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## Mexico: 28,000 killed in drug violence since 2006 (2:05 p.m.)

By The Associated Press

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MEXICO CITY - More than 28,000 people have been killed in drug violence since President Felipe Calderon launched a crackdown against cartels in 2006, a government official said Tuesday.

Intelligence agency director Guillermo Valdes also said authorities have confiscated about 84,000 weapons and made total cash seizures of \$411 million in U.S. currency and \$26 million worth in pesos (330 million pesos).

Valdes released the statistics during a meeting with Calderon and representatives of business and civic groups. Attendees are exploring ways to improve Mexico's anti-drug strategy.

Drug violence in Mexico "is still growing," Valdes said.

The most recent official toll of the drug war dead came in mid-June, when the attorney general said 24,800 had died. He did not specify a time frame. The government does not regularly break down murder statistics, but leading newspapers who kept their own counts say last month was the deadliest yet under Calderon: According to national daily Milenio, 1,234 were killed in July.

The Mexican government says most victims were involved in the drug trade.

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