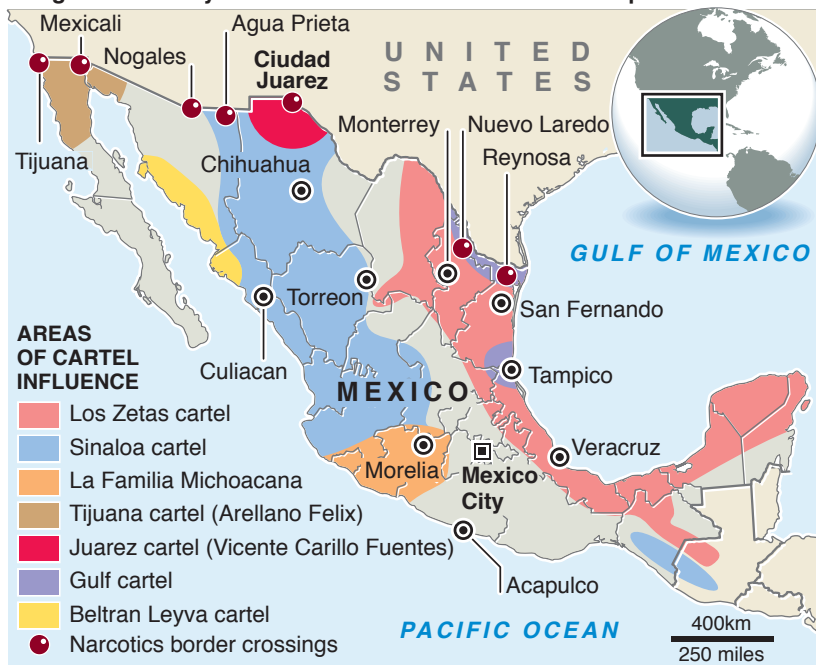


Mexico's drug violence escalates

Nearly four years after President Felipe Calderon launched a crackdown against drug traffickers, the cartels have transformed the epicentre of the drug war – the city of Ciudad Juarez – into the murder capital of the world



Early 2010: Los Zetas – mercenary army of **Gulf cartel**, led by **Heriberto “El Lazca” Lazcano** (right) – breaks away, aligning with **Juarez, Tijuana, and Beltran Leyva cartels**



Feb: Gulf cartel joins forces with **Sinaloa cartel** – led by **Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman Loera** (left) – and **La Familia Michoacana**, forming **New Federation** to fight Zetas’ alliance

