

# Fact Sheet: U.S.-Mexico Bilateral Meeting

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Press Office  
Contact: 202-282-8010  
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Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge and Secretary of the Interior Santiago Creel today announced the following agreements after bilateral meetings in Mexico City.

## Agreements Signed by Secretaries Tom Ridge and Santiago Creel

*Purpose:* To improve border safety and security along our shared border in order to prevent migrant deaths and combat organized crime linked to human smuggling and trafficking.

### 2004 U.S.-Mexico Action Plan for Cooperation and Border Safety

- Establishes a U.S.-Mexico Coordinating Commission to implement the action plan
- Expands prevention campaigns through media strategies
- Strengthens binational law enforcement cooperation to combat human smugglers and traffickers
- Increases surveillance capabilities and the presence of enforcement agencies in high-risk corridors to deter migrant entry
- Improves response capabilities to help migrants in life-threatening situations
- Reinforces secure and orderly repatriation of migrants to their places of origin

### Memorandum of Understanding on the Safe, Orderly, Dignified and Human Repatriation of Mexican Nationals

- Establishes a U.S.-Mexico Repatriation Technical Working Group
- Enhances existing mechanisms and procedures for the repatriation of Mexican nationals from the United States
- Specifies criteria for local repatriation arrangements
- Agrees to explore ways to carry out the repatriation of Mexican nationals to their place of origin and of third country nationals to their home.

### Additional Announcements

Secretaries Ridge and Creel announced that the Joint Working Group for USVISIT has met twice already, to further coordination and avoid any potential disruptions caused by the program. The Joint Working Group anticipates installation of Border Crossing Card readers at all ports of entries for pedestrian and vehicular traffic in the coming months. The Secretaries also made announcements on the following:

- Expansion of SENTRI Lanes

The Secure Electronic Network for Traveler's Rapid Inspection (SENTRI) is a dedicated commuter lane system that leverages technology to make the flow of people across our shared border more secure.

#### *Action:*

We plan to establish eight new SENTRI lanes at six additional land ports of entry this year: San Ysidro, CA; Calexico, CA; Nogales, AZ; El Paso, TX; Laredo, TX; and Brownsville, TX. The six locations account for more than 90% of cross-border trade.

- Expansion of FAST Lanes

The Free and Secure Trade (FAST) program is designed to enhance the security and safety of the commercial flow of goods along the Southern border, while facilitating the economic prosperity of both countries. Companies using FAST lanes agree to rigorous inspections of their plants, warehouses and employees as well as to safety procedures, including special container seals that ensure the integrity of the cargo and eliminate vulnerabilities. In exchange, participating companies receive fast electronic processing and reduced inspections.

*Action:* We plan to establish FAST lanes at five additional land ports of entry this year: Pharr, TX; Brownsville, TX; Calexico, CA; Otay Mesa, CA; and Nogales, AZ.