



## U.S. - Mexico At a Glance

### Merida Initiative - Promoting a Culture of Lawfulness

“The fight we were beginning to wage against the Mafia did not involve two massed armies, but rather house-to-house fighting in which we tried to recapture our civic lives neighborhood by neighborhood. . .No less than other tyrannies, the Mafia destroys liberty, mortifies democracy, makes economic development impossible, and kills the very concept of citizenship. Yet as we here in Palermo know, when such tyrannies are finally broken, the human spirit blossoms.”

*Leoluco Orlando  
Former Mayor  
Palermo, Italy*

In his annual 2009 State of the Union report, President Calderon made more than fifty references to the need to create and strengthen “a culture of lawfulness” (CoL) in the face of unprecedented crime facing Mexico. The Mexican government and civil society leaders have begun to make fostering CoL a priority at the national, state, and municipal levels.

#### **How is the Merida Initiative Helping?**

The Mexican Government and non-governmental organizations have been collaborating with leading CoL experts from the U.S. with the use of Merida Initiative resources.

Below are examples of Merida-funded programs:

- CoL education is now part of the national school curriculum. At the start of the 2009-2010 school year, CoL courses were being taught in 22 states to almost 1 million students.
- The Secretaria de Seguridad Publica has committed to implementing a CoL program to reach all 32,000 members of the force. A 40-hour course for recruits has already been taught to 3,550 new officers in the 6 months since its inception in May 2009.
- Northern border states have also established CoL education within their state police forces, beginning with Nuevo Leon.
- In September, 45 media professionals participated in a seminar to enhance their professional skills in incorporating CoL themes into ongoing work.
- Mexico's Secretaria de Funcion Publica (SFP), the ministry responsible for monitoring government agencies, declared CoL promotion a priority. The SFP signed an agreement to implement a CoL educational program in 2010, consisting of professional education for civil servants and workforce mentoring.

#### **What's ahead?**

Promoting a culture of lawfulness in Mexico is a critical component of Mexico's anti-drug strategy and its potential impacts are far-reaching. Through the Merida Initiative, millions of dollars will assist the Government of Mexico refine and expand its programs in order to reach as broad a segment of Mexican society as possible.



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