



*The United States-Mexico Security Partnership
progress and impact*

- The Mérida Initiative is an unprecedented partnership between the United States and Mexico to fight organized crime and associated violence while furthering respect for human rights and the rule of law. It is laying the groundwork for sustained common cause and has built confidence that is transforming our bilateral relationship.
- Mérida was conceived in 2007 as a multi-year, \$1.4 billion effort. The U.S. Congress has appropriated \$1.3 billion since the program's inception in FY 2008.
- The U.S. and Mexican governments have built on the foundations of the Mérida Initiative to establish four strategic pillars to guide our cooperation and institutionalize our partnership: Disrupt Organized Criminal Groups; Strengthen Institutions; Create a 21st Century Border; and Build Strong and Resilient Communities.

SUCSESSES

Pillar 1 – Disrupt Capacity of Organized Crime to Operate

- **Building on Law Enforcement Successes:** The Mérida Initiative provides funding and support for law enforcement and prosecutorial capacity building in Mexico. By building capacity, the Mérida Initiative both complements ongoing operational law-enforcement efforts and strengthens the Mexican/U.S. law-enforcement partnership – a partnership that has achieved a number of notable successes in the past year:
 - **Extraditions:** 107 fugitives were extradited from Mexico to the United States in 2009, exceeding 2008's record of 95 extraditions.
 - **Removal of Key Drug Trafficking Organization Leaders by Mexican Security Forces:**
 - Arturo Beltran Leyva (killed during attempted arrest) December 2009 (Beltran Leyva Cartel)
 - Arrest of Carlos Beltran Leyva, December 2009 (Beltran Leyva Cartel)
 - Arrest of Eduardo Teodoro "El Teo" Garcia Simental, January 2010 (Arellano Felix Cartel)
 - **U.S. Project Coronado:** 1,186 alleged members of La Familia Michoacana arrested in October 2009.
 - **U.S. Operation Xcellerator:** A multi-agency, multinational effort that targeted the Sinaloa cartel, which resulted in the seizure of \$59 million in currency, hundreds of firearms, more than 12,000 kilograms of cocaine, and 12,000 pounds of methamphetamine. More than 750 individuals associated with the Sinaloa cartel were arrested in February 2009.
 - **Economic Sanctions Against Key Drug Trafficking Organizations Pursuant to the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act:** Since October 2009, OFAC designated 38

individuals and 16 entities tied to the financial and commercial networks of: the Arellano Felix Organization; the Beltran Leyva Organization; the Sinaloa Cartel; and La Familia Michoacana.

- Currency Seizures: In FY 2009, CBP seized more than \$37.2 million in southbound currency—a 270 percent increase over the previous fiscal year. In FY 2009, over \$17 million in currency was seized as a result of investigatory cooperation between U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the Government of Mexico. ICE and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will continue to conduct Operation Firewall through FY 2010. To date, the operation has yielded over \$24 million in cash seizures in Mexico.
- Arms Trafficking: ICE and the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, & Firearms (ATF) are working jointly on weapons seizures, including through Armas Cruzadas and Project Gun Runner. ATF also rolled out the pilot of the bilingual “Spanish” eTrace to Mexico and Central America. This system allows Mexican investigators to trace weapons known to originate from the United States.
- Providing the Tools: Funding from the Mérida Initiative is providing tools that will increase operations against the cartels, including:
 - 5 Bell 412 Helicopters for the Mexican Army/Air Force (SEDENA): Delivered December 2009 to provide rapid mobility for security forces for counternarcotics and other security operations.

Pillar II: Strengthen Institutions to Sustain Rule of Law and Human Rights

- Criminal Justice Reforms: The United States is supporting Mexico’s implementation of comprehensive criminal-justice reforms through the professionalization of police and prosecutors, systems development, judicial exchanges, and partnerships between Mexican and U.S. law schools.
- Training: As of March 2010, 5,500 federal and state officials of all levels from law-enforcement and judicial agencies participated in newly designed training programs. Over 4,300 police officers graduated from the Federal Police (SSP) Basic Investigation Techniques course in San Luis Potosi and are deployed throughout Mexico.
- Capacity Building: Through expert-to-expert exchanges, programs, and workshops, Mexico’s criminal-justice institutions are working with U.S. law-enforcement and prosecutorial offices to build capacity to combat organized criminal activities that impact both Mexico and the United States. Focus areas include investigation and prosecution of complex cases; trial advocacy skills, including evidence collection and preservation; extradition and fugitive apprehension; witness protection; internal integrity; advanced witness interview techniques; officer safety and protection; and asset forfeiture and asset management.
- Corrections System Reform: Sixty Mexican instructors completed course work at the New Mexico State Corrections Academy that enabled them to deliver courses to basic trainees at the Mexican National Corrections Academy. Staff from the Colorado Department of Corrections also provided training to SSP officials.
- Human Rights: Mexico and the United States launched a formal Human Rights Dialogue, the first meeting of which was held on March 16. The Mexican Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights received a grant from the United States to support efforts to strengthen national and local capacity to protect and promote human rights.

Pillar III: Building a 21st Century Border

- U.S. Interagency Border Architecture: This was created for coordinating infrastructure, planning and prioritization, secure flows of cargo and goods, and corridor security initiatives.
- Assistance to Mexican Customs: DHS has provided assistance to Mexican Customs including: the training of 44 canine teams, training on inspection techniques, and development of curriculum on customs investigations, with investigative training to begin this year. At the request of Mexican Customs, CBP conducted a gap analysis and is working to help establish a Customs training academy in Mexico to promote professionalization of new customs inspectors.
- Document Verification Software and Biometric Equipment and Training: Delivered to the Mexican Immigration Service (INAMI) and will be used on the Mexican southern border with Guatemala to increase document security and improve the detection of false documents.
- Rescue Equipment (Radios, Navigation Equipment): Delivered to support training for 45 Mexican immigration officers in search-and-rescue teams.
- Hi-tech Inspections at Ports-of-Entry: Provided scanners, X-ray machines, and other non-intrusive inspection equipment to enhance Mexican authorities' ability to detect illicit goods at key checkpoints and land and air ports of entry.

Pillar IV: Build Strong and Resilient Communities

- As Mexico addresses the ways to support its communities to resist organized crime, the United States will provide support for programs in targeted geographic areas. Focus areas may include: community-based initiatives to address crime and violence, strengthening social networks, building economic opportunities for at-risk youth, demand reduction, and fostering a culture of lawfulness. In some areas, progress is underway.
- Demand Reduction: The Office of National Drug Control Policy and the U.S. State Department co-hosted a Binational Drug Demand Reduction Conference in February 2010. The United States and Mexico agreed to focus future efforts on a community-based approach to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and reintegration of individuals affected by drug use and other criminal activity. See ONDCP Fact Sheet on U.S. demand reduction.
- Culture of Lawfulness: A train-the-trainer course for the SSP completed in May 2009 enabled the training of approximately 3,000 officers. 22 states are scheduled to offer a minimum of 60 hours of anti-corruption education during the 2009-2010 school year, targeting one million secondary school students.
- Support for national network of citizen participation councils: Engaged citizens and the media in reporting on and prevention of violence.