



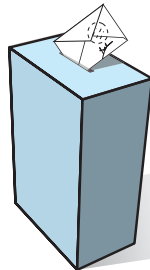
Mexico

The Legal Framework

National Legislation

Systems and Concepts	Military Organization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organic Law for Federal Public Administration (DOF 1976/12/29. Last reform: DOF 2007/10/01) - National Security Act (DOF 2005/01/31. Last reform: DOF 2005/12/26) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discipline Act of the Mexican Army and Air Force (DOF 1926/03/15. Last reform: DOF 2004/12/10) - Organic Act of Military Courts (DOF 1929/06/22. Last reform: DOF 1931/02/24) - Code of Military Justice (DNL N° 005 - 1933/08/31. Last reform: DOF 2005/06/29) - Military Service Act (DOF 1940/09/11. Last reform: DOF 1998/01/23) - Act which creates the Army and the Air Force University (DOF 1975/12/29) - Reward Act for Navy of Mexico (DOF 1985/01/14) - Organic Law of the Army, Air Force and Navy National Bank (DOF 1986/01/13. Last reform: DOF 2002/06/24) - Organic Law of the Mexican Army and Air Force (DOF 1986/12/26. Last reform: DOF 1998/01/23) - Discipline Act for the Personnel of the Navy of Mexico (DOF 2002/12/13) - Organic Act of the Navy of Mexico (DOF 2002/12/30) - Act on Promotions and Rewards of the Mexican Army and Air Force (DOF 2003/10/30) - Act for Checking, Adjusting and Calculating the Services for the Mexican Navy (DOF 2004/06/14) - Promotions Act for the Navy of Mexico (DOF 2004/06/25) - Military Education Act for the Mexican Army and Air Force (DOF 2005/12/23) - Act for Checking, Adjusting and Calculating the Services in the Mexican Army and Air Force (DOF 2006/02/09)

Source: Compilation based on the legislation above mentioned. For constitutional provisions see Chapter 1.



Political Participation of Military Members

	Retired	On Duty
Are they entitled to vote?	Yes	Yes
Are they entitled to become candidates for elections?	Yes	Yes ⁽¹⁾

(1) The members of the military on active duty cannot be elected Deputies unless they shall definitely have resigned from their position ninety days prior to the election (Political Constitution, Sec. 55) or Senator (Political Constitution, Sec. 58), or six months in the case of President (Political Constitution, Sec. 82). The law indicates that in order to occupy a post subjected to popular elections, the members of the armed forces shall request a special permit for that purpose.

Source: Constitution, *Ley Orgánica del Ejército y la Fuerza Aérea Mexicanos* (DOF 1986/12/26; last reform: DOF 1998/01/23) and *Ley Orgánica de la Armada de México* (DOF 2002/12/30).

International Treaties

On Hemispheric Security	On Disarmament	On Human Rights and Justice	On the Hemispheric System
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - American Treaty on Pacific Settlement (Pact of Bogota): Signature: 1948/04/30 Deposit: 1948/11/23 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco): Signature: 1967/02/14 Deposit: 1967/09/20 - Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: Signature: 1968/07/26 Deposit: 1969/01/21 - Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons: Signature: 1993/01/13 Deposit: 1994/08/29 - Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines (Ottawa Convention): Signature: 1997/12/03 Deposit: 1998/06/09 - Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction: Signature: 1972/04/10 Deposit: 1974/04/08 - Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of certain Conventional Weapons: Signature: 1981/04/10 Deposit: 1982/02/11 - Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other Related Materials: Signature: 1997/11/14 Deposit: 1998/06/01 - Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions: Signature: 1999/06/07 Unratified - Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT): Signature: 1996/09/24 Deposit: 1999/10/05 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inter-American Convention on Human Rights (Pact of San Jose de Costa Rica): Accession: 1981/03/24 - Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance of Persons: Signature: 2001/05/04 Deposit: 2002/04/09 - Inter-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture: Signature: 1986/02/10 Deposit: 1987/06/22 - International Criminal Court: Signature: 2000/09/07 Deposit: 2005/10/28 - Jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice as Compulsory: Deposit: 1947/10/28 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Charter of the Organization of American States: Signature: 1948/04/30 Deposit: 1948/11/23

Source: Compilation based on the information supplied by the web pages of the Secretariat for Legal Affairs of the Organization of American States, and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs.

The Budget

State Budget 2008

Local currency	1,899,925,000,000
US\$	173,350,821,168
2008 GDP (in US\$)	949,576,000,000

Defence Budget 2008

Local currency	51,579,409,059
US\$	4,706,150,462
GDP's %	0.50
% of the State Budget	2.71

Defence Budget 2008 (in Local Currency)

Branches*	Personnel Services	Materials and Supplies	General Services	Other Current Expenses and Physical Investment	TOTAL
Secretary of Defence Program					
Command of the Mexican Air Force	1,946,752,698	318,006,667	267,979,074	0	2,532,738,439
National Defence Staff	2,555,507,195	176,372,181	160,102,878	0	2,891,982,254
Military Regional Commands	16,500,944,823	1,529,184,159	792,083,533	60,048,805	18,882,261,320
Military Industry General Directorate	390,915,283	231,910,122	115,594,562	0	738,419,967
General Audit of the Military Justice	177,028,569	4,907,484	5,700,993	0	187,637,046
Presidency of the Military Supreme Military Tribunal	100,384,658	1,641,103	647,547	0	102,673,308
General Directorate of Military Education	965,110,812	77,061,483	19,225,673	15,451,195	1,076,849,163
General Directorate of Health	2,715,227,967	379,858,330	28,846,855	0	3,123,933,152
Other General Directorates**	4,186,257,589	821,869,777	316,378,885	5,000	5,324,511,251
Navy Program					
Board of Admirals	12,856,169	219,600	0	0	13,075,769
Naval Board	8,189,724	128,100	0	0	8,317,824
Navy General Staff	261,792,926	22,395,000	6,424,200	0	290,612,126
Naval Forces, Regions, Zones and Sectors	6,725,082,694	1,170,283,815	470,980,839	0	8,366,347,348
General Directorate of Naval Constructions	129,707,600	100,676,900	5,678,500	338,000,000	574,063,000
General Directorate of Investments and Development	123,665,128	40,022,850	57,892,400	58,500,000	280,080,378
Other General Directorates***	2,212,393,055	463,307,594	289,275,079	631,552,400	3,596,528,128
Secretary****	200,097,885	6,295,242	47,328,400	0	253,721,527
Institute of Social Security (ISSFAM)	203,517,083	20,088,658	1,381,866,081	1,730,185,237	3,335,657,059
TOTAL	39,415,431,858	5,364,229,065	3,966,005,499	2,833,742,637	51,579,409,059

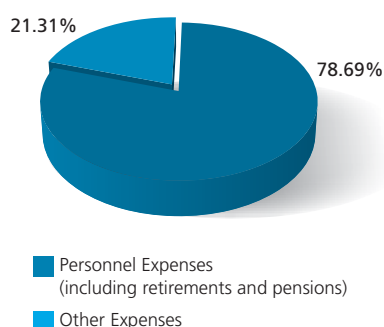
* Responsible Units.

** Administration, Factories of Outfits and Equipment, Engineers, Social Communication and Information Technology.

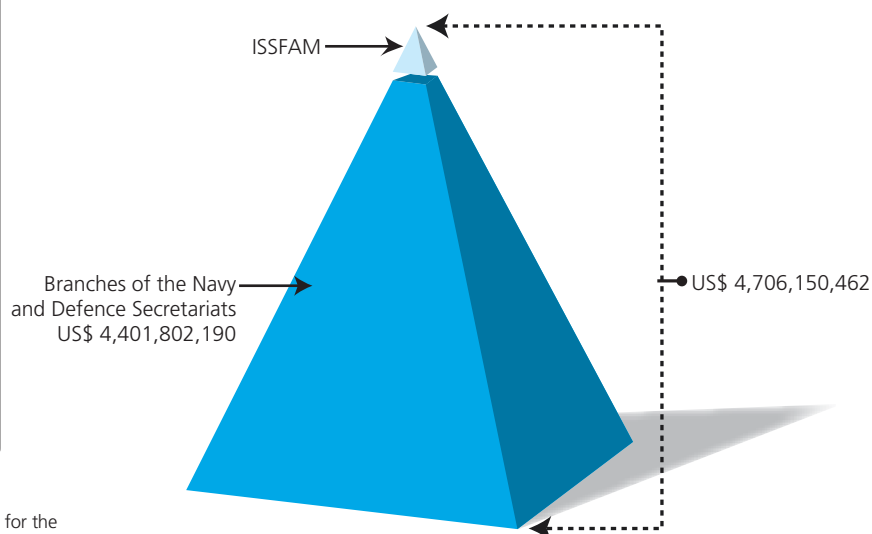
*** Administration and Finance, Services and Human Resources.

**** Includes responsible units of Under-Secretary, General Administration, Juridical Unit, General Inspection and Control.

Defence Budget
2008 Breakdown



Composition of Defence Budget 2008



Source: Compilation based on the Outcomes Budgetary Act for the Federation, 2008. The State budget passed by the Congress by means of the above mentioned Act is considered herein.

2008 GDP: World Economic Outlook Database Projection, IMF. This source has been taken for comparative purposes. Each country makes the budget based on its own GDP estimation.

The dollar value is the exchange rate considered by the World Economic Outlook Database, IMF. The exchange rate average is 10.93 Pesos, based on the information provided by the Bank of Mexico. For further calculations, figures are provided in local currency.

Expressions in Bold Type (Table) make reference to the different items regarding defence, which can be found in a sectorial or institutional classification of the budgetary Act.

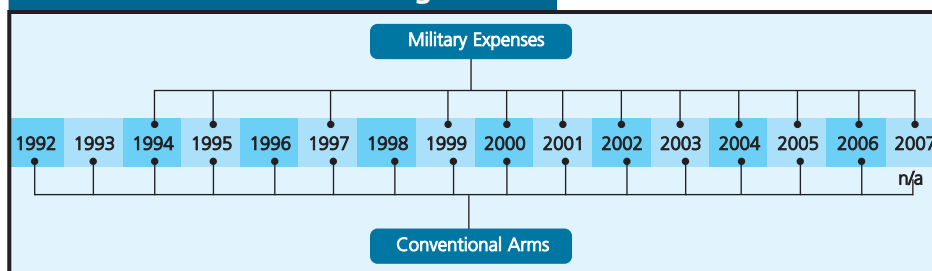


Political Definitions

Concepts

What is Defence?	What is Security?
<p>The Mexican State has the inalienable responsibility and objective to protect the integrity of the territory and preserve the sovereignty of the Nation. The long fight for becoming a free nation, a nation ruled by law, could not be considered as so without the Armed Forces.</p> <p>Guaranteeing the integrity of the national territory is a key imperative for Mexico's progress. The national borders, seas and coasts of the country must not become a channel for the operation of criminals.</p> <p>Actions against life, health, physical integrity and the patrimony of Mexicans must not be allowed in the national territory.</p> <p>(Plan Nacional de Desarrollo, 2007-2012)</p>	<p>National security refers to the actions destined, in an immediate and direct manner, to maintaining the integrity, stability and permanence of the Mexican State, which entails: the protection of the Mexican Nation against threats and risks the country might face; the preservation of national sovereignty and independence and the defence of the territory; maintenance of the constitutional order and empowerment of the democratic institutions of the government; maintenance of the unity of the parties which form the Federation; the legitimate defence of the Mexican State regarding other States or subjects of international law, and the preservation of democracy, founded on the economic, social and political development of the country and its inhabitants.</p> <p>(Ley de Seguridad Nacional, DOF 2005/01/31. Last reform: DOF 2005/12/26, Sec. 3)</p>

Submissions to the UN Registers



Source: Compilation based on reports submitted to the UN Register of Conventional Arms and the UN Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures from 1992 to 2008. The publication of information from the Register of Conventional Arms corresponding to the year 2007 is expected by August 2008.

Constitutional Powers of the Congress

Related to War and Peace

- Can it declare war?: Yes
- Is a congressional authorization required to declare war?: Yes
- Can it make peace?: No
- Is a congressional authorization necessary to make peace?: Yes ⁽¹⁾
- Is a congressional authorization necessary for the entry of foreign troops to the national territory?: Yes ⁽¹⁾
- Is a congressional authorization necessary for the deployment of national troops outside the country?: Yes ⁽¹⁾

(1) Corresponds to the Senate.

Related to Control

- Is its approval required to appoint senior officers of the Armed Forces?: Yes ⁽¹⁾
- Can it accuse officers of the Armed Forces?: No
- Can it try officers?: Yes ⁽²⁾
- Does it participate in the election of officials for institutions of external control?: Yes
- Can it modify the national budget?: Yes ⁽²⁾

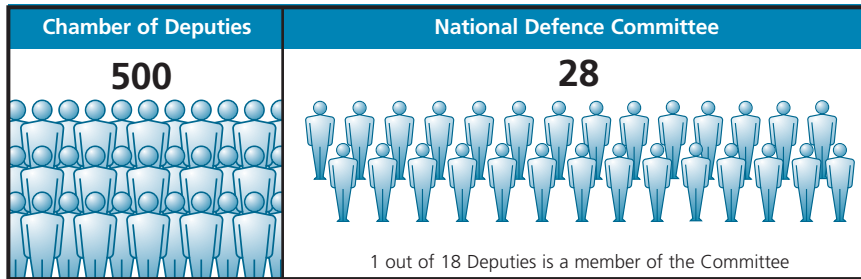
(1) Corresponds to the Senate.

(2) Corresponds to the Chamber of Deputies.

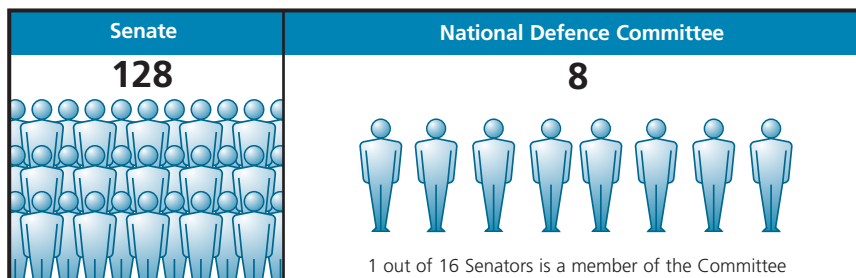
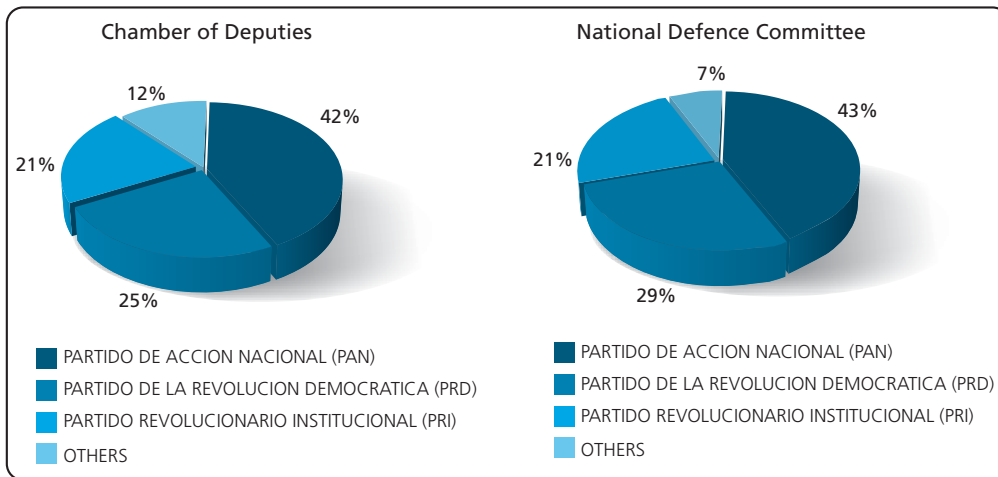
States of Exception

Name: Exception regime.
 Cause: Invasion.
 Grave disturbance of the public peace.
 Any other issue which could put the society in grave danger.
 Conflict.
 Participation of the Legislative Power: Requires the approval of the Congress.

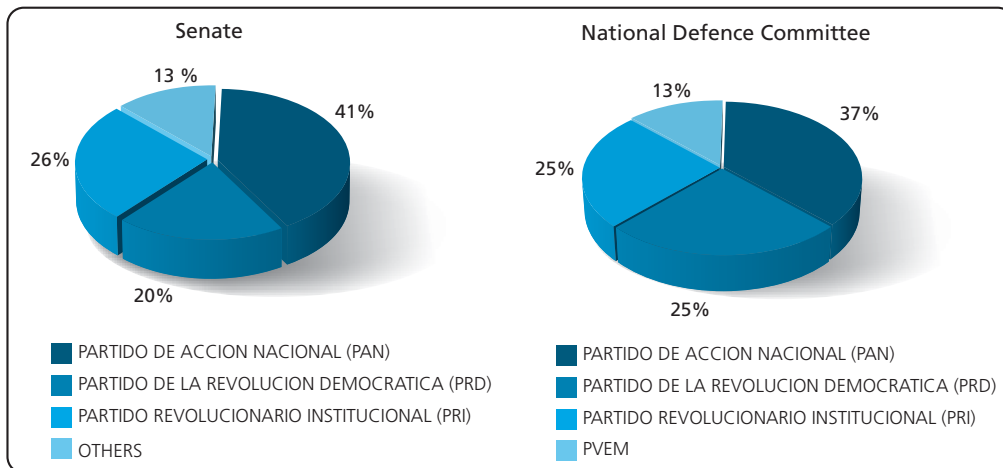
Source: Compilation based on the Constitution.



Breakdown of Parties



Breakdown of Parties



Source: Compilation based on information provided by the Legislative Power.



System Organization

Functions

Source: Compilation based on the Constitution, *Ley Orgánica de la Administración Pública Federal* (DOF 1976/12/29; last reform: DOF 2007/10/01), *Ley Orgánica de la Marina de México* (DOF 2002/12/30), *Ley Orgánica del Ejército y la Fuerza Aérea Mexicanos* (DOF 1986/12/26; last reform: DOF 1998/01/23) and *Ley de Seguridad Nacional* (DOF 2005/01/31; last reform: DOF 2005/12/26).

Date of Foundation

Secretariat of National Defence: 1937
Secretariat of the Navy: 1940

Current Secretaries (August 2008)

Secretariat of National Defence:
Guillermo Galván Galván
Secretariat of the Navy:
Francisco Saynez Mendoza

Can the military members be Secretaries?

Yes

Number of military members who were Secretaries

Secretariat of National Defence: 13
Secretariat of the Navy: 15

Number of civilians who were Secretaries

Secretariat of National Defence:
None
Secretariat of the Navy: 3

Have there been any women in charge of the Secretariats?

No

[The Secretaries currently in charge are not considered]

Average permanence in the Secretary of Defence/Navy position

Secretariat of National Defence:
5 years and 4 months
Secretariat of the Navy:
3 years and 8 months

Source: Compilation based on information provided by Secretariat's and the program's strategy of the *Ley de Presupuesto de Egresos de la Federación para el Ejercicio Fiscal 2008* (DOF 2007/12/13).

State Powers Sphere

The President of the Republic is the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces; as such, will exercise the High Command of the Army, the Air Force, and the Navy. The National Security Council coordinates the actions oriented to the preservation of the national security. It is a deliberative instance which aim is to establish, determine and articulate the national security policy, as well as to design the outlines that allow the articulation of actions within its connected departments. The Council will meet periodically - every two months at least - at its President's request.

It is conformed by the President of the Republic -who presides it; the Secretary of Government - who is his Executive Secretary; the Secretary of National Defence, the Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of Public Safety, the Secretary of Civil Service, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, the Secretary of Communications and Transportation, the Attorney-General of the Republic and the Director General of the National Research and Security Centre. Council meetings will be confidential.

The National Congress exercises the faculties conferred by the Constitution and continually overviews those questions related to the defence, through the defence committee in both chambers.

Ministerial Sphere

The Secretary of National Defence exercises the High Command of the Army and the Air Force, in conformity with the instructions given by the President, is responsible for organizing, equipping, educating, training, qualifying, managing and developing the Ground and Air Armed Forces.

The Secretary of the Navy exercises the High Command of the Navy, in conformity with the instructions given by the President, is responsible for the organization, equipment, education, training, qualification, management and development of the marine Forces.

Military Sphere

The Chief of the National Defence Staff is the technical, operative, and close supporting body to the High Command, to whom it assists in planning and coordinating those issues related to the national defence and organization, training, operation and development of Ground and Air Armed Forces, and transforms decisions into directions, instructions and orders, thus verifying their fulfillment.

The General Staff of the Navy is the advisory body which assists the High Command in planning, coordinating, and supervising the required operations for the fulfillment of the attributions conferred to the Navy; it also transforms its decisions into directions, orders and instructions, and overviews their fulfillment.

Secretariat of the Navy

The Secretariat of the Navy, pursuant to the Organic Law of the Federal Public Administration, has among other duties, to safeguard the nation's sovereignty, by exercising the State's actions at Mexican maritime areas, islands, cays, reefs, continental slopes, including the pertaining air space, guaranteeing the defence of the Nation's interests, rule of law and public order maintenance, security provided to maritime traffic and protection of human life and its possessions in the sea.

Within the exercise of those powers, carries out surface, air-sea and maritime infantry operations; the protection of strategic facilities; surveillance to guarantee security on maritime traffic; protection of human life in the sea; lifesaving and rescue; weapons trafficking; fight against drugs and human trafficking; and civil defence in cases of disaster or emergency. These operations are led by the Commanders of the forces, regions, zones and naval areas.

Secretariat of National Defence

The Secretariat of National Defence is a political administrative body from the Federal Executive Power, whose specific powers are set forth by the Organic Law of the Federal Public Administration and in turn is the Supreme Headquarters of the Army and Air Force.

It is responsible for organizing, fitting, training and developing the land and air Armed Forces, through medium and short term programs allowing:

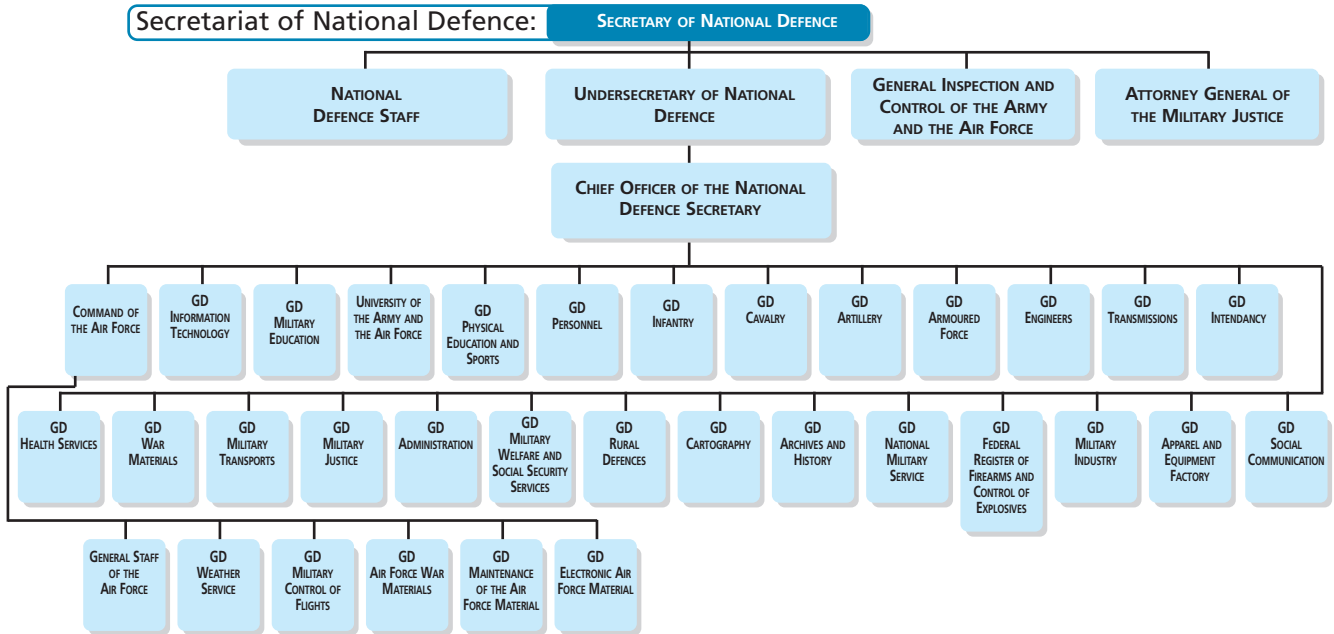
- The defence of the nation's integrity, interdependence and sovereignty.
- The guarantee of domestic security.
- Help to population in case of public needs.
- The performance of civic actions and community programs aimed at supporting the country's progress.
- In case of disaster, the provision of help for keeping the order, helping victims and their possessions and rebuilding affected areas.

It is in charge of several issues, besides the ones assigned by the Federal Executive:

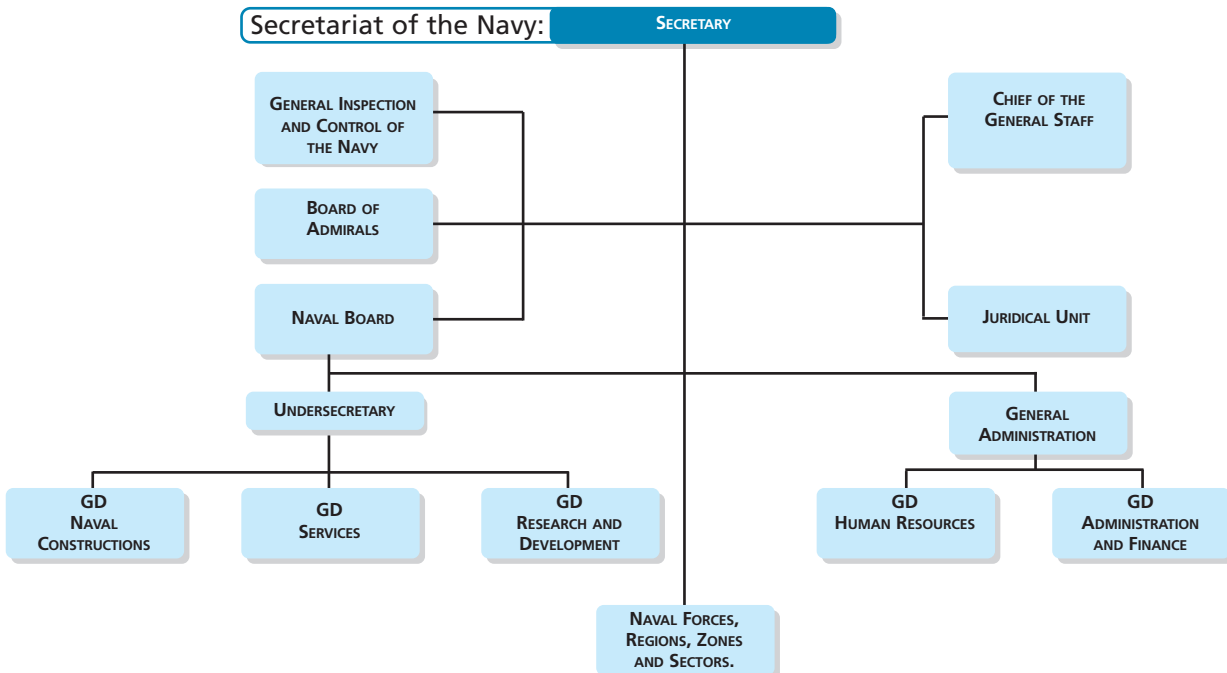
- Foster respect for human rights.
- Fight drug trafficking.
- Contribute on the fight against organized crime.
- Support public security activities.
- Maintain internal security.
- Provide security to vital facilities.
- Protect the environment and natural resources.

Source: Compilation based on information provided by Secretariat's and the program's strategy of the *Ley de Presupuesto de Egresos de la Federación para el Ejercicio Fiscal 2008* (DOF 2007/12/13).

ORGANIZATION CHART



Source: Compilation based on *Reglamento Interno de la Secretaría de Defensa* (DOF 1992/09/01). GD: General Directorate.



Source: Secretariat of the Navy. GD: General Directorate.



Defence Education

Main Training Courses of Specialization in the Area

Training Course	Institution
- Masters on National Security	Centre for Superior Naval Studies
- Masters on Military Administration for National Security and Defence	National Defence College

Source: Compilation based on the information supplied by the web page of the above mentioned institutions

Military Career

ARMY

Heroic Military College

Duration: 3 years

Graduation Title: Graduate in Military Sciences

Graduation Rank: Second Lieutenant

Academies of Intermediate Education

Lieutenant

Second Captain

First Captain

Staff College

Superior War School

Major

Lieutenant-Colonel

Colonel

General Brigadier

Brigade General

Division General

Entry to the Heroic Military College – 2007 – ⁽¹⁾

Candidates: 2,787
Admitted Candidates: 350
1 out of 8 candidates was admitted

NAVY

Heroic Naval Military School

Duration: 5 years

Graduation Title: Graduate in Naval Sciences Engineering

Graduation Rank: Midshipman

Academies of Intermediate Education

Corvette Lieutenant

Frigate Lieutenant

Navy Lieutenant

Staff College

Superior Centre of Naval Studies

Corvette Captain

Frigate Captain

Navy-Captain

Rear-Admiral

Vice-Admiral

Admiral

Entry to the Heroic Naval Military School – 2008 –

Candidates: 4,036
Admitted Candidates: 420
1 out of 9 candidates was admitted

AIR FORCE

Air College

Duration: 3 years

Graduation Title: Air Force pilot

Graduation rank: Second Lieutenant

Academies of Intermediate Education

Lieutenant

Second Captain

First Captain

Staff College

Superior War School

Major

Lieutenant-Colonel

Colonel

Group General

Wing General

Division General

Entry to the Air College – 2007 – ⁽¹⁾

Candidates: 2,557
Admitted Candidates: 277
1 out of 9 candidates was admitted

(1) Year 2007. As for August 2008, the 2008 admission process was in its final stage. 2,503 candidates applied to the Heroic Military College, and 2,557 to the Air College.

Source: Compilation based on *Ley Orgánica del Ejército y Fuerza Aérea Mexicanos* (DOF 1986/12/26) and *Ley Orgánica de la Armada de México* (DOF 2002/12/30). Entry to Academies: Secretariat of National Defence and Secretariat of the Navy. The table strictly follows the order and hierarchy of the ranks shown on each country.

The Armed Forces

General Mission

Defend the integrity, independence and sovereignty of the Nation, guarantee internal security and external defence.
 Help civil citizens in cases of public needs; carry out civic and social works aimed at the country's progress and in case of disaster, provide help for order maintenance, assistance to the people and their assets as well as with the reconstruction of affected areas.
 Make use of the Federation's naval power for external defence, and render assistance for the country's internal security.
 (Ley Orgánica del Ejército y Fuerza Aérea Mexicanos, DOF 1986/12/26, Sec. 1; Ley Orgánica de la Armada de México, DOF 2002/12/30, Sec. 1)

Specific Missions

Army

- Defend the integrity, independence and sovereignty of the Nation.
- Guarantee internal security.
- Provide assistance to civilians in case of public need.
- Carry out civic actions and social works which support the progress of the country.
- In case of disaster, provide assistance to maintain the order, help people and their assets and rebuild affected areas.

Navy

Its mission is to use the naval power of the Federation for external defence and cooperate in the internal security of the country.

Air Force

- Defend the integrity, independence and sovereignty of the Nation.
- Guarantee internal security.
- Provide assistance to civilians in cases of public need.
- Carry out civic actions and social works which support the progress of the country.
- In cases of disaster provide assistance to maintain the order, help the people and their assets and rebuild affected areas.

Total Armed Forces: 248,141

Officers: 11,018
 Warrant Officers and Troops: 38,426
49,444



20%

80%

Army and Air Force
 Officers: 36,011
 Warrant Officers: 95,105
 Troops: 67,581
198,697



Source: Compilation based on Ley Orgánica del Ejército y Fuerza Aérea Mexicanos (DOF 1986/12/26) and Ley Orgánica de la Armada de México (DOF 2002/12/30) (missions); Secretariat of the Navy and Ley de Presupuesto de Egresos de la Federación para el Ejercicio Fiscal 2008 (DOF 2007/12/13) (Regular Force).



Women in the Armed Forces

		Army	Navy	Air Force
Entry year (Officers)	Staff Corps	1938	1938	1938
	Line Corps	2007	2008	2007
Rank reached		Brigade General	Admiral	Wing General

“Line Corps” means those military members trained to perform in combat missions, and who also have command capacity.
 “Staff Corps” means those military members who are part of the Forces or who join them, in order to provide technical and/or professional support services.

Source: Compilation based on *Ley Orgánica del Ejército y Fuerza Aérea Mexicanos* (DOF 1986/12/26), *Ley Orgánica de la Armada de México* (DOF 2002/12/30), and information provided by the above mentioned institutions.



Source: Information supplied by the Secretary of National Defence and Secretary of the Navy. The country to which the Attaché is posted is considered here as the Office, beyond other cross accreditations to one or many countries.

Analysis:

The Mexican Armed Forces: Challenges and Structures in the Face of Democracy

■ Raúl Benítez Manaut*

■ Unlike the rest of the military structures in Latin America, there exists in Mexico a peculiar military organization, inherited from the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) and the way in which the conflicts were settled down, among the triumphant elites of such revolution.

The Mexican revolutionary regime had exceptional characteristics. It was built on a solid authoritarian regime, but the almost absolute power of the Armed Forces started to decrease from its core, to finally yield it to a new elite group, conformed by union leaders and peasants, a new middle class that gradually started to control the State administrative apparatus. The military ended up as a constituent of the State and the political system, unlike in the past, when they had been its articulating axis.

Over the decade of the 20s, between 40-60 percent of the national budget was allotted to keeping the revolutionary armies. In order to transcend the figure of autocratic governments, the northern leaders designed in 1929 the masterpiece of revolution: the *Partido Nacional Revolucionario*, (Revolutionary National Party), which would become the PRI, *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (Institutional Revolutionary Party) in 1946. The revolutionary Generals ruled until 1946. That year – partly because of the aftermath of World War II, but mainly for considering the country to be institutionally consolidated – the power was passed onto a civilian, and a new civil-military relation era began. The country was governed by the PRI for seventy-one years (until 2000), along which four military and eleven civilians were in direct power.

■ There exists in Mexico a peculiar military organization, inherited from the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) and the way in which the conflicts were settled down, among the triumphant elites of such revolution.

* Researcher at the Centre for Research on North America (CISAN), National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM).



■ The lack of a civilian minister for the Armed Forces and a Joint Chief of Staff is an outstanding fact.

In terms of the Armed Forces stance within the Mexican State apparatus, there is no Ministry of Defence as defined in a democratic government. The Secretary of National Defence (an active four-star General) is in turn the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and the Air Force. In other words, it is a Minister of the State and, at the same time, the most important military commander of the country. The Mexican Organic Law for the Army and the Air Force establishes that the Secretary of Defence should be an active Major General. In the case of the Navy, the SEMAR, *Secretaría de la Marina*, (Secretariat of the Navy) is in turn a Secretariat of the State and the Navy High Command. The Secretary of the Navy is the four-star highest ranking commander in the Navy. Unlike in SEDENA, *Secretaría de Defensa Nacional*, (Secretariat of the National Defence), it does not require an active Admiral; however, the political-military tradition demands it to be so. In other words, the President could appoint a Secretary of the Navy without having to change the Organic Law of the Mexican Navy.

Given that there are two military Secretariats of State and, in turn, two military commands, there are in practice two almost fully and mutually autonomous Armed Forces. That autonomy is enhanced due to the fact that there is no Joint Chief of Staff for the Armed Forces in the country. That is to say, what is outstanding in the Mexican military structure is what does not in fact exist: a civil ministry of the Armed Forces, and a Joint Chief of Staff.

The case of the Air Force is a paradigm. It is the most recently created force and it is under the command of SEDENA. However, there is a Commander of the Mexican Air Force and its corresponding General Staff (the Air Force General Staff). However, the Commander and the General Staff are subordinated to the Secretary of Defence, and they depend on it. For that reason, the Air Force is not independent, and its doctrine of war subordinates to that of the Army's, in harmony with the defence doctrine, which points out that Mexico has no military external enemies, for that reason an autonomous deterrent air force would not be required.

The Army is the epicentre of the Armed Forces. The Navy and the Air Force have different origins, but their configuration in correspondence with the Army is one of the pending matters of modernization. However, it is hard to think that a whole reform of the Armed Forces will take place, due to the fact that the military issue is not seen as a priority in the Mexican political agenda. The relative importance of the military in the political apparatus (despite they carry out significant missions supporting an important number of Secretariats of State), is a reason for that. In this sense, the Mexican Armed Forces (if compared to the rest of the Latin American forces) are considered to be a singular paradigm, as - notwithstanding the fact that they had been designed from the view of a triumphant popular revolution almost a hundred years ago and, reorganized under an authoritarian regime - they are still seen as de-politicized and professional. For that reason, since the Revolution years, no attempt of military riot has been successful in Mexico, and there is no political or social force questioning the doctrine, structure or modus operandi of the Armed Forces.

The Mexican Army is, without a doubt, the force with more troops within the structure of the Forces. Its main missions - besides the main constitutional mission

of defending the country in the face of a foreign aggressor - are: backing the public security corps of the country (mainly the Secretariat of Public Security, considering the 14,000 troops assigned to the Federal Preventive Police's Support Forces); collaborating with the Attorney-General's Office in the struggle against drug-trafficking (mainly through the eradication of psychotropic crops and interception of cocaine and other drugs trafficking); civil population protection missions in the face of natural disasters (mainly floods and hurricanes in coastal areas, and also earthquakes); environmental protection (for instance, reforestation campaigns); collaborating with the Secretariat of Health in the preventive vaccination in marginal and extremely poor areas; facing political protest movements when they outnumber the public security corps (at President's request); and others. Within the international field, the activities of the Army and the Air Force are very modest. Mostly, they offer bi-national cooperation – though beyond the framework of international bodies – when natural disasters devastate other countries, mainly in the Caribbean Basin and Central America. The presence of Mexican troops in the United States was outstanding – due to its symbolic character – after the hurricane Katrina destroyed the city of New Orleans in September 2005.

In the case of the Navy, it was integrated to the Army under the Ministry of War and Navy, throughout the XIX century. During the Mexican Revolution, it was again dismantled and disqualified; it started its restructuring over the post-revolutionary period, to finally be considered to have the capacity to bear independent structures from the Army (within the World War II scenario), in 1940.

Unlike the Army, the Navy has a wider projection abroad and participates marginally in internal security missions. Yet, it also responds to a wide range of supporting missions to other Secretariats of State. For instance - due to the lack of coastal police structures in the Attorney-General's Office -, the Navy carries out the labour of Coast Surveillance. It also takes part of the war against drug-trafficking on the coasts, and fulfils many environmental protection missions, as the Secretariat of Environment does not have the resources for that. In the international sphere, the Army has stated in recent years that it could take part in peace operations, depending on the positive consideration of the President. It has participated in rescue missions after catastrophes as well, such as in the case of the tsunami in Indonesia, in December 2004. Naval collaboration with Guatemala, Belize and the United States in terms of coast surveillance is frequent, and it has been more willing to collaborate with the Northern Command of the United States.

Another aspect of the Mexican Armed Forces is its relation with the rest of the State structures (Judicial Power, Legislative Power, State and Municipal Governments) and with autonomous State structures, such as the IFAI, *Instituto Federal de Acceso a la Información* (Federal Institute of Access to Public Information) and the IFE, *Instituto Federal Electoral* (Federal Electoral Institute). Likewise, the relation with non-state civil sectors is more recent, and the gradual opening towards civil society should be taken into consideration.

As regards the Judicial Power, the Armed Forces have their own Courts, and judges are appointed by the Secretary of National Defence. This has been harshly criticized by numerous jurists and non-governmental organizations, as it is viewed

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as a signal of autonomy and even impunity, being the access to justice hampered when military are involved. Anyway, unfairness towards the military themselves comes from the significant differences between the civil and the military legislation, and the difficulties to apply for a “juicio de amparo” (an injunction suspending the effects of legal dispositions tending to violate the constitutional individual rights) or guaranteeing a defence that ensures a proper prosecution.

Concerning the Legislative Power, not long ago - during the former President Fox’s administration - the Military Secretaries of State visited the Chambers of Deputies and Senators to hold audiences with the legislators. In the past, there were no instances of communication. There are naval and defence commissions, whose members willingly responded to the chiefs of the commissions throughout the PRI’s administration; its presidents or secretaries, have been retired or commissioned militaries. Hence, the military laws have never been questioned. Today a slow progress on mutual sensitization is seen, about the need to have better and more frequent links between the Armed Forces and the Legislative Power.

Concerning state and municipal governments, there is a respectful relation among authorities and the Forces. However, in military garrisoned states and municipalities (as for example, in highway posts, for implementing the Federal Law on Firearms and Explosives or, collaborating with the war on drug-trafficking) the military have a *de facto* autonomy, and could hardly be prosecuted in civil courts if any incidents should happen. In other words, their material and human resources are quite often superior to those of the local authorities.

Regarding the civil society and the new Mexican State structure (like the Federal Institute of Access to Public Information, IFAI), the military have been receptive to the demands on information access, but at the same time, the vast majority of information is considered confidential and a national security concern. Both military Secretariats of State were the last to open their webpages to public access, after the rest of the Mexican Federal Government apparatus had done it. The Mexican military have refused to compile a white book of defence, or two books on the sector, and web forums on defence policies conformed by civilians do not exist, contrasting almost every Latin-American country. The reports submitted by the Secretaries of State to the President and the Congress - public records by nature - have been rendered as secret of State until two or three years ago. This secrecy is much deeper when it comes about knowing the armament system of the country, or the details of the budgetary expenditure.

Regarding the military-IFE links, even today the IFE assigns the Armed Forces the protection of electoral materials and their transportation to the polling stations all along the country in federal elections times. Similarly, they carry out the surveillance of the polling stations and the vote keeping premises. That is a symptom of trust towards the military institution, essentially from the political parties.

The Mexican Armed Forces, if compared to other similar forces in Latin America and other regions of the world, keep embracing a nationalist stance within their doctrine and their performance. That is a hindrance to a more active presence in the international security system. The political and public opinion in Mexico is divided in that respect, as well as regarding the military collaboration

with the United States, other Latin American countries and international organizations.

Halfway through 2006, the presidential election won by Felipe Calderon Hinojosa, - candidate for the PAN, National Action Party - showed many weaknesses in the process of transition to democracy in Mexico. At the same time, ordinary violence and that triggered by organized crime have raised to unprecedented levels. In the same way, the escalation of violence provoked by drug-trafficking, hit several members of the Armed Forces and security corps. Within this framework Calderon started to talk about a new strategy against drug-trafficking (even before taking office), through the massive use of the Armed Forces, and asked the United States for emergency aid. During 2007, the two governments negotiated the so-called Merida Initiative, a package of 1,400 million dollars to be implemented within the lapse of three years. This aid is mainly focused on the Armed Forces.

The intensive use of the Armed Forces in the war against drug-trafficking has rendered numerous consequences. Among them, there has been an increase in the number of complaints against members of the Army before the Mexico's National Human Rights Commission: 144 in 2004; 194 in 2005; 200 in 2006; 384 in 2007; and 242 between January and April 2008. This leads towards an inevitable equation: the overuse of the Armed Forces in the war against the organized crime, *per se*, involves possible violations to human rights, due to the low educational level of the low-ranking militaries, and to their weak training in those matters. Along with the arrival of the United States assistance, this issue will become one of the most significant in the discussions about the use of the Armed Forces, the use of foreign equipment, and its supervision by the government of the United States and civil society, who demand transparency. Given that it is a long term war, the Armed Forces must adequate their strategies and tactics with the respect for society. Otherwise, there will be many obstacles in the Mexican and the American Congress and in the civil society of both countries.

There are also positive trends within the Forces since President Calderon took power. The most outstanding of those trends is the instruction given to increase the access of women to the military academies and to positions directly connected to the military tasks (not only in administrative support, services or medical issues). Through that, promotions can equal men's professional career. Another important element related to the issue of the human rights, is the opening of agencies as from the beginning of 2008, for receiving complaints from civilians and the internal side of the services as well, about mistreatment from superior ranks. The success of these two measures is still to be noticed, since these reforms are very recent.

In fact, the war on drug-trafficking redesigns and readdresses the main efforts of the Armed Forces towards their struggle: they need an important budgetary and political support, both from the Executive and the Congress. This can inhibit the internationalization of the Mexican military presence, and might lead towards an unwanted militarization process in civilian fields like: intelligence, public security and even justice. At any rate, despite the aforesaid about human rights, the armed forces are situated among the highest confidence generating institutions amidst the people in opinion polls.

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