



U.S. - Mexico At a Glance

Merida Initiative - Canine Program

“I would like to stress that we are engaged in broad cooperation. The Merida Initiative has meant a qualitative change in the level of cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking and in general against organized crime. . . the objective is really to strengthen the capacity, the capabilities of the Mexican state to face this common threat.”

*Patricia Espinosa
Foreign Secretary
Mexico*

The Government of Mexico's canine program has expanded exponentially over the past few years. Mexican law enforcement entities such as Secretaria de Seguridad Publica (SSP) and Aduanas (Customs) have recognized the importance and effectiveness of canines in interdicting narcotics, firearms, and ammunition at major ports of entry across the country and during operations. The number of canine teams has significantly increased, aging dogs that have been working beyond their years are being replaced, and the retention rate of canine handlers has also increased, making the canine units an elite part of each agency's operations.

Merida Initiative support for canine programs:

- Recognizing the effectiveness of a quality trained canine team, SSP and Aduanas have committed to building National Canine Academies for their respective agencies. With Merida Initiative support, both agencies are in the design phase and will begin construction in the first quarter of 2010. These academies will focus on significantly increasing the number of canines trained across the country, particularly at key ports of entry along the U.S.–Mexico Border.
- Over the past year, Merida Initiative-supported programs have trained and certified over a dozen teams, including instructors, to ensure the long-term sustainability of the programs.
- With Merida Initiative funds, support will go towards the procurement and training of canines in basic narcotics, firearms and explosive detection. In January 2010, over 50 canine/handler teams from SSP and Aduanas will be trained by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Alcohol, Firearms, Tobacco (ATF) agencies in the United States.
- To meet the immediate needs of all canine units, equipment for operations, training, and veterinary use has been provided to SSP and Aduanas.



U.S. Embassy Mexico City • 5080-2000
Public Affairs Section (PAS)
mexico.usembassy.gov