



Brussels, 9 November 2017
(OR. en)

14182/17

CORDROGUE 144
COLAC 121

NOTE

From: US Regional Chair of the Dublin Group
To: Dublin Group
No. prev. doc.: 14199/15
Subject: Regional Report on Central America

**UPDATE ON DRUG SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA FOR CENTRAL DUBLIN
GROUP MEETING**

INL and the U.S. Strategy for Central America

Central America's geographic bind, with the primary coca producers to the south and the main cocaine users to the north, have fostered a regional corridor for drug trafficking and consequently, consumption has increased among youth and adolescents. That said, there exists little to no data on drug use throughout the region as gang activity and extortion have historically eclipsed drug trafficking as the major issues contributing to violence in Central America. As a result, there are very few other international donors aside from the United States supporting counternarcotics efforts in Central America; Canada provides some support for port security capacity building in the Northern Triangle.

Through the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI), the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) supports citizen security and advances rule of law to help combat drug trafficking, gangs, and violence, and address the root causes of migration from Central America to the United States. CARSI is a multi-year program which provides training, technical assistance, and equipment to professionalize and improve the capabilities of law enforcement and justice institutions, with a focus on the Northern Triangle countries of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, whose homicide, impunity, and migration rates are highest in the region, and in Costa Rica, Panama, Belize, and Nicaragua.

INL's efforts are a core component of the U.S. Strategy for Central America, which advances security, prosperity, and governance in the region. Under the Strategy, INL is using its FY 2016 appropriation of \$205 M, \$125.3M of which supports the Northern Triangle, to improve border security and create a stable Central America by helping governments fight narcotraffickers, transnational gangs, and smugglers before they reach our Southwest border.

Regional Law Enforcement Programming

Through comprehensive law enforcement programming, the United States is helping the governments of the Northern Triangle seize record levels of drugs, dismantle criminal networks, combat gang violence, and build justice institutions strong enough to prosecute, convict, and imprison criminals.

- *Interdiction:* Ninety percent of cocaine produced in South America transits the Central America/Mexico corridor before reaching the United States. To target this threat, INL works with U.S. interagency and international partners to provide training, advising, equipment, and operational support to police task forces, vetted units, and maritime law enforcement personnel to build the capacity of partners to interdict drugs before they reach the United States.

- *Violence Prevention:* INL and the U.S. Agency for International Development have pioneered an innovative “place-based strategy” (PBS) for crime and violence reduction in Central America. PBS identifies key high-crime places and people at-risk for criminal involvement to strategically implement a balanced and integrated set of four targeted interventions. These include: primary violence prevention activities directed at the community at large; secondary violence prevention activities tailored to individuals considered at risk of engaging in crime, based on empirical criteria; tertiary prevention activities, closely tied to rehabilitation and reinsertion for known offenders; and justice sector activities which provide the community access to formal criminal justice services and increase trust between citizens and law enforcement.
- *Information Sharing:* INL has implemented a software/database management platform for police forces known as COMPSTAT in the United States. The platform supports geo-referencing of crime data, management of human resources, monitoring of police response time, and an analytical cube enabling police precinct commanders to conduct real time analysis of crime situations. COMPSTAT-modeled platforms are in place in Costa Rica, Belize, Honduras, Guatemala, and Panama. INL also supports a regional information sharing database for the Transnational Anti-Gang units throughout the Northern Triangle.
- *Community Policing:* INL supports a Model Police Precinct program to streamline assistance to 141 police precincts that exhibit and promote community policing best practices. Increased police involvement in MPP-supported communities has strengthened transparency, accountability and intelligence gathering, leading to a reduction in crime rates and an increased citizen involvement in local solutions to local security problems.

Regional Drug Demand Reduction Programming

Demand reduction programming is designed to increase the capacity of the Central American governments to address and counter the demand for illegal narcotics through a comprehensive, balanced, and coordinated approach. Activities build upon existing efforts, specifically those under the Place-Based Strategy and Model Police Precinct programs. Initiatives seek to identify and address individuals most at risk of addiction for targeted prevention efforts, while also developing government capacity to provide evidence-based treatment for existing addicts. Projects build the capacity of government entities and NGOs to conduct outreach as well as provide drug treatment and rehabilitation services.

- *Violence and Drug Prevention:* INL supports Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T) throughout Central America; it is a school-based, police taught gang and violence prevention program for elementary and junior high school aged children, not only providing them with important life-skills needed for future success but also promoting a positive relationship between youth and the police, an important goal of community policing.
- *Drug Awareness Campaigns:* INL supports the development and implementation of drug awareness and prevention campaigns that utilize science based prevention throughout the region, specifically among vulnerable communities.
- *Community Coalitions:* INL supports the establishment of community coalitions in the region through the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA). CADCA offers training, technical assistance and other resources on how to build effective community coalitions to NGOs and community groups in throughout Central America affected by the cultivation, trafficking and use of illicit drugs and alcohol problems. CADCA's trainings offer essential competencies and skills necessary to help create a culture of legality and bring about reductions – at the community level – in substance abuse rates.