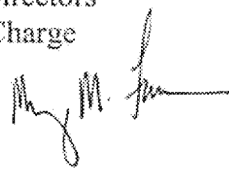




U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

APR 14 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Directors  
Deputy Assistant Directors  
Special Agents in Charge

FROM: Marcy M. Forman   
Director

SUBJECT: Implementation of Small Arms Trafficking Initiative  
Operation Armas Cruzadas

The smuggling of illegal weapons from the United States into Mexico is a threat to the overall safety and security of both countries. Weapons smuggled into Mexico often end up in the hands of the drug cartels or other smuggling organizations where they can be employed against law enforcement officers and citizens in either country. These firearms continue to fuel violence along the Southwest border and in the interior of Mexico.

To combat the illegal exports of U.S. origin arms and other commodities, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) leverages multiple resources, including over 25 years of experience in criminal export investigations and the broadest authorities of any U.S. government agency in the areas of illegal export of munitions, small arms, and dual-use technology, including sanctions violations. In addition to these authorities, ICE has primary jurisdiction over investigations relating to the cross-border smuggling of firearms and other weapons out of the United States.

ICE is leveraging its authorities, expertise and experience to initiate "Operation Armas Cruzadas" in order to combat the smuggling of weapons from the United States into Mexico. As part of this initiative, DHS and Government of Mexico (GoM) agencies will partner in unprecedented bi-lateral interdiction, investigation and intelligence-sharing activities to identify, disrupt, and dismantle trans-border criminal networks that smuggle weapons from the United States into Mexico.

Operation Armas Cruzadas implements numerous activities that enhance a timely, systematic intelligence-sharing cycle to drive interdictions and investigations. Effective information sharing will occur through key strategies:

## **Training Stakeholders**

- Provide training in appropriate export and other weapons laws, resources and methods used to combat trans-border smuggling

## **Industry Outreach**

- Project Shield America (PSA) is an ICE industry outreach program designed to increase public awareness of export laws and controls, since 2001 ICE agents have conducted more than 15,300 industry outreach presentations
- PSA will be expanded to include strategic audiences involved in the manufacture, sale, or shipment of firearms and ammunition along the southern border
- Border Enforcement Security Task Forces (BESTs) will utilize PSA to approach Federal Firearms Licensees (FFL), trade shows and gun shows, retail and discount stores, and other businesses dealing in after market sale of weapons
- Distribute public information posters and brochures, which emphasize U.S. export control and smuggling laws relating to firearms and ammunition, and Mexican gun trafficking laws

## **Reinvigorating the ICE Border Liaison Program**

- Establishes an official ICE point of contact for Customs and Border Protection (CBP), ICE Representatives in Mexico, state and local law enforcement agencies, as well as GoM law enforcement agencies along the U.S. – Mexico border
- Sustain an open and cooperative working relationship with foreign and domestic entities from all levels of government
- Current membership varies by individual ICE field office, and 6-month blanket country clearances are being issued for each ICE Border Liaison Officer to conduct liaison with the GoM (with U.S. Embassy concurrence)

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**Proposed Participants:**

United States

- DHS
  - ICE
  - CBP
- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF)

Mexico

- Procuraduría General de la Republica (PGR) – Mexico Attorney General’s Office
  - Subprocuraduría de Investigación Especializada en Delincuencia Organizada (SIEDO) – Prosecutorial Branch
- Secretaría de Seguridad Pública (SSP) – National Police Force
- Centro Nacional de Planeación, Análisis e Infamación para el Combate a la Delincuencia (CENAPI)
- Aduana Mexico - Customs
- Centro de Investigación y Seguridad Nacional (CISEN) - Intelligence

Additional information regarding Operation Armas Cruzadas will be disseminated at a later date. For questions regarding this initiative, contact ASTI Section Chief **(b)(6),(b)(7)(C)** at (202) **(b)(6),(b)(7)(C)** or via email at **(b)(6),(b)(7)(C)**@dhs.gov .