



Drug War Activists Speak Out Against 'Failed' Policies

Carolina Moreno | September 4, 2012

In December 2006, Mexico's newly elected President Felipe Calderón declared war against [Mexican drug cartels](#) -- words he cemented by [sending over 4,000 troops to eradicate narcotraffickers](#) and the cartel violence that had taken hold of his home state of Michoacán.

Almost six years later, the wave of violence in Mexico persists and continues to spread, with government entities recording 21,500 homicides in the first half of 2012, [compared to the 25,000 homicides during Calderón's first full year in office](#), according to the Associated Press.

But the human toll of the Drug War lies far beyond the U.S.-Mexico border, spreading across the entire Western Hemisphere, no longer only afflicting countries known as the main producers and consumers of the narcotics, [but those caught in the middle of the illicit drug trade as well](#).

Activists against the drug war have therefore also needed to cross these borders, figuratively and sometimes literally [leading caravans for peace](#) or banding together in advocacy groups to fight for alternative solutions to the war on drugs and its consequences. Some say [legalization](#), others [decriminalization](#), but all of them ask for peace. Here are some of the faces speaking out against "failed" drug policies in their search for an end to the war.

Cato Policy Analysis cited in a photo slideshow: **Drug War Activists**

Jorge Castañeda, Former Mexican Secretary Of Foreign Affairs

The thousands of lives lost in Mexico to drug-related violence has caused Mexico's former Foreign Minister to declare former President Felipe Calderón's war on drugs "failed."

Castañeda has been known to frequently advocate for drug legalization on both sides of the border to decrease the cartel violence that plague's his native country. In an Economic Development Bulletin by the CATO Institute, the former Mexican official wrote:

"There is no possible way that Mexico could get away with unilaterally decriminalizing possession, commerce, and consumption of drugs in Mexico if the United States didn't do the same thing." -- "Mexico's Failed Drug War," May 2010.