



U.S. - Mexico At a Glance

Merida Initiative - Creating a 21st Century Border Structure

“...the United States will remain a full partner in this effort. We will work to make sure Mexico has the support it needs to dismantle and defeat the cartels. And the United States will also meet its responsibilities by continuing our efforts to reduce the demand for drugs and continuing to strengthen the security of our shared border.”

*Barack Obama
President of the
United States*

Recognizing that our common border can only be secured when our nations work with a common vision, U.S. agencies have cooperated closely with the Mexican government, police, and military in creating Merida Initiative programs to enhance border management, infrastructure and technology, and to stop the flow of drugs to the north and cash and arms to the south.

Current Merida Initiative projects contributing to the creation of a 21st century border structure:

- Mexico is acquiring a wide range of non-intrusive detection devices that will make interdiction efforts more mobile and expand them to remote areas throughout the country's interior. Thirty ION scanners have been delivered to SEDENA, five mobile X-Ray Backscatter vans were provided to SSP, and ten X-Ray minivans will be delivered to SSP early in 2010.
- Border Patrol agents from the Search and Rescue Team (BORSTAR) conducted training in Texas for 44 INAMI “Grupo Beta” Agents. The course includes training in trauma, swift water and technical rescues, and navigation through rural, mountainous and desert terrain. The training has also served to increase bilateral cooperation in making the border safer and reducing the loss of life resulting from human trafficking.
- Bilateral arms trafficking workshops held in Cuernavaca in April, in Phoenix in September, and in Tapachula in October were attended by U.S. state and federal law enforcement professionals as well as Mexican counterparts from the PGR, SAT, SEDENA and the SSP. The conferences established bilateral objectives and working group structures and covered areas such as intelligence sharing, evidence collection and tracing.
- Biometric equipment has been installed and is in use at three checkpoints along Mexico's southern border. Biographic and biometric information collected at the checkpoints will be stored in a database that will be a powerful tool to support judicial proceedings and counter terrorism efforts.



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