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INFO RHMFIUU/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC
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RUEHGO/AMCONSUL HERMOSILLO
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RUEHNL/AMCONSUL NUEVO LAREDO
RUEHRD/AMCONSUL MERIDA
RUEHRS/AMCONSUL MATAMOROS
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UNCLAS MONTERREY 000066

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS
DS/IP/WHA, DS/IP/DEAV, AND DS/PSP/DEAV
WHA/MEX

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [KCRM](#) [SNAR](#) [CASC](#) [PGOV](#) [MX](#)
SUBJECT: Grenade Attacks Against Monterrey Police; Feb. 26 and 28th
EACs

REF: 10 NUEVO LAREDO 56

A1. (SBU). Late in the evening of February 27, hooded men conducted simultaneous grenade attacks against the facilities of five municipal police forces within the Monterrey metro area. At police stations in the working class suburbs of San Nicolas and Cadereyta, the grenades exploded, injuring two and causing significant property damage; in Guadalupe, Escobedo, and Apodaca the devices did not detonate. Law enforcement sources, but not the press, report a sixth attack in the city of Santiago, south of Monterrey, and there are sketchy indications of a seventh attack in Sabinas-Hidalgo, about an hour north of Monterrey. The authorities have arrested two attackers and recover three unexploded grenades and one grenade spoon. ATF Monterrey is in the process of obtaining access to the recovered physical evidence. Although there were civilian witnesses to the San Nicolas explosion, no one is likely to come forward to present evidence or testify. Law enforcement sources report that the police present when the stations were attacked fled their posts. It is now clear that the ongoing war between the Gulf and Zeta drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) has reached Monterrey.

Nuevo Leon Spin Control

A92. (SBU). While Nuevo Leon Secretary General Javier Trevino Cantu has characterized the coordinated attacks as a reaction by organized crime to the state government's security efforts, this explanation is not persuasive as the state's programs are still notional at best. Neither the recently-announced military/federal/state plan to install roadblocks (68 checkpoints in 19 cities) along the Monterrey to Reynosa, Tamaulipas corridor nor the state's new plan to install checkpoints in 11 Monterrey metro area municipalities to stem car theft have begun. Given the thorough penetration by the Zetas of the police forces in those municipalities that were hit, a much more likely explanation is that the attacks were a signal from the Gulf cartel to the police to cease/desist their support of the Zetas and switch sides. Other plausible theories exist as well -- such as the attack was an attempt to "heat up" the Monterrey plaza -- but none involve organized crime responding to "effective" state government enforcement efforts.

Public Worried and Distrustful

A93. (SBU) Locally, the Monterrey public is worried as citizens fear that if the war between the cartels were to hit the city in earnest, Monterrey could experience the rampant violence seen at the border. The continuing wave of car-jackings/car thefts -- the DTOs appear to be using the stolen cars to fulfill their transportation needs -- has many on edge. Citizens are curtailing trips to the border, and several bus companies are cancelling runs to outlying cities in the state. Indeed, if high-value targets fleeing Tamaulipas take up residence in Monterrey and nearby Saltillo, Coahuila, violence here between the cartels and between the cartels and the military (both army and navy) will increase. During the previous week reliable witness reported carloads of gunmen, with automatic weapons hanging out the window, retreating to Monterrey along the highways linking the city to Reynosa. Indeed, DEA confirms a rolling confrontation between the military and retreating Zetas on February 27 in the Nuevo Leon municipalities of Zuazua and Pesqueria, both to the north and east of Monterrey.

A94. (SBU). A recent poll done by the Monterrey-based Grupo Reforma

-- publishers of the influential local daily "El Norte" -- revealed that 58 percent of Tamaulipas respondents had seen or heard gun battles or violent acts that the media/government had not made public. From here, it looks as if Nuevo Leon residents share this view. Indeed, post law enforcement has learned that six died during the Zuazua/Pesqueria shoot-out, an incident which has not been reported in the local press. The rumor that Tamaulipas Governor Eugenio Hernandez had been kidnapped flew around among Monterrey elites at light speed on February 26. The comparative silence of Nuevo Leon Governor Rodrigo Medina on security issues in general has only heightened suspicions.

February 26 EAC Meeting and February 28 Follow-up

¶5. (SBU) Prior to the grenade attacks, Consulate General Monterrey's Emergency Action Committee (EAC) met on February 26, 2010 to discuss the current wave of narco-related violence and its potential impact on Consulate security and operations. The EAC was chaired by Consul General with the presence of MGT, RSO, CONS, POL, CLO, FBI, ATF, DEA, ICE, PD and OPAD. Among items discussed was the continued increase in car-jackings and stolen cars. During the previous evening, a local car lot was hit by a DTO and as many as 10 SUVs were taken. The group also kidnapped the owner and two other family members. It was reported that local police seen in the area did not respond to distress calls from the family.

¶6. (SBU) RSO relayed Unclass reporting that the Los Zetas leader, Miguel Heriberto Lazcano-Lazcano is believed to be hiding in Monterrey and was planning for counter-offensive strikes against the Gulf Cartel in Tamaulipas. This information dovetailed with reporting from other sources and the members of post's Law Enforcement Working Group elaborated that Saltillo, Coahuila would likely be considered a safehaven by the Zetas.

¶7. (SBU) The CG and RSO discussed obtaining further protective equipment for the Local Guard Force. RSO will submit a request for an emergency shipment of ballistic helmets and rifle grade body armor from DS/PSP/DEAV.

¶8. (SBU) At a February 28 follow-up session of the Law Enforcement Working Group, committee members discussed the probabilities of further Gulf Cartel retributions against Zeta controlled police departments in the Monterrey area. Various EAC members believe that the next targets of attack by the Gulf cartel might be the Monterrey and Santa Catarina police or Nuevo Leon state police facilities. On February RSO office distributed a security notice to Consulate employees reminding them of the need to remain vigilant.

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