcotics activities,

the surveillance programs were strengthened by the checkpoints established along the priority highways and roads used by the criminal organizations. Likewise, they were supported by inspection flights coordinated along with the personnel of the land interception camps (Mexico 2003).

Additional references specific to the PGR's role in fighting drug trafficking, organized crime and other federal crimes can be found in Country Reports 2001, which is available through Regional Documentation Centres. The report also includes references to some of the more recently established units of the PGR, such as the April 2000 creation of "a new special unit to investigate possible armed civilian groups in Chiapas" (Country Reports 2001 4 Mar. 2002, Sec. 1.g) and the November 2000 creation of "the Special Prosecutor's Office for Attention to Crimes of Trafficking in Children" (ibid. Sec. 5).

The International Narcotics Control Strategy Report 2001 refers to some of the most recent changes affecting the counter-narcotics role of the PGR and its branch, the Federal Judicial Police (Policía Judicial Federal, PJF):

An integral part of improving Mexico's capacity to intercept illegal drugs has been the reorganization of the PGR. In early 2001, the administration focused on reforming the Federal Judicial Police (PJF). With dynamic leadership, increased resources, and intensive planning, a new Federal Investigative Agency (AFI) was formally inaugurated in October to serve as the investigative arm of the PGR. The 3,500 person AFI incorporates the former PJF and personnel from other components of the PGR.

... Another important change is the transformation of the PGR's Center for Drug Control Planning (CENDRO) into an independent intelligence analysis organization under the Office of the Attorney General. CENDRO's responsibilities are expanding beyond drug control to incorporate organized criminal activities including arms trafficking, terrorism, trafficking in children, stolen cars, money laundering, and kidnappings (US Mar. 2002, Sec. III).

On other duties of the PGR, the same report states that "the PGR expanded its vetting process in 2001 to track employees throughout their careers" (ibid.). It adds that "in 2001, the PGR conducted suitability reviews of approximately 14,000 employees including federal prosecutors, police agents, forensic experts, and pilots assigned to counternarcotics duties" (ibid.).

The report also cites several examples of results and statistics obtained from federal interdiction efforts on land, sea and air by military and police; however, the report does not specify the individual participation of PGR or PJF agents at such interdiction activities (ibid.).

Additional information on the PGR, including references to changes within its organization and activities in relation to drug trafficking, can be found in MEX40139.E of 8 October 2002 and earlier Responses (please note that MEX37265.E of 25 June 2001 provides an overview of the organizational structure of the PGR and PJF), as well as in the September 1999 Issue Paper Mexico: Police and other Research Directorate Issue Papers on Mexico.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum.

References

Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2001. 4 March 2002. United States Department of State. Washington, DC. <<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2001/wha/8320.htm>> [Accessed 7 Feb. 2003]

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United States of America (US). March 2002. Department of State. International Narcotics Control Strategy Report 2001. <<http://www.state.gov/g/inl/rls/nrcrpt/2001/rpt/8478.htm>> [Accessed 14 Feb. 2003]

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