

United States Senate

December 16, 2020

The Honorable William P. Barr
Attorney General
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo
Secretary of State
Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Attorney General Barr and Secretary Pompeo,

I write to applaud you on your sustained efforts to deny Mexican drug cartels access to the United States and more broadly, to deepen the security and law enforcement relationships between our country and Mexico. I also write to express concern about the Mexican government's recent efforts to undermine those relationships.

The Trump administration has taken new and specific steps to counter Mexican drug cartels, including through potential and actual designations. In March, for instance, the United States Department of Treasury designated multiple businesses for links to cartels, denying them needed access to the United States' financial system. This month, the United States designated Mexican national Lucio Rodriguez Serrano as a drug kingpin, expanding the ability of our nation's law enforcement and that of our partners to combat drug trafficking globally.

Unfortunately, there are increasingly influential voices in the Mexican government who are at odds with that mission.

The government of Andrés Manuel López Obrador recently secured the transfer of Mexico's former Secretary of National Defense, General Salvador Cienfuegos from United States custody. Cienfuegos had been indicted in New York and arrested in Los Angeles on charges linked to his support of the notorious H-2 Cartel. His arrest was an important achievement in the battle to end global narcotics trafficking and before his transfer, he was the most senior Mexican official charged in the United States in this context. The premise and promise of his release was that the Obrador administration would investigate and, if appropriate, charge Cienfuegos under Mexican law. They have not. Instead, they have –

- Called for the additional transfer of Genaro García Luna, Mexico's former Secretary of Public Security, who is currently on trial in the Eastern District of New York for charges related to bribery and cocaine trafficking for the Sinaloa Cartel.
- Moved, in recent days, to further undermine the Drug Enforcement Agency's (DEA) capabilities in Mexico, including by forcing our agents to disclose highly sensitive information and by denying them the legal immunity for carrying out their duties.

I urge you to strongly reject and respond to these requests and efforts. Given the Mexican government's conduct around the Cienfuegos case, transferring García Luna should be a nonstarter. Moreover, United States' diplomats and officials should utilize their voices and the influence of the United States to make it clear to the Mexican government that attacking or undermining the DEA is unacceptable, and that such action calls into question the strength of the U.S.-Mexican relationship, which might have to be reevaluated.

The Mexican government's intransigence increasingly endangers the national security of the United States, as well as the safety and health of Americans, just as they do for Mexico and Mexican citizens. The United States and Mexico share a land and various maritime borders plagued by illicit drug trafficking and destabilizing violence. Mexican drug cartels attack citizens on both sides of the border.

I urge you to secure assurances from the Mexican government that their promises regarding the transfer of Cienfuegos will be met, and more broadly that they will cease targeting the critical counter narcotics work conducted by American and Mexican agents combatting drug cartels in Mexico. As always, I stand ready to provide the necessary resources to enable you to carry out these tasks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ted Cruz', is centered on the page.

Ted Cruz
United States Senator