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The Best Way to Fight Mexico's Drug Cartels

Jacob Sullum | November 14, 2011

Today the Cato Institute, which tomorrow is holding a conference on "Ending the Global War on Drugs," released a paper analyzing Mexico's part in that war, which has been spectacularly bloody in recent years, killing more than 40,000 people since President Felipe Calderon launched a military assault on the cartels at the end of 2006. Cato Senior Fellow Ted Galen Carpenter concludes:

The only lasting, effective strategy is to defund the Mexican drug cartels. Reducing their billions of dollars in revenue requires the United States, as the principal consumer market for illegal drugs, to abandon its failed prohibition policy. That move would eliminate the lucrative black-market premium and greatly reduce the financial resources the cartels have available to bribe officials or hire enforcers to kill competitors and law enforcement personnel and intimidate the Mexican people. A refusal to abandon prohibition means that Mexico's agony will likely worsen and pose a significant security problem for the United States.

More on the Cato conference [here](#).