



## Fact Sheet on Sig Sauer Arms Exports to Mexico

- In March 2015, the Department of State notified Congress of a Direct Commercial Sales license agreement for Sig Sauer, Inc. to sell Sig Sauer rifles and pistols for the Mexican military and federal and state police forces, for a value of up to \$266 million.<sup>1</sup> The license is valid until February 2024, according to a portion of it released by the Mexican Navy.
- The State Department clarified that only \$1.1 million of the agreement is for services, technical data, and other materials; the remaining \$265 million is for “kits” to assemble semi-automatic pistols and submachine guns.<sup>2</sup> Based on unit costs for Sig Sauer weapons acquired by the Mexican Navy since 2015,<sup>3</sup> the full execution of this agreement would mean the transfer of nearly 200,000 firearms – an enormous amount.
- According to Mexico’s formal declarations under the Arms Trade Treaty, Sig Sauer delivered 12,236 firearms to Mexico in 2015-2017: 3,179 assault rifles; 696 machine guns; and 8,361 pistols.<sup>4</sup>
- Mexican Navy marines practiced using Sig Sauer MPX submachine guns, capable of firing 850 rounds a minute, at a joint exercise with U.S. forces in Camp Pendleton, California in July 2018.<sup>5</sup>
- As of September 2018, Sig Sauer and other New Hampshire manufacturers had exported \$33 million in guns and gun parts to Mexico since March 2015, according to Census Bureau trade records — meaning that Sig Sauer has at least \$232 million left in sales to make before its license expires in 2024.<sup>6</sup>
- The U.S. exported on average \$30 million annually in firearms and gun parts to Mexico in 2013-2017.<sup>7</sup>
- The Mexican Secretariat of National Defense (SEDENA, the Mexican Army) also acquired an unknown number of Sig Sauer pistols in 2008 – presumably from an earlier agreement.<sup>8</sup>
- Sig Sauer, Inc., with production facilities in Newington, New Hampshire, is incorporated in Delaware and affiliated with Sig Sauer in Germany. Its five-member board of directors includes two German nationals who live in Germany.<sup>9</sup>

### What Groups in Mexico Use Sig Sauer Weapons?: End Use Controls

- SEDENA is the entity in Mexico that receives all arms imports on behalf of federal, state, and local police forces, as well as for ministerial police and the Army itself.
- From 2006 to 2016, SEDENA itself sold 12,541 Sig Sauer firearms (rifles and pistols) to police and private entities, for nearly \$10 million, according to SEDENA. Nearly two third of these (8,099) were transferred to state and local police in 2014-2016, including in states with extensive charges of police collusion with organized crime, such as Chihuahua, Veracruz, Tamaulipas, and Morelos. The states where police received the greatest number of Sig Sauer firearms since 2006 were Mexico State (2,319), Michoacán (2,005), Hidalgo (1,369), Querétaro (736), and Tamaulipas (508).<sup>10</sup>
- Between 2007 and August 2015, SEDENA purchased and distributed 4,624 Sig Sauer pistols, including 2,832 pistols to state and local police forces. The remaining 1,792 pistols were re-sold by SEDENA to private security companies, to the Bank of Mexico, and to private individuals.<sup>11</sup>
- According to the Department of State, it imposes no geographic restrictions on weapons that the United States exports to Mexico. The Department of State reviews arms export license applications, and may deny transactions outright based on credible reports of human rights violations by the end users of the weapons, although there is no indicate that it has done so. In addition, the arms export license does not contain within it an exclusion of Mexican police or military units as end users.<sup>12</sup>
- U.S. officials conduct some inspections of weapons transferred to Mexican armed forces, known as Blue Lantern inquiries. Of 52 Blue Lantern checks on U.S.-transferred firearms in Mexico from 2010 through 2016, Mexico failed (findings were “unfavorable”) 17 inquiries – nearly a third of them. The reasons include inaccurate inventories and non-responsiveness of weapons recipients.<sup>13</sup>
- Firearms also arrive in Mexico illegally, especially through trafficking over the border from the United States. It was one such illegally-trafficked pistol used in the killing of Marisela Escobedo, the mother of a murdered young woman who was holding a protest vigil at the state government building in Chihuahua in 2010 when she was killed with a Sig Sauer 9mm pistol. The murderer reportedly admitted that he had killed 11 other people with the same weapon.<sup>14</sup>

### Sig Sauer, Inc. and the Trump Administration

- As Donald Trump prepared to launch his presidential campaign, he visited Sig Sauer headquarters in New Hampshire. His sons Eric and Donald Jr. and toured Sig Sauer in February 2016, and posed for photos with the Sig Sauer representatives at the Shot Show in Las Vegas in January 2016.<sup>15</sup>
- In August 2016, Sig Sauer donated \$100,000 to GunVote, a PAC that campaigned actively for the candidacy of Donald Trump.<sup>16</sup>
- In January 2017, Sig Sauer contracted with Bob Grand, an associate of Vice-President Mike Pence, and his partner Craig Burkhardt to lobby for U.S. exports of firearms.<sup>17</sup>

### Other Information

- Other U.S. weapons producers also sell firearms to Mexican armed forces and police, though in much smaller quantities than the 2015 Sig Sauer agreement.<sup>18</sup>
  - Colt Defense was licensed to sell a thousand 5.56mm Carbine rifles for use by Mexican state forces in April 2015, for \$3 million.
  - Glock was licensed to sell 11,231 pistols (mostly 9mm) to the Mexican military for resale to other police and military entities in Mexico in February 2016.
  - US Ordnance, Inc. was licensed to sell a million dollars worth of grenade launchers and machine guns for use by the Mexican Navy in February 2016.
- U.S. companies have sold billions of dollars worth of military equipment and weaponry besides firearms since 2012, including Blackhawks, other aircraft, and thousands of HUMVEEs.<sup>19</sup>
- Other nations also sell firearms to the Mexican armed forces, including Italy, Israel, and Sig Sauer's country of origin, Germany, which restricts arms exports to Mexico.

This fact sheet was updated in November 2018 by the project on U.S. Arms in Mexico, of Global Exchange. For more information, see [www.stopusarmstomexico.org](http://www.stopusarmstomexico.org), or contact John Lindsay-Poland at [johnlindsaypoland@gmail.com](mailto:johnlindsaypoland@gmail.com).

<sup>1</sup> Department of State, "FY 15-16 Foreign Military Sales and Direct Commercial Sales Congressional Notifications for Mexico" September 2016, posted at: <https://stopusarmstomexico.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/20160928-Mexico-FMS-DCS-CN.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Secretary of State Julia Frifield, letter to Senator Patrick Leahy, 18 January 2017, posted at: <https://stopusarmstomexico.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/State-Dept-End-Use-Controls-Mexico-18-Jan-2017.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Secretariat of (Mexican) Navy, response to public records request, folio no.: 00001300009518, February 28, 2018. Posted at: [https://stopusarmstomexico.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/0001300009518\\_065.pdf](https://stopusarmstomexico.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/0001300009518_065.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Mexico annual reports on imports of small arms for calendar years 2015-2017, posted at: <https://thearmstradetreaty.org/annual-reports.html?templateId=209826>.

<sup>5</sup> "La Infantería de Marina de México exhibe sus nuevos Fusiles Sig Sauer 5,56mm," at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DdAye2uu51w>.

<sup>6</sup> Data drawn from [usatrade.census.gov/data](http://usatrade.census.gov/data).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> "Adquisición de Aeronaves, Armamento y Vehículos adquiridos por esta Secretaría de Estado en el periodo 2006-2018" at: [https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/322654/ADQS.\\_DE\\_AERONAVES\\_ARMAMENTO\\_Y\\_VEHICULOS\\_ABR.\\_18.pdf](https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/322654/ADQS._DE_AERONAVES_ARMAMENTO_Y_VEHICULOS_ABR._18.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Sig Sauer, Inc. Annual Report 2016 to Secretary of State of New Hampshire, posted at: <https://stopusarmstomexico.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Sig-Sauer-NH-2016-rpt.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> SEDENA, 17 February 2017, response to information request, posted at: <https://stopusarmstomexico.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/SEDENA-Sig-Sauer-doc-feb2017.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Some other states that received Sig Sauer pistols were: State of Mexico (1,572); Queretaro (237); Hidalgo (200); San Luis Potosi (123); Zacatecas (3); Sonora (44). SEDENA, 21 August 2015, response to information request. Posted at: <https://stopusarmstomexico.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ifai-sig-sauer-ago-2015.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Frifield, *op.cit.*

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> "Lucrative exports to the drug war," *taz.de*, 14 December 2016, at: <http://www.taz.de/!5365433/>

<sup>15</sup> Josh Harkinson, "Trump's Connection to the Maker of the Weapon Used in Orlando," *Mother Jones*, 15 June 2016, at: <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2016/06/donald-trump-sig-sauer-gun-orlando-mass-shooting>.

<sup>16</sup> National Shooting Sports Foundation press release, 1 August 2016, at <http://www.nssfblog.com/sig-sauer-further-nssf-gunvote-effort-with-100000-contribution/>

<sup>17</sup> Isaac Arnsdorf, "Bob Grand signs Sig Sauer," *Politico*, 26 January 2017, at <http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/politico-influence/2017/01/bob-grand-signs-sig-sauer-218428>.

<sup>18</sup> "FY 15-16 Foreign Military Sales," *op.cit.*

<sup>19</sup> "What's Behind Mexican Military's Buying Binge?" *Washington Post*, 15 June 2015.