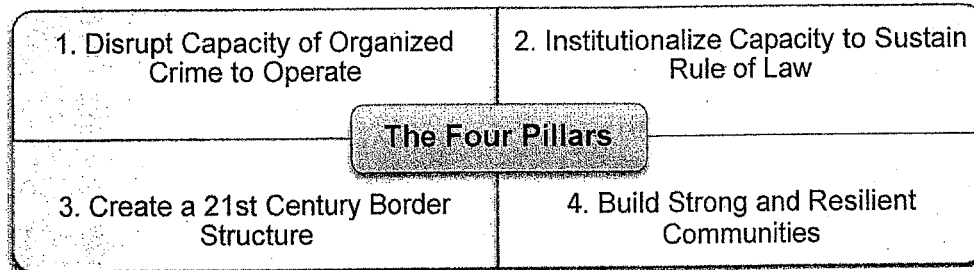




U.S. - Mexico At a Glance

Beyond Merida - The Four Pillars of Cooperation

The programs supporting the historic Merida Initiative are designed to counter the drug-fueled violence that has threatened citizens on both sides of the border. The Strategic Framework for implementing the myriad of Merida Initiative activities and programs is referred to as the Four Pillars, each of which pulls together Merida programs under strategic objectives. Taken together, these four objectives will strengthen both of our societies in the fight against organized crime and violence and will help drive the transformation of our bilateral security relationship.



PILLAR ONE – Disrupt Capacity of Organized Crime to Operate

Diminish the power of Mexican organized criminal groups by systematically capturing and incarcerating their leaders and by reducing drug trade revenues by interdicting drugs, stopping money laundering, and diminishing production. Through equipment, technology, aviation, and training, the Merida Initiative will support better investigations, more captures and arrests, successful prosecutions, and shipment interdiction.

PILLAR TWO – Institutionalize Capacity to Sustain Rule of Law

Enhance the capacity of Mexican public security, border and judicial institutions to sustain the rule of law. Merida Initiative programs will strengthen the capabilities of key institutions to improve internal controls, further professionalize the military and police, reform corrections institutions, and implement justice sector reform.

PILLAR THREE – Create a 21st Century Border Structure

Facilitate legitimate commerce and movement of people while curtailing the illicit flow of drugs, people, arms, and cash. The Merida Initiative will provide the foundation for better infrastructure and technology to strengthen and modernize border security at northern and southern land crossings, ports, and airports. Professionalization programs will transfer new skills to the agencies managing the border and additional non-intrusive technologies will assist in the detection of criminal activities.

PILLAR FOUR – Build Strong and Resilient Communities

Strengthen communities by creating a culture of lawfulness and undercutting the lure and power of drug trafficking organizations. By implementing job creation programs, engaging youth in their communities, expanding social safety nets, and building community confidence in public institutions, Merida Initiative assistance will test new initiatives to strengthen Mexican communities against organized crime.



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United States-Mexico Partnership: A New Border Vision

Office of the Spokesman
Washington, DC
March 23, 2010

Mexico and the United States have a shared interest in creating a 21st century border that promotes the security and prosperity of both countries. The U.S. and Mexican governments have launched a range of initiatives that challenge the traditional view of "hold the line" and are developing a framework for a new vision of 21st century border management.

The new framework is based on the principles of joint border management, co-responsibility for cross-border crime, and shared commitment to the efficient flow of legal commerce and travel:

- **Enhancing Public Safety** – The protection of Mexican and U.S. citizens from the criminal organizations responsible for the traffic in people, drugs, arms, and money across our common land border is a key priority for both countries. In addition to the bilateral Merida Initiative programs currently underway, we must develop joint strategies for key smuggling and trafficking corridors along with regular sharing of information on investigations, prosecutions, and screening practices.
- **Securing Flows** – The central challenge in managing flows of people and goods is to separate high-risk travelers and cargo from low-risk ones. Tools that help prevent illegitimate trade and travel while expediting legitimate trade and travel include implementing complementary risk management strategies in both countries, establishing a bi-national "model port" to share information on goods and people, and improving trusted traveler and shipper programs. We must work together with the private sector to ensure that we achieve these goals.
- **Expediting Legitimate Commerce and Travel** – Each day, about a billion dollars of commerce and a million people cross the U.S.-Mexico border. Affirmative steps that accelerate the flow of people and goods through ports of entry enhance both countries' economic competitiveness. Both countries need work with the private sector to encourage investment in the people, technology, and infrastructure that comprise a 21st century border. Secure transit lanes for pre-cleared rail and truck shipments as well as passenger pre-clearance programs are two tools that could make cross border trade and travel more efficient.
- **Engaging Border Communities** – Mexico is the number one or number two export destination of twenty-two U.S. states. Cross-border trade contributes enormously to the economic vitality of both countries, especially in the border region. Continuing to engage border communities, as well as state, local, and tribal governments in bi-national strategy development, law enforcement, and communications, is essential to collaborative border management.
- **Setting Policy** – Achieving rapid policy change requires an agile inter-agency process within each country as well as a means by which both governments can easily coordinate at a bi-national level. Both countries need to reinvigorate their policy-setting architecture to address the statutory, regulatory, systems, and infrastructure changes needed to realize our new vision of collaborative border management.

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