

## **The use of hand grenades in Mexico: A problem of explosive violence in populated areas? A media review, 2011-2012**



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## Introduction

This paper presents a general review of the extent of the presence of hand grenades in the actual context of armed violence in populated areas of Mexico in moments when the country is immersed in a situation of large scale armed violence, which more and more resembles an armed conflict because of the number of casualties in a relatively short time span. Between the end of 2010 and the early months of 2011, Mexico was reported to be the country from Latin America that experienced more attacks with explosive weapons mostly hand grenades (12), but also car bombs (3).<sup>1</sup>

This study seeks to contribute with the analysis of armed violence in Mexico, with an approach towards the means and methods of combat are involved, that is, among other things, what types of weapons are utilized and in which ways in which they are being employed, considering that in relation to explosive weapons not enough is known about its effects on victims and private and public property, or its geographic distribution of the known incident, or to see what is the trend and peaks of such cases, as reported in national media. In knowing this, it could be determined if it is necessary to take steps on risk education, among other measures.

As part of an ongoing investigation, this is a one-year media follow-up from 1 March 2011 to 1 April 2012<sup>2</sup>, focused on all those references to the hand grenades, principally when they have been detonated, but also cases of unexploded or abandoned ordnance, as well as those where they have been seized by authorities. The studied media are the on-line versions of the principal newspapers of national circulation in Spanish, and in some cases, in newspapers from localities where incidents took place. For purposes of this document, the reference to hand grenade has to do with fragmentation grenades, as presumably, they are the type of grenade employed in the reported incidents.

### *What is a fragmentation grenade?*<sup>3</sup>

**Fragmentation grenades are explosive weapons used at short range, for closed combat, designed to dispose shrapnel, fletchettes, notched wire, or ball bearings upon exploding by time-delay mechanisms or contact. This type of hand grenade is capable of killing and injuring inside a radius of roughly 10 meters, although wounding could also be produced at around 50 meters. Potentially they could be turned into improvised explosive devices (IED) in a very simple and cheap manner. Also, depending on their quality or their shelf-life they could fail to explode once activated, thus turning them into unexploded ordnance. Fragmentation grenades have become part of the regular infantry equipment with millions of them produced and distributed all over the world for at least a century, and are the most common type of hand grenade. There are other forms of hand grenades such as smoke, incendiary, concussion, among other.**<sup>4</sup>

*Armed violence in Mexico, 2006-2012: An escalation in the means and methods of combat leading to a phenomenon of explosive violence in populated areas?*

<sup>1</sup> CNN Mexico, "Mexico es el país de America Latina con mas ataques con explosivos," 30 March 2011, <http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/03/30/mexico-es-el-pais-de-america-latina-con-mas-ataques-con-explosivos>

<sup>22</sup> For information about the use of hand grenades in previous years, see "Granadas, el arma de moda," by MEPI Foundation, [http://fundacionmepi.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=298:granadas-el-arma-de-moda-&catid=50&Itemid=68](http://fundacionmepi.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=298:granadas-el-arma-de-moda-&catid=50&Itemid=68)

<sup>3</sup> In reference to this weapon, the terms used in this text are hand grenades.

<sup>4</sup> Definition of grenade in Britannica Online, [www.britannica.com](http://www.britannica.com); United Nations; CARE (2005) Landmine and explosive remnants of war. Safety Handbook. UNMAS: New York; AOAV (2012) Monitoring Explosive Violence. The EVMP Dataset 2011. AOAV: London.

Mexico has been undergoing a situation of armed violence on a great scale over the past five to six years, involving an important part of the national territory and its population. Its consequences have caused between 60,000 and 80,000 deaths between 2006 and 2012<sup>5</sup>. Furthermore, data show new aspects concerning the extent of this matter such as thousands of internally displaced people<sup>6</sup> and an undefined number of enforced and involuntary disappearances<sup>7</sup>.

Criminal organizations have become better organized and violent—in some cases with firepower and logistical capabilities similar to those of mid-sized armies.<sup>8</sup> Their actions have killed and injured who do not participate in the hostilities, unarmed civilians. Although firearms remain the specific tools of armed violence in Mexico and are the weapons of choice of drug cartels military-grade arms have mushroomed in their stockpiles<sup>9</sup> including AR-15 and AK-47 assault rifles, grenade launchers, armour-piercing “cop-killer” FN 5.7×28mm bullets, .50-caliber sniper rifles, machine guns, as well as rocket-propelled grenades (RPG), and hand grenades (fragmentation grenades). Even Claymore M18A1 directional anti-personnel mines (made in the US)<sup>10</sup> have been found, though there are no public reports on their use between 2009 and 2011, according to the Mexico Article 7 reports for the Mine Ban Treaty.

As for the origin of the explosive and other light weapons, according to information disclosed by WikiLeaks (cables sent by the US Embassy in Mexico, from March 2009 to January 2010),<sup>11</sup> 90 percent, comes from the stockpiles of armies in the volatile region of Central American, and are smuggled into Mexico through the porous borders with Guatemala and Belize.<sup>12</sup> It is necessary to add that thousands of weapons used in the armed conflict of that sub region in the 1970s and 1980s were not properly disabled and destroyed, and have been moving around the region’s black market.<sup>13</sup>

At this point one wonders whether Mexico is now exposed to a large-scale problem of explosive violence in populated areas. The use of explosive weapons certainly is not new, but their level of conspicuity has reached a higher mark. Hand grenades have been used different ways and scale, and now are being found by the thousands: up to 17,159 units of explosives and hand grenades have been seized during the administration of president Felipe Calderon, as compared to 151 during the presidency of his predecessor Vicente Fox.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Aristegui Noticias, “83 mil muertes en el sexenio de Calderón: semanario Zeta,” 27 November 2012, <http://aristeginoticias.com/2711/mexico/83-mil-muertes-en-el-sexenio-de-calderon-semanario-zeta/>

<sup>6</sup> La Jornada, “UN, ready to get involved and support displaced persons due to violence”, 19 October, 2011; “There are 100 thousand displaced persons from their communities in Mexico, NGO states,” 4 February, 2012; “One million 600 thousand displaced persons”, 7 March, 2012, [www.jornada.unam.mx](http://www.jornada.unam.mx)

<sup>7</sup> UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (2012) Mission Report on Mexico, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, <http://www.hchr.org.mx/files/Desaparicion%20forzada%20WEB.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Proceso, “Con Zeta de Muerte” (First Part), Special edition No. 37, April 2012.

<sup>9</sup> Los Angeles Times. “Drug Cartel’s new weaponry means war”, 15 de Marzo de 2009, [www.latimes.com](http://www.latimes.com).

<sup>10</sup> As referred on the Article 7 Transparency Report of the Convention on the prohibition of the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and on their destruction: United Nations Office at Geneva, [http://www.unog.ch/80256EE600585943/\(httpPages\)/A5378B203CBE9B8CC12573E7006380FA?OpenDocument](http://www.unog.ch/80256EE600585943/(httpPages)/A5378B203CBE9B8CC12573E7006380FA?OpenDocument)

<sup>11</sup> CNN Mexico, “WikiLeaks: Armamento pesado del narco llega a Mexico de Centroamerica,” 29 March 2011, <http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/03/29/wikileaks-armamento-pesado-del-narco-llega-a-mexico-de-centroamerica>; Fox News Latino, “Mexican cartels get heavy weapons from CenAm, U.S. cables say,” 30 March 2011, <http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2011/03/30/mexican-cartels-heavy-weapons-centam-cables-say/#>; La Jornada, “Las armas mas letales llegan al narco mexicano desde Centroamerica: EU,” 29 March 2011, <http://wikileaks.jornada.com.mx/notas/las-armas-mas-letales-llegan-al-narco-mexicano-desde-centroamerica-eu>

<sup>12</sup> Border with Belize, 250 kilometers; border with Guatemala, 962 kilometers, CIA World Factbook, Mexico, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mx.html>

<sup>13</sup> De León, Carmen R. (2006) Small arms and development in post-conflict societies. Notebook No. 6. IEPADES: Guatemala.

<sup>14</sup> El País, “Intoxicados...” Op. Cit.

### ***Incidents involving hand grenades in Mexico***

**15 September 2008.** During the celebration of Mexico's national day in the Melchor Ocampo square of the city of Morelia, a direct attack with at least two hand grenades was directed against the crowd by members of a criminal organization related to drug-trafficking. Eight people were killed and 130 more were injured.<sup>15</sup>

**12 December 2011.** In a clandestine palenque (cockfight arena) in the community of Cerro Gordo in the southern state of Veracruz, a hand grenade was tossed among the public. The explosion of this device produced, according to reports, somewhere between 9 and 20 injured people were injured. One person was killed. This is a sort of attack that has become increasingly common, sometimes accompanied by gunfire.<sup>16</sup>

**18 July 2011.** An eleven-year-old shepherd boy found an abandoned hand grenade in a rural area of the municipality of Petlalcingo, in the central state of Puebla, while he was herding sheep. Presumably he manipulated it and exploded. As a consequence, the young boy lost at least one leg and one arm; possibly his genitalia too. Apparently, the abandoned hand grenade belonged to the Mexican army.<sup>17</sup>

**4 March 2012.** Nuevo Laredo, in northern Mexico along the US border, has been one of the most violent towns of the country, with elevate numbers of homicides—including large numbers of migrants on their way to the United States—at least 10 people were injured, and an 18-month-old baby was killed, when members of an armed band launched a hand grenade in the parking place of a Wal-Mart supermarket during a shootout with a rival group. Among those injured there were other children.<sup>18</sup>

The increase in the presence of organized crime and its levels of violent action throughout the country, has not just led to the increase in the number of police agents, but also to the growing intervention of the armed forces in policing. At the start of the actual presidential administration, in December 2006, there were 20,000 members of the armed forces in such tasks. By the early months of 2010 the number increased to 94,000<sup>19</sup>. On the other hand, the number of federal police agents went from 6,500 in 2006, to 36,000 in 2011, while national-security related expenditure went from 5.3 billion USD to 10.8 billion USD.<sup>20</sup> A side-effect has resulted from this escalation, which is the concomitant beefing up of means of combat that state police organizations have embarked on. In 2008 a National Agreement on Security was reached between states and the federal government that led to the authorization<sup>21</sup> for the use of military weaponry, including hand grenades by law-enforcement agencies, who were considered as outgunned by the drug-cartels' fighting forces. The first applications to reduce this so-called "caliber gap" were made in 2009. Some of these have already been approved and the states of Zacatecas, Guerrero, Coahuila, and Yucatan have thus received hundreds of hand grenades. Ever since, additional requests have also been filed by Aguascalientes, Baja California,

<sup>15</sup> El Universal, "Reportan estallido de granadas en Morelia," 15 September, 2008, <http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/538664.html>; La Jornada, "Fueron Los Zetas responsables de los atentados del 15-S en Morelia: PGR," 27 September 2008,

<http://www.lajornadamichoacan.com.mx/2008/09/27/index.php?section=politica&article=003n1pol>; Zócalo de Saltillo, «Morelia recuerda... y llora, » 9 September 2009, <http://www.zocalo.com.mx/seccion/articulo/morelia-recuerda...-y-llora>

<sup>16</sup> Novedades de Quintana Roo, "Estalla granada en un palenque clandestino," 12 December 2011, <http://www.novenet.com.mx/seccion.php?id=234099&sec=2&d=12&m=12&y=2011>

<sup>17</sup> Milenio, "Le estalla granada de fragmentación a pastor," 19 July 2011, [http://puebla.milenio.com/cdb/doc/noticias2011/b7ee2d743f396305d89c9a2a02791708?quicktabs\\_1=0](http://puebla.milenio.com/cdb/doc/noticias2011/b7ee2d743f396305d89c9a2a02791708?quicktabs_1=0)

<sup>18</sup> El Economista, "Estalla granada en Walmart de Nuevo Laredo," 5 March 2012, <http://eleconomista.com.mx/seguridad-publica/2012/03/05/estalla-granada-walmart-nuevo-laredo>

<sup>19</sup> La Jornada, "Alaban diputados la labor leal y patriótica de las fuerzas armadas", 19 de febrero de 2010, [www.jornada.unam.mx](http://www.jornada.unam.mx)

<sup>20</sup> El País, "Intoxicados por la violencia," 4 February 2012, [http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2012/02/04/actualidad/1328390894\\_823809.html](http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2012/02/04/actualidad/1328390894_823809.html)

<sup>21</sup> The Federal Firearms and Explosives Law, in its article 11, establishes that hand grenades and other military weapons are for the exclusive use of armed forces. Ley Federal de Armas de Fuego y Explosivos, <http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf/102.pdf>

Chihuahua, Guanajuato, Jalisco, and Veracruz. In two years the Defense Ministry has received requests for a total of 5,972 hand grenades.<sup>22</sup> There have not been reports about their use yet.

The resulting state police arsenals and potential use by their agents, pose important challenges in the form of stockpile security, as well as the risk of indiscriminate attacks and possible “collateral damage” in populated areas. What are the stockpile-management standards in force? How feasible it is to use these weapons in policing in populated areas?

All this is happening at a moment when the federal government has taken steps in response to the recommendations by the National Human Rights Commission for the prevention of human rights violations as a consequence of improper use of force in law enforcement duties. On 23 April, the Attorney General’s Office, and the ministries of Defense, Navy, Interior and Public Security made public<sup>23</sup> their protocols for the legitimate use of force for law enforcement personnel. These are based on the principles of legality, necessity, proportionality, rationality, and opportunity. These protocols give specific guidelines for federal agents, soldiers and marines in response to cases when the force can be used, but do not make express reference to hand grenades or explosive weapons in general.<sup>24</sup>

Now what remains left to see is how will the allocation of hand grenades to state police forces and the guidelines on the use of force for federal military and police agencies will be compaginated.

### *The state of explosive violence in populated areas in Mexico*

What is the extent of the incidents involving hand grenades? What is the number of casualties and the conditions of victimization? Taking as a time framework the one-year period from March 2011 to March 2012—which is the bloodiest period during the present situation of violence with 121 casualties—we have that there have been 56 incidents involving hand grenades (a monthly average of 4.6 cases), resulting in 121 casualties (a monthly average of 10.1): 13 dead (11 percent), 108 injured (89%).

<sup>22</sup> Milenio, “Dotaran de granadas a los policías de Yucatan,” 9 January 2009, <http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/impreso/8517658>; Milenio, “Dotan a 4 estados de granadas para la lucha antinarco,” 21 February 2011, <http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/noticias2011/c9f7284947a4566849c43f30119cc5e2>

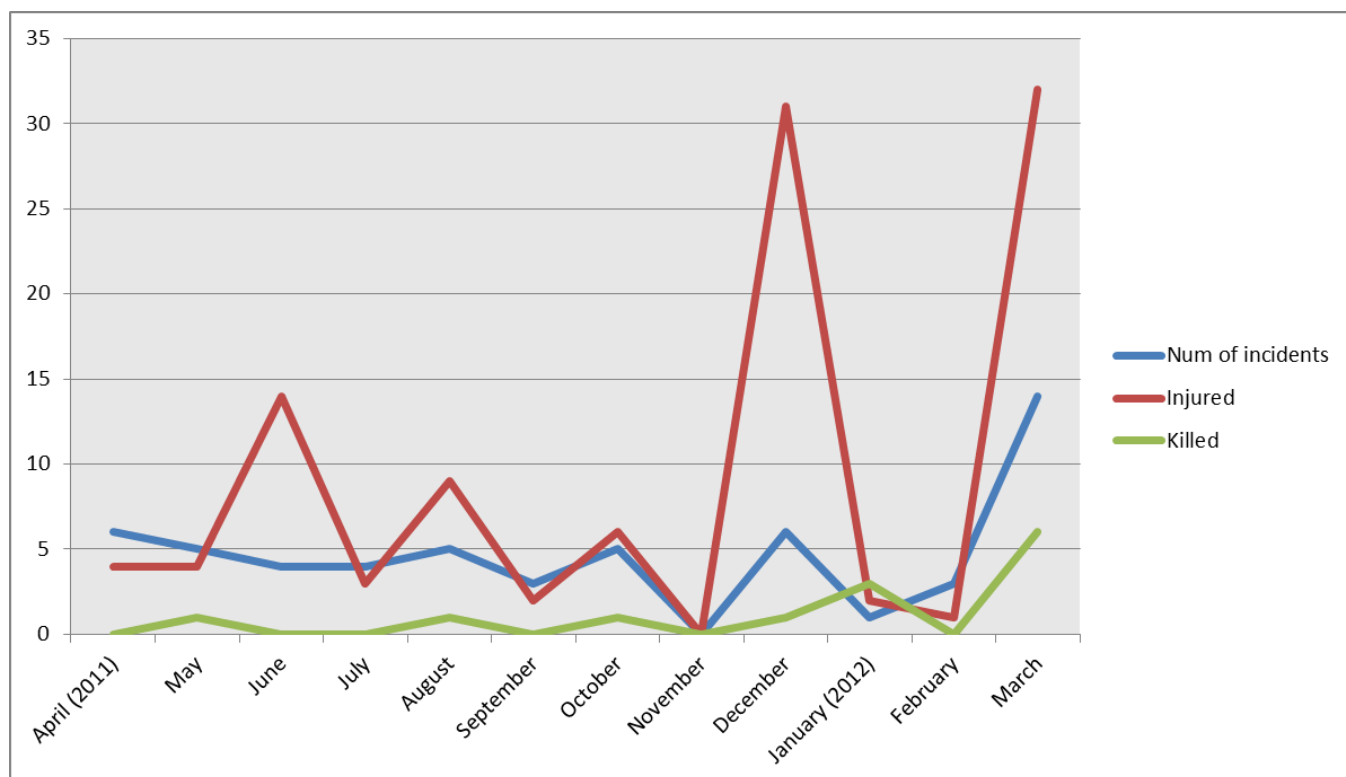
<sup>23</sup> La Jornada, “Presenta Calderon protocolos para el uso de la fuerza publica,” 24 April 2012, <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2012/04/24/politica/008n1pol>; Milenio, “Publica PGR, Ejercito, Marina y SSP lineamientos sobre uso de la fuerza,” 23 April 2012, <http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/noticias2011/6b37fd578400d92dfab9aa898f723491>

<sup>24</sup> Protocols on the use of force available at the Official Gazette of the Federation, for the navy, [http://www.dof.gob.mx/nota\\_detalle.php?codigo=5244757&fecha=23/04/2012](http://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5244757&fecha=23/04/2012); the army and air force, [http://www.dof.gob.mx/nota\\_detalle.php?codigo=5244755&fecha=23/04/2012](http://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5244755&fecha=23/04/2012); and the Public Security Ministry, [http://www.dof.gob.mx/nota\\_detalle.php?codigo=5244759&fecha=23/04/2012](http://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5244759&fecha=23/04/2012)



Month	Num of incidents
April (2011)	6
May	5
June	4
July	4
August	5
September	3
October	5
November	0
December	6
January (2012)	1
February	3
March	14
	<b>56</b>

Number of incidents per month,  
March 2011-March 2012



Trend in incidents and casualties from March 2011 to March 2012

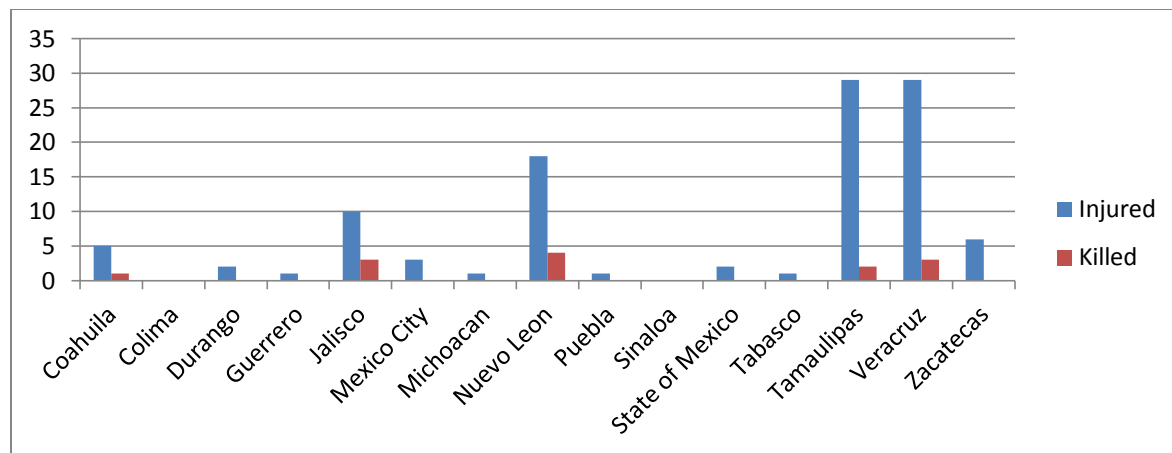
In general there was a decreasing trend in the number of incidents and of casualties until the end of 2011 and in March 2012 when there was a sharp rise in the number of incidents (December=6; March=14), and in the number of casualties (December=32; March=38).

Of the total 32 federal entities, incidents have been reported in 15 of them. The most affected states are Tamaulipas and Nuevo Leon, with 31 and 22 casualties, respectively.<sup>25</sup>

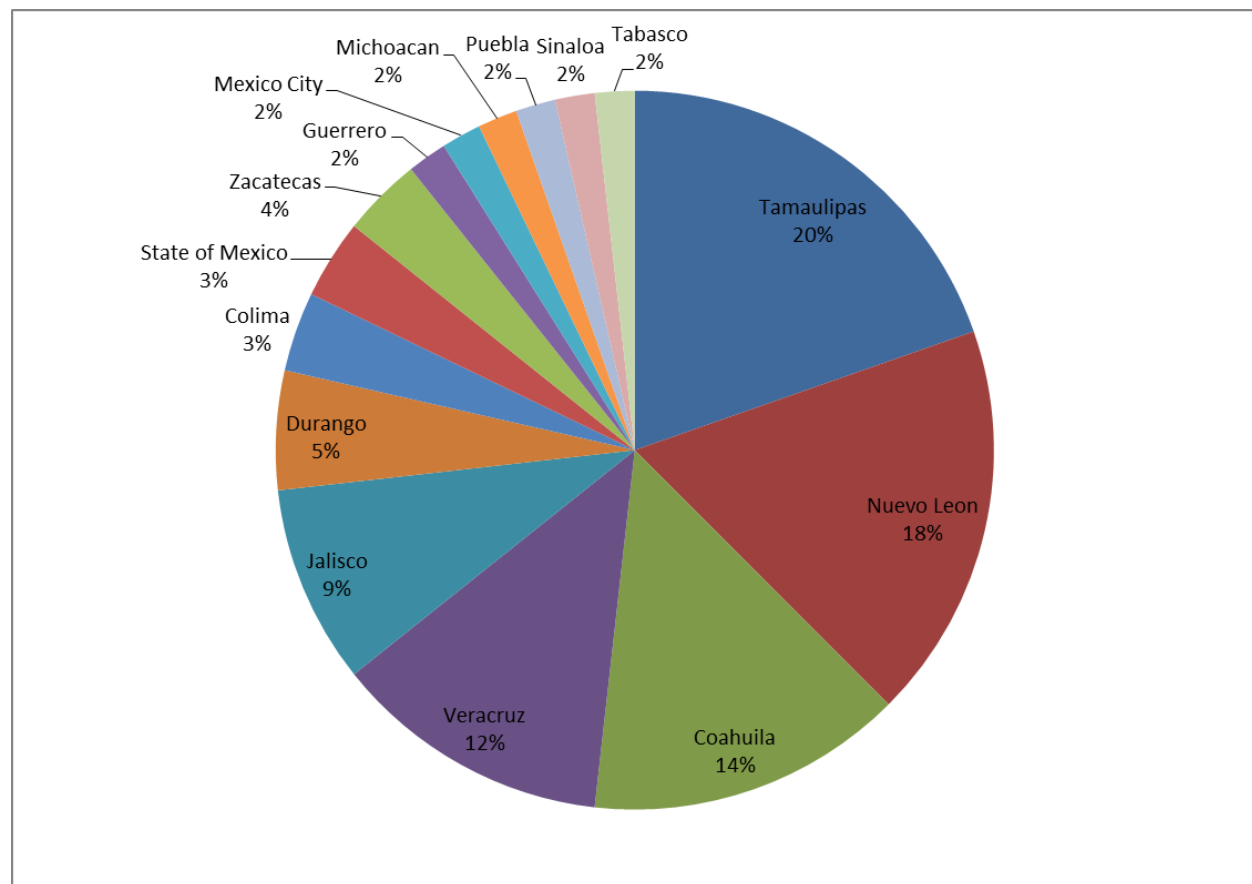
State	Num of incidents	Injured	Killed	Total casulties
Coahuila	8	5	1	6
Colima	2	0	0	0
Durango	3	2	0	2
Guerrero	1	1	0	1
Jalisco	5	10	3	13
Mexico City	1	3	0	3
Michoacan	1	1	0	1
<b>Nuevo Leon</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>22</b>
Puebla	1	1	0	1
Sinaloa	1	0	0	0
State of Mexico	2	2	0	2
Tabasco	1	1	0	1
<b>Tamaulipas</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>31</b>
Veracruz	7	29	3	32
Zacatecas	2	6	0	6
	<b>56</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>121</b>

Number of incidents and casualties in affected states 2011-2012

<sup>25</sup> Tamaulipas and Nuevo Leon are among the states with the highest number of homicides for every 100,000 people, 32.4 and 29.1, respectively. The national figure is 14.6. The average for Latin America and the Caribbean is 27.5. El País, "Mexico resiste entre dos fuegos," 4 February 2012, [http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2012/02/04/actualidad/1328389811\\_396763.html](http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2012/02/04/actualidad/1328389811_396763.html); AOA; SEHLAC (2012) Capacidades Estatales para Atender el Problema de la Violencia Armada. El Caso de America Latina y el Caribe. AOA: London, p. 18



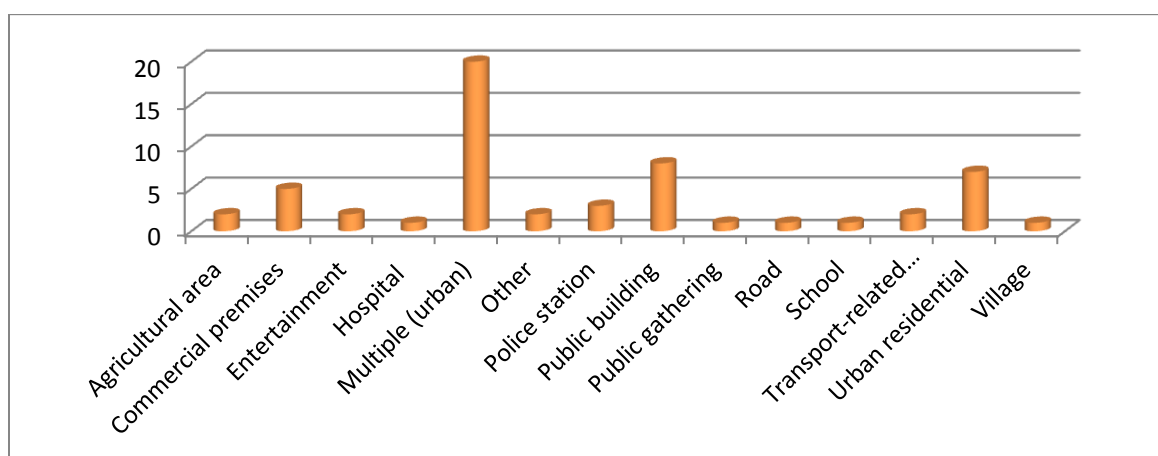
Number of casualties in affected states, 2011-2012



Percentage of the total of incidents in affected states, March 2011-March 2012



Mexico is basically an urban country, with 76.8% of its population living in cities of at least 2,500 people,<sup>26</sup> and most of armed violence is concentrated in urban areas--as in the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean.<sup>27</sup> Hence, most of combats between drug cartels, and between these and State forces, take place in significantly populated areas, mostly for the territorial control of sales points and trafficking routes. At least 48% of the incidents occurred in specifically urban environment,<sup>28</sup> while 5% happened in areas that are basically rural.<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, 32% of the incidents occurred in public places and gatherings.<sup>30</sup>



Number of incidents by event location, 2011-2012

There is no particular moment of the day for the occurrence of the hand grenade incidents, as there is a quite even distribution from morning to night:

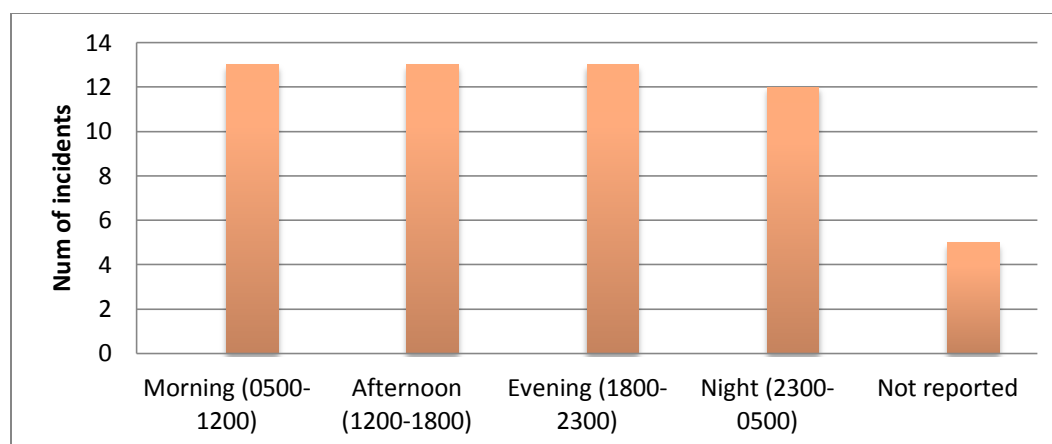
<sup>26</sup> Instituto Nacional de Geografía y Estadística, Volumen y Crecimiento: Población total en zona urbana por países seleccionados, 1950 a 2010, " Available at: <http://www.inegi.org.mx/sistemas/sisept/Default.aspx?t=mdemo114&s=est&c=23643>

<sup>27</sup> Capacidades Estatales ...Op Cit

<sup>28</sup> Categories: multiple (urban); urban residential

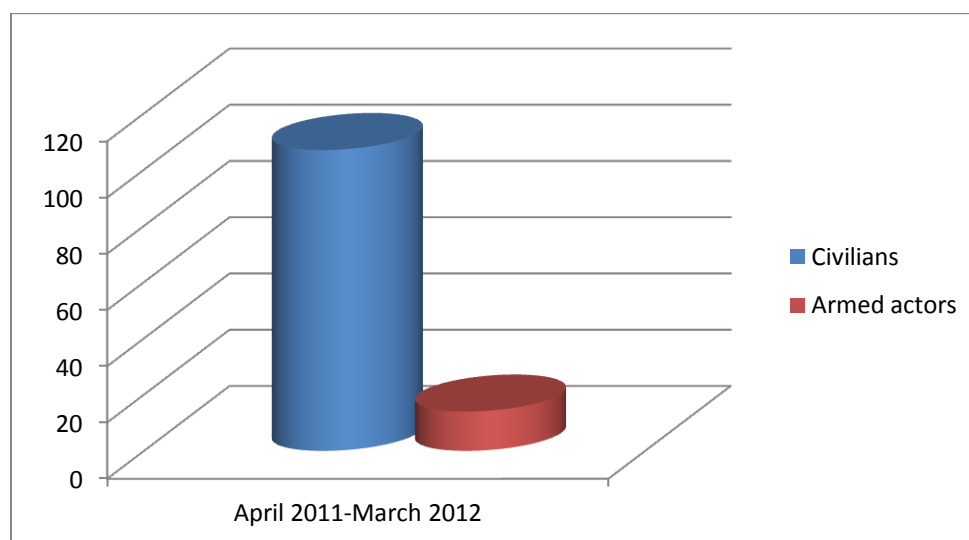
<sup>29</sup> Categories: Agricultural area; village

<sup>30</sup> Categories: Commercial premises; entertainment; hospital; public buildings; public gathering; school.



Number of incidents by time of the day, 2011-2012

Explosive violence with hand grenades has become a humanitarian problem even if many attacks are directly aimed against police agents and soldiers. Out of the total number of attacks only a minority affected law-enforcement personnel and their facilities (5%) and only 14 out of 121 of the total number of victims (12%) were law members of the armed or police forces.<sup>31</sup> Between 2006 and 2012 430 federal police agents; 174 members of the army and air force; 120 agents of the Attorney General's Office, and 42 members of the navy have been killed in the context of the present situation of large-scale armed violence in Mexico.<sup>32</sup>

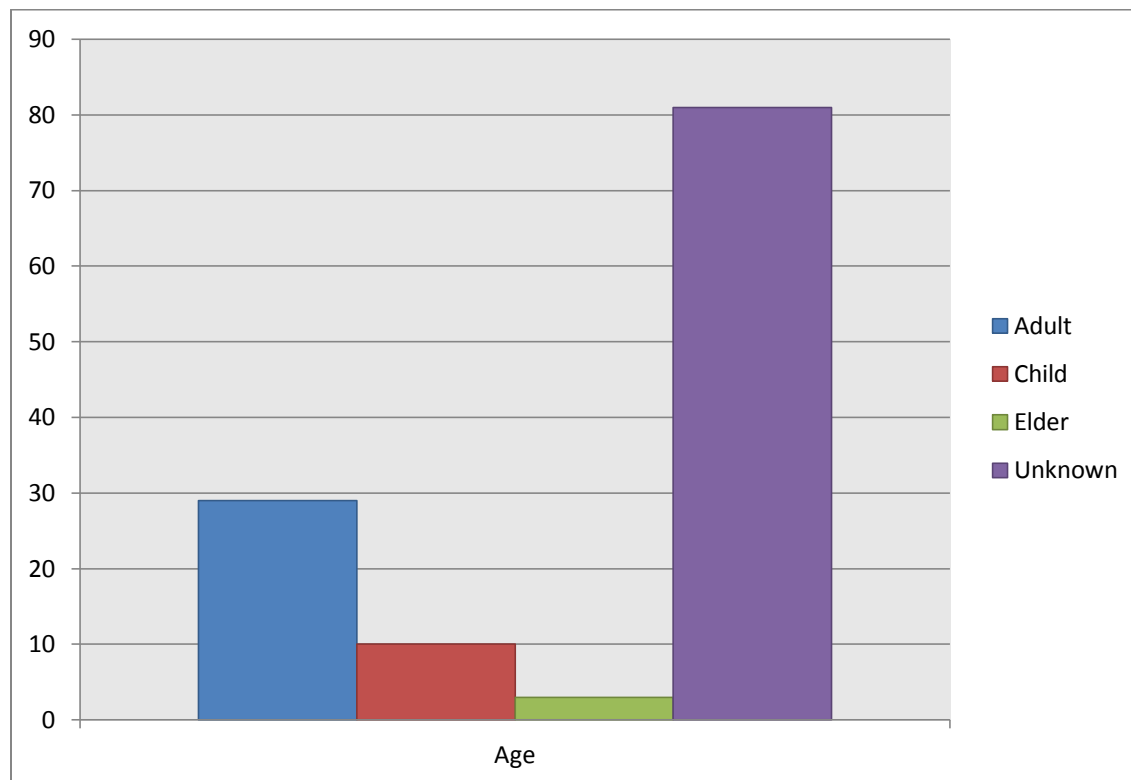


It is complicated to have a more defined picture of the profile of the victims both in terms of age and sex groups, as in the majority of cases these characteristics are not reported, 56 percent and

<sup>31</sup> Category: Armed actors.

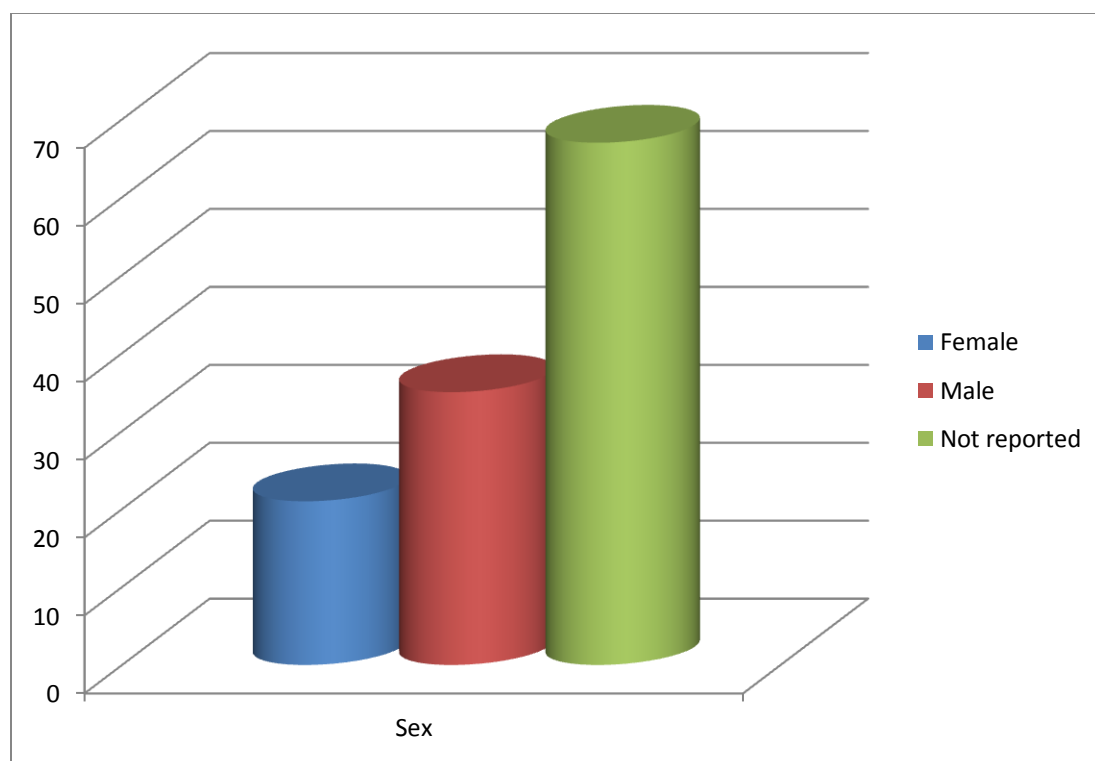
<sup>32</sup> Milenio, "Van 430 federales y 174 militares muertos en la lucha antinarco," 9 May 2012, [www.milenio.com](http://www.milenio.com)

54 percent, respectively. Yet out of what is reported we could indicate that 69% of the victims are adults (29), 7% are children (10), and 7% elder (3).



Number of victims by age group, 2011-2012

The majority of the reported victims are men, with 63% of the cases (35), as compared to the 37% of cases among women (21).



Number of incidents by sex, 2011-2012

In the face of this growing exposition of the population to these explosive devices should authorities not start considering that coping with the problem of explosive violence in populated area requires something more than the creation of special bomb-squads? What happens when explosive weapons are not immediately found? Has the moment come for the State and civil society organizations to develop risk education programs in those states or municipalities where hand grenades are commonplace? During the period under study there were reports of 23 cases of unexploded hand grenades, three of them due to malfunction. These were duds from attacks or were simply found lying around, ready to be found, even by children.

### **Cases of unexploded or abandoned hand grenades**

**10 October 2011.** *In trying to escape from the police after threatening people inside a bar in Mexico City, an individual hurled a hand grenade which fell inside a garden outside the bar but did not explode. Afterwards the local police bomb squad (Zorros) disposed of the explosive device.*<sup>33</sup>

**15 December 2011.** *The headquarters of the municipal police forces of Lagos de Moreno and of San Juan de los Lagos (Jalisco state) were under grenade attack, producing a toll of five injured people. In the latter attack, one hand grenade did not explode, but was collected by the state bomb squad (Grupo Tedax).*<sup>34</sup>

**5 March 2012.** *An unexploded grenade was found abandoned in the premises of a police station of the city of Los Mochis, in the western state of Sinaloa during repairs following an attack by assassins on board armored pick-up trucks. Army personnel arrived on the spot to deactivate the grenade.*<sup>35</sup>

**23 March 2012.** *Students from elementary school Hermenegildo Galeana, in the city of Acapulco (Guerrero state) were evacuated after an abandoned hand grenade (not activated) was found on the street in the neighborhood, where the previous night an attack took place that resulted in the death of a minor and in two more injured persons. Police and military personnel sealed off the area and collected the device.*<sup>36</sup>

### **Conclusions**

We may conclude that there is a phenomenon of violence perpetrated with hand grenades in Mexico which is becoming a constant within the context of the current situation of armed violence in the country, specifically in populated areas during most of the year. The most affected part of Mexico includes those regions that have been hardest hit by the escalation in the means and methods of combat that attempt against basic humanitarian principles, basically in the north of the country.

There certainly have been moments in which the number of incidents and casualties have drastically risen. In terms of casualties, the vast majority are injured male adults. It is necessary to underscore that almost all the victims are unarmed civilians as collateral damage from indiscriminate attacks, but also from what amounts to terrorist aggressions.

What are the possible scenarios for the coming years in relation to explosive violence in populated areas in Mexico? Given the current dimensions of this problem and the expansion of the cartel violence--both spatial and in human costs--we might expect in the short term, to witness a level of explosive violence in populated areas in similar terms as in the period under analysis, or perhaps even an intensification.

<sup>33</sup> Excélsior, "Arroja granada fuera de un bar en Iztapalapa," 10 October 2011, [http://www.excelsior.com.mx/index.php?m=nota&id\\_nota=773735](http://www.excelsior.com.mx/index.php?m=nota&id_nota=773735)

<sup>34</sup> Informador, "Atacan a granadazos sedes policiales de Lagos y San Juan de los Lagos," 15 December 2011, <http://www.informador.com.mx/jalisco/2011/344921/6/atacan-a-granadazos-sedes-policiales-de-lagos-y-san-juan-de-los-lagos.htm>

<sup>35</sup> El Universal, "Lanzan granadas contra SP de Los Mochis," 5 March 2012, <http://www.zocalo.com.mx/seccion/articulo/lanzan-granadas-a-seguridad-publica-de-los-mochis>

<sup>36</sup> Milenio, "Hallan granada y suspenden clases en escuela de Acapulco," 23 March 2012, <http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/noticias2011/69508a81215c1944961855c574c1abe7>

Of course as long as there are deficiencies in military stockpile management in Central America, as is the case in Honduras, the availability and use of military-grade weapons, including grenades for use by criminal groups in Mexico will remain constant.

Yet, in order to have a clearer view of this phenomenon and to develop more precise and complete scenarios, analysis should extend the review of cases at least all the way to 2006, including testimonies from those actors directly involved and affected: victims and their families, law-enforcement agents, and rescue personnel. This would help to assess the economic impact and the conditions of the assistance to the victims beyond first aid.

Although not as numerous as incidents involving hand grenades, improvised explosive device incidents deserve particular attention due to their implications and level of damage and destruction, and should be part of a thorough research on explosive violence in Mexico. There is also a need to determine what types of hand grenades are being used and what their source is.

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