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Washington Post: What's behind Mexico's military buying binge?

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by [Elias Alias](#) , [June 17, 2015](#)

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Soldiers keep watch on a military truck outside a ranch where a gunfight between gunmen and federal forces erupted in Michoacan on May 22, 2015. REUTERS/Alan Ortega

What's behind Mexico's military buying binge?

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http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2015/06/15/whats-behind-mexicos-military-buying-binge/?tid=trending_strip_2

Excerpts:

The Washington Post * By Joshua Partlow June 15

MEXICO CITY--It started with 27 rail cars full of ammunition rolling down the tracks into Mexico.

That load of 30 million bullets was soon followed by fleets of Black Hawk helicopters and thousands of Humvees: in all more than \$1 billion of American military equipment sold to Mexico within the past two years.

In late 2013, Mexico asked the United States if it could fill a large order of 5.56 mm ammunition, and the embassy helped deliver the trainloads of \$6 million worth of bullets within 100 days, the official said.

“That case really kind of broke the ice,” he said. “They saw the responsiveness of what we could do as a partner in foreign military sales. And they liked it.”

That sale paved the way for even larger purchases: orders for more than two dozen UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters for the Air Force and Navy, and more than 2,200 Humvees. Since Peña Nieto came to office in late 2012, Mexico has purchased about \$1.5 billion in equipment through the government’s military sales program, plus \$2 billion more through U.S. companies, said Inigo Guevara Moyano, a Mexican defense consultant based in Washington.

“All of these buys have been to replace existing systems that averaged 30 to 40 years old and drained budgets through high maintenance costs and poor availability,” he said. He noted that defense spending also rose sharply under Peña Nieto’s predecessor, Felipe Calderon, and that it reflects the “maturing military-to-military relationship at the institutional level, regardless of who is in power.”

(snip)

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Salute!

Elias Alias, editor

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