

**STATEMENT
OF
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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

**REGARDING A HEARING ON
“Update on Southwest Border; The Challenges that DHS Continues to
Face”**

**BEFORE THE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14 -- 10:00 a.m.

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Price, Ranking Member Rogers, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you again for the opportunity to discuss the role of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in public safety and Southwest border security. This is my second appearance before you on this issue, and I thank the Committee for its continued support by providing \$100 million to increase our operations along the Southwest border in fiscal year (FY) 2010. ICE's FY 2011 budget request annualizes the generous increases provided in the FY 2010 bill and is a two percent increase over its FY 2010 budget. The additional \$80 million will support detention and removal operations, the Border Enforcement Security Task Force (BEST) program, and the National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center. ICE's commitment to securing the Southwest border remains as strong as ever. The request provides continued support for the significant increases provided in the FY 2010 bill and allows ICE to focus efforts on on-boarding, training and deploying the best agents and support staff in a strategic manner.

I would be remiss if I did not speak about the recent tragic murder last month of a prominent Arizona rancher, Robert Krentz, near the Mexican border. I speak on behalf of the men and women of ICE in offering our condolences for Mr. Krentz's family and community, as well as the families of the three people associated with the United States Consulate who were recently brutally murdered in Ciudad Juárez. Together with our Mexican partners and domestic Federal and State law enforcement partners, ICE is working to ensure that the perpetrators of these crimes are brought to justice.

These recent events illustrate the point I made in my testimony last November—there has been an increase in the level of drug cartel-related violence on the Mexican side of the Southwest

border, particularly around Ciudad Juárez and Tijuana, and along the Nuevo-León-Tamaulipas-Texas border. As I unequivocally stated then, and as I repeat now, addressing the violence in Mexico is vital to the United States interests.

ICE remains firmly committed to ensuring that our borders are secure and to curbing the bilateral flow of contraband including guns, money, and drugs. As detailed in the first Quadrennial Homeland Security Review (QHSR), delivered by Secretary Napolitano to Congress in February 2010, ICE plays a key role in border security and enforcing immigration law. ICE's efforts help protect the American people from illicit trafficking and related transnational crime through smart, tough, intelligence-driven law enforcement.

ICE's efforts along the Southwest border are guided by the Office of National Drug Control Policy's National Southwest Border Counternarcotics Strategy, as well as the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Counternarcotics strategic goals. These plans articulate a simple, yet powerful, message: we must reduce the flow of illicit drugs, money, and violence across the Southwest border.

ICE's efforts along with Southwest border are conducted in close coordination with our partners at U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and our State, local, and tribal partners to ensure coordination between U.S. law enforcement. ICE's work also directly supports the Mérida Initiative which established a strategic framework to guide U.S. and Mexican cooperation. The Mérida Initiative institutionalizes this partnership through: disrupting organized criminal groups; strengthening institutions; creating a 21st century border; and building strong and resilient communities. Our

success in battling the violence on the Southwest Border hinges on this partnership, at home and abroad.

Finally, I want to stress that our working relationship with fellow law enforcement and civilian agencies in Mexico remains extremely positive and well-coordinated. We have forged productive working relationships, and President Calderon's leadership and commitment to defeat drug cartels remains a guiding light for the Mexican Government and public.

ICE's efforts to enhance public safety and reduce violence on the Mexican side of our shared border includes the ICE-led Border Enforcement Security Taskforces (BESTs), investigations leading to the dismantling of transnational criminal organizations and gangs, and the removal of criminal aliens who threaten our communities. I will start by highlighting our efforts to combat the increasing violence and illegal activities in Ciudad Juárez, immediately over the border from El Paso.

ICE's Efforts in Ciudad Juárez

ICE recognizes the severity of the violence and illicit activity in Ciudad Juárez. We intend to use, to the greatest extent possible, our available resources to address this problem strategically. Since my last testimony before this Subcommittee, ICE has initiated new programs, while simultaneously expanding and reorganizing existing programs, to address the escalating cartel violence in and around Ciudad Juárez.

First, since March 3, 2010, ICE has suspended the removal of Mexican nationals with criminal records through Ciudad Juárez until further notice. Temporary cessation of the removal of criminal aliens to Ciudad Juárez can reduce the number of individuals susceptible to recruitment or exploitation by cartels and criminal gangs upon repatriation to Mexico.

Second, we are expanding the Illegal Drug Program (IDP) to El Paso, Texas this month in coordination with CBP and the United States Attorney's Office in El Paso. The IDP began last fall as a pilot program in Nogales, Arizona, with protocols between the Mexican Office of the Attorney General (PGR), ICE, and CBP. The IDP enables PGR to prosecute cross-border drug smugglers that the United States Attorney's Office declines to prosecute, often due to evidentiary issues involving the knowledge of the smuggler. The program became operational on Oct. 24, 2009, and has already produced results in Nogales, Arizona. Since its inception, 24 defendants were arrested as a result of 17 separate seizures, with a total combined weight of 887.71 pounds of marijuana, 52.31 pounds of cocaine, and 6.11 pounds of heroin. The 24 defendants were referred for prosecution in Mexico. On March 11, 2010, the PGR notified ICE that the first two completed cases had resulted in a 10-year prison sentence. This partnership has enabled us to increase enforcement against individuals directly involved with drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) operating in the area.

Third, the BESTs continue to play a critical role in ICE's enforcement efforts, especially in partnership with Mexico. The El Paso BEST is working collaboratively with Mexico's Tactical-Operative Intelligence Unit (UNITO) Juárez taskforce and will address the following four primary threats in the El Paso-Juárez corridor: 1) narcotics smuggling; 2) weapons violations; 3) money laundering; and 4) human smuggling/trafficking. Similarly, the El Paso BEST has been divided into three teams. Our Operations team conducts investigations of criminal violations related to weapons smuggling, bulk cask smuggling, transnational gangs, and narcotics smuggling. The Human Smuggling/Trafficking team conducts long-term investigations involving criminal organizations that are smuggling or trafficking undocumented aliens. Finally, the Disrupt team addresses short-term or lower-level violent crimes.

I'd like to share an example of the real results ICE is achieving in El Paso. From a significant, long-term investigation, ICE arrested twenty-five people, including the owner and two managers of the Gateway Hotel in El Paso, for conspiracy to smuggle and harbor illegal aliens for financial gain. These arrests are only part of a comprehensive approach to address the violence on the Southwest border and disrupt cross-border crime.

The Southwest Border Initiative

Since the launch of Southwest Border Initiative (SWBI) in March 2009, information sharing between the Departments of Homeland Security, Justice, and Defense has increased, resulting in better intelligence capabilities and coordination with State, local, and Mexican law enforcement authorities to disrupt and dismantle drug trafficking organizations operating along the Southwest border. Between March 2009 and March 2010, seizures of weapons, money, and narcotics along the Southwest border have increased significantly compared to the same time period in 2008-2009. Specifically, ICE has achieved:

- A 64 percent increase in narcotics seizures in the Houston Area of Responsibility (AOR). The San Antonio AOR reports a 23 percent increase in narcotics seizures during the same period.
- A 40 percent increase (\$2.7 million increase) in currency seizures in the San Diego AOR. These seizures are critical, as they represent the profits from criminal activity and the means by which transnational criminal organizations fund their illegal activities of drug smuggling, weapons smuggling, and human trafficking.
- A 15 percent increase in criminal convictions in the Phoenix area of responsibility AOR.

- An 11 percent increase in administrative arrests of criminal aliens by ICE's Detention and Removal Operations along the Southwest border. From March 2009 through March 2010, DRO San Diego, San Antonio, Phoenix, Houston and El Paso arrested 27,741 criminal aliens compared to 24,895 from the same period last year.

In September 2009, ICE and DHS bolstered efforts along the SWB through the Arizona Operational Plan, later designated as the Alliance to Combat Transnational Threats (ACTT) initiative, in response to a surge in border crime in Southern Arizona. The ACTT plan builds upon ICE's investigative successes and supports the Mérida goal of building resilient communities by increased public safety and a culture of lawfulness. As a stakeholder in the ACTT effort, ICE is fully committed to the effort's primary focus of conducting intelligence-driven border enforcement operations to disrupt and dismantle violent cross-border criminal organizations that have a negative impact on the lives of the people on both sides of the border.

ICE investigations reveal that cross-border criminal organizations often engage in various criminal acts to support their smuggling activities. The ACTT was developed specifically to address serious felonies that significantly impact public safety in Arizona. These serious felonies include smuggling of aliens, bulk cash, and drugs; document fraud; exportation of weapons; homicide; hostage taking; money laundering; and human trafficking and prostitution.

In conjunction with our ACTT partners, ICE has participated with CBP in productive interdiction operations that have yielded substantial enforcement results. Further, intelligence garnered from seizures has led to investigations targeting the command and control structure of large transnational criminal organizations.

Dismantling Cross-Border Criminal Networks through BESTs along the Southwest Border

ICE continues to expand BESTs, which currently operate in 10 locations along the Southwest border. Depending on the unique law enforcement needs within ICE's various areas of responsibility, BESTs often include members from other Federal agencies such as CBP, DEA, ATF, the FBI, and State and local law enforcement agencies. Many of the BEST locations also include foreign law enforcement, including Mexican officials.

When fully operational, the Mexico City BEST will be a bilateral, multi-agency taskforce that enhances information sharing between ICE and the Mexican government, thereby increasing operational effectiveness. This vetted unit will be poised to investigate a wide range of criminal organizations using investigative methods such as undercover operations, intelligence collection, and financial intelligence exploitation and to ensure prosecution. The Mexico BEST is currently conducting investigations with limited vetted personnel.

Several other highlights of the work of the BESTs at the border include:

- From November 19, 2009, through March 12, 2010, ICE BESTs seized 3,514 pounds of cocaine, 17,689 pounds of marijuana, 176 pounds of methamphetamine, 23 pounds of crystal methamphetamine, and 254 pounds of ecstasy. Over the same period, ICE BESTs seized 296 weapons, 125 vehicles and \$965,000 in U.S. currency and monetary instruments. ICE looks to build on its successes through the Mérida Initiative's efforts to dismantle illicit activity and build a modern and safe border.
- Developing communication and information-sharing protocols to identify human smuggling routes used by transnational criminal organizations through Mexico that could have an impact on our national security.

- Working with the U.S. Embassy in Mexico to design a consistent standard for vetting State and local officials, enabling these officials to work with ICE vetted units on the U.S./Mexico border.

Our efforts to dismantle cross-border criminal organizations are producing results. For instance, in the area of weapons smuggling, in April 2009, El Paso BEST, in collaboration with the El Paso Police Department and ATF, arrested two individuals identified as working for a drug trafficking organization in Mexico. BEST agents conducted an undercover meeting in which two Mexican individuals provided a list of weapons and a good faith deposit of \$148,000 for the firearms. The purchase wish-list included 20 revolvers, 75 semi-automatic handguns, 320 rifles, 300 machine guns, 52 grenade launchers and several thousand rounds of ammunition they wished to purchase. The individuals agreed to pay \$1.9 million in U.S. currency for the weapons. A total of four people were indicted in the investigation. Three have been sentenced; the fourth is a fugitive believed to be hiding in Mexico.

To combat human smuggling, ICE agents arrested 104 people on Feb. 2, 2010 during “Operation Night Moves,” which targeted illicit transportation businesses that smuggled illegal aliens from Houston, Texas. Twenty-two people were charged for using their businesses to transport aliens recently smuggled into the country. ICE agents also seized 32 vehicles and 18 weapons, including one weapon that was reported stolen.

Finally, to target dangerous, transnational gangs, ICE agents in El Paso participated in “Operation Knockdown,” a coordinated effort by DEA, FBI, and El Paso law enforcement agencies targeting Barrio Azteca (BA) gang members from March 18-21, 2010. BA gang members are allegedly responsible for the murders of three individuals associated with the U.S. Consulate in Ciudad Juárez on March 13, 2010. BA gang members are also involved in

smuggling drugs from Mexico into the United States for distribution throughout the country, and are suspected of committing assassinations for the Juárez Cartel. ICE agents have made a total of 23 criminal arrests of U.S. citizens and Mexican nationals for violations of Federal and State law.

Dismantling a criminal organization requires robust criminal prosecution. To assist U.S. Attorneys with increased caseloads resulting from ICE's increased enforcement, we are loaning ICE attorneys to serve two-year terms as Special Assistant U.S. Attorneys (SAUSA). Currently, ICE has six SAUSAs stationed along the Southwest Border. ICE has developed an agreement with the Department of Justice to increase this number in the coming months.

Intelligence Support to ICE Investigations Along the Southwest Border

A robust intelligence and information sharing mechanism is critical to dismantling transnational criminal organizations operating along the Southwest Border. ICE draws on its intelligence programs, such as the Border Violence Intelligence Cell (BVIC) and its Field Intelligence Groups, to execute its law enforcement operations successfully. Over the last year, ICE deployed additional intelligence analysts and reports officers to our offices along the Southwest border and in Mexico. These key personnel support ICE investigations with their subject matter expertise on transnational criminal organizations engaging in money laundering, narcotics trafficking, human trafficking, alien smuggling, and counter proliferation.

ICE's BVIC has served as a centralized mechanism to support operations conducted through the BEST teams and with the Government of Mexico. ICE co-located the BVIC at the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) to enhance information sharing with our law enforcement

partners. ICE's partnership with ATF's EPIC Gun Desk, for example, has helped coordinate firearms tracing efforts and identified smuggling routes between the United States into Mexico.

With the recent upsurge in violence in Juárez, the BVIC is actively developing actionable intelligence on drug cartels and their associates, and is working with our interagency partners. For example, on March 31, BVIC research helped the EPIC Airwatch Command positively identify a known drug trafficker who was seeking to purchase a plane for ostensibly illicit purposes. The information resulted in that seizure of a small aircraft valued at \$1.1 million.

ICE's Field Intelligence Groups (FIGs) also play a critical role in building actionable intelligence against the DTOs. FIG El Paso for example supports DRO, BEST El Paso, and BEST Las Cruces. Following the murders of the persons associated with the U.S. Consulate in Ciudad Juarez, FIG El Paso was instrumental in identifying Barrio Azteca (BA) members who crossed into the United States following the murders. Additionally, Intelligence Officers assigned to support Operation Knockdown were responsible for arresting a high level BA member based on information provided by confidential sources.

In furtherance of information sharing to support ICE's law enforcement initiatives, ICE created a Weapons Virtual Task Force (WVTF). This cyberspace task force, comprised of the ICE and Government of Mexico personnel, will post investigative information through a Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) portal. This initiative intends to use the HSIN WVTF portal as the primary mechanism for sharing firearms-related investigative information and intelligence that will lead to ready identification and the routine disruption of illicit trans-border activities that support weapons smuggling between the United States and Mexico.

Let me stress that ICE is committed to partnership in this critical area. To facilitate bilateral sharing of law enforcement information, ICE is supporting the Department's efforts to

develop a stand-alone web-based tool, Law Enforcement Information Sharing Service International (LSI). This tool will allow task force personnel to better understand patterns and trends in international organized crime and promote early detection of organized crime threats. In addition, LSI will provide better identification of partner countries impacted by U.S.-based criminal organizations, resulting in earlier collaboration and better investigations.

Targeting Transnational Criminal Organizations and Pursuing Money Laundering and Bulk Cash Smuggling Investigations

Transnational criminals attempt to exploit lawful movement and transportation systems to create alternative, illicit pathways through which people and narcotics, illicit proceeds, and weaponry can cross the border. As the Department's largest investigative agency, ICE plays a critical role in the layered approach to border security. Our anti-money laundering projects, including Operation Armas Cruzadas and Operation Firewall, are critical to identification, disruption, and dismantling of transnational gangs.

The final point on ICE's efforts in developing intelligence-driven investigations must include a mention of a key study ICE launched in conjunction with the DHS Office of Counternarcotics Enforcement and the Mexican government in October 2009. This report was commissioned to study the movement of illicit proceeds between the United States and Mexico. I am pleased to report that the study was just recently completed and it provides a critical strategic overview of the criminal proceeds "supply chain." It identifies key nodes and vulnerabilities that we can use to disrupt bulk cash smuggling and money laundering. This first-ever bilateral study will assist U.S. law enforcement in developing strategic approaches to dismantling the financial infrastructure of transnational criminal organizations. The study's

factual findings and results will be released at a joint U.S./Mexico Money Laundering Strategy Planning Meeting to be held in approximately six weeks.

Operation Armas Cruzadas

Operation Armas Cruzadas is a comprehensive, collaborative, intelligence-driven, systematic effort in partnership with the Mexican government to identify, disrupt, and dismantle the criminal networks that illicitly transport arms across the border. From March 25, 2009, through March 12, 2010, Armas Cruzadas has resulted in the seizure of 125 firearms, 13,386 rounds of ammunition, and several criminal arrests. Since its creation, the Operation has resulted in the seizure of 3,877 weapons, 396,414 rounds of ammunition, criminal arrests of 749 individuals, and more than \$10.48 million in U.S. currency and monetary instruments. This bilateral law enforcement and intelligence-sharing operation between U.S. and Mexican law enforcement agencies has helped to curtail drug cartels and criminal organizations that seek to acquire powerful and dangerous firearms that perpetuate the violence along the Southwest border.

Operation Firewall

ICE's Operation Firewall disrupts the movement and smuggling of bulk cash en route to the border, at the border, and internationally. Through partnerships and collaboration with State and local law enforcement officers, CBP, and international law enforcement partners such as Mexico, ICE targets the lifeblood of these criminal organizations. During fiscal year 2009, Operation Firewall efforts in Mexico resulted in nine seizures totaling over \$18 million and the arrest of five individuals by Mexican authorities. Thus far in calendar year 2010, Operation

Firewall efforts at the Mexico City International Airport have resulted in five seizures totaling \$3.1 million. ICE Attaché Mexico City is receiving robust support from the Mexican government in conducting Operation Firewall. Since its inception in 2005, Operation Firewall has resulted in 3,946 seizures totaling more than \$302 million and the arrests of 679 individuals. These efforts include 205 international seizures of more than \$112 million and 140 international arrests.

Investigations informed by operational intelligence continue to produce successful criminal prosecutions. For example, in August 2009, a vehicle stop resulted in the seizure of approximately \$74,000. Information regarding this seizure was sent to ICE's Bulk Cash Smuggling Center (BCSC—an operational unit within ICE that was launched in August 2009 and maximizes money laundering investigations through intelligence). The BCSC quickly linked the seizure to a trucking company involved in narcotics smuggling and money laundering activities. The investigation is still underway. To date, this information has led to the seizure of several thousand pounds of marijuana and over \$3.1 million in cash.

Transnational Gangs

Transnational gangs perpetrate numerous violations within ICE's purview, including human smuggling and trafficking, narcotics smuggling and distribution, identity theft and benefit fraud, money laundering, weapons smuggling and arms trafficking, cyber crimes, kidnapping, extortion, and export violations. These gangs often conspire with other dangerous criminal organizations, which allow them to mature from small autonomous criminal groups into larger, international criminal enterprises.

As the only Federal agency that focuses exclusively on transnational gangs comprised of foreign nationals, the key to ICE's success against gangs is our ability to use a multifaceted approach to attacking violent crime by applying appropriate investigative strategies and law enforcement authority.

For example, in November 2009, under ICE's Operation Community Shield Program, ICE agents initiated "Project Big Freeze" to combat street gangs, prison gangs, and outlaw motorcycle gangs in the United States specifically conducting business on behalf of DTOs, including those that operate along the Southwest border.

The impetus for Project Big Freeze was the National Drug Threat Assessment report by the National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC) of the U.S. Department of Justice. This 2009 report identified gangs as an imminent threat to the national security and public safety of our country. The report classified 28 gangs as exceedingly dangerous due to their involvement with cross-border criminal activity linked to Mexican and Asian DTOs.

Project Big Freeze involved more than 115 law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State, and local levels, and resulted in the arrest of 517 gang members and associates from 88 gangs across 83 cities throughout the United States. Forty-one of these arrested individuals were present illegally in the United States and 240 were from 15 gangs affiliated with Mexican DTOs. As part of this initiative, agents seized 725 pounds of marijuana, 7 kilograms of cocaine, 142 grams of heroin, 87 grams of crack cocaine, 29 grams of methamphetamine, 47 firearms, and more than \$100,000 in U.S. currency.

Detention and Removal Operations Along The Southwest Border

To enhance enforcement efforts along the Arizona-Sonora border, ICE deployed 45 officers from its Office of Detention and Removal Operations to its Phoenix Field Office. Focusing these resources in Arizona has demonstrably bolstered public safety efforts in that State. From September 2009 through February 2010, this initiative resulted in 6,317 encounters, 5,455 arrests, and 4,237 removals. During the same time period, ICE's Phoenix office responded to 570 calls for assistance from other law enforcement agencies which resulted in 1,776 more alien arrests. Additionally, 1,229 cases were presented to the United States Attorney's Office (USAO) for prosecution, of which 478 were accepted.

Four important detention and removal initiatives support our efforts along the Southwest border. Through the Criminal Alien Program (CAP), ICE identifies and arrests criminal aliens who are incarcerated within Federal, State, and local prisons and jails. Next, ICE's Secure Communities program has activated IDENT/IAFIS (Automated Biometric Identification System/Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System) Interoperability along the Southwest border to more effectively identify and remove the most dangerous criminal aliens from the United States. ICE's National Fugitive Operations Program (FOP) targets criminal, fugitive aliens who pose a risk to public safety. Last, the Law Enforcement Area Response Unit (LEAR), a program in Phoenix, Arizona, responds to law enforcement agencies requests for assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week, thereby increasing efficiencies in the identification of illegal and criminal aliens. In sum, these programs aim to deter and reduce future recidivism rates of violent criminal aliens by seeking removal and/or criminal prosecution where appropriate.

The Mexican Interior Repatriation Program (MIRP) also supports removal efforts along the Southwest border by operating in the summer months and returning aliens to the interior of Mexico. This bilateral initiative between the United States and Mexico aims to reduce the loss

of human life and combat organized crime linked to the smuggling, trafficking, and exploitation of persons attempting to enter the United States. Between August and September of 2009, 10,560 Mexican nationals were voluntarily returned through the MIRP initiative. A bilateral review of the MIRP 2010 General Principles and Local Operating Procedures is underway and the procurement process is estimated to begin this month. The 2010 MIRP is scheduled to commence in early June 2010, and continue for 120 days. To bolster public safety along the Southwest border, discussions continue to determine the best strategy to achieve year-round interior repatriation of Mexican nationals including those with criminal convictions.

Initiatives with the Mexican Government

ICE is expanding its law enforcement training and outreach programs in Mexico and strengthening our efforts to curb illicit activity at the border. ICE coordinates multiple initiatives that involve direct coordination with the Mexican government.

In addition, in August 2007, the Mexican Tax Administration Service (SAT), Mexican Customs, CBP, and ICE signed a Bilateral Strategic Plan to fight cross-border crime. This plan strengthened our collaboration by expanding institutional cooperation mechanisms. I am pleased to say that since I last testified, the Secretary signed a Declaration of Principles with the Mexican Minister of Finance, and DHS, ICE, CBP, SAT and Mexican Customs signed an updated version of the corresponding Bilateral Strategic Plan which identifies several priority initiatives. Under this December 2009 plan, we will begin next month an unprecedented investigative training course for Mexican customs-enforcement personnel, modeled on the ICE Special Agent training, which is scheduled to be completed in June 2010. This comprehensive curriculum will prepare Mexican Customs officials to assume expanded investigative responsibilities and graduates will

better understand U.S. and Mexican customs laws and law enforcement best practices. Increased investigative capabilities will support the prosecution of criminal customs violations in Mexico and will improve bilateral information sharing and investigative efforts. These new capacities will enable the Government of Mexico to stem the abuse of the international shipping systems to bring contraband into the United States.

ICE participates in a bilateral arms working group, Grupo de Coordinacion-Armas, with U.S. Embassy law enforcement partners and the Mexican government. This working group focuses on efforts to combat arms trafficking/smuggling. Every two weeks, the ICE Attaché in the Mexico City office obtains seizure summaries, including names of suspects and lists of arms and munitions seized, and provides that information to analysts.

We are also sharing critical information with Mexican authorities to assist them in their fight against the DTOs. On March 23, 2010, Secretary Napolitano signed an unprecedented agreement with Governance Secretary Gomez-Mont and Secretary of Public Safety General Garcia Luna in Mexico that memorializes DHS' effort to share criminal history information electronically with Mexican law enforcement about Mexican nationals who are being repatriated from the United States and who have been convicted of certain felonies in the United States. We worked closely with the Department of Justice and the FBI to ensure that all parties adhere to regulations on the sharing of this criminal record information and the agreement includes language that precludes Mexico from accepting repatriation.

Finally, ICE is enabling Mexican law enforcement officials to perform their duties more effectively by providing training and technical assistance. For instance, among other programs, we have provided training on arms trafficking, cyber crimes, basic criminal investigative methods, undercover training to SSP officers, as well as global trafficking in persons, child sex

exploitation, and information-sharing platform training. We have also planned trainings in ethics and gang investigations. We remain committed to our cross-training efforts to build the investigative capacity of Mexican law enforcement entities.

CONCLUSION

Enhancing public safety along the Southwest border remains an enormous priority for the Department and ICE. We have taken important steps to improve security along the border by instituting several initiatives and pursuing strong partnership with other Federal agencies, State and local law enforcement, and the Mexican government. Since my last testimony before this Subcommittee, we have begun to see real results from our efforts, and we will continue to prioritize this important mission. I assure you ICE takes this issue very seriously. We will continue to utilize our broad jurisdiction and ability to forge strategic partnerships with our fellow law enforcement agencies, both here and abroad.

I thank the Subcommittee for its continued support of ICE and our border security mission. Your support is vital to the work of ICE. Moreover, your continued interest and oversight of our actions is important to the men and women at ICE, who work each day to ensure the safety and security of the United States.

I would now be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

BIOGRAPHY OF JOHN MORTON
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John Morton is the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). He leads the principal investigative component of the Department of Homeland Security and the second largest investigative agency in the federal government, with more than 19,000 employees and an annual budget of more than \$5 billion.

Mr. Morton came to ICE with an extensive background in federal law enforcement and immigration law and policy. Mr. Morton, who began his federal service in 1994, has held a variety of positions within the Department of Justice, including as a trial attorney and special assistant to the general counsel in the former Immigration and Naturalization Service and as counsel to the deputy attorney general.

From 1999 to 2006, Mr. Morton prosecuted criminal cases as an Assistant United States Attorney in the Eastern District of Virginia, first in the Major Crimes Unit and later in the Terrorism and National Security Unit. From 2006 to mid-2009, Mr. Morton served in the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice, first as the Acting Chief of the Domestic Security Section and then as the Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General.

Mr. Morton is a graduate of the University of Virginia, School of Law.