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# Secretary Napolitano Highlights Border Security Accomplishments on One Year Anniversary of Southwest Border Initiative

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## ***Announces Cross-the-Board Increases in Drugs, Weapons and Cash Seizures***

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano today highlighted the United States' significant progress in securing the U.S.-Mexico border one year after the Obama administration announced the Southwest Border Initiative—a series of unprecedented steps to crack down on Mexican drug cartels by deploying additional personnel and technology, increasing information sharing, working closely with the Mexican government, and improving federal coordination with state, local and tribal law enforcement authorities.

“Last March, this administration took decisive action to combat transnational crime and drug-related violence along the Southwest border to help ensure the security of both the United States and Mexico,” said Secretary Napolitano. “Over the past year, our unprecedented cooperation with the Mexican government and sustained security efforts along the border have resulted in major progress in combating the ruthless cartels that threaten the safety of both our nations.”

Since last March, DHS has doubled the number of personnel assigned to Border Enforcement Security Task Forces; tripled the number of ICE intelligence analysts working along the U.S.-Mexico border; quadrupled deployments of Border Liaison Officers; and begun screening 100 percent of southbound rail shipments for illegal weapons, drugs and cash—for the first time ever.

DHS also deployed additional canine teams trained to detect drugs and weapons and non-intrusive inspection technology that help identify anomalies in passenger vehicles at the Southwest border. Today, the Border Patrol is better staffed than at any time in its 85-year history, having nearly doubled the number of agents from approximately 10,000 in 2004 to more than 20,000 in 2009.

Over the past year since the Southwest Border Initiative was launched:

- U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) combined have seized \$85 million in illicit cash along the Southwest border—a 22 percent increase over the same period during the previous year.
- CBP and ICE together have seized 1,404 firearms and 1.62 million kilograms of drugs along the Southwest border—increases of 22 and 14 percent respectively over the same period during the previous year.
- CBP seized \$29.5 million in illicit southbound cash along the Southwest border—a 39 percent increase over the same period during the previous year.

Additionally, the San Diego DHS Maritime Unified Command, comprised of U.S. Coast Guard, CBP, ICE and other law enforcement partners, saw a more than six-fold increase in maritime drug interdictions in the Pacific waters extending from the Southwest border—seizing 57,437 lbs. of drugs in fiscal year 2009 compared to 8,884 lbs. seized in fiscal year 2008. Already in fiscal year 2010, the Coast Guard has seized 11,500 lbs. of drugs across the San Diego sector.

DHS continues to work closely with the Mexican government to build new collaborative efforts on a variety of issues including cross-border communications, narcotics smuggling enforcement, port security, aviation security, information sharing, law enforcement training, and trade.

This includes unprecedented engagement based on a Declaration of Principles of Cooperation signed last month between Secretary Napolitano and Mexican Secretary of Public Safety

(SSP) Genaro García Luna, which allows for the expansion of coordinated intelligence sharing and joint strategic, intelligence-driven plans—already being implemented in the border region of Sonora and Arizona—to other border areas at high risk for transnational criminal activity moving forward.

Secretary Napolitano has visited Mexico five times in the past year, meeting with Mexican President Felipe Calderón on multiple occasions—most recently this week as part of U.S. delegation for the Mérida U.S.-Mexico High Level Consultative Group—to discuss ways both nations can work together to secure the border. Earlier this week, Secretary Napolitano and Mexican Interior Secretary Fernando Francisco Gómez-Mont signed two agreements to bolster aviation and border security by expanding efforts to crack down on violent drug cartels and combat terrorism.

For more information, visit [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov).

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