Fifteen Police Officers Killed by Gang Ambush in Jalisco

Mexico City, April 08 (teleSUR-RHC) A criminal attack against federal police forces left 15 officers dead and five wounded, confirmed local authorities from the western state of *Jalisco* on Tuesday. The police unit was ambushed late Monday on the road linking *Guadalajara* with the tourist resort of *Puerto Vallarta*, reported the local attorney general on social media.

This was not the first time federal forces have been ambushed in recent months, but Monday's attack killed the most officers since the 2010 killing of 12 officers on the border of *Michoacan* state.

Although the local attorney general's office did not explicitly name the local criminal gang suspected of the ambush this time, the (failed) attack upon the security commissioner's convoy on March 30 was allegedly launched by the *Jalisco* New Generation group, confirmed the attorney. One week earlier, the drug cartel's leader Heriberto Acevedo Cardenas, aka "El Gringo," was killed during a police assault, probably leading to retaliation measures like the security commissioner's attack, explained the attorney. Such ambushes against public forces have happened regularly since May 2014.

The *Jalisco drug* cartel, formed in 2010, seems to have significantly grown in power in the region, undermining the "war on drugs" policy implemented under the conservative governments of Felipe Calderon (2006-2012) and Enrique Peña Nieto (2012-present), which includes the militarization and privatization of public security.

Insight Crime warned last October that the *Jalisco* cartel, like other organized crime groups, has sought to take control of the region by infiltrating local police and political elites. In this sense, the killing of drug leaders like "El Gringo" only contributes to the fragmentation of the cartel, not its disappearance.

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