



**HARVARD**  
UNIVERSITY

# SECURITY POLICY AND VIOLENCE CRISIS IN MEXICO

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Conference: Drugs, Violence, and  
Drug Policy in Colombia and Mexico

March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012

- I. The Security Policy during President Calderon's Administration (2006-2012)

### Pillar One: Joint Operations to Support State and Local Governments

- Massive deployment of troops (and increasingly the Federal Police) in public security duties in areas blighted by organized crime-related violence.
- About 45 thousand troops are currently deployed in such operations.
- Federal forces perform raids and drug seizures, they staff road checkpoints, and they have even taken over the local police, including traffic control. They have captured a record number of cartel 'kingpins'.

## Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

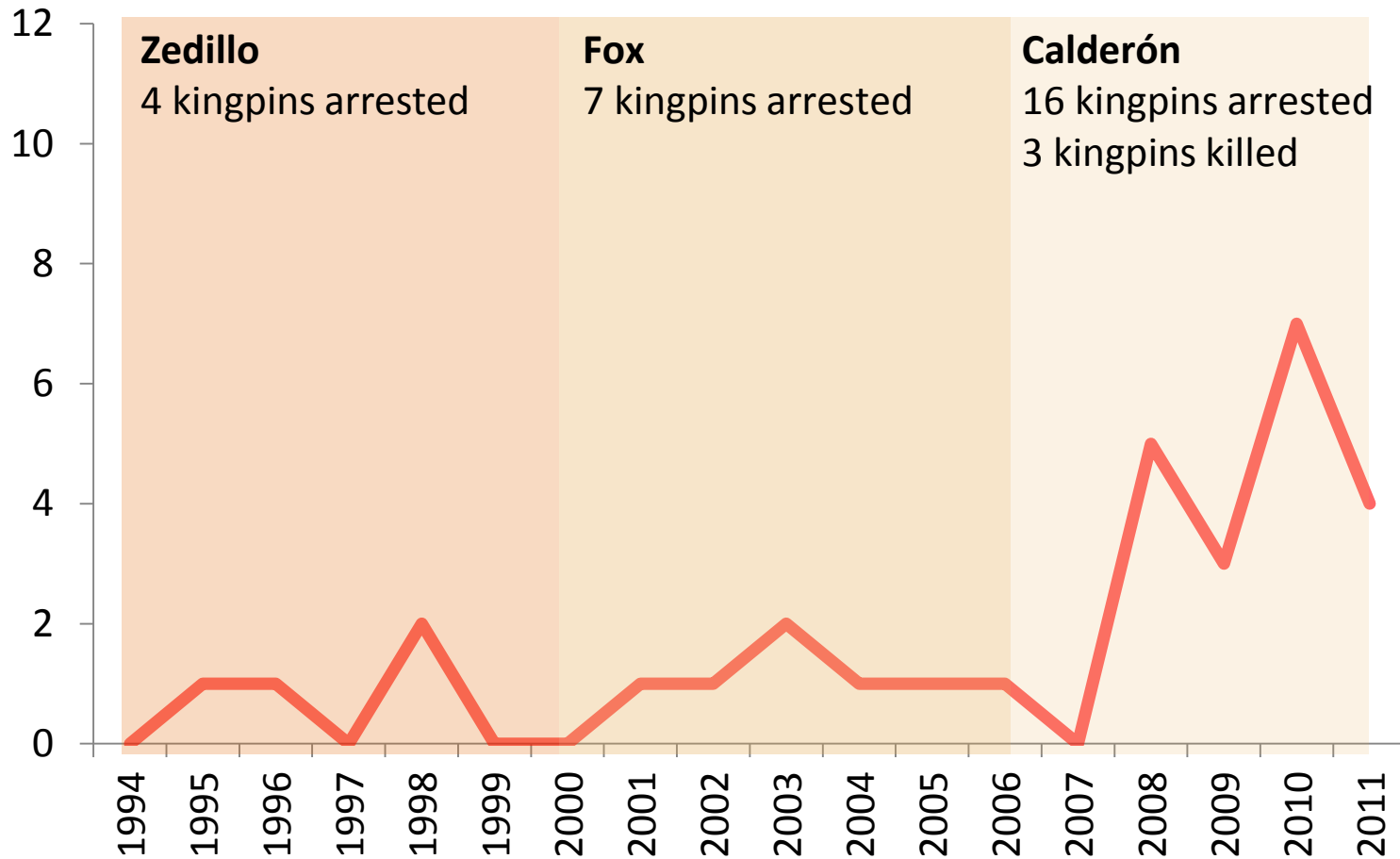
### Pillar One: The First Eight Joint Operations of Calderon's Administration to Support State and Local Governments

#### *Large Scale Joint Operations*

<b>State</b>	<b>Month</b>
Michoacán	December 2006
Baja California	January 2007
Guerrero	January 2007
Nuevo León	January 2008
Tamaulipas	January 2008
Chihuahua	April 2008
Durango	May 2008
Sinaloa	May 2008

# Security, Drugs and Violence: An Overview

*Kingpin Captures or Killings*

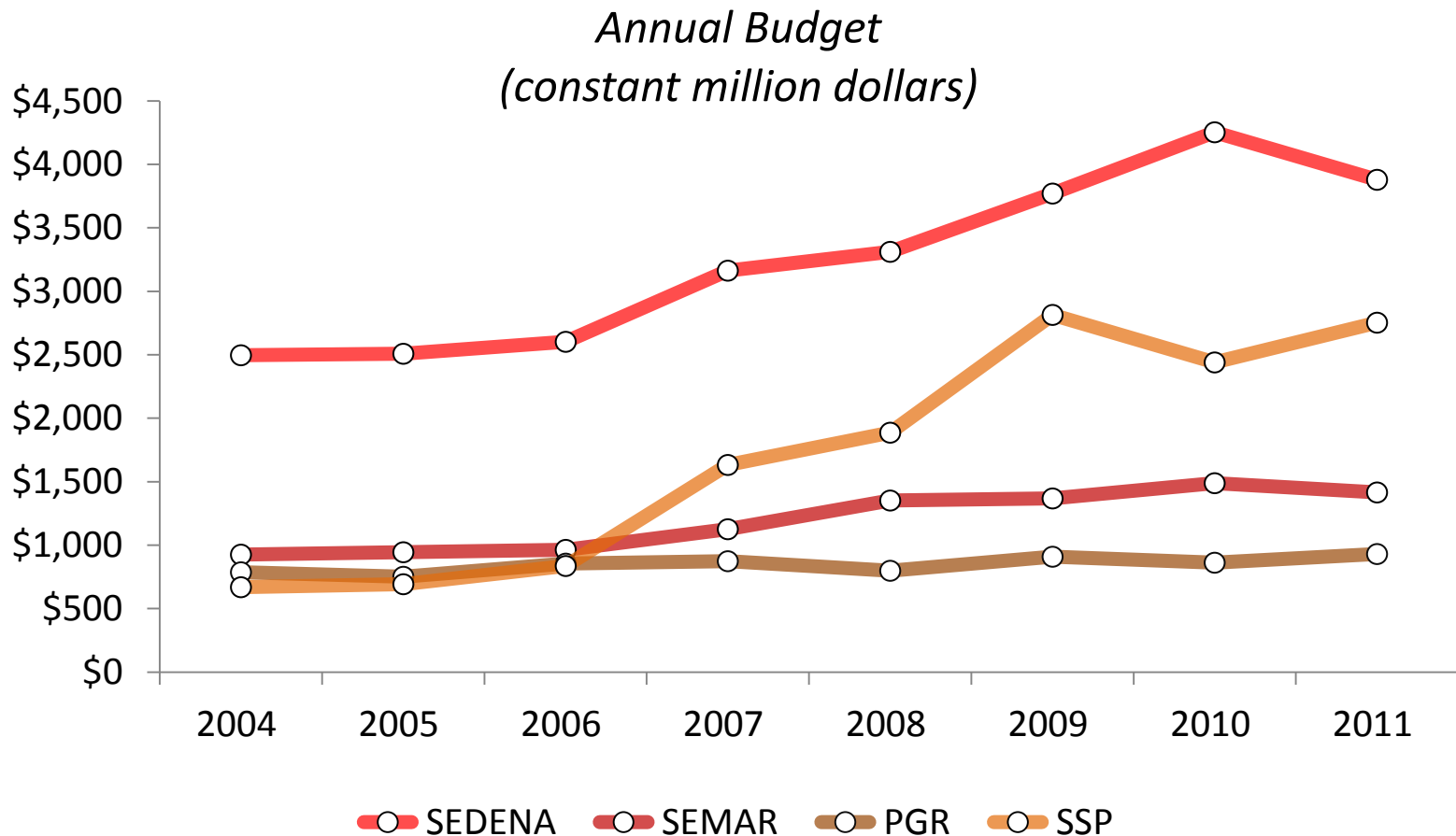


### Pillar Two: 2. Build-up technological and operational capabilities of law enforcement agencies

- From 2006 to 2012 the security budget of the Federal Government doubled in real terms.
- The main institution building effort has focused in the Federal Police, that grew from a 22,000 in 2007 to a 35,000 force in 2011.
- Plans to reform the judiciary and to curb criminal control over prisons have yet to be implemented.

# Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

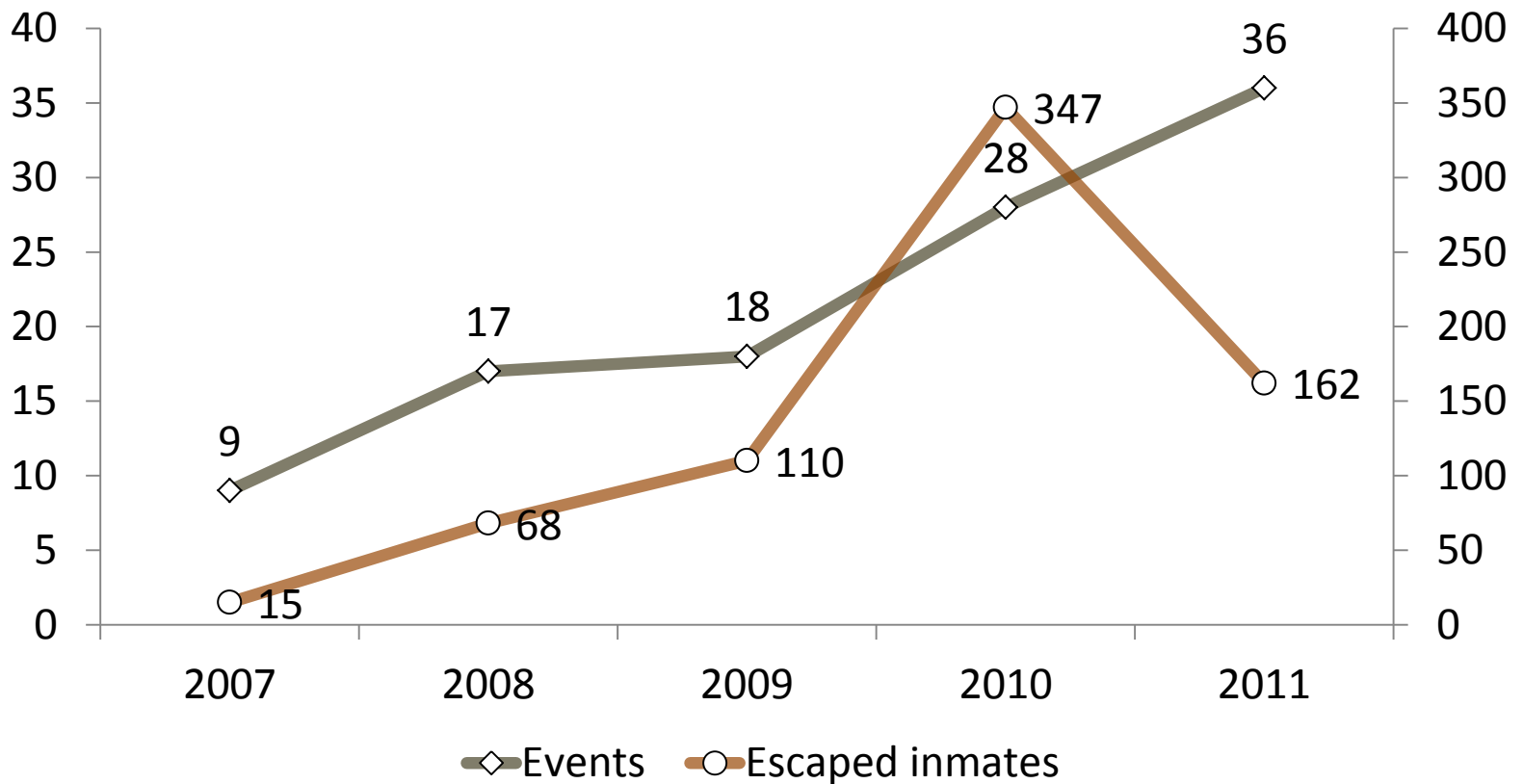
## Pillar Two: 2. Build-up technological and operational capabilities of law enforcement agencies



# Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

## Pillar Two: 2. Build-up technological and operational capabilities of law enforcement agencies

*Jailbreak events and escaped inmates*





### Pillar Three: Legal and Institutional Framework Reform

- Security is the only realm where the President's legislative agenda has found overall congressional support.

#### *Key Security Bills*

<b>Bill</b>	<b>Status</b>
Law for the confiscation of assets used to commit crimes	Approved 2009
Law of the National Public Security System (information sharing procedures, security funds distribution, etc.)	Approved 2009
Anti-kidnapping law	Approved 2010
<b>Unified state police commands</b>	<b>Rejected</b>
Law against money laundering	Pending approval

### Pillar Four: An Active Crime Prevention Policy

- There are no large federally funded programs aimed at preventing recruitment activities from illegal organizations
- Marginal resources have been devoted to programs that seek to provide a safer environment at schools, and to improve facilities such as parks in crime-ridden neighborhoods.
- Data from organized crime-related deaths and from detentions has not been processed in order to provide a diagnosis that could allow designing crime-prevention targeted social policies.

### Pillar Five: Strengthening International Cooperation

- Merida Initiative resources roughly account to 4 percent of Mexico's Federal Government security expenditure.
- US agents are not allowed to carry weapons in Mexico. Therefore, close assistance of US agents in ground operations (akin to that which has taken place in Colombia) is not feasible.
- The US support Mexico's security strategy basically through intelligence services —stemming from Mexican criminals in US prisons— which have allowed the capture of several kingpins.

## Current strategy in short

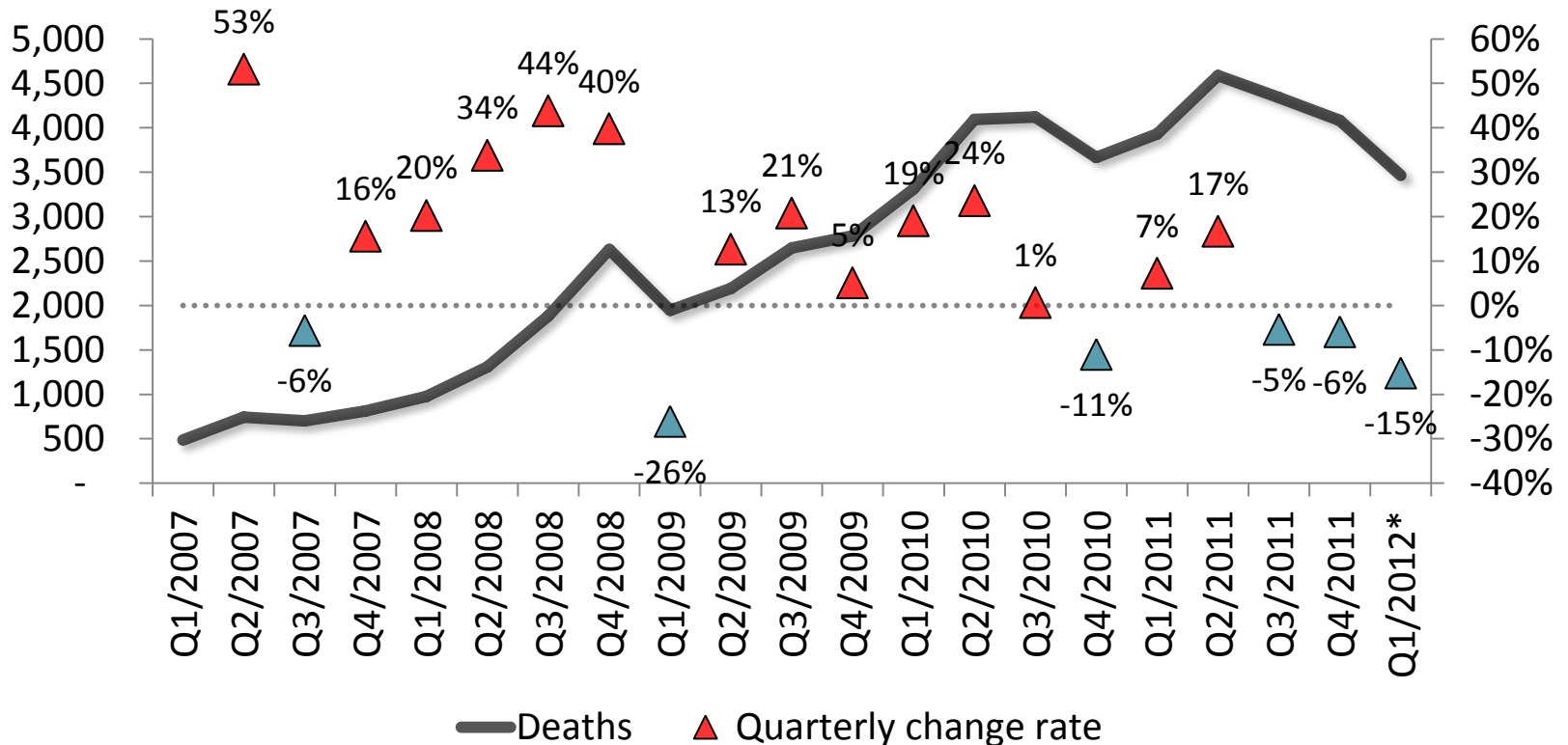
- Federal forces have replaced state and local police departments and are tackling criminal organizations, particularly capturing kingpins.
- Mexico is creating a stronger Federal Police, but it lacks a reliable judiciary and corrections system.
- The US supports Mexico's strategy against organized crime providing information. Otherwise, foreign support to Mexico's security policy is marginal.

## II. Organized Crime-Related Violence Trends

## Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

- Organized crime-related violence increased dramatically from 2008 to 2010. During 2011 it stabilized, and it may have started a decreasing trend.

*Organized Crime-Related Deaths per Quarter  
and Quarterly Growth Rate*

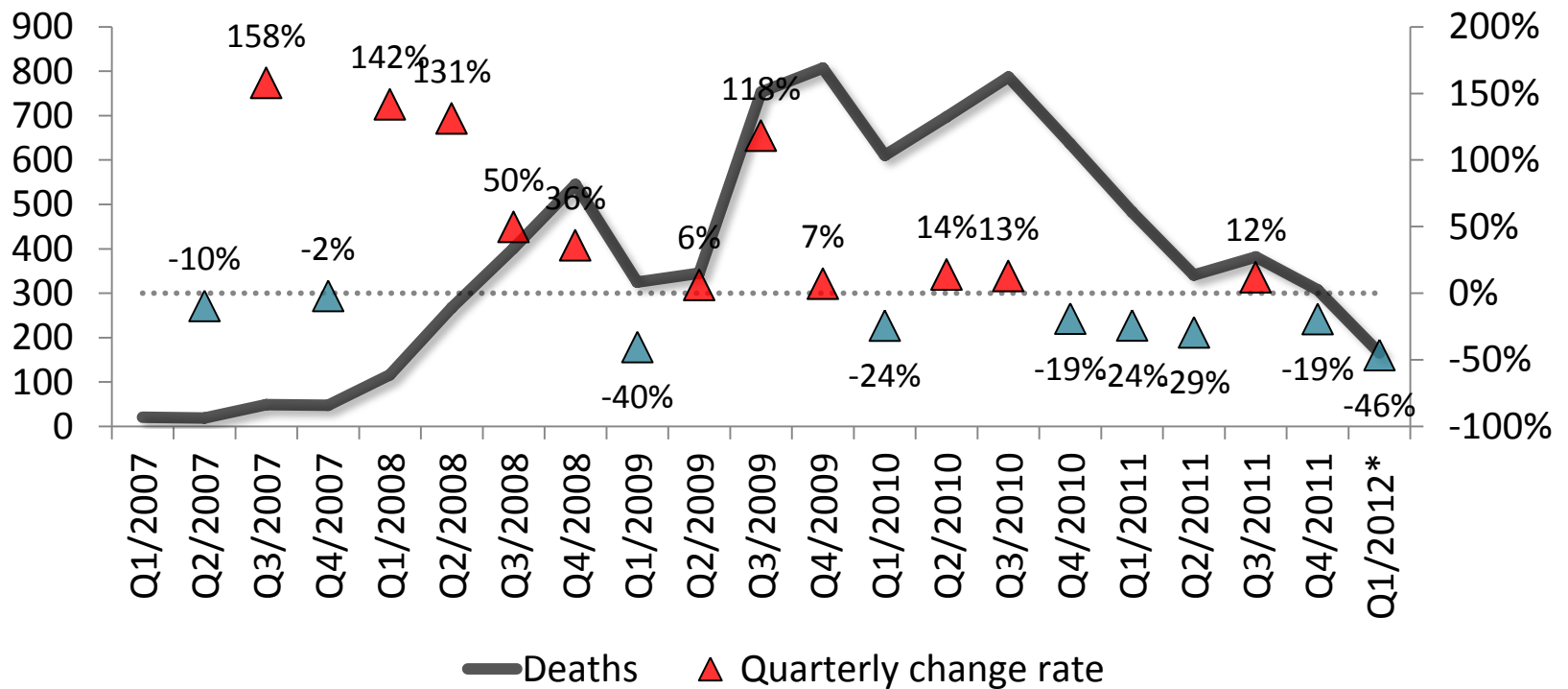


\*Estimation based on data for January and February 2012.

## Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

- Violence decrease is already notorious in Ciudad Juárez. The city that suffered the more severe violence crisis earlier in the administration.

*Organized Crime-Related Deaths per Quarter and Quarterly Growth Rate in Ciudad Juárez*



\*Estimation based on data for January and February 2012.

### The Government's Strategy and Organized Crime-Related Violence

The strategy failed to address three dynamics that link criminal organizations to violence.

1. Systematic kingpin captures and killings create an 'agency problem' within organizations, which lead to cartel splits, and violent conflicts between new competitors in the criminal market.
2. Violence is an epidemic phenomenon (initial outbreaks usually become chronic and expand geographically).
3. Certain activities of criminal organizations thrive in violent environments.



## The Agency Problem

- Criminal organizations do not have access to legal dispute settlement mechanisms. Hence transactions rely heavily on bosses' personal reputation.
- When kingpins of a cartel are arrested, second tier members are no longer able to enforce agreements based on personal reputation, and may face financial losses.
- Second tier members may also perceive that working for an organization under constant attack is too risky.
- Under these circumstances, second tier members have stronger incentives to split from the cartel and create their own criminal networks.

# Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

## *Fragmentation of Mexican Cartels*

<i>2006</i>	<i>2007-2009</i>	<i>2010 (1<sup>st</sup> Semester)</i>	<i>2010 (2<sup>nd</sup> Semester)</i>	<i>2011</i>
	Cártel de Sinaloa	Cártel de Sinaloa	Cártel de Sinaloa	Cártel de Sinaloa
Cártel de Sinaloa	Cártel de los Beltrán Leyva	Cártel del Pacífico Sur	Cártel del Pacífico Sur	Cártel del Pacífico Sur
				La Mano con Ojos
				La Nueva Administración
		Cártel de la Barbie	Cártel Independiente de Acapulco	Cártel Independiente de Acapulco
Cártel de Juárez	Cártel de Juárez	Cártel de Juárez	Cártel del Charro	Cártel del Charro
Cártel de Tijuana	Cártel de Tijuana	Cártel de Tijuana	Cártel de Juárez	Cártel de Juárez
Cártel de Tijuana	Facción de El Teo	Facción de El Teo	Cártel de Tijuana	Cártel de Tijuana
Cártel del Golfo	Cártel del Golfo-Zetas	Cártel del Golfo	Cártel del Golfo	Cártel del Golfo
		Los Zetas	Los Zetas	Los Zetas
La Familia Michoacana	La Familia Michoacana	La Familia Michoacana	La Familia Michoacana	Los Caballeros Templarios
				Los Incorregibles
				La Empresa
Cártel del Milenio	Cártel del Milenio	Cártel del Milenio	La Resistencia	La Resistencia
			Cártel de Jalisco-Nueva Generación	Cártel de Jalisco-Nueva Generación
-	-	-	-	La Nueva Federación para Vivir Mejor
6	8	10	11	16

## Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

- The arrest policy, cartel fragmentation and violent drug wars are also among the causes of the development of protection markets and mafias:

**Drug wars**

**Reconversion.** Cartels crushed and displaced from drug trafficking engage in protection provision.

**Forced relocation.** Traffickers resettle and engage in protection provision.

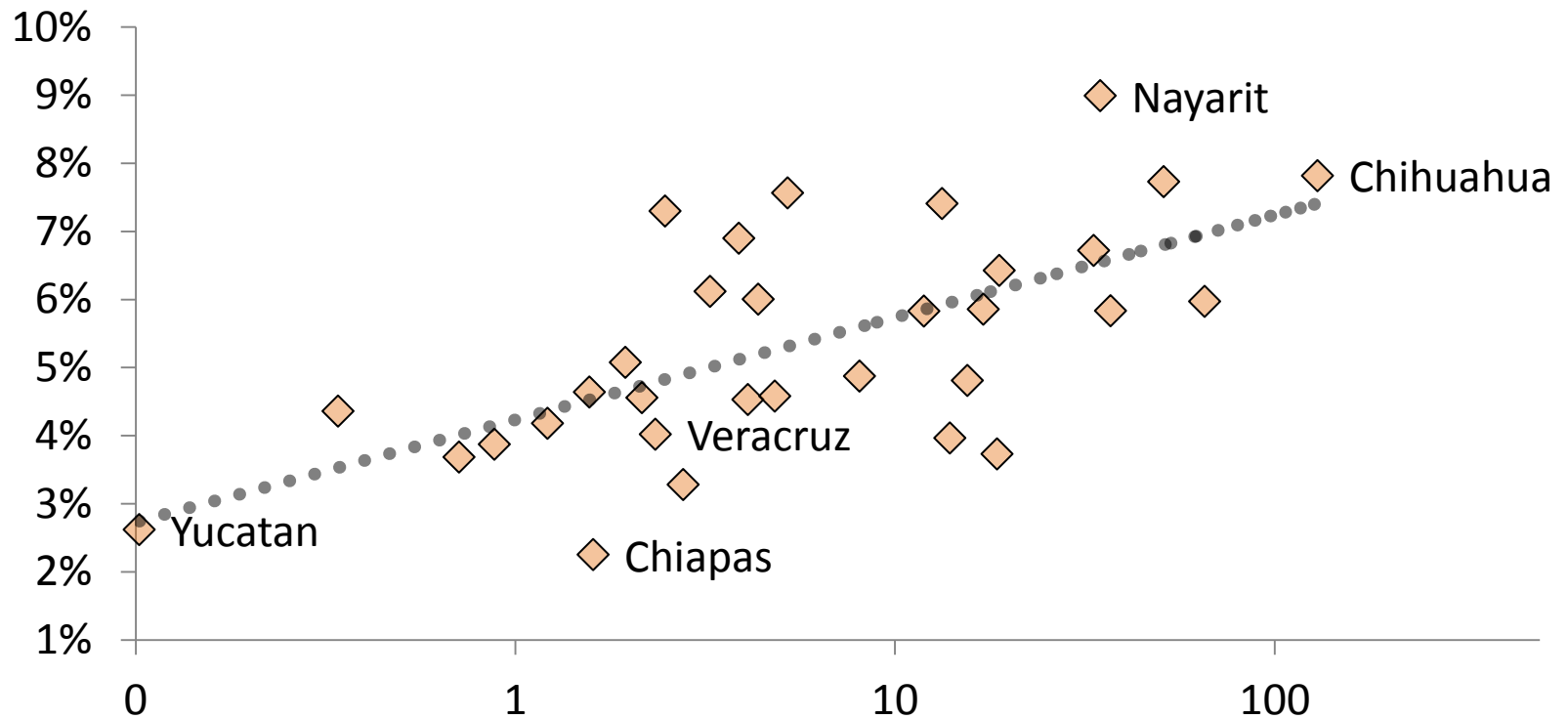
**Impunity.** Widespread violence raises impunity and protection demand.

**Mafia**

## Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

- Criminal organization conflicts and violence outbreaks precede and boast extortion networks.

*Organized Crime-Related Deaths per 100,000 People (Logarithmic Scale) and Extortion Victimization Rate by State in 2010*



### Illegal Protection Markets

- Mafias are organizations that provide illegal protection (against deception by others, the government or a threat from the mafia itself).
- In some regions of Mexico—where criminal organizations are establishing or competing— violence and “extortion” seem to be related.
- An observable feature of mafias is that –unlike drug traffickers— they need to build a widespread reputation. Hence mafias actively seek publicity.

# Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

## *Municipalities by Type of Violence*

<b>Mafia Ridden Violence</b>		<b>Drug-trafficking Ridden Violence</b>	
<i>Municipality</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Municipality</i>	<i>State</i>
Cuernavaca	Morelos	Miguel Alemán	Tamaulipas
Chilpancingo	Guerrero	Delicias	Chihuahua
Acapulco	Guerrero	Mexicali	Baja California
Ecatepec	México	Nuevo Casas Grandes	Chihuahua
Lázaro Cárdenas	Michoacán	Santiago Papasquiaro	Durango
Benito Juárez	Quintana Roo	Juárez	Chihuahua
Morelia	Michoacán	Salvador Alvarado	Sinaloa
Petatlán	Guerrero	Durango	Durango
Iztapalapa	Distrito Federal	Torreón	Coahuila
Nezahualcóyotl	México	Ascensión	Chihuahua
Nuevo Laredo	Tamaulipas	Badiraguato	Sinaloa
Apatzingán	Michoacán	Cajeme	Sonora
Aguascalientes	Aguascalientes	Camargo	Chihuahua
Pungarabato	Guerrero	Gómez Palacio	Durango
Guadalajara	Jalisco	Guadalupe	Chihuahua
Uruapan	Michoacán	Guadalupe y Calvo	Chihuahua
Culiacán	Sinaloa	Hidalgo del Parral	Chihuahua
Gustavo A. Madero	Distrito Federal	Juárez	Nuevo León
		Playas de Rosarito	Baja California
		Pueblo Nuevo	Durango
		Sinaloa	Sinaloa

## Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

- Drug-trafficking ridden violence typically develops along or near the U.S. border and became endemic over two years ago.



## Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

- Mafia ridden violence typically develops in central Mexico. It is a relatively recent phenomenon.



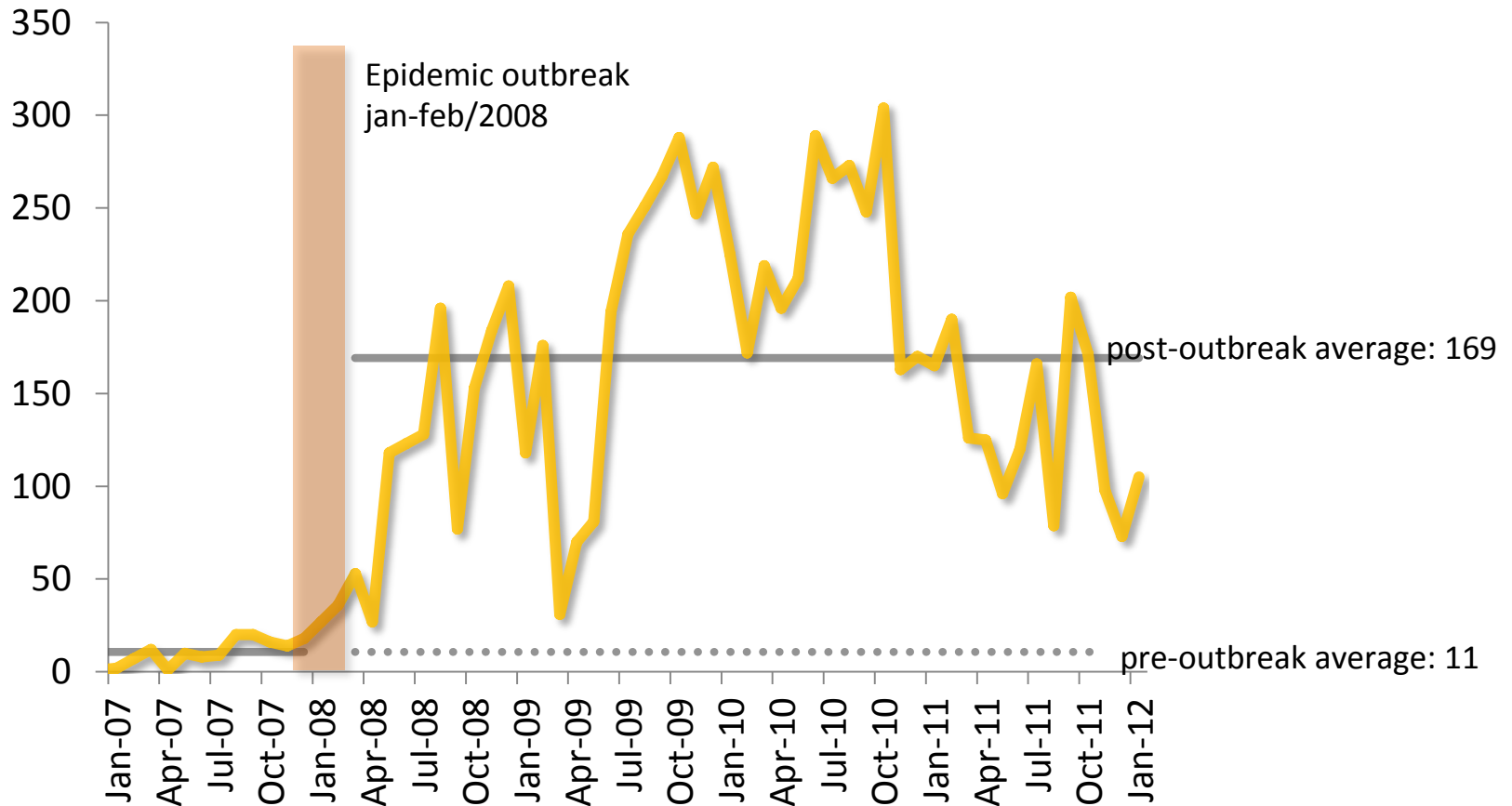


### Epidemic Nature of Violence

- When violence increases, the probability for each killing to be punished diminishes (the “unitary” cost of a killing is lower). This makes an intensive use of violence more attractive for criminal organizations and opportunistic criminals.
- When a criminal expects her rivals to use violence, she is very likely to attempt to strike first.
- Theoretical models (such as Schelling’s ‘critical mass’) are useful to explain collective behavior trends such as violence epidemics.

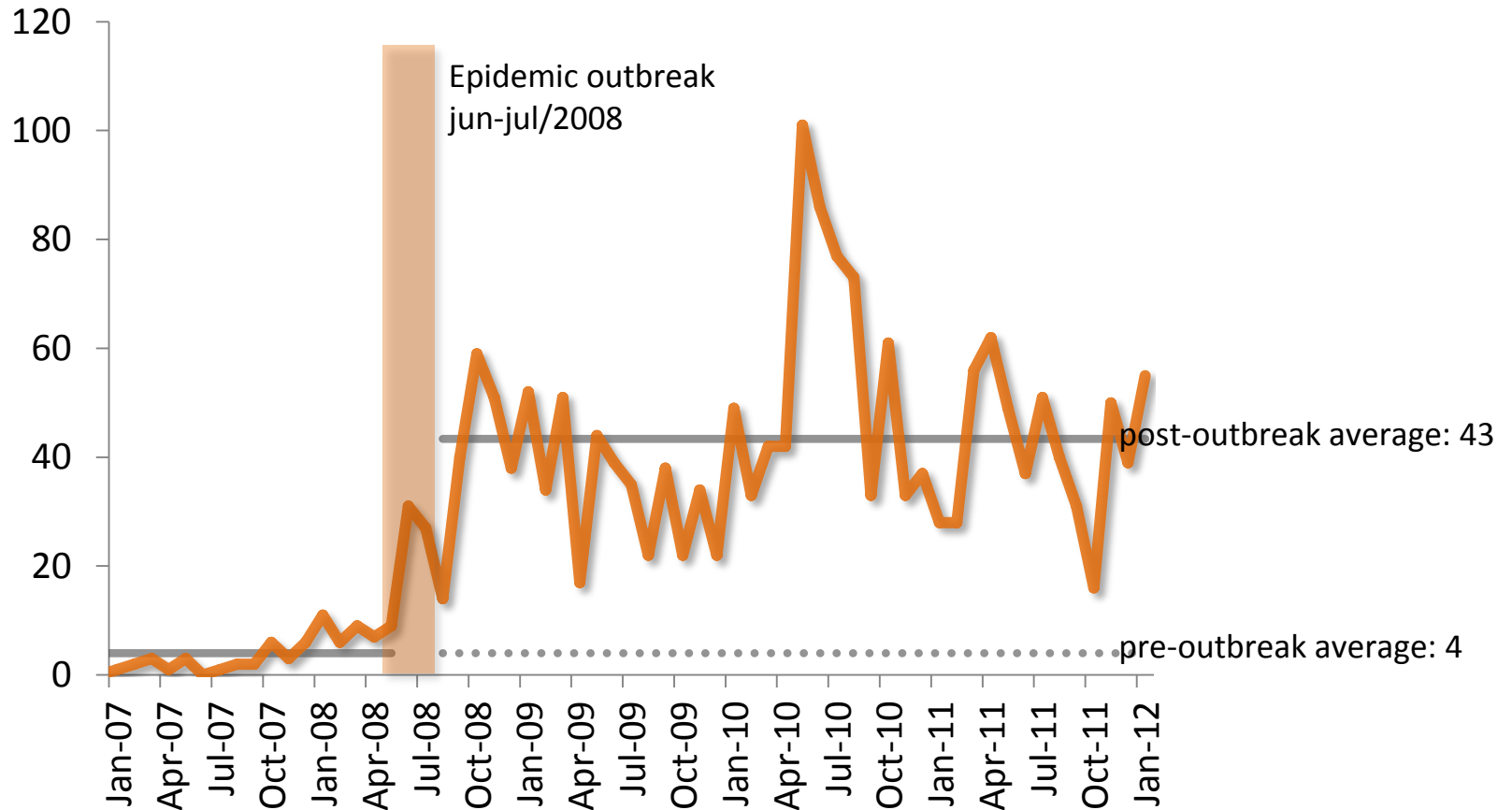
# Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

## Monthly Organized Crime-Related Deaths in Ciudad Juárez



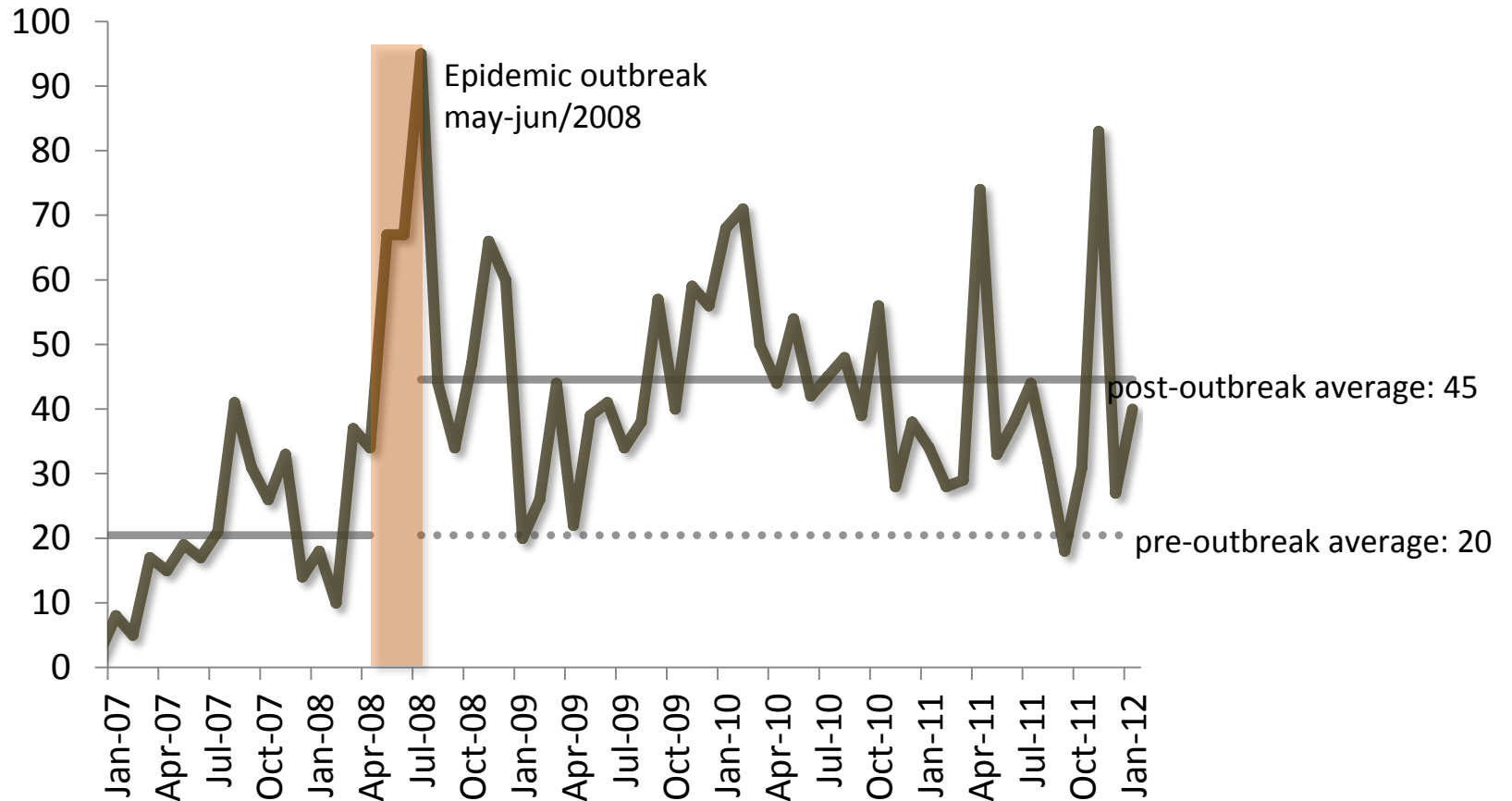
# Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

## Monthly Organized Crime-Related Deaths in Chihuahua



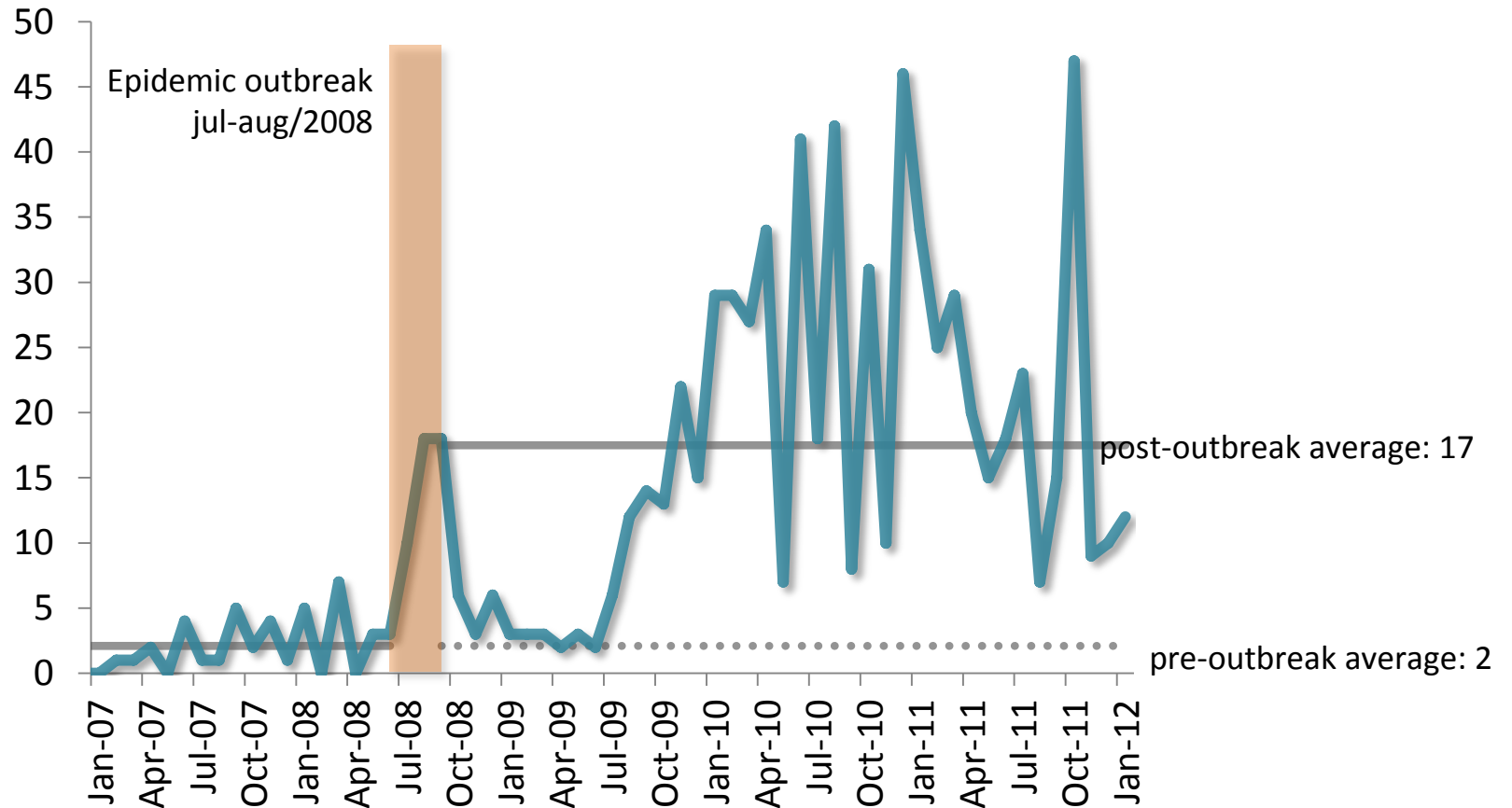
# Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

## Monthly Organized Crime-Related Deaths in Culiacán



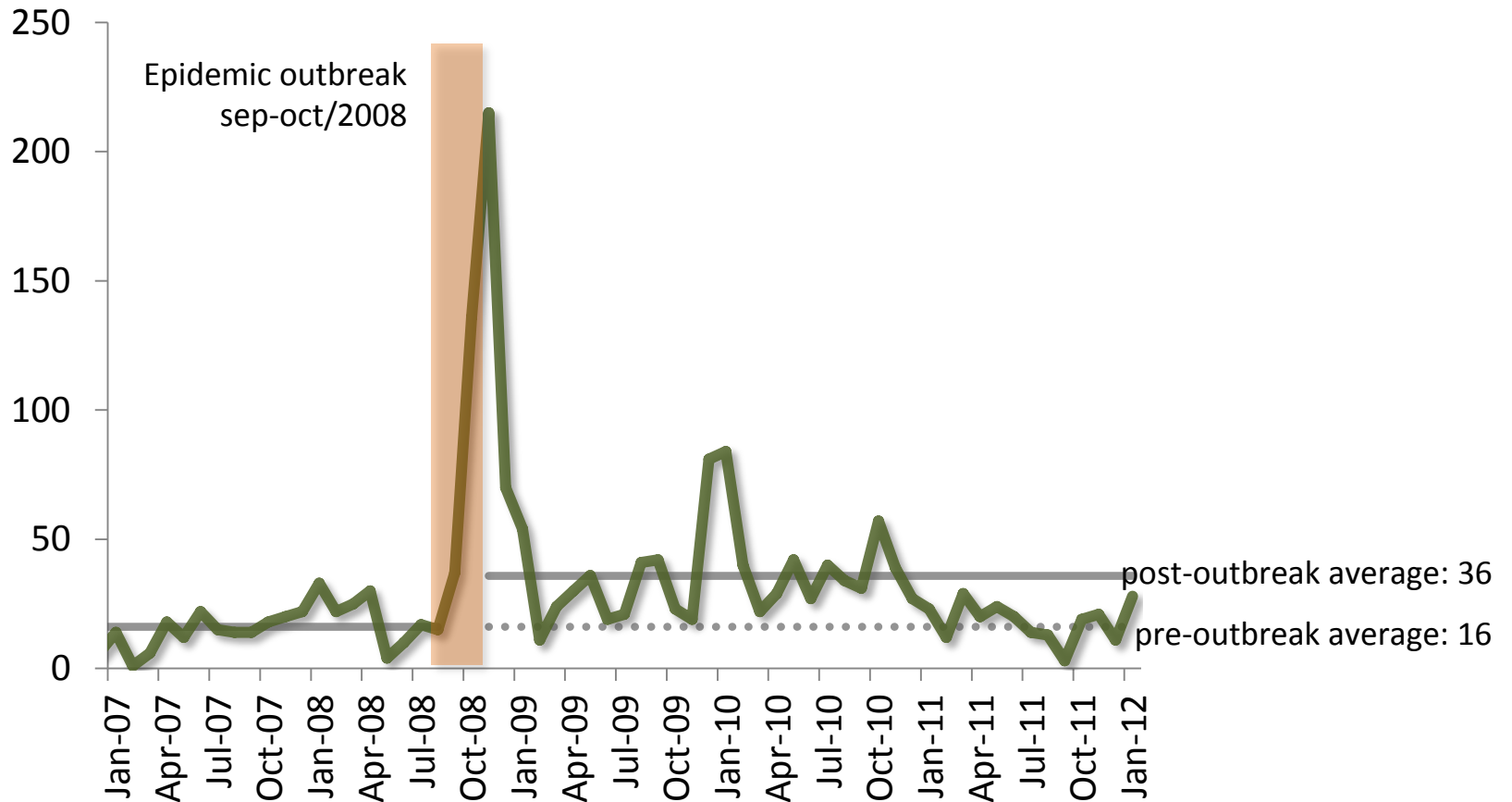
# Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

## Monthly Organized Crime-Related Deaths in Mazatlán



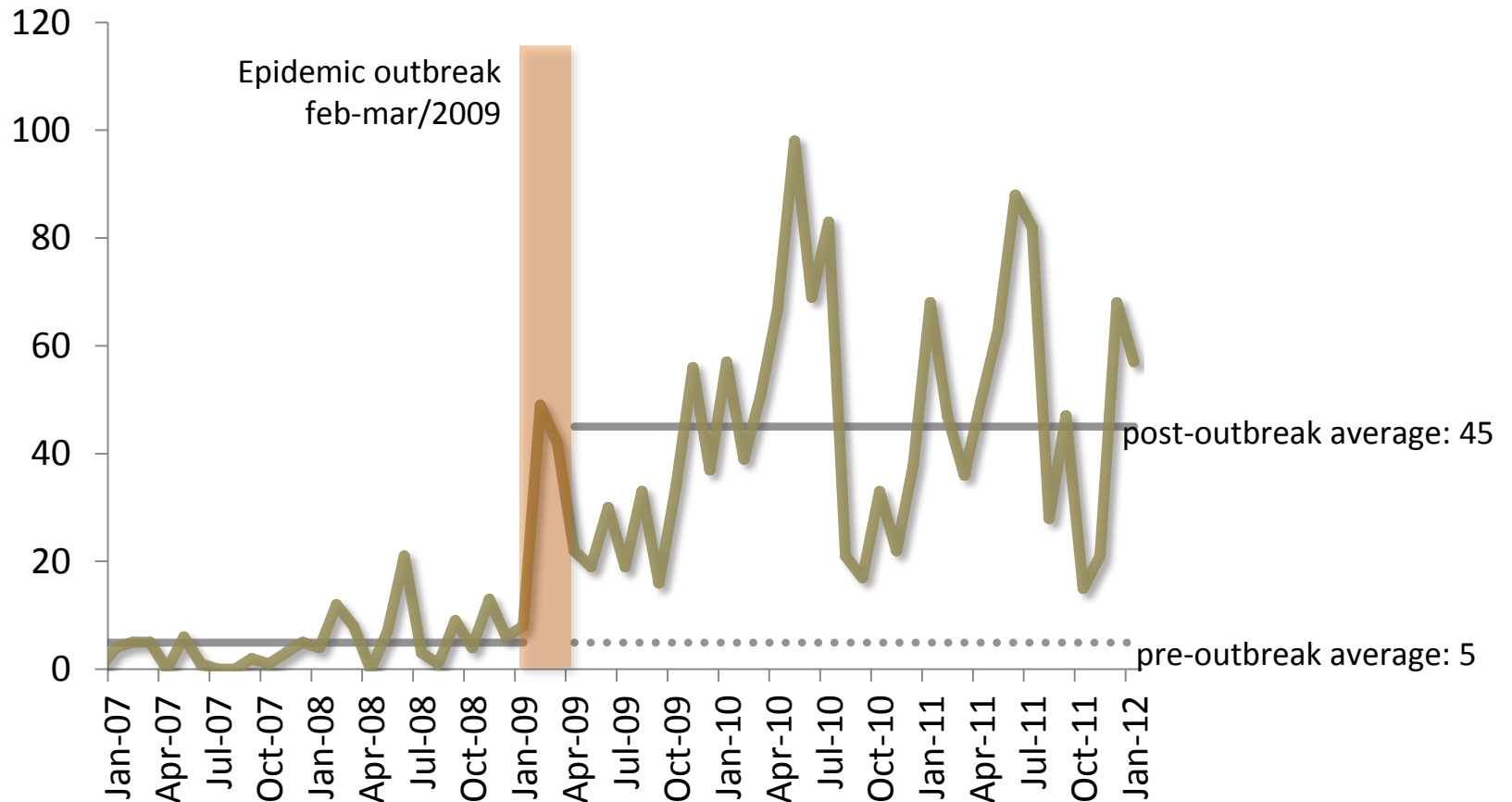
# Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

## Monthly Organized Crime-Related Deaths in Tijuana



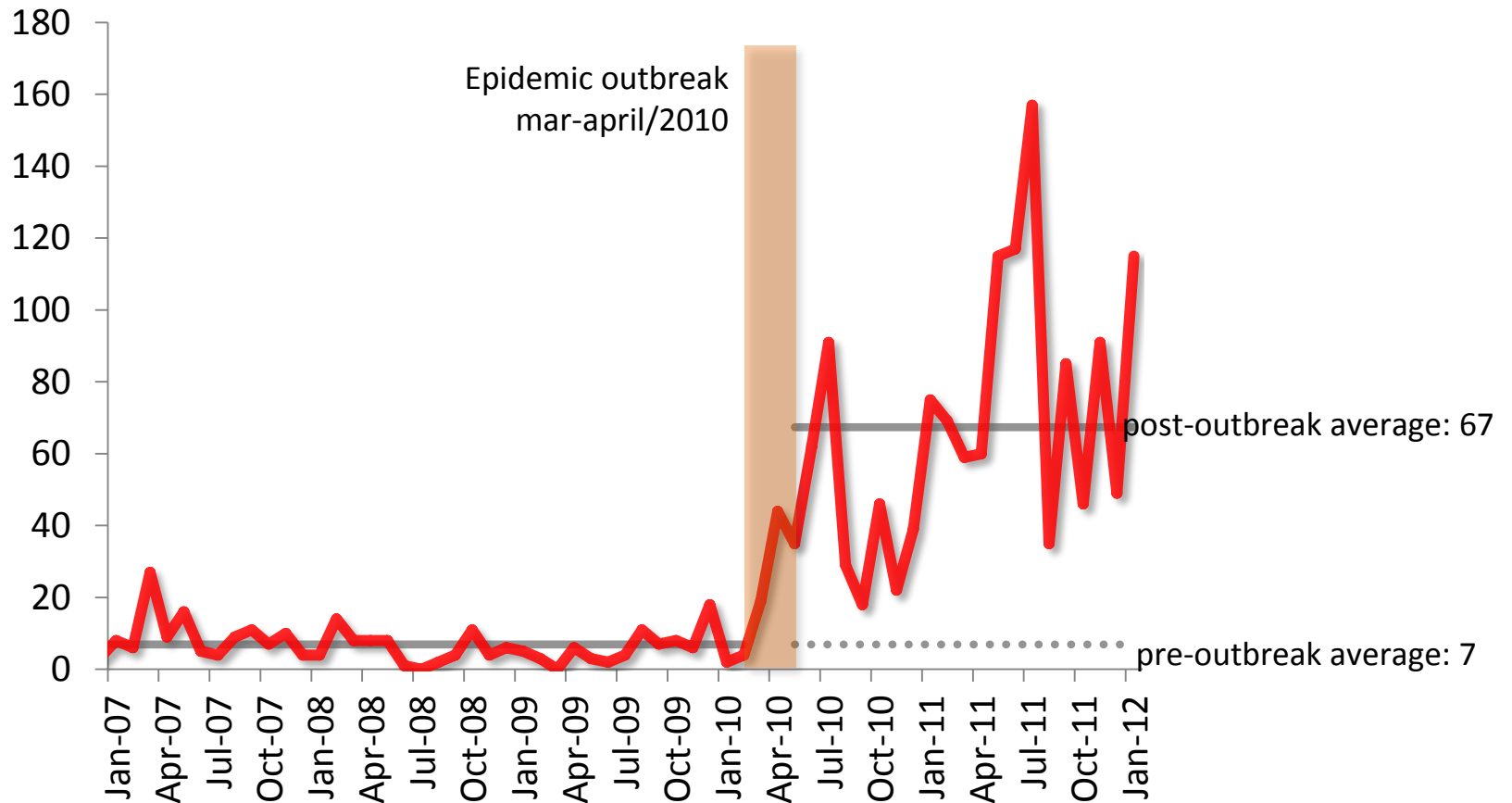
# Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

## Monthly Organized Crime-Related Deaths in Torreón-Gómez Palacio



# Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

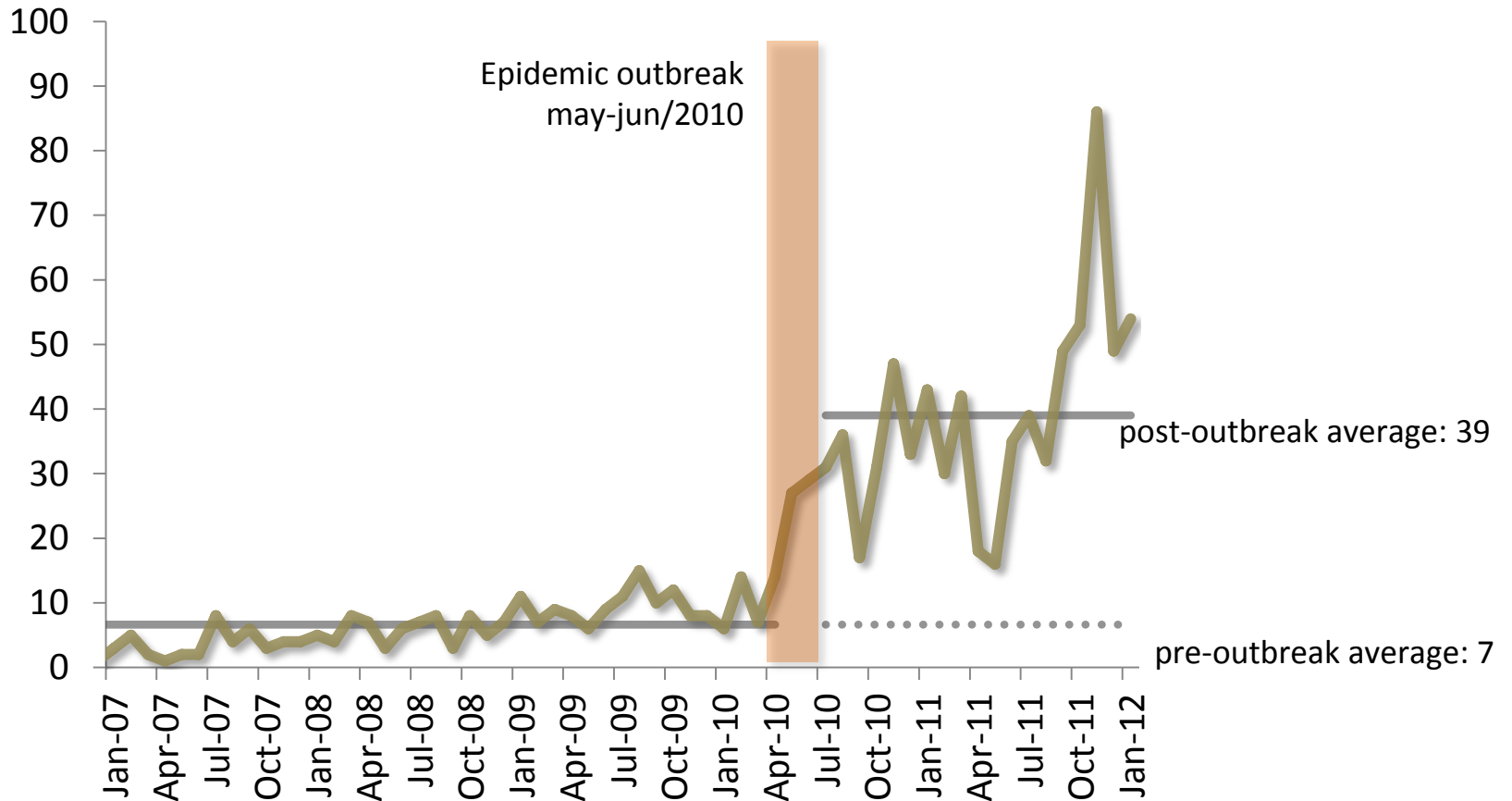
## Monthly Organized Crime-Related Deaths in Metropolitan Monterrey





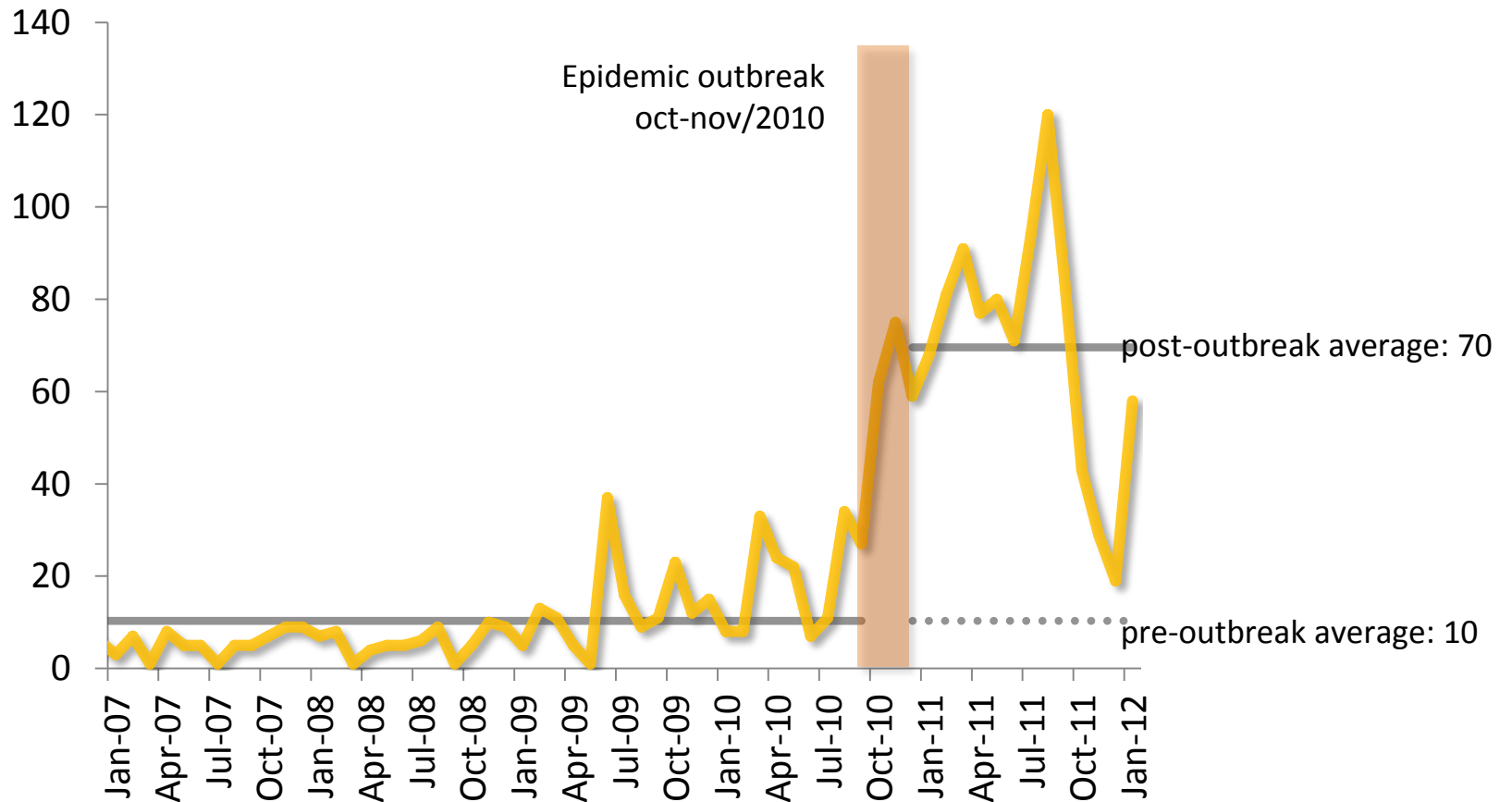
# Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

## Monthly Organized Crime-Related Deaths in Metropolitan Guadalajara



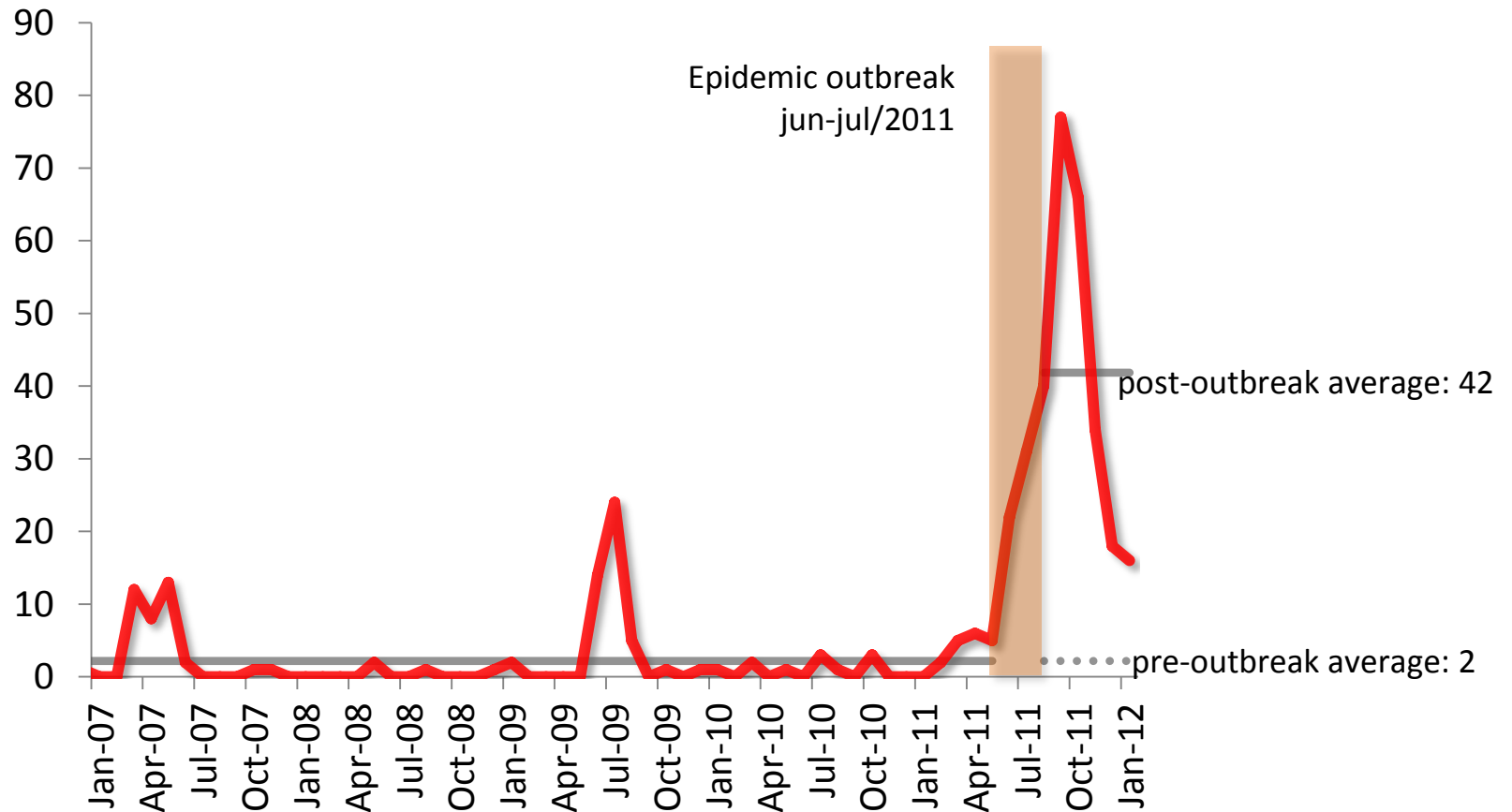
# Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

## Monthly Organized Crime-Related Deaths in Acapulco



# Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

## Monthly Organized Crime-Related Deaths in Metropolitan Veracruz



### Structural factors which are currently pushing down violence levels in Mexico:

- 1. Increasing social demand to stop violence:** In 2011 for the first time a national level social movement embraced violence reduction as its central demand.
- 2. More effective interventions:** For instance, federal forces have been more pro-active about taking over municipal police departments controlled by criminal organizations.
- 3. Reduced ability to recruit new gunmen:** It is estimated that gunmen currently have a 20 to 40 percent chance of being killed during a year (even risk-prone individuals may not be willing to accept such a high risk).

## Security Policy and Violence Crisis in Mexico

Municipality or Metropolitan Area	Violence Outbreak	Pre outbreak average monthly deaths	Post outbreak average monthly deaths	Change
Ciudad Juárez	01/2008	11	169	1436%
Culiacán	05/2008	20	45	125%
Chihuahua	06/2008	4	43	975%
Mazatlán	07/2008	2	17	750%
Tijuana	09/2008	16	36	125%
Torreón/Gómez Palacio	02/2009	5	45	800%
Zona Metropolitana de Monterrey	03/2010	7	67	857%
Zona Metropolitana de Guadalajara	05/2010	7	39	457%
Acapulco	10/2010	10	70	600%
Veracruz/Boca del Río	06/2011	2	42	2000%

### III. The Strategy in Colombia and Mexico: Opposing Outcomes

### The Strategy in Colombia and Mexico

- The strategy to split large cartels into smaller organizations is deemed to have contributed to restore security in Colombia.
- The same strategy seems to be rendering opposing results in Mexico.
- A set of differing features of both countries may account for these differing outcomes.

### Ability to Divert Drug-Trafficking Operations

- The fragmentation of Colombian DTO's into small networks may have reduced their monopoly power, or their ability to keep a large share of cocaine trafficking profits.
- Due to Mexico's border and intense trade to the US, currently it is very hard to divert drug shipment to routes outside Mexico, to diminish Mexican DTO's current predominance in transnational drug-trafficking, and to reduce their clout.

Trade to the US in 2011:

<b>Mexico</b>	460,650 million dollars
<b>Colombia</b>	37,431 million dollars



### Divided Police Command

- In Mexico, unlike Colombia, public security duties are split between the Federal Government, 32 States, and over 2,400 Municipalities; most of them running their own police departments.
- State and municipal authorities do not have incentives to assume the costs and risks of supporting a surge on organized crime that was originally identified as a Federal Government endeavor.

### Violence in the Recent Past

- Colombia has experienced widespread conflicts —and endemic violence in both urban and rural settings— since 1948. Hence, cartel fragmentation did not have a large effect as a ‘trigger’ of violence.
- In Mexico there were no significant episodes of widespread violence during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the authorities were unprepared to deal with the consequences of a strategy that brought unprecedented conflicts throughout the territory.

## Lesson Drawing from Colombia

Institutional and social differences call for a different approach to organized crime in Colombia and Mexico. However, successful Colombian policies may allow to tackle practical problems in Mexico.

- 1. Gang violence in urban areas:** Colombia has reduced violence in urban areas such as Medellín through a combination of social policies and law enforcement strategies.
- 2. Security in roads:** Through a set of military interventions, Colombia was able to restore security in a road system blighted by theft and kidnapping.