



the merida initiative

Office of National Drug Control Policy 2007

The Governments of Mexico and the United States share a deep concern over the threat to our societies caused by the availability of illegal drugs and other contraband on both sides of the border, as well as the growing operational and financial capabilities of criminal groups involved in trafficking and transnational criminal activity.

Background:

- President Calderon has taken the unprecedented step of requesting our cooperation in order to consolidate a transnational approach to a transnational problem. He has characterized the use of the military against the cartels as an immediate and necessary first step to restore public security, but has already begun to transition to civilian law enforcement.
- The timing of the GOM request, coupled with the unique opportunities presented by both President Calderon's fight against drug trafficking and the recognition by the Central American nations of their need to define their security requirements regionally, made an emergency supplemental request the most appropriate funding vehicle for the package.
- The Merida Initiative will build on specific activities that aim to 1) bolster Mexican domestic enforcement capacity; 2) bolster U.S. domestic enforcement capacity; and 3) expand bilateral and regional cooperation that addresses drug trafficking and other transnational crime. To accomplish this, the President is requesting \$550 million as the first part of a multi-year \$1.4 billion program to fund security cooperation with Mexico and Central America.

Elements Included in the Request:

- Upgrades to programs undertaken by our partners' detection and monitoring of events occurring inside their territory.
- Rotary wing transportation and support packages to facilitate quick response of security forces in counternarcotics operations by providing greater mobility.
- Non-intrusive equipment and assets to support counterpart security agencies inspecting and interdicting drugs, trafficked goods, people and other contraband.
- Computer technology to strengthen host countries' coordination of security forces and information sharing with the United States.
- Technologies to enhance our partners' capacity to collect actionable intelligence for law enforcement purposes.
- Training to support Mexico and Central America's efforts to streamline and professionalize their law enforcement organizations.
- Capacity building measures and training to complement actions undertaken by regional governments to reform judicial processes, respond to citizens' concerns and strengthen prison management.
- Support for Mexican NGOs and agencies working to reduce the rising level of drug usage in Mexico.
- Equipment, training and community action programs in Central American countries to implement anti-gang measures and expand the reach of these measures in the region.

