



# U.S. - Mexico At a Glance

## Merida Initiative Overview

“We face a defining moment. In our hands is the decision whether we continue with inertia or whether we push for deep changes to transform our country.”

*Felipe Calderon  
President of Mexico*

“At a time when the Mexican government has so courageously taken on the drug cartels that have plagued both sides of the border, it is absolutely critical that the United States join as a full partner in dealing with this issue, both through initiatives like the Merida Initiative, but also on our side of the border, in dealing with the flow of guns and cash south.”

*Barack Obama  
President of the  
United States*

The Merida Initiative is an historic program of cooperation that acknowledges the shared responsibilities of the United States and Mexico to counter the drug-fueled violence that has threatened citizens on both sides of the border. The U.S. Congress has funded the Merida Initiative with wide bipartisan support, appropriating over \$1.3 billion to Mexico. It is currently providing technical expertise and assistance to Mexico for police professionalization, judicial and prison reform, information technology enhancement, infrastructure development, border security, and the promotion of a culture of lawfulness.

Merida Initiative-supported programs currently underway:

- To ensure a shared security vision, U.S. and Mexican officials have been working together on multiple levels through regular meetings of a Bilateral Implementation Group. In 2010, Mexican and U.S. policy-planners will sit side-by-side in a new bilateral office, bringing the level of cooperation between our nations even closer.
- Over 4,300 Federal Police have already completed training at Mexico's Federal Police Academy in San Luis Potosí. Taught by law enforcement professionals from the U.S., Colombia, Spain, Canada, and the Czech Republic, the program includes criminal investigative techniques, evidence collection, crime scene preservation, and ethics.
- To assist Mexico in cracking down on trafficking in cash and contraband, non-intrusive inspection equipment is being provided to various agencies. In 2009, SEDENA received 30 handheld ION scanners, and SSP received 5 mobile X-Ray Backscatter vans as well as 10 mobile X-Ray minivans .
- The U.S. is providing equipment and funds for Mexico's prison reform initiative. Corrections instructors are being trained at U.S. facilities and corrections officers are attending newly-designed courses at Mexico's new Academy for Penitentiary Administration.
- Merida funds are helping Mexican police and customs officials expand and improve canine teams used in the interdiction of narcotics, firearms, explosives, and other contraband. More than a dozen canine teams have been trained and construction on new canine training academies for SSP and Aduanas will begin in 2010.
- Five Bell 412 helicopters were delivered to SEDENA in December 2009. In 2010, one CASA 235 aircraft will be delivered to the Navy and 3 UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters to the SSP with more deliveries to follow.



U.S. Embassy Mexico City • 5080-2000  
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