



Narcos in Ukraine to Train in Drone Use: Authorities' Alarm

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A joint investigation by the Ukrainian secret services (SBU) and military intelligence has revealed that members of Latin American drug cartels have infiltrated the **Ukrainian International Legion** with the aim of receiving **advanced combat drone training**, to then apply these techniques in their own countries against security forces and rival groups.

The alarm was raised after the **Mexican National Intelligence Center** reported the presence of Mexican “volunteers” in Ukraine, particularly interested in FPV (First Person View) capabilities, techniques that allow drones to be piloted like low-cost precision missiles. The investigation, [reported by the French media *Intelligence Online*](#), has also expanded to Colombian citizens.

The Ukrainian authorities are targeting the **“Ethos” tactical group**, active in the Donetsk and Kharkiv regions, where some Spanish-speaking volunteers with experience or previous ties to the cartels have been specifically inserted. Among the most striking cases, an individual known

as “**Águila-7**”, registered with fake Salvadoran documents, reportedly received advanced training in Lviv showing unusual military skills, including electronic warfare and thermal camouflage techniques.

Subsequent investigations have revealed possible connections with former members of Mexico's **GAFE special forces**, from which cartel hitmen are often recruited, particularly from the notorious group **Los Zetas**.

Additionally, at least three former FARC guerrillas have been inserted into the Legion using fake Panamanian and Venezuelan documents, with movements organized by networks linked to organized crime.

Ukraine: Training Ground for Asymmetric Wars

The conflict in Ukraine has led to the creation of a **complex military training program** that includes drone manufacturing, tactical maneuvers, anti-jamming techniques, and real-time field coordination: skills that represent **a force multiplier for non-state armed groups** like the narcos.

An SBU official told the media *Intelligence Online*:

“We welcomed the volunteers in good faith. Now we must acknowledge that Ukraine has become a global platform for the dissemination of FPV tactics. Some come here just to learn how to kill with a \$400 drone and then resell this knowledge.”

The investigation raises **serious concerns for regional security in Latin America**, where Mexican cartels already use armed drones against police and rivals.

News link: <https://www.defensenews.com/global/the-americas/2025/07/30/drug-cartel-operatives-snuck-into-ukraine-for-drone-training-report/>