## Cartel Violence Continues in Mexican Border Cities of Tijuana, Juárez

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Cartel-fueled violence in the Mexican border cities of Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez continues with multiple daily killings in both cities. The two cities sit along the Mexican border with California and Texas. This year's number of killings in Tijuana has now reached 1,521 — Ciudad Juárez hit 1,017.

Drug cartel-related violence associated with bitter turf wars over drug smuggling and street-level drug sales in the border cities of Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez continues at an alarming rate. The killings in both cities have been attributed in part to a shift in Mexico becoming a user nation with a thriving street-level drug market and a growing addict population, according to Breitbart Texas' U.S. and local Mexican law enforcement sources. For many years, Mexico was primarily considered an export nation of illicit drugs. But, with the availability of cheap high-grade methamphetamine and other drugs, Mexican authorities have seen a spike in gang wars fighting over lucrative street-level sales which. These wars are blamed for the daily killings in

major cities throughout Mexico. The local gangs are being supplied by the major drug cartels which operate in both cities.

In the border city of Tijuana, which sits on the Mexico-California border approximately 20 miles south of San Diego California, they surpassed 1,521 homicides for 2019. During a 24-hour period covering August 29 and 30, a total of 11 people were murdered. In one case, a severed head of an unknown victim was abandoned inside a backpack near a school in colonia Lázaro Cárdenas Tercera Mesa. A passerby headed to the school reported the shocking discovery to the police. According to local media reports, the recent 11 homicide victims included several who were dumped throughout various sections of the city with hands and feet bound and eyes and mouth duct-taped shut. These victims displayed signs of torture.

Ciudad Juárez, the sister city of El Paso, Texas, closed out August with 129 homicides bringing the total for 2019 to at least 1,017, according to Alejandro Valadez, a spokesman for the State Attorney General's Office (FGE) in the Northern Zone (Ciudad Juárez). Although the month of August trended downward in comparison to the month of July, the murder totals for 2019 are up in comparison to the previous year. By comparison, Ciudad Juárez had 898 homicides in the first eight months of 2018. The killings registered in 2019 are up 119, an 11 percent increase. Breitbart Texas reported on a shocking cartel hit in Juárez which resulted in the deaths of four victims consisting of two teens, a child, and their 25-year-old uncle Sunday morning. The minors, who were sisters, were 14, 13 and 4 years of age and were reportedly all shot in the head.

Month-by-Month Comparison of Homicides in the two border cities:

	Tijuana	Ciudad Juárez
January	220	108
February	145	96
March	152	116
April	184	149
May	192	151
June	216	130
July	230	139
August	182	128

Robert Arce is a retired Phoenix Police detective with extensive experience working Mexican organized crime and street gangs. Arce has worked in the Balkans, Iraq, Haiti, and recently completed a three-year assignment in Monterrey, Mexico, working out of the Consulate for the United States Department of State, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Program, where he was the Regional Program Manager for Northeast Mexico (Coahuila, Tamaulipas, Nuevo Leon, Durango, San Luis Potosi, Zacatecas.) You can follow him on Twitter. He can be reached at robertrarce@gmail.com.