

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**A NATIONAL STRATEGY TO ADDRESS U.S./MEXICAN BORDER SECURITY  
ISSUES**

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## **ABSTRACT**

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This research project identifies the threat to the United States and proposes a national strategy to address the ease with which illegal migrants are entering the United States along the Mexican border. A comprehensive strategy for employing all elements of national power is necessary. The objectives of the proposed strategy are to significantly reduce the number of migrants attempting to cross the border illegally and decrease the amount of drugs trafficked throughout the region. The concepts for accomplishing these objectives are to pursue legislation and policies that would reduce the number of illegal immigrants in the United States through attrition, fully support DHS in its Secure Border Initiatives and expand USNORTHCOM's TSCP to engage with Mexico by leading a unified effort of all elements of national power to address the root causes of the problem. The resources needed to accomplish the objectives are the will of the government to raise the priority of this issue by putting it on the national agenda and the funding and personnel necessary to execute the concept. DHS must continue to lead the country's internal security efforts and to improve its border protection posture. USNORTHCOM must work with the State Department to expand its TSCP with Mexico and broaden its mission set to address threats to American security beyond its borders.



## A NATIONAL STRATEGY TO ADDRESS U.S./MEXICAN BORDER SECURITY ISSUES

In the twenty first century, the environment the world faces and will struggle with well into the future is one characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA). The traditional balance of power between nation-states and alliances no longer regulates actions of actors within the international system. In fact, it is increasingly difficult to predict the behavior of nation-states and non-state actors which makes anticipating threats to national interests even more challenging. As a result, it is imperative that the United States develop and execute sound strategies to counter these threats to the international system and the American way of life. An effective national security strategy must address a wide spectrum of issues from globalization, to the span of influence wielded by non-state actors, to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Additionally, it must balance capabilities and resources against prioritized objectives to synchronize all elements of national power. Since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the focus of the national security strategy has been on prosecuting the Global War on Terrorism and countering nuclear proliferation threats. While these efforts are crucial in protecting national interests, the government must not overlook the threat to America's security posed by its inability to enforce legal entry along the Mexican border. The United States must take decisive action immediately by employing all elements of national power to secure the Mexican border and overcome the social and economic issues necessary for enhanced regional stability.

The porous border between the United States and Mexico presents a serious and escalating threat to North American security. It is unique in many ways. The almost 2000 mile border is the most frequently crossed international border in the world. The U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics reports that in 2004, an average of 660,000 people per day crossed the border legally through 35 points of entry. In addition to the huge volume of legal crossings, during the same year, the Border Patrol apprehended over a million people entering the United States illegally.<sup>1</sup> The U.S./Mexican border "marks the zone where two culture areas of the Western Hemisphere meet."<sup>2</sup> It is "a divide between one of the greatest differences that separate countries today, the dividing line between the prosperity of the developed world and the relative poverty of the Third World."<sup>3</sup> David Kennedy addresses the economic issues associated with the border region and identifies the unique circumstance driving Mexican immigration as "the income gap between the United States and Mexico (which) is the largest in the world between two contiguous countries."<sup>4</sup> This disparity between living conditions on either side of the border creates an environment ripe for illegal activities from drug smuggling to

human trafficking. In Mexico, the geography of the border region allows for significant areas of ungoverned territory which offers a safe haven for all types of criminal and terrorist activities. Also, the Mexican government's inability to enforce laws, provide basic social functions, and fairly distribute wealth across its population make the U.S. southern border a serious concern for the protection of North American security.

The most critical issue with significant second and third order effects is the ever increasing flow of immigrants, both legal and illegal, across the border. There is more to consider than weighing the economic advantages and disadvantages of the easy access to inexpensive unskilled labor. Samuel P. Huntington builds on the economic issue and describes the migration of Mexicans to America as "a unique, disturbing, and looming challenge to our cultural integrity, our national identity, and potentially to our future as a country."<sup>5</sup> His assessment is that the nature of this migration does not allow for acceptable assimilation of the current and unending wave of Mexican immigrants into the nation, ultimately, threatening its cultural and political integrity. The persistently huge numbers of migrants crossing the border illegally and concentrating in particular regions of the United States is reaching such a tipping point that America is rapidly becoming a bilingual and bicultural society. Huntington makes the case that without the influx of people through Mexico, the number of immigrants to the United States would be reduced by over thirty percent. He notes that Barbara Jordan's 1997 Commission on Immigration Reform recommended such a reduction in legal and illegal immigration. Huntington's case for reducing the great number of Mexican immigrants highlights the fact that immigrants from other parts of the world contribute higher skill and education levels to American society than Mexican immigrants. He asserts that less skilled Americans would earn more wages without competition from the more inexpensive Mexican immigrant labor. Political concern over bilingual education would no longer be relevant and the potential challenge to America's cultural and national integrity would also be significantly reduced.<sup>6</sup>

Immigration is not the only reason for concern over border security. Drug trafficking continues to be a problem despite the best efforts of the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and our national War on Drugs. The March 2006 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report published by the State Department documents that 70 to 90 percent of the cocaine destined for the United States passes through Mexico. Mexico continues to be the main foreign source of marijuana and methamphetamine. It is a major supplier of heroin, accounting for about 30 percent of the U.S. market, despite Mexico's relatively small percentage of worldwide production.<sup>7</sup> Drug trafficking leads directly to other illicit activities. For example, the area along the border is a significant money laundering hub for funds derived from the sale of drugs in the

region and sold throughout the country. Also, violence continues to erupt in various border cities as rival cartels fight for control of smuggling routes.<sup>8</sup>

Corruption, crime and violence are on the rise along the border, increasing the challenges faced by those attempting to manage the situation on both sides. The above factors make the US/Mexican border region a safe haven for terrorist activity. The poorly secured border also allows easy and untraceable access to those who would harm Americans.

These serious issues require the United States to aggressively pursue solutions to the border problems. There are several reasons why the timing is right for government leaders to take action by raising the priority of this issue on the national agenda and increasing the investment of resources dedicated to solving the problem. In response to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the American Congress enacted several laws to provide for enhanced national homeland defense including improved border security. Since their establishment, the Department of Homeland Security and United States Northern Command have now matured enough to effectively address the border security issues. Also, the Mexican presidential election in July 2006 resulted in new leadership ripe for assistance in improving social and economic conditions that are the root causes of the border security problems.

In the largest government reorganization since the establishment of the Department of Defense in 1947, The Homeland Security Act of 2002 created the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The primary missions of this Department are to prevent terrorist attacks within the United States; reduce the nation's vulnerability to terrorism; and minimize the damage and assist in the recovery from terrorist attacks that do occur inside the country. DHS is the single authority over 22 federal entities with vital roles in protecting America's infrastructure and preventing acts of terrorism on U.S. soil which were previously distributed among other departments and agencies. These critical entities include: U.S. Customs Service (formerly with the Treasury Department), parts of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (formerly of the Justice Department), Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Domestic Preparedness Office (formerly of the Federal Bureau of Investigation), and Energy Security and Assurance Program (formerly of the Energy Department).<sup>9</sup>

Since its establishment, DHS has developed into an effective organization and is taking positive action to improve national security. The 180,000 men and women of the Department, operating on a budget of about 40 billion dollars a year, work diligently to secure the nation's transportation system, protect critical infrastructure, strengthen border security, increase emergency preparedness, improve information sharing, prevent weapons of mass destruction, and increase the country's defenses against biological threats.<sup>10</sup>

The impressive strides made by DHS in strengthening border security are of particular interest. The Department's updated mission statement reflects an emphasis on border security. It states, "We will lead the unified national effort to secure America. We will prevent and deter terrorist attacks and protect against and respond to threats and hazards to the nation. We will ensure safe and secure borders, welcome lawful immigrants and visitors, and promote the free-flow of commerce."<sup>11</sup> Secretary Chertoff is backing up the Department's commitment to the border security mission through actions and his organization is postured to make significant progress in resolving the security issues along the Mexican border.

Another newly minted organization ready to positively influence the border situation is U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM). The Department of Defense (DoD) established USNORTHCOM in 2002 to provide command and control of its homeland defense efforts and to coordinate military support to civil authorities. As a regional combatant command, USNORTHCOM's area of responsibility consists of the continental United States, Alaska, Canada, Mexico, and the water surrounding this land mass out to approximately 500 nautical miles, including the Gulf of Mexico and the Straights of Florida. Like DHS, the creation of USNORTHCOM is the result of a major reorganization and the new headquarters now controls homeland defense organizations previously subordinate to other major commands. These organizations include U.S. Space Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command, Joint Forces Headquarters for Homeland Security, Joint Task Force for Civil Support, and Joint Task Force Six.<sup>12</sup>

The USNORTHCOM organization continues to mature and adapt to evolving national homeland security policy. It operates on an estimated budget of 70 million dollars per year, employing a staff of approximately 500 active duty, reserve military and civilian personnel. The command's stated mission requires that it conduct operations to deter, prevent, and defeat threats and aggression aimed at the United States, its territories and interest within its assigned area of responsibility. USNORTHCOM's other responsibilities include theater security cooperation with Canada and Mexico, consequence management, and defense support to civil authorities as directed by the president or secretary of defense. In October 2002, USNORTHCOM established the Army's newest service component command, U. S. Army North to provide command and control of DoD homeland defense efforts and to coordinate defense support of civil authorities. The command achieved initial operating capability in October 2005.<sup>13</sup>

These organizational changes within the U.S. government, driven by the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, are the foundation necessary to implement the elements of national

power in order to resolve the border security problem. The organizations have evolved, from creating new command and control structures to establishing operational capabilities, and now stand ready to make a difference that will enhance homeland security.

Governmental change on the other side of the border adds to the idea that the timing is right to aggressively pursue long term and far reaching solutions. In July 2006, elections in Mexico resulted in a new president ripe for assistance in improving social and economic conditions. President Felipe Calderon was elected, from the same party as Mexico's previous president, Vicente Fox. Although experts anticipate a change in tone, one less openly friendly, they expect Calderon to pursue a very close working relationship with the United States. They predict that his efforts will focus on Mexico's traditional policy of balancing its dependence on the United States with closer relations to the rest of Latin America.<sup>14</sup>

Even with optimism about a new leader, dysfunctional governments, high unemployment and massive income inequality across Mexico and Latin America are rapidly decreasing stability in the region. While the situation has not yet reached a crisis stage, pre-emptive efforts are necessary now to avoid a much larger problem in the future.

With all tools in place to adequately support resolution of the issue—national organizations focused on the problem and a friendly government in Mexico—border security legislation finally made the Congressional agenda in 2006.

Unfortunately, Congress failed to enact proper legislation to ensure a lasting solution to the problem. Instead of implementing a comprehensive reform of U.S. immigration laws as proposed by the Executive Branch, Congress offered a limited approach to the problem in the Secure Fence Act. This Act authorizes the construction of 700 miles of double-layered fencing along the border. The fence is expected to cost at least six billion dollars, yet leave nearly 1300 miles of the border uncovered. Critics warn that this fence does little to address the underlying economic, social and law enforcement problems that create the border security challenges. Although DHS would recommend some barriers carefully positioned in critical places along the border, the Secure Fence Act does not focus enough national effort on this serious problem to ensure a lasting solution.<sup>15</sup>

A comprehensive strategy encompassing all elements of national power is necessary to resolve the border issues and overcome the underlying causes of the situation. A simple model for developing a strategy, adopted by The US Army War College, is Lykke's three legged stool. His theory is that strategy consists of the balanced relationship among objectives (ends), concepts (ways), and resources (means). In this model, risk is any gap between the resources required to execute the right concepts to adequately accomplish the objectives.<sup>16</sup>

Using Lykke's model, a national strategy to resolve the issues surrounding the U.S. border with Mexico consists of objectives, concepts and resources. The objectives proposed by this paper are to significantly reduce the number of migrants attempting to cross the border illegally and decrease the amount of drugs trafficked throughout the region. Accomplishing these objectives will reduce the crime and violence along the border and ultimately increase U.S. national security as well as regional stability.

The concepts offered to achieve these objectives approach the border security issue from a holistic perspective. Only a comprehensive effort will adequately resolve the complex situation from the root causes of the problem, in Mexico, to the second and third order effects of illegal immigration and drug trafficking in the United States. The synchronization of all elements of national power is necessary. The United States must simultaneously engage in several lines of operation to address migration, drug trafficking and governance, employing all elements of national power: diplomatic, informational, military, economic, financial, intelligence and law enforcement. In support of these lines of operation, it may be necessary for the United States to modify laws, re-prioritize diplomatic efforts and allocate financial resources, to insure the safety and security of its citizens.

The first challenge that requires immediate attention as part of the overall plan is illegal migration. This line of operation would use an attrition concept, policy reform and border security enhancements to reduce the number of illegal immigrants residing in the United States.

Mark Krikorian presents a solid concept for reducing the number of illegal immigrants through consistent enforcement of current laws. His premise is that through attrition the United States could steadily shrink the illegal population over time instead of allowing it to continually increase. This plan calls for policies and enforcement operations to deter new illegal immigrants from settling, execute deportations at a faster rate, and force people who are illegally residing in the United States to deport themselves. He offers that the established policies, laws, and enforcement tools, if consistently applied, require little modification to effectively reduce the number of illegal immigrants. Specifically, the plan combines more aggressive conventional law enforcement including arrests, prosecutions, deportations and asset seizures with new governmental policies that would make it difficult and unpleasant to reside in the United States illegally. These policies would require residents to provide valid proof of their legal status in order to start a job, obtain a driver's license, open a bank account, or obtain any kind of regulated or government service. The intent of these policies is to create "virtual choke points" throughout society where an examination of a person's legal status is required before necessary services are provided. The idea is to not only identify illegal residents for prosecution and

deportation, but also make it as difficult as possible for them to live a normal life in America. Properly enforced, these policies would coerce illegal residents to deport themselves. Implementation of this concept requires that policies which encourage illegal immigration be eliminated or avoided. The increasing flow of new legal and illegal immigrants must slow for an attrition approach to be effective. Because illegal immigrants are motivated by jobs and family connections, Krikorian advises against any new guest worker program and recommends elimination of the visa lottery and preference category to streamline the legal immigration system. Also, he suggests that any legalization or amnesty program would subvert consistent enforcement of current immigration laws until the system demonstrates success in significantly reducing the number of illegal immigrants in the United States.<sup>17</sup>

Attrition alone will not fully resolve the challenge of illegal immigration along the southwest border. In November 2005, DHS initiated a comprehensive multi-year plan, called the Secure Border Initiative (SBI), to gain operational control of America's borders and reduce illegal immigration. The plan calls for increased interior enforcement of the country's immigration laws, addressing only a small part of the attrition concept. It does, however, lay out a strong foundation for improving security along the border by adding more agents to conduct patrols, expanding detention and removal capabilities, increasing physical barriers at critical locations, and integrating technology into the border security system using remote surveillance camera systems and sensors.<sup>18</sup> Border security enhancements as a result of the SBI, combined with the execution of an attrition approach, would significantly improve the illegal immigration situation and help reduce drug trafficking, but neither of these parts of the overall concept addresses the underlying causes that created such a serious problem

The ways necessary to fully achieve the strategy's objectives must include efforts to control the flow of Mexicans and other Central Americans seeking to reside legally in the United States, prevent illegal migration, as well as stop the trafficking of drugs throughout the region. A proposal for how to accomplish this builds on the attrition plans described above that focus on courses of action within the United States. To adequately resolve the issue, the strategy must address the situation in Mexico that is the root cause of the migration problem and facilitates drug trafficking. The Mexican economy is driving its people to seek a better life in the United States. Corruption is rampant throughout police, border security and military organizations. Mexicans are leaving their homes and crossing the border to find jobs. The only way to end this migration is to assist the Mexican government by bolstering its economy, helping it create jobs for its people, and facilitating better governance. The State Department must raise the priority and amount of economic assistance programs to tailor more and bigger projects for targeted

regions in Mexico generating the largest number of immigrants. Also, State Department efforts need to include negotiations for better trade arrangements to help Mexico help itself rather than relying on aid packages to influence such a desperate economic environment. Although these economic incentives will go a long way to help address the underlying causes of illegal immigration, Mexico's governance issues dictate that close oversight of the programs is necessary. A way to provide the necessary control of economic effort is through the regional combatant commander's Theater Security Cooperation Plan (TSCP). The idea would be for the State Department and USNORTHCOM to pool their resources and partner to insure a national unity of effort that compels the Mexican government to effectively manage economic support.

Mexico's economic woes can also account for the extensive drug trafficking operations. The poor economy offers criminals a lucrative and low risk trade. Corruption is rampant throughout police, border security, and military organizations because of low wages. The dysfunctional government in Mexico allows criminal activity and violence with few, if any, consequences. The border region is ungoverned territory, making security at America's doorstep a serious challenge.

An expanded TSCP, teaming USNORTHCOM with the State Department, is the instrument that the United States can wield, applying all elements of national power in a synchronized way, to address not only the economic challenges but also migration, drug trafficking and governance issues. The State Department must set the stage to compel Mexico to cooperate with USNORTHCOM in a comprehensive TSCP. This part of the concept proposes establishing a forward presence in Mexico with USNORTHCOM as the lead in its role as the regional combatant command. The intent is to forward base a small headquarters with a robust Joint Interagency Coordination Group (JIACG) and access to resources from DoD, State, DNI, DHS, and DEA as appropriate. USNORTHCOM is perfectly postured to pursue an expanded TSCP and engage with Mexico's strategic leaders. The missions of this headquarters would include assistance in executing the economic aid programs, continuation and expansion of military cooperation opportunities, security assistance coordination, immigration policy enforcement, and support for efforts to reduce drug trafficking. Security of the United States is the driving factor for this course of action, however, a strong military stance is not desired. The correct attitude, which is unobtrusive and totally transparent to the Mexican authorities, must dominate all efforts. The potential exists to make USNORTHCOM the test bed for the first integrated interagency regional combatant command. Execution of this mission set is the perfect venue for demonstrating the successes as a result of interagency and bilateral international synergies. It is a low risk opportunity to shift national security strategy paradigms.

While DHS is the lead for executing homeland security missions internally to the United States, it stands to reason that USNORTHCOM is the appropriate organization to look beyond the nation's borders. This geographic division of effort will better support national objectives and facilitate enhanced unity of effort as the roles and responsibilities of USNORTHCOM and DHS evolve and adapt to the complex global environment.

With this additional responsibility USNORTHCOM will require a Joint Intelligence and Operations Center (JIOC) to track intelligence requirements in support of the new missions above. The JIOC will establish a liaison element with U. S. Southern Command to insure intelligence sharing and collaborative efforts. Also, it should be capable of integrating Canadian and Mexican partners as well as intelligence analysts from other governmental organizations.

Employment of all elements of national power is necessary to tackle the challenges associated with executing each part of the comprehensive concept plan described above to achieve the objectives of reducing illegal immigration and drug trafficking along the southwest border. Currently, no single organization possesses the mission or capability to unify the efforts of those engaged in each element of national power, especially across multiple lines of operation. The proposed strategy calls for USNORTHCOM, as the geographic combatant command, to synchronize the following types of activities that represent each element of national power.

The diplomatic element of national power encompasses the State Department missions to engage and influence Mexico. The proposed concept calls for significant negotiation with Mexico to compel their cooperation. The management of governmental policies and modification of appropriate laws to support the concept also falls under the diplomatic element.

Intelligence sharing with Mexico and South American countries could prove to be a valuable element of national power. The capabilities of U.S. platforms can provide critical information to other countries which can be used to compel their cooperation.

This concept requires very little use of the military as an element of national power. Some national guard forces have been activated to provide military support to civilian authorities as DHS requested assistance in patrolling parts of the southern border until they were able to hire and train additional Border Patrol Agents. USNORTHCOM is currently a military organization, but in the future significant potential exists for it to be a joint interagency command. The concept does not require the use of force that the military brings to influence situations. It does, however, require a capable planning staff to strategically consider the impact of its actions at all levels and a competent ability to execute the approved plans.

All aid and trade assistance coordinated by the State Department falls under the economic element of national power.

The nature of drug trafficking operations and other potential non-state actor threats lends itself to tracking through financial channels. Finance as an element of national power will significantly assist intelligence operations. Financial considerations from organizations like the World Bank could also assist in finding ways to creatively jump start local Mexican economies through small business loans at reduced rates or other incentives.

The informational element comes into play to advertise new policies or laws and highlight the reinvigorated enforcement of current ones. Another informational consideration is for governmental leaders to place public emphasis on their commitment to this strategy. Without this visible support at the highest levels of leadership, consistently applied law enforcement is impossible. Also, use of the informational element by broadcasting other than military assistance and cooperation successes with Mexico internationally could improve the negative world opinion of the United States.

Law enforcement is the most critical element of national power in executing the concept for reducing the number of illegal immigrants. Implementation and execution of enforcement operations by local, state and national government offices and organizations like police, Border Patrol, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), U.S. Attorneys and judges will determine the success of the strategy. Also, border security efforts with Mexico would more appropriately be considered law enforcement than military.

The resources needed to accomplish the objectives, given the comprehensive concepts described above are the will of the government and the funding and personnel necessary to execute the concept. The government, represented by Congress and the President, manage national priorities to demonstrate the country's willingness to address issues. In this case, the commitment to enact appropriate legislation and direct policies in support of the concept is critical to balancing the ends ways and means of the strategy. The government must appropriate the funding necessary to provide sufficient aid packages to Mexico. Changes to governmental processes necessary to execute the attrition portion of the concept will require funding resources. The enhanced border security technologies will also increase the cost of normal operations. The government must authorize and compensate the additional personnel necessary to execute the concept in USNORTHCOM, DHS, State, DEA and other agencies. While bills are associated with executing a comprehensive plan that addresses all issues contributing to the problem, a unified holistic approach synchronizing all elements of national

power implies a level of fiscal efficiency. Certainly the anticipated cost of the approved fence, six billion dollars, could cover the cost of the proposed strategy.

A complete strategy requires an assessment of the proper balance between the proposed ends, ways and means. This will determine the amount of risk involved in executing the strategy. One technique is an evaluation based on a test of the strategy's suitability, feasibility, and acceptability. Suitability considers whether accomplishment of the objective will produce the desired effect. Feasibility determines whether the resources available can execute the required concepts or courses of action. Acceptability weighs the cost of using the resources against the importance of accomplishing the desired effect.<sup>19</sup>

The suitability of the proposed strategy that offers as ends a significantly reduced number of immigrants attempting to cross the border illegally and a decreased amount of drugs trafficked throughout the region will clearly improve security of the U.S./Mexican border. These ends are measurable and many indicators can determine the effectiveness of this proposed strategy. Census statistics could reflect how well the illegal immigrant attrition approach works, while current tracking systems used by the DEA and Border Patrol indicate the numbers of illegal migrants and amounts of drugs that cross the border from Mexico. No solution could provide such improved border security that it prevented every unauthorized person from accessing the country. No such system is fail-safe. The proposed strategy offers a system that provides incentives for people to do the right thing, transparency for authorities to determine compliance with laws and policies, and consequences for those who do not comply. These factors are necessary for a social system to be effective. Therefore, the proposed strategy definitely meets any reasonable standard for suitability.

The feasibility of this strategy considers the art of the possible. It is a determination of whether or not a comprehensive approach as described above, using all elements of national power, would be able to effectively accomplish the stated objectives. The United States possesses the ability to engage all elements of national power across multiple lines of operation simultaneously. The risk to this strategy, however, is the level of cooperation that Mexico will provide to the effort. Mexico is unlikely to support any of the policy recommendations that would deny guest worker or amnesty programs. Compelling Mexico to participate in this strategy may prove to be a challenge for the diplomats. However, the resources and capabilities are available and could indeed accomplish the actions necessary to significantly reduce the number of immigrants attempting to cross the border illegally and decrease the amount of drugs trafficked throughout the region, ultimately increasing U.S. national security as well as regional stability.

The acceptability consideration considers cost and in most cases it is a question of affordability. It would be an interesting study to determine the cost of engaging multiple elements of national power along several lines of operation at the same time. A synchronized and unified approach would likely increase efficiencies, better inform priorities and offer a fiscally responsible solution to the root causes of the border security issue. It seems as if the richest nation in the world could afford any cost to properly execute a strategy that would insure the safety and security of its citizens and defend its way of life.

Considering the assessment above, there is some risk associated with the proposed strategy for the United States to significantly improve the security of its southwest border. The obvious risk is Mexico's commitment to cooperation. That risk could be significantly reduced if the emotions of the American people motivated the government to appropriately leverage all available elements of national power no matter what it takes to compel Mexico to cooperate. Then, the ends, ways and means of the strategy could be easily balanced. The will of the people generate the resources and the government organizes a cohesive effort to execute a strategy using all elements of national power. The success of any strategy is determined by how well the ends, ways and means are balanced and any risk associated with its execution is reduced or mitigated.

Now is the time for America's leaders to recognize the threat posed by the insecure border with Mexico and take decisive action to implement a solution to the problem. The second and third order effects of illegal migration, drug trafficking and poor governance in Mexico pose a serious challenge to North American security. With the establishment of DHS and USNORTHCOM, the government possesses the correct organizations to adequately address the issues. In order to effectively leverage these capabilities, a comprehensive strategy for employing all elements of national power is necessary. A proposed national strategy offers the objectives of significantly reducing the number of migrants attempting to cross the border illegally and decreasing the amount of drugs trafficked throughout the region. Accomplishing these objectives will reduce the crime and violence along the border and ultimately increase U.S. national security as well as regional stability. The concepts for accomplishing these objectives are to pursue legislation and policies that would reduce the number of illegal immigrants in the United States through attrition, fully support DHS in its Secure Border Initiatives and expand USNORTHCOM's TSCP to engage with Mexico by leading a unified effort of all elements of national power to address the root causes of the problem. The resources needed to accomplish the objectives are the will of the government to raise the priority of this issue by putting it on the national agenda and the funding and personnel

necessary to execute the concept. Congress must enact legislation to reform immigration policy and the president must direct immediate action by the Departments of State, Defense and Homeland Security to unify their efforts toward the goal of regional stability and security. DHS must continue to lead the country's internal security efforts and to improve its border protection posture. USNORTHCOM must, specifically, work with the State Department to expand its TSCP with Mexico and, generally, broaden its perspective to address threats to American security beyond its borders. This comprehensive strategy using all elements of national power is necessary to secure the border and protect the American way of life.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Migration Policy Institute, "The US-Mexico Border," *Migration Information Source*, (Washington, D.C.: Migration Policy Institute, 2006), 1 June 2006; available from [http://www.migrationinformation.org/issue\\_jun06.cfm](http://www.migrationinformation.org/issue_jun06.cfm); Internet; accessed 3 February 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Glynn Custred, "North American Borders: Why They Matter," *Backgrounder* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Immigration Studies, April 2003); available from <http://www.cis.org/articles/2003/back803.html>; Internet; accessed 3 February 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> David M. Kennedy, "Can We Still Afford to be a Nation of Immigrants?" *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 278, No. 5 (November 1996), pp. 52-68.

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