

Mexico Armed Conflict Deaths Topped Only by Syria and Iraq



Mexico City, May 21 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Mexico had the third highest number of deaths due to armed conflict last year, surpassed only by Syria and Iraq, a new study reveals.

According to the annual Armed Conflict survey by London-based International Institute for Strategic Study, 15,000 were killed in clashes in Mexico, unevenly distributed with almost 70 percent of the violence concentrated in the ten states situated along the main drug-trafficking routes to the United States.

Researchers blamed high levels of violence on the drugs trade and the Mexican state “relying heavily on its armed forces” to deal with the criminal gangs. The advance of the Islamic State group saw 18,000 dead in Iraq in 2014, while the massive civil war in Syria killed 70,000.

Central American countries Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador also suffered high levels of violence from criminal gangs, especially in El Salvador where a “truce between the main criminal gangs, *Mara Salvatrucha* and *Barrio 18*, which had contributed to a marked decline in violence, collapsed.”

However, in the Latin American region hope could be gleaned from Colombia which, the report said, “appeared to be on the way to resolution,” due to the ongoing peace talks between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. The guerrilla group has committed to a unilateral cease-fire.

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