Dear President Biden,

We, the undersigned organizations from both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border, are deeply concerned about guns and violence. We've joined together in our appeal to you to prevent further sale of U.S. firearms to Mexican security force units that are implicated in grave human rights violations, including massacres, and collusion with organized crime in Mexico.

Last January 22, sixteen Guatemalan migrants and three Mexicans were massacred in Camargo in Mexico’s Tamaulipas state, just miles from the Texas border. The young Guatemalans - the youngest was 15 - had left their homes in a poor indigenous Mam community in Guatemala just ten days earlier. Mexican authorities have arrested 12 state police officers from a Special Operations Group (GOPES) for carrying out the massacre. GOPES officers are armed with U.S.-exported assault rifles produced by Sig Sauer, Inc.

The “Camargo massacre” is among the most recent -- of tens of thousands of murders and millions of acts of intimidation all across Mexico and the region, many committed by local and state police illegally using arms exported from the USA -- against civilians.
The current end use control system has proven ineffective in stopping US weapons shipments to state police involved in notorious human rights violations. For example, even after the disappearance of 43 student teachers in Iguala, Guerrero in 2014 where local police used Colt weapons during this event, the Mexican army still certified to Colt Manufacturing that additional exported long guns were destined for Guerrero state police in February 2015.

In the case of Tamaulipas, the United States has exported weapons for police use for at least the last six years. According to Mexican Army documents, more than a thousand US-produced Sig Sauer rifles were sold for use by police in the state of Tamaulipas between 2014 and May 2019. And despite repeated atrocities committed by uniformed police and military, the flow of guns has continued unabated.

In September 2019, Tamaulipas state police murdered eight people execution style in Valles de Anahuac, a neighborhood in Nuevo Laredo just over the border from Texas. The UN High Commission for Human Rights investigated, and police were charged but have not been tried for their role in the killings. Nevertheless, Tamaulipas state police received 600 more Sig Sauer rifles and 250 Sig Sauer handguns within three months after these events, according to receipts that Stop US Arms to Mexico obtained from the Mexican army.

In March and April 2018, the United Nations and others reported that Mexican naval special forces forcibly disappeared dozens of residents of Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, on the Texas border. Mexican Naval special forces received Sig Sauer-exported rifles and were trained in their use by the U.S. Marines at Camp Pendleton in July 2018.

Your “Executive Order on Creating a Comprehensive Regional Framework to Address the Causes of Migration” rightly pledged to prevent “violence, extortion, and other crimes perpetrated by ...criminal organizations and promote human rights.” In order to achieve these goals, we strongly urge your Administration to 1.) institute active measures to stem the smuggling to Mexico of weapons purchased in the United States and 2.) prevent the federally licensed exportation of rifles and pistols from U.S. companies to police and military units known to collude with organized crime or violate the human rights of Mexicans or migrants.

A first step is to ensure that all end user certificates for firearms exports correctly identify who are the ultimate buyers of U.S. weapons. Currently, these certificates falsely identify the end user as the Mexican army, even when the actual recipients are state and local police.
We applaud your Administration’s review of arms sales and in particular the suspension of arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates due to illegal use against civilians in the war in Yemen. We urge you to extend this end use review to Mexico, where U.S.-supplied arms are used for purposes that directly contravene our national interest of promoting peace, prosperity, and stability in our region.

Peace in the US-Mexico region will not be achieved if we fail to curb armed violence. Please consider a moratorium on the delivery of firearms to Mexican police and military units that have been credibly linked to gross abuses of human rights or who have or colluded with organized crime.

It is in the interest of both the United States, Mexico, and our Central American neighbors that we suspend such exports until reliable and effective end use controls are established.

Cc: Antony Blinken, US Secretary of State
    Secretary of Commerce

Sincerely,

Woman’s National Democratic Club
March For Our Lives
Win Without War
Brady Campaign
Washington Office on Latin America
Amnesty International USA
Latin America Working Group
Global Exchange
Center for International Policy
North American Congress on Latin America
Newtown Action Alliance
Red de Pueblos Trasnacionales
Friendship Office of the Americas
CODEPINK
Latin America Solidarity Coalition of Western Massachusetts
Mennonite Central Committee - Mexico
Seminario Bautista de México
Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
School of the Americas Watch (SOAW)
Arms Control Association
Shadow World Investigations
States United to Prevent Gun Violence
Center for Civilians in Conflict
Journey4ward
Physicians for the Prevention of Gun Violence
Survivors Lead
Vision Quilt
Ceasefire Oregon & Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation
Healing 4 Our Families & Our Nation
Honor with Action Coalition
Virginia Center for Public Safety
Survivors Empowered
Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom US
Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES)
Dominican Sisters in Committed Collaboration
Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Violence Policy Center
Women for Weapons Trade Transparency
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas - Justice Team
Global Health Partners
Presbyterian Peace Fellowship
Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters, USA-JPIC
Chicago Religious Leadership Network on Latin America (CRLN)
Alliance for Global Justice
Immigrant Justice Task Force, Wellington Ave United Church of Chris
Anahuac Institute of Public Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, Anahuac University Mexico
North Shore Baptist Church
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach
First United Church of Oak Park
Team ENOUGH
Office of Global Health, Medical College of Wisconsin
Spanish Education for Women
Sisters of St. Joseph Third Order of St. Francis
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces
School Sisters of Notre Dame, Central Pacific Province
School Sisters of Notre Dame Cooperative Investment Fund
Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart
Sisters of St, Joseph of Rochester Justice & Peace Office
Society of Helpers
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet LA
Sisters of Mercy
Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary
Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur EW
Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment
Franciscan Action Network
Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart
Sisters, Home Visitors of Mary
Caroline House Bridgeport, CT
Social Ministry of Our Lady of Lourdes
Servants of Mary: U.S./Jamaica Community
Sisters of Saint Joseph of Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, PA
Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Western American Area
Notre Dame Sisters
Sisters of St Francis of the Neumann Communities
Franciscan Sisters of the Poor
Wheaton Franciscans
Sisters of the Presentation, Dubuque, IA
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
Erie Benedictines for Peace
Sisters of Mercy, Ada, Oklahoma
Gun Sense Vermont
Presentation Sisters San Francisco CA
Adorers of the Blood of Christ, US Region
Task Force on the Americas
Sisters of Bon Secours, USA
New Mexicans to Prevent Gun Violence
Kichwa Nation
Comité de Familiares de Migrantes del Centro de Honduras (Cofamicenh)
Casa Monarca. Humanitarian Aid for Migrants
Comisión Mexicana de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos
Derechos de la Infancia y la Adolescencia
Centro de Estudios Ecuménicos, A.C.
Hacia la vida digna para todas las personas, ReverdeSer Colectivo A.C.
Organizacion Popular Independienta ac
Pastoral Social, Iglesia Anglicana
Centro Presbiteriano por la Paz
IEPC /OBF Costa Rica /OBF Regional
Centro de Investigación Multidiciplinario para el Desarrollo (CIMDE)
Derechos de la Infancia y la Adolescencia
Pastoral de Migración Iglesia Luterana Mexicana
Red Jesuita con Migrantes Latinoamérica y el Caribe
Programa Casa Refugiados
Marea Azul A.C.
Colombia Humana
Colectivo Agrario Abya Yala
Red Somos una América Somos Abya Yala
Denver Justice and Peace Committee
Comunidad Ecuménica Martin Luther King
Food not bombs
Instituto para las Mujeres en la Migración (IMUMI)
Red Jesuita con Migrantes Centro y Norte América (RJM-CANA)
Galería MUY