

The Central America Regional Security Initiative: Disrupt the Movement of Criminals and Contraband



“...Our greatest threat has moved to Central America, where traffickers and criminal gangs now facilitate the flow of up to 95% of all cocaine reaching the U.S. and threaten the very governments themselves.”

– Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement Affairs William Brownfield

CARSI – An Integrated, Collaborative Regional Security Program

The Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) responds to regional threats by supplementing the strategies and programs Central American nations implement on their own and in cooperation with other countries. CARSI is coordinated with other nations, international financial institutions, the private sector, civil society, and the Central American Integration System (SICA), and draws upon the expertise and efforts of like-minded donors supporting the citizen safety goals of Central American countries.

The Illicit Movement of Goods and People Threatens the Security of the Region

Narcotics traffickers and other criminal organizations continue to establish trafficking routes to and through Central America, leading to rising domestic drug consumption in Central American countries. The widespread availability of firearms, including weapons trafficked into the region, increases the incidence of violent crimes. The expansion of transnational gangs and their networks across Central America creates communities of fear where gangs effectively control entire neighborhoods. Organized crime seeks to rob governments of taxes and import duties by circumventing legitimate trade routes, reducing the ability of the state to fund and provide basic services to its citizens. Much as the United States has recognized its need to secure its borders, so have the nations of Central America.

U.S. Assistance – Securing Borders and Facilitating Legitimate Trade

Through CARSI, the United States is working with the nations of Central America to secure the region's borders and to deny territory to drug and arms traffickers, gangs, and other organized criminal organizations that are exploiting the region to further their illicit activities. CARSI provides border security training, technical assistance and advisors, equipment, and investigative support to identify and disrupt trafficking networks and to prevent the movement of criminals and illicit goods within the region. U.S. activities support host nations' interdiction efforts at airports, at sea and land ports of entry, in the littoral waters and airspace of the region, and in the region's remote areas between formal border crossings.

For more information related to the Central America Regional Security Initiative, please visit our website at <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rt/carsi/index.htm>

The Five Goals of CARSI in Central America:

1. Create safe streets for the citizens of the region;
2. **Disrupt the movement of criminals and contraband to, within, and between the nations of Central America;**
3. Support the development of strong, capable, and accountable Central American governments;
4. Re-establish effective state presence, services and security in communities at risk; and
5. Foster enhanced levels of coordination and cooperation between the nations of the region, other international partners, and donors to combat regional security threats.