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Mexico's Southern Flank: The "Third" U.S. Border

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Abstract

Mexico's crime-ridden southern frontier has become a veritable third U.S. border, as a constant flow of Central Americans and others cross into Mexico, often en route to the United States. As the number of unlawful migrants surges, their characteristics are changing: recent apprehensions include nationals of Caribbean, Middle Eastern, and Asian nations, and foreigners linked to terrorism are using Mexico as a thoroughfare to the United States. Mexico's immigration department is hindered by a number of factors in stanching this flow, and Mexican officials have only begun to publicly recognize the severity of the problem. Washington, too, must wake up to the security threat posed by Mexico's soft underbelly.

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