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CONFRONTING TRANSNATIONAL DRUG SMUGGLING: AN ASSESSMENT OF REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Serial No. 113–67
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Serial No. 113–241

JOINT HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION,

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

AND THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE,

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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SECOND SESSION

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Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives

Bill Shuster
Chairman

Washington, DC 20515

Nick J. Rahall, II
Ranking Member

April 25, 2014

SUMMARY OF SUBJECT MATTER

TO:	Members, Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation and Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere
FROM:	Staff, Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation and Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere
RE:	Hearing on "Confronting Transnational Drug Smuggling: An Assessment of Regional Partnerships"

PURPOSE

On April 29, 2014, at 10:00 a.m. in 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation and the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere will hold a joint hearing to examine the federal government's efforts to confront transnational drug smuggling and stem the flow of illegal drugs to the United States. The Subcommittees will hear from the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), the United States Coast Guard, and the United States Southern Command (SOUTHCOM).

BACKGROUND

Illicit drug trafficking continues to threaten the safety, security, and public health of Americans and citizens throughout the world. Central and South American countries that have experienced an increase in trafficking have also suffered from increased violence, crime, and corruption. That violence has directly impacted Americans as Mexican drug cartels are allegedly responsible for the kidnapping and murder of hundreds of United States citizens over the last decade. Finally, illegal drugs place significant strain on our Nation's health care and criminal justice systems, costing U.S. taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars annually.

In an effort to combat the adverse impact of drugs and coordinate the federal government's drug control activities, Congress established the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) as part of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-690). Section 1705 of title 21, United States Code, requires ONDCP to submit to Congress a National Drug Control

Strategy (NDCS) on an annual basis. The latest NDCS, released in April 2013, outlines the policies the Obama Administration is undertaking to reduce the consumption of illegal drugs in the United States and the societal consequences of such consumption. The NDCS can be broken down in three parts:

1. Domestic Activities – policies and programs related to domestic demand reduction, including federal drug treatment and prevention programs, as well as domestic law enforcement;

2. International Activities – policies and programs undertaken by the United States in cooperation with foreign nations to eradicate drug crops, seize drugs, arrest and prosecute major traffickers, destroy processing capabilities, develop and promote alternative crops to replace drug crops, and promote the involvement of other nations in efforts to control the supply of and demand for drugs; and

3. Interdiction Activities – policies and programs designed to intercept and disrupt shipments of illegal drugs and their precursors en route to the United States from abroad.

Efforts to confront transnational drug smuggling and stem the flow of illegal drugs to the United States are covered under International Activities and Interdiction Activities. This memo includes information on Interdiction Activities. Information on International Activities is covered in the attached memo from the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere.

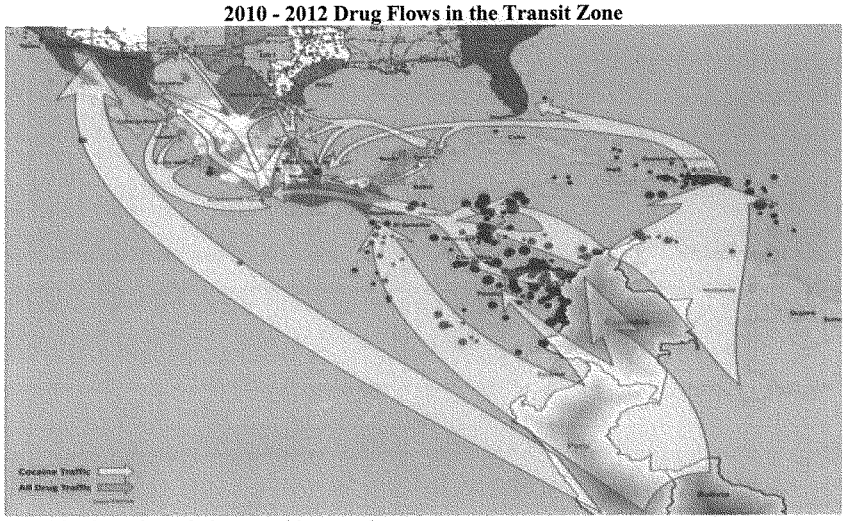
Interdiction Activities

The majority of illegal drugs entering the United States come from South American countries. For instance, Colombia is the source of 95 percent of the cocaine consumed by Americans. The drugs pass through a seven million square-mile area called the Transit Zone, roughly twice the size of the continental United States. The Transit Zone includes the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

Typically, in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, fishing vessels carrying multi-ton loads of cocaine depart Colombian and Ecuadorian ports for delivery points along the Central American or Mexican coast. In the Caribbean, high-speed "go-fast" vessels, hauling as much as two metric tons of cocaine at a time, leave Colombia's north coast for points along the Central American and Mexican coastlines, or to island nations such as the Dominican Republic. Smugglers have also used semi- and fully- submersible vessels to move large shipments of cocaine and marijuana from South America to distribution points in Central America.

Once the drugs land in Central American nations, they are broken down into multiple smaller packages for transshipment to the United States. Although Mexican drug cartels have recently been using panga boats (small, open-air, outboard-powered fishing boats) to move drugs into the United States, the vast majority of the drugs enter through the United States- Mexico land border. Interdicting these smaller packages at the Mexican border is extremely difficult, so the NDCS focuses on interdicting bulk shipments of drugs in the Transit Zone.

2010 - 2012 Drug Flows in the Transit Zone



Note: Blue dots indicate the location of drug interdictions

Agency Roles and Responsibilities

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1990 and 1991 (P.L. 101-189) designated the Department of Defense (DoD) as the lead agency for the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime trafficking of illegal drugs into the United States. The Coast Guard is designated as the lead agency for the interdiction and apprehension of illegal drug traffickers on the high seas. The interdiction effort in the Transit Zone is coordinated by the Joint Inter-Agency Task Force South (JIATF-South). A subordinate of SOUTHCOM, JIATF-South is led by a Coast Guard Rear Admiral (currently RADM Stephen E. Mehling) and composed of representatives from the DoD, Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Department of Justice, and Department of State. Canada, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Spain provide ships, aircraft, and liaison officers. A number of Central and South American countries have also assigned liaison officers to JIATF-South. To provide JIATF-South with the ability to effectively conduct its mission, the State Department has negotiated maritime counterdrug bilateral agreements or operational procedures with 45 foreign nations to coordinate detection, monitoring, interdiction, and apprehension activities.

A typical JIATF-South interdiction operation begins with the collection of actionable intelligence on drug trafficking activities. Next, Customs and Border Patrol, Coast Guard, DoD, or allied nation maritime patrol aircraft (MPA) are launched to detect and monitor the suspect vessel(s). The MPA will then contact a nearby Coast Guard, Navy, or allied nation's surface asset, which will launch a small boat or an armed Coast Guard helicopter manned with Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment personnel to disable the vessel(s), seize the drugs, and

arrest the crew. Operation Martillo (Hammer) is the name of the current JIATF-South interdiction operation.

Goals and Performance

The national interdiction goal, as set forth by the NDCS, establishes a removal rate for all agencies involved in interdiction of 40 percent of the documented flow of cocaine destined for the United States by fiscal year (FY) 2015. The 10-year average removal rate is approximately 25 percent. However, in FY 2012, the removal rate dropped to approximately 23 percent. Since FY 2009, the Coast Guard has set its own annual performance target for cocaine removal from noncommercial vessels in the Transit Zone. The average annual performance target is 16 percent. The Service has achieved its performance target only once since FY 2009.

Of the 702 potential drug shipments targeted in the Transit Zone in FY 2013, JIATF-South was able to interdict 149 (or 21 percent). Those interdictions resulted in the removal of 132 metric tons of cocaine in FY 2013, 20 metric tons (or 13 percent) less than were interdicted in FY 2012. Marijuana interdiction reported by the Coast Guard fell 29 percent from 124,500 pounds in FY 2012 to 88,000 in FY 2013.

Factors Impacting Performance

Several factors impact the ability of JIATF-South to meet drug interdiction performance targets, including continuously changing modes, tactics and routes by drug smugglers; the inability of allied nations to consistently commit assets; and the availability, quality, and timeliness of actionable intelligence. However, according to the leaders of the Coast Guard and SOUTHCOM, the largest factor in the recent decline and ongoing failure to meet drug interdiction performance targets has been the decreased availability of ships and aircraft due to cuts in funding available to support operations, as well as increased rates of asset failures.

1. Cuts in Funding - The FY 2013 sequester had a significant impact on the ability of the SOUTHCOM and Coast Guard to meet drug interdiction performance targets. Sequestration cut approximately $200 million from the Coast Guard's training, operating, and maintenance accounts which limited the availability of assets. As a result of sequestration, the Coast Guard reduced its commitment of forces to JIATF-S. Specifically, planned ship deployments fell by more than 30 percent, from an original FY 2013 target of 1,460 major cutter days to 986. The Coast Guard also reduced planned MPA support to JIATF-S to 3,207 hours, from a FY 2013 target of 4,700 hours.

   In March 2013, as the result of sequestration, the Navy removed the two frigates it had assigned to SOUTHCOM in support of JIATF-South operations. In August 2013, the Navy was able to provide one frigate to replace the two that were removed five months before.

2. Asset Failures - The age of Coast Guard vessels and aircraft, coupled with an increased tempo of operations in recent years, have led to increased rates of failure among the assets' parts and major systems. These factors, in turn, reduced resource hours, which

have negatively impacted operational readiness and mission performance. In its August 2012 report entitled "Legacy Vessels' Declining Conditions Reinforce Need for More Realistic Operational Targets" (GAO-12-741), the Government Accountability Office found that the Service's legacy fleet of vessels was not able to achieve operational targets for either percent time free of casualty, or underway hours. In September 2013, the DHS Inspector General reported that the primary cause of the failure of the Service to meet its FY 2012 drug interdiction performance target was due to decreased asset availability from aging and deteriorating assets (OIG 13-122).

In recent testimony before the House Armed Service Committee, SOUTHCOM Commander General John F. Kelly stated:

> "Irrespective of sequestration cuts, we face a sharp downtown in availability of large surface assets such as U.S. Navy frigates and U.S. Coast Guard High Endurance Cutters, which face decommissioning or are approaching the end of their expected lifespan".

WITNESS LIST

Admiral Robert J. Papp, Jr.
Commandant
United States Coast Guard

General John F. Kelly
Commander
United States Southern Command

Ambassador Luis E. Arreaga
Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs

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RAMON ZERTUCHE
DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR

One Hundred Thirteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere
Committee on Foreign Affairs
256 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
www.foreignaffairs.house.gov

April 25, 2014

MEMORANDUM[1]

TO: Members of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Transportation and Infrastructure
FROM: Matt Salmon, Chairman and Duncan Hunter, Chairman
SUBJECT: Background for April 29, 2014 hearing, "Confronting Transnational Drug Smuggling: An Assessment of Regional Partnerships".

***In the interest of time, only the Chairmen and Ranking Members will make opening statements, all other statements can be submitted for the record.**

Background

On Tuesday, April 29, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building, the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere and the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation will hold a joint hearing to assess interdiction capabilities of the United States and its regional partners in Central America and the Caribbean. General John F. Kelly, Commander of U.S. Southern Command, Admiral Robert J. Papp Jr., Commandant of U.S. Coast Guard, and Ambassador Luis E. Arreaga, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, will outline the Administration's counternarcotics strategy, security initiatives in the region, and efforts of EU and Western Hemisphere partner countries.

Transnational Criminal Organizations and the Security Situation

In recent years, Central American and Caribbean countries have experienced a deteriorating citizen security, and increased drug trafficking. Gangs, criminal groups, and drug traffickers have expanded their activities and cemented their networks in these regions as a result of poor state presence and control, lack of economic alternatives, and the push from the Merida Initiative. Generally, Central American and Caribbean governments struggle to respond to security challenges because of their lack of air-to-ground surveillance, maritime patrol, and law enforcement capabilities. The lack of financial resources is also a key factor handicapping these countries' efforts. According to the World Bank, the overall economic cost of crime and violence averages 7.5% of gross domestic product in the region. The States' coffers of several Caribbean countries (the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica) are also heavily impacted by the activities and violence caused by drugtrafficking organizations (DTOs) and transnational criminal

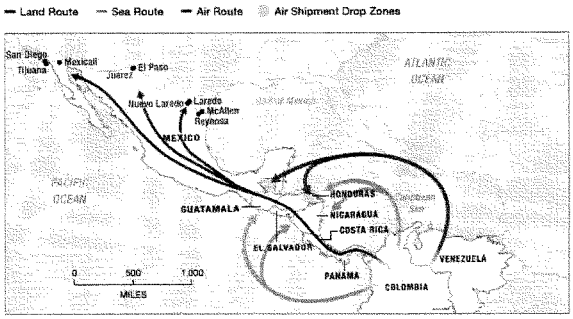
[1] This memo was prepared by Subcommittee staff for background purposes. It draws upong Congressional Research Services materials, scholarly articles, and other publications.

organizations (TCOs). The mixture of poor capacity, reactionary responses, and ill-financed law enforcement agencies have created favorable conditions for DTOs and TCOs to operate almost freely.

U.S. Counternarcotic Strategy and Interests in Latin America

The United States has a key interest in strengthening the anti-narcotics and law enforcement capabilities of its neighbors. The Andean Ridge (Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador and Venezuela) is the source of every ounce of cocaine consumed in the United States. During a recent fact-finding trip, subcommittee staff learned our best relations with most Western Hemisphere countries is at the tactical level. However, law enforcement agencies face a significant operational shortcoming, resulting in an interdiction rate of 20%. This figure is half of the Administration's objective under the national counternarcotics strategy that aims to interdict at least 40% of the incoming drug shipments to the United States. Financial resources and personnel capabilities are fundamental. To paint the picture, when blocks of cocaine land in Honduras, Guatemala or El Salvador, DTOs use their sophisticated networks in the Central American corridor to transport drugs to the United States via the U.S.-Mexico border. The Caribbean corridor also presents a significant challenge for U.S. agencies. In comparison to other trafficking routes, the percentage of illicit narcotics flowing into the U.S. via the Caribbean corridor increased to 14% in 2013, versus 10% in 2012. This growth is troubling because once drugs arrive in Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Islands they are successfully transported to the mainland. DTOs and TCOs utilize go-fast boats to evade Caribbean authorities, who in most cases, do not chase the contraband because they have to interdict in the open waters. The main challenge is stopping traffickers by shooting their engine while the vessel is in motion.

At the request of partner nations and to present a comprehensive response to security concerns, the United States government created two counternarcotics and anti-crime mechanisms to help strengthen interdiction and law enforcement capabilities of its Western Hemisphere partners. The Central American Security Initiative (CARSI) and the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) aim to address the immediate security needs of the participating countries to help dismantle drugtrafficking networks and improve citizen security. From FY2008 to FY2012, Congress appropriated $494 million for CARSI programs and $203 million for CBSI programs. Department of State (DOS) and USAID manage the funds, and soft and hard training programs. USAID's efforts prioritize prevention programs for at-risk youth (such as job training and after school activities) to provide an alternative and deter them from joining the lucrative activities of DTOs and TCOs. DOS is responsible for the capacity building training programs and the coordinating regional communication and cooperation.



Central American Regional Security Initiative

The Central American Regional Security Initiative was established in 2010 to assist the law enforcement agencies and security forces in their fight against DTOs and TCOs. Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama are partner countries. CARSI's five primary goals are to: 1) create safe streets for citizens in the region; 2) disrupt the movement of criminals and contraband to, within, and between nations of Central America; 3) support the development of strong, capable, and accountable Central American governments; 4) re-establish effective state presence in communities at risk; and 5) foster enhanced levels of security coordination and cooperation among nations in the region.

The northern triangle countries (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras) experience the highest levels of violence in Central America, with significant portions of their sovereign territory under the control of DTOs and TCOs. See the map above, the blue circles illustrate the areas where most of the cocaine air shipments land, and where criminal organizations control improvised landing strips. Consequently, these countries are the top recipients of CARSI funds. To enhance partner countries' air, land, and maritime narcotic interdiction capabilities, DOS provides communication, border inspection, and security force equipment such as radios, computers, X-ray cargo scanners, narcotics identification kits, ballistics vests, and night–vision goggles. In El Salvador, CARSI funded, vetted law enforcement units can identify gang structure, leadership, and infrastructure, and now possess the investigative skills to disrupt gang operations. Vetted units are able to identify extortion rings and collect information to convict members of TCOs. Moreover, in early 2014, the Honduran vetted border unit seized 2.2 metric tons of cocaine, with a street value of more than $44 million, and seized $800 million in assets from Los Cachiros. The U.S. Treasury is targeting this DTO because of its links to the Mexican Sinaloa Cartel. More importantly, in Panama, DOS established a regional border protection training academy where security officials from all Central American partner countries receive training in basic and advanced border security techniques. This is a key component of DOS efforts as most borders in the region are porous and easily accessible by DTOs and TCOs. The Panamanian authorities are taking the leadership role and by the summer of 2014 are expected to nationalize the program. During his testimony before the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere last June, Ambassador William Brownfield of the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs stressed the importance of improving regional communications and promoting joint operations to maximize the use of scarce resources.

Caribbean Basin Security Initiative

Under CBSI, Caribbean nations and the United States have committed to cooperate on three strategic priorities: 1) to substantially reduce illicit trafficking, 2) increase public safety, 3) and promote social justice. In order to overcome some of the region's capacity challenges, DOS has prioritized maritime and aerial capacity building. As mentioned above, DTOs evade authorities because they effectively utilize go-fast boats. Close proximity and poor communication and coordination between Caribbean countries (due to historic and ideological reasons) created the ideal working environment for DTOs and TCOs. To improve maritime interdictions, DOS provided Defender Class SAFE boats to Antigua, Dominica, Granada, St. Kitts and Nevis, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. These assets improved the operational readiness of Caribbean countries' security forces and increased capacity for search-and-rescue, maritime security, and law enforcement operations. Similar to Central America, CBSI equipment contribution and training programs have yielded significant security improvements. In 2012, the Dominican Republic seized 9.6 metric tons of cocaine, a 40 percent increase from 2011, and in 2013 law enforcement agencies seized 15 metric tons. Additionally, the Central Bank of Suriname, in coordination with the U.S. Department of Treasury, developed an Anti-Money Laundering Examination Manual (the first of its kind) for on-site money laundering examinations. The most innovative program is being implemented in the Eastern Caribbean.

Dominica, St. Vincent, and Antigua and Barbuda are using civil asset forfeiture to target the wealth of regional TCOs. St. Vincent seized $600,000, and Dominica $17,000; the funds are used to fund law enforcement training and other interdiction efforts. Subcommittee staff learned that out of the Caribbean partnership, the Bahamas has been a strong partner because our law enforcement agencies coordinate closely and frequently conduct joint operations (similar to the shiprider program with Canada). DOS efforts also prioritize long-term relationships, though, it should be noted that the U.S. has been working with the Bahamas for over 30 years. Building this kind of partnership with Central American and Caribbean nations will take some time.

Colombia's Contributions

For over a decade, counternarcotics efforts have marked the cornerstone of U.S. bilateral relations with Colombia. This long-term security relationship led to a 44% decrease in homicides, 79% decrease in terrorist attacks, 88% decrease in kidnappings, and a 91% decrease in attacks by DTOs and TCOs on Colombian soil. The U.S.-Colombia security partnership produced measurable results and Colombia has become a security exporter. Until recently, about 40% of Colombia's territory was controlled by DTOs and TCOs. Today, the Colombian National Police (CNP) is recognized as one the most effective and well-trained counternarcotics forces in the region. CNP is tasked with sharply curtailing illicit cocaine production in priority conflict zones to cut one of the main sources of funding for illegal armed groups and DTOs. Several Central American and Caribbean countries have formally requested anti-narcotics training from CNP. DOS uses CARSI and CBSI funds to facilitate transportation and covers other costs associated with the training programs. According to CNP's International Affairs Office, they have trained nearly 22,000 individuals from 47 different countries in ground, air, and maritime interdiction, police testimony, explosives, intelligence operations, and Comando JUNGLA – an elite counternarcotics program designed by the United States. Colombia has been assisting Panama in its goal of becoming the most effective law enforcement unit in Central America. Subcommittee staff learned that in Central America, Panama is one of the leaders in capacity building and rapid-deployment operations. Ambassador Brownfield has acknowledged Panama's improvements and hopes that its accomplishments can be replicated at the northern triangle border to improve the Mexico-Guatemala border, an improved environment there would significantly hinder the operations of Mexican cartels and DTOs in the region.

Table 1: Police and Military Personnel Trained by Colombia 2009-2013

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total by country
Mexico	4,676	1,388	892	132	3,222	10,310
Guatemala	7	5	211	316	1,193	1,732
Honduras	2	622	214	34	1,737	2,609
Panama	393	575	644	1,013	401	3,026
El Salvador	0	19	56	150	240	465
Costa Rica	9	15	149	137	67	377
Ecuador	8	280	160	436	248	1,132
Peru	42	214	146	30	78	510
Other countries	595	220	276	311	386	1,788
TOTAL	**5,732**	**3,338**	**2,748**	**2,559**	**7,572**	**21,949**

Table 2: Areas and Support Activities in Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and Panama

	Honduras	Guatemala	El Salvador	Panama
Crime	Financial Crimes and Asset Forfeiture; Major Crimes Task Force;	Intelligence led policing; Polygraphers	Polygraph Administration and Training; Extortion Investigations; Seminar on Intelligence Activities	Polygraph Administration and Training; Money Laundering/Assets Forfeiture/ Intelligence Units
Narcotrafficking	National Police Intelligence Unit; Police Counter Drug Labs Training-Basic Riverine Operation Mobile Training Team-Small Boat Operation Mobile Training Team-Intelligence Officer Course; Command and Control Subject Matter Expert Exchange and Assessment; Tactical Response Training Team	Ground Interdiction Support; Small Boat Operation Mobile Training Team; Tactical Response Team Training; Civil Affairs Subject Matter Expert Exchange and Assessment-Fixed and Rotary Wing Pilot Training Course	Basic Riverine Operation Mobile Training Team; Small Boat Operation Mobile Training Team; Air Assault and Special Forces Tactical Response Team Training	Jungla Training; Basic Riverine Operation Mobile Training Team; Small Boat Operation Mobile Training Team; Aerial Target Analysis Course; Tactical Response Team Training
Rule of Law	Judicial and Prosecutor Protection	Institutional Strengthening, Training and Curriculum	Seminar on Managing Informants	Police Testimony course; Police Intelligence Training
Resilient Communities		Citizen Security		

Operation Martillo

U.S. efforts and financial contributions are fundamental to the disruption and dismantling of DTOs and TCOs. However, the biggest constraint is coordinating regional operations to maximize law enforcement assets under tough budgetary times. To mitigate this regional challenge, U.S. Southern Command is taking the lead by promoting interagency and multilateral operations. Operation Martillo (Hammer) is a U.S., European, and Western Hemisphere effort that targets illicit trafficking routes to prevent transnational criminal organizations from transporting narcotics, precursor chemicals, bulk cash, and weapons in the Atlantic and Pacific waters of Central America. Belize, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, France, Guatemala, Honduras, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Panama, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and Chile contribute assets to ensure the success of Operation Martillo. The U.S. contributes Navy and Coast Guard vessels and aircraft from U.S. federal law enforcement agencies. In 2013, international and cooperative interagency efforts resulted in the seizure of 132 metric tons of cocaine, 41,232 lbs of marijuana, 4,000 grams of heroin, 3.5 million in bulk cash, as well as the detention of 295 suspects. Operation Martillo is contributing to the overall regional goal of bridging the gap as participating countries share actionable information, but do not always have the assets to interdict. DOS is transitioning to the second phase as our partners are nationalizing the aviation, maritime, and law enforcement training programs. Congress can assist by showing continued support for the contributions of our partners, and recognize the success of joint and multilateral operations.

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CONFRONTING TRANSNATIONAL DRUG SMUGGLING: AN ASSESSMENT OF REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

TUESDAY, APRIL 29, 2014

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION,
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
JOINT WITH THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittees met, pursuant to notice, at 10:06 a.m. in Room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Matt Salmon (Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, Committee on Foreign Affairs) presiding.

Mr. SALMON. A quorum being present of the subcommittee, the subcommittees will come to order. I am going to start by recognizing myself and the ranking member—actually, our ranking member isn't here. I will recognize myself and my fellow cochairman, Mr. Hunter, and then we will go to the ranking member on that subcommittee. And we are pleased to have this hearing today. Without objection, the members of the subcommittees could submit their opening remarks for the record.

And now I yield myself as much time as I may consume to present my opening statement. And I want to start, first and foremost, by thanking my colleague, Chairman Duncan Hunter of the Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation and his staff for working with me and my staff to convene today's timely and important hearing on confronting transnational drug smuggling and an assessment of our strategy and regional partnerships.

Recently the U.N. issued a report naming Latin America as the most violent region in the world, with 13 countries in the region listed among the top 20 worldwide in homicide rates. In fact, the top six most murderous countries per capita are all right here in our own Western Hemisphere.

Transnational criminal and narcotics trafficking organizations are becoming more sophisticated in evading law enforcement and, as the U.N. report suggests, increasingly more violent. This violence along our border and near our shores poses a great threat to our national security and destabilizes our region. The United States has spent over $1 trillion since the 1970s attempting to dis-

rupt and dismantle drug cartels in Latin America with mixed success. I have convened this hearing jointly with Chairman Hunter today to drill down into whether U.S. law enforcement and military assets are being properly leveraged to address this serious threat.

In this fight we have seen the consequences of our country being forced to confront dwindling financial resources when the DOD deemphasized its commitment to interdiction efforts which, in turn, affected our overall counternarcotics efforts. I am concerned what a disengaged DOD means for our overall counternarcotics strategy in the region. I think we must assume, at best, a level budgetary environment going forward. So our strategy to combat transnational criminal organizations needs to balance this budgetary constraint with still finding solutions that combat this scourge.

Excuse me. From a foreign policy standpoint, we need to find ways to better engage our regional partners and help them build capacity more efficiently and more effectively. Ambassador Arreaga, you and I spoke briefly about important steps INL has taken to work with our hemispheric partners to build capacity and empower them to address the serious challenges posed by increasingly violent drug-trafficking organizations. I look forward to hearing more about the successes and challenges you face in implementing INL's piece of the overall strategy.

Where possible, I would like to see replicas of some of the most successful programs that we have helped implement in the region, like Plan Colombia and the Merida Initiative of Mexico. Of course, the success plan of Colombia was only possible because of Colombia having the political will and leadership to win their country back from the terrorists and narco-traffickers.

In Mexico we have seen an increased commitment on the part of the Mexican Government to partner with the U.S. in this effort through the Merida Initiative and other joint operations. This commitment has yielded very important successes, and we continue to build on them. It seems clear to me that no amount of U.S. taxpayer monies will ever be enough to finally turn this situation around without the buy-in and the support of the people and governments of Central America and the Caribbean.

I am looking forward to hearing more about the success of Operation Martillo—or "hammer," in English—since its inception in January of 2012. But I want to personally and publicly congratulate all who were involved in the two big cocaine seizures earlier this year in the southwestern Caribbean. I understand the street value of the seizures would have been somewhere in the neighborhood of $300 million. I think that this is a great example of what we can accomplish when we work together with our regional partners.

I want to thank the Coast Guard and the SOUTHCOM Joint Interagency Task Force South for hosting my staff in Florida earlier this year in preparation for this hearing, and for agreeing to testify today. And it is always a pleasure to have State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs here to provide their insight on Central American and Caribbean security programs in the hemisphere. I thank them for their

willingness to work with my staff on a daily basis, and to come to our hearings, and to answer our questions.

I am hopeful that this hearing will be an important step toward a more cohesive and more effective multi-agency strategy to protect our national security interests in our hemisphere.

I will now recognize Chairman Duncan Hunter for his opening remarks.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, Admiral, General, and Ambassador. Great to see you. General Kelly, really great to see you.

The subcommittees are meeting today to review the Federal Government's efforts to confront transnational drug smuggling and stem the flow of illegal drugs to the United States. I want to thank and commend Chairman Salmon and the House Committee on Foreign Affairs for agreeing to explore this important topic in a joint hearing.

Illicit drug use remains a serious concern for the United States. Illegal drugs not only pose a strain on our Nation's health care and criminal justice systems, but their trade and transport cause significant safety and security concerns. The transport of illegal drugs affects millions throughout the country and the world. Some of the most notorious and violent criminals, cartels, and narco-terrorists are directly responsible for drug violence, crime, and corruption that are destabilizing foreign nations and risking the lives of American citizens here and abroad.

Representing southern California, I am very aware of the harm that drug traffickers inflict on our communities. In recent years, violence stemming from the drug trade has spilled over the Mexican border and has led to the kidnappings and murders of numerous American citizens and law enforcement officers. A little over a year ago, Coast Guard Senior Chief Petty Officer Terrell Horne was killed while leading a boarding team in a counterdrug operation off the coast of Santa Cruz, California. Senior Chief Horne was carrying out the Coast Guard's mission to interdict and apprehend illegal drug traffickers on the high seas.

Stopping bulk drug shipments at sea before they are broken down into smaller packages is the most effective and efficient way to stop the flow of illegal drugs across our borders. The Coast Guard is the lead agency in maritime interdiction because it has unique military and law enforcement authorities which enable it to seamlessly disable a drug smuggling vessel, seize the drugs, and arrest the crew. But that only works when the Coast Guard, SOUTHCOM, and partner agencies and nations have the resources and assets to act on intelligence targets.

However, cuts to the military's budget, coupled with aging and rapidly failing Coast Guard assets, are undermining mission success. SOUTHCOM and the Coast Guard were only able to interdict roughly 20 percent of the cocaine bound for the United States in recent years. It is not because you don't know where the rest is, but that is all you have the assets to interdict. That is half of the national target. Since 2009, the Coast Guard has only achieved its cocaine interdiction rate once.

I hope today's hearing will help clarify the direction we need to take in the future to ensure our men and women in uniform have

the resources and assets they need to carry out this and other critical missions.

I know that I said this at our last hearing, but this will be the last time that Admiral Papp will appear before us. Maybe. Unless he comes to something else later. I want to again commend you for your leadership and thank you for your tremendous service to our Nation.

You know, this is an interesting hearing for one big reason for me, and it is this: We can do 100 percent of this, theoretically, if you have the assets to do it. So, by only doing—by only interdicting 20 percent, what that means is we don't really care about the other 80 percent. And we are not talking about marijuana here, we are talking about opiates, heroin, and cocaine, the main stuff brought up from the south that we are not decriminalizing here in the United States that kills our kids.

So, with that, let's just—especially, if we could right now—talk about why we don't care about the other 80 percent. Why are we not trying to hit our target, when it just takes more assets to do so? It doesn't take a new paradigm of how to interdict or anything; it just takes the assets.

So, with that, I yield back.

Mr. SALMON. Thank you. I recognize Mr. Garamendi.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. Mr. Sires is not here. Perhaps Mr. Meeks could take his place. OK, good. Thank you.

I am going to really shorten my statement here. The chairman, Mr. Hunter, handled almost all of it having to do with the Coast Guard, the Coast Guard budget, and the effect that the budget, or the lack of a good budget, is having on the Coast Guard's ability to do its work, and quite possibly the reality that maybe we really don't care that much, because we don't seem to be putting sufficient money into the effort. In fact, it appears as though the current situation would even further diminish the Coast Guard's budget and its ability to do its job.

The chairman, Mr. Hunter, has gone through all of that, so I don't propose to repeat all of it. But there is one thing that I would like to cover. And since the Foreign Affairs Committee has joined us—we have joined them—on this hearing, all too often we look at this problem from the point of view of America, and not often from the point of view of the countries that are supplying the drugs. Latin America, looking at the map that was put on our desk here. We can go to Southeast Asia or even to a place called Afghanistan. And we need to look at the perspective from those countries, and hear their view of our efforts or lack of efforts. You mentioned, Mr. Salmon, the issue of Colombia and the work that has been done there, which is a pretty good example of what can be done when we work with those countries that are our partners in this problem.

So, at some point—I know we have the Ambassador here, and he will undoubtedly speak to us about the issue from that point of view, at least from the American point of view. But perhaps the Ambassador from Mexico might want to give us their point of view of this, or Colombia, or other countries that are the partners in this problem. So I would recommend that we do that at some point, and

listen carefully to their point of view, and see how that would affect our own strategies here.

In the meantime, our subcommittee, the Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation, is doing the best we can to make sure the Coast Guard has its assets. However, we are seriously hampered by sequestration, by the budget that passed the House of Representatives 2 weeks ago would make it even more difficult, because it does continue sequestration in the outyears. In fact, sequestration on steroids, making all of this even more difficult.

With that, I will yield back whatever remaining time I have.

Mr. SALMON. Thank the gentleman. I recognize the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Coble.

Mr. COBLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be very brief. It has been pretty well covered. As Mr. Duncan Hunter said, Admiral Papp is probably making his swan song today, my old shipmate—strike that, my young shipmate. But, Admiral, I appreciate very much what you have done. Best wishes to you in your next life. But it has been a good rapport between our subcommittee and the Nation's oldest continuous seagoing Service. Always ready. Thank you, Admiral.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SALMON. Thank you. Mr. Meeks?

Mr. MEEKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank both chairmans that are here, and, of course, Ranking Member.

Let me just say narcotics has long been one of the main areas of focus of the United States foreign policy in Latin America. Seventeen of the twenty-two nations which President Obama identified as major producers of illicit drugs in 2014 are located in Latin America or the Caribbean. So this is not just an American problem, but it is truly a hemispheric problem, and one which we must tackle head on, and we must do it in multiple ways, I believe, and not just one way.

As a friend of Latin America and a frequent visitor to the region, I have seen the effects of illicit drug trade personally. In fact, in Colombia, for example, a country which I care deeply about, have been to several times, I have seen the devastating effects the drug cartels and related criminal activity have had on particularly minority populations, especially the Afro-Colombian and indigenous peoples in places like Buenaventura and Cali. The horrendous violence and tragic poverty in such areas is a direct result of the drug trade. And while recent involvement of the police and military of our President Santos may give short-term solutions, we must combat the evils underlying society in these places in order to elevate the local people to the lives that they deserve.

I returned just last week from a trip to Haiti and Guatemala and Mexico City. And there, too, I saw what can result in countries which are the hubs for drug transit. We must get to the root of this problem, and what facilitates the plague of drugs in the Western Hemisphere, and we must identify both the social and economic factors which contribute to the widespread production and transit of drugs in the region. And we must not rest until we are sure that they have been eradicated for good.

We know we have got to coordinate while we do this. We have got to coordinate what interdictions and what the Coast Guard is doing and what we have, to try to make sure that it is coordinated and we can run them out and not use what happens where we can run them from one country and they run to another country and—because they feel that we don't have the same kind of assets there.

So, despite, though, my frustration with what is going—this ongoing problem in the region, I must also say that I am optimistic. I am optimistic because we have the tools at our disposal that are working, and we have new tools that we are developing. And when I visited, for example, the National Police Academy in Haiti last week, I learned about a new partnership with the New York Police Department, and how the United States is facilitating counter-narcotics capabilities abroad with our friends and partners.

I also believe that legal trade is a powerful antidote to illicit drug trafficking. The free movement of goods and services is at the heart of a strong rule of law. And I am confident that new and upcoming free trade agreements will bolster the ability of the United States neighbors to develop robust, diversified economics which are not dependent on drugs. And I am confident that local farmers and workers will be able to find ways to make their living honorably, and to give back to their countries. Building trade capacity is an issue I care deeply about. And I believe this Congress must lend its support for the sake of both America and its partner nations.

Lastly, I believe combating the drug trade is also important to bridge our differences and work together to solve a problem which hurts us all. I look forward to the day when America once again—we can't do it now—but can cooperate with Venezuela, for example, in combating narcotics. I look forward to extending our hands in friendship to our neighbors in a sincere effort to rid the hemisphere of this horror, and to build new regional partnerships that will bring us closer together than ever before.

Thank you, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SALMON. Thank you. Ms. Hahn, do you have some comments you would like to make?

Ms. HAHN. I have a question.

Mr. SALMON. OK, fine. We will go ahead and introduce.

Pursuant to Committee Rule 7, the members of the subcommittee will be permitted to submit written statements to be included in the official hearing record. Without objection, the hearing record will remain open for 7 days to allow statements, questions, and extraneous materials for the record, subject to the length of limitation of the rules.

Admiral Papp is the 24th commander—Commandant, excuse me—of the United States Coast Guard. He previously served as the commander of the Coast Guard Atlantic Area, overseeing all U.S. Coast Guard operations in the eastern half of the world. Admiral Papp is a graduate of the United States Coast Guard Academy. He also holds an M.A. in national security and strategic studies from the U.S. Naval War College, and an M.S. in management from Salve Regina College.

Ambassador Arreaga is a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs. Prior to his appointment, he served as the United States Am-

bassador to the Republic of Iceland, and deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Panama. Ambassador Arreaga holds a Ph.D. in economics and an M.A. in management from the University of Wisconsin.

General Kelly is commander of the United States Southern Command. Prior to his current position, he served as a senior military assistant for the Secretary of Defense, and commanded Marine Forces Reserve and Marine Forces North. General Kelly is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts and U.S. National War College.

I know it goes without saying you all understand the lighting system. Just understand that it goes yellow about the time you have about a minute left, and it goes red—it is time to cut it off. And you guys are so distinguished, I am not brave enough to probably cut you off, so try and be as adherent to that as you can.

And, with that, Admiral Papp.

TESTIMONY OF ADMIRAL ROBERT J. PAPP, JR., COMMANDANT, U.S. COAST GUARD, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY; AMBASSADOR LUIS E. ARREAGA, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE, BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE; AND GENERAL JOHN F. KELLY, U.S. MARINE CORPS, COMMANDER, SOUTHERN COMMAND, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Admiral PAPP. Thank you, Chairman Salmon. And good morning, again, to Chairman Hunter and Ranking Member Garamendi, and to all the members of the subcommittees. I want to thank you for the opportunity to be here this morning to thank you for your continued support of the Coast Guard, and also to discuss the challenges that we face in confronting the illicit smuggling in the Western Hemisphere and its consequences that it has for our country.

And I would be remiss this morning if I didn't recognize some of our other partners in this fight: the Department of Justice, and our partner agencies in the Department of Homeland Security who also contribute greatly to the efforts to stem the flow of illicit traffic into the United States.

We continue to face a significant threat in the drug transit zones of the Western Hemisphere and in the southern maritime approaches to the United States. Ruthless transnational criminal organizations advancing their illicit trade through coercion, bribery, and violence create a destabilizing effect on both the governments and economies of the Western Hemisphere and our partner nations.

For instance, for the second consecutive year, Honduras has the world's highest murder rate, a direct result of the massive influx of U.S.-bound cocaine entering Central America through the western Caribbean Sea and the eastern Pacific Ocean. And those drugs reach our shores, and the activities of those sophisticated criminal networks have an impact on America's streets, as well, in the form of gang violence and turf wars by urban drug dealers.

Coast Guard is the lead Federal agency for maritime law enforcement in support of the administration's national drug control strategy, and the strategy to combat transnational organized crime. On

the frontlines of our detection, monitoring, and interdiction and apprehension operations, the Coast Guard deploys major cutters, long- and medium-range fixed-wing aircraft, airborne use-of-force helicopters, and our law enforcement detachments embarked on Navy and allied warships to stop drug traffickers in the transit zone, before the drugs can approach our shores.

And working with U.S. Southern Command and the Departments of State and Justice—a really important fact here—we have established more than 40 maritime bilateral law enforcement agreements with our international stakeholders, including Venezuela, who we still cooperate with in the drug war.

Our unique combination of ships, aircraft, and authorities, and partnerships has continuously proven to be an effective interdiction system when employed in the transit zone. Over the last 5 years, Coast Guard ships and law enforcement detachments operating in the offshore regions have removed more than 500 metric tons of cocaine with a wholesale value of nearly $17 billion. This is more than two times the amount of cocaine and twice the purity seized by all other U.S. Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies combined.

This is where we get the very best value for the taxpayer's dollar. It is also where we have our first best chance to address this problem: close to the source, and far from our shores, where the drugs are pure and uncut, where they are in their most vulnerable bulk form, and before they are divided into increasingly smaller loads, making them exponentially harder and more expensive to detect and interdict.

And, Chairman Hunter, in response to do we care about the other 80 percent, of course we care about the other 80 percent. But it is not just about the drugs. For every shipment that we interdict at sea, we gather valuable information about the sophisticated criminal enterprises that move these drugs. By understanding the criminal networks, we are better prepared to combat other illicit enterprises, including human traffickers and international terrorists. Our interdictions remain a key weapon in the U.S. arsenal to combat transnational criminal networks.

The Coast Guard and its partners rely upon this what we call cycle of success to disrupt the networks behind the illicit trafficking in the Western Hemisphere. Successful interdictions and subsequent prosecutions provide actionable intelligence on future events, producing follow-on seizures and additional intelligence, thus feeding that cycle of success. Our at-sea interdictions are the engine that drives this cycle and our success. More than half the designated priority drug targets extradited to the United States from South America over the last 10 years are directly linked to Coast Guard interdictions.

Over 60 named drug-trafficking organizations have been dismantled because of our investigations originating with or supported by Coast Guard interdictions. The removal of these networks helped countries like Colombia restore citizen security and economic opportunity, contributing to a $14 billion increase of imports of the United States goods over the last 20 years.

But despite our success, far too many illicit drugs still reach our shores. Our reduced numbers of ships can stop only a fraction of

the contraband our intelligence tells us is moving. Erosion of this cycle of success, either through degraded intelligence, a reduction in ships and aircraft, or a decrease in prosecutions, will have a chronic negative impact on our Department's mission to secure and manage our borders.

And you don't need to look any further than a recent news report from Chicago to get a sense of how these criminal networks are impacting our communities once these drugs reach the homeland. The Sinaloa Cartel uses Chicago as a distribution hub by exploiting people in underserved communities to traffic their illicit goods. The impacts of this cartel activity are felt throughout our communities and manifest themselves in a host of problems infecting our society.

This problem is not going away. The flow of illicit trade and drugs, people, and all the many forms it takes continues to threaten our homeland. Those engaged in this business bring their traffic on, over, and even under the sea, and exploit our global supply and transportation chains to deliver contraband to the market. The offshore interdiction of illegal drugs in bulk quantities is critical to the safety and security of our Nation.

But even more important is the understanding and disrupting the sophisticated criminal networks that transport these drugs and sow instability throughout Central America and Mexico, and adversely impact our safety, security, and prosperity. As the Department of Defense rebalances the bulk of its fleet to the western Pacific, and as Coast Guard cutters continue to age, I fear that this problem is only going to get worse. Sustaining the cycle of success by strengthening international partnerships, investing in cutter and aircraft recapitalization, and leveraging interagency capabilities will keep deadly, addictive drugs off U.S. streets, disrupt transnational criminal networks, create space for security within the Western Hemisphere, and facilitate the safe flow of legitimate commerce and transport.

So, I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak on this very important topic this morning, and I look forward to answering your questions.

Mr. SALMON. Thank you, Admiral.

Ambassador Arreaga?

Mr. ARREAGA. Good morning, Chairman Salmon, Chairman Hunter, Ranking Member Garamendi, and other distinguished members of the subcommittee. Just a word of warning, my accent sometimes gets the better of me. So if you hear something that doesn't make sense, it really does make sense; I just mispronounced it.

[Laughter.]

Mr. ARREAGA. Thank you so much for the opportunity to appear today with my colleagues, General Kelly and Admiral Papp, to discuss our work to undermine transnational organized crime, minimize its impact in the United States—on the United States, and improve citizen security in the Western Hemisphere.

The State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, or INL, leads the Department's anticrime, counternarcotics efforts globally. We shape and deliver assistance programs in nearly 80 countries to help partner nations

build their capacity to fight crime and prosecute criminals under the law. This is, no doubt, an enormous responsibility. And INL does not approach it alone. We partnered with the best and brightest in the United States Government to impart expertise and training, and we also partner with police departments, courts, and corrections entities from a number of your constituencies.

In the Western Hemisphere the United States has established partnerships to confront shared threats and advance common interests. The collection of the maritime initiative with Mexico, our longstanding partnership with Colombia, the Central America Regional Security Initiative, CARSI, and the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative constitute our strategic approach to enhance and professionalize civilian enforcement institutions, court systems, and corrections capacity, so that they can investigate and undermine criminal groups, prosecute criminal offenders, and remove them from their operations.

While the State Department has no direct role in interdiction efforts, the governments that we mentor and train in the Western Hemisphere do. Our assistance efforts results in enhanced foreign government capacity to interdict drugs, investigate crimes, and prosecute and incarcerate criminals.

In the Bahamas, Jamaica, Panama, and Costa Rica, civil police and prosecutors, working with maritime law enforcement components, patrol their waters, seize narcotics, and judicialize cases. In other areas of the hemisphere, where law enforcement capacity is less developed, our regional partners, such as the Government of Colombia, are working in coordination with our programs to develop basic policing skills, and they are also working with our U.S. law enforcement and military partners to pursue narcotics traffickers.

These successes, large and impressive as they are, pale in comparison to the magnitude of the drug transit threat in our hemisphere. Furthermore, while we are making progress in building partner nation capacity, and I want to emphasize this, it cannot make up for gaps in U.S. interdiction assets in the region. Let me repeat that. It cannot make up for gaps in U.S. interdiction assets in the region.

We know that the Caribbean is experiencing an increase in drug flows, with a majority of shipments occurring by a maritime means. In 2011, cocaine transiting the Caribbean to the U.S. totaled approximately 5 percent of the total flow. This increased to 9 percent by 2012, and 16 percent by the end of 2013. Central America remains a priority, as 80 percent of documented drug flow from South America transits Central American territory. Under CARSI, the United States is implementing a comprehensive and integrated approach to stem illegal trafficking.

We also recognize that it will take many years to see fruits of our efforts in Central America, owing to the magnitude of threats we confront there.

The partnerships between the State Department, partner nations, the U.S. Coast Guard, and U.S. SOUTHCOM constitute a proven and trusted mechanism that works every single day.

It is also important to note that regional partnerships between nations are flourishing, that joint operations have become more

common, and that information sharing is happening in a near-real-time basis. This is a proven formula. While these are all significant developments, they are not enough to curtail the magnitude of trafficking operations. U.S. foreign assistance expertise and engagement by our law enforcement and military partners remains critical. However, the capability gaps abroad require more from us.

Chairman Salmon, Chairman Duncan, and other distinguished Members, thank you for your focus on this important topic. I look forward to our discussion.

Mr. SALMON. Thank you.

General Kelly?

General KELLY. Members of the committee, I look forward to discussing the strong counternarcotics partnerships between U.S. Southern Command and the interagency—especially the U.S. Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security and INL. Together we defend the southern approaches, or we try to defend the southern approaches of the United States.

Chairmen, Members, those southern approaches are being assailed by dangerous criminal networks that are well resourced, adaptive, and skilled at exploiting all avenues of approach to the United States. Illicit trafficking threatens our country at every land, air, and sea border, and challenges the sovereignty of many of our partners in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Department of Defense plays a critical supporting role in the fight against illicit trafficking, although this role is under discussion and some disagree with it.

As you know, we have congressionally mandated statutory responsibility as the lead Federal agency—that is, U.S. Southern Command does—as the lead Federal agency for detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs towards the United States. Like the U.S. Coast Guard and DHS, along with DEA, FBI, and INL, we also build the partner capacity of nations which helps enhance security, stability, and antitrafficking efforts throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Together, with U.S. law enforcement and intelligence from foreign, military, and law enforcement partners, we focus on combating illicit drug trade, and supporting interdiction as far from our borders as possible, before those drugs are broken down into nearly impossible-to-detect load sizes.

Our support to interdiction efforts not only keeps drugs like cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamines from violating our shores, it puts international drug traffickers in jail and leads to invaluable intelligence that enhances our understanding of trafficking networks. All with almost no violence.

And when we are adequately resourced, the defend-forward approach is very effective, although my component—Joint Interagency Task Force in Key West receives only 1.5 percent of the total U.S. Government counternarcotics budget, 1.5 percent. With the support of partners like DHS and the Coast Guard, DEA, and FBI, they remove—are responsible for removing 68 percent of all of the seized cocaine heading towards the United States.

Our international partners are also key to our effectiveness, especially in our ongoing counterdrug operation, Martillo. Fifty percent of Martillo's interactions would not have been possible without

the contributions of our partners. The outstanding support of nations like Colombia, Panama, Guatemala, Honduras, Belize, Costa Rica, and even Nicaragua, not to mention Canada, the United Kingdom, France, and the Netherlands, it is what makes Martillo a success. I will be frank; we could not do it without these partners. They are fighting our drug fight for us. And their courage and commitment, in my opinion, is second to none.

And human rights, ladies and gentlemen, are first and foremost in all of our relationships with these countries. And there is a lot we can do for them for very little, like providing inexpensive patrol craft with maintenance and training packages, as well as providing them ISR and intelligence support. Since we are unlikely to get any additional assets due to other global priorities, right now our partners are the only hope we have of putting a dent in the drug flow coming to the United States.

And I emphasize this is our fight, not their fight. It is destructive to their countries, but it is our problem. And they are fighting it for us at great loss of life. They help us make a big dent all of the time. Last year alone, 132 metric tons of cocaine were seized and disrupted, thanks in part to their contributions to Operation Martillo, 132 tons, no violence.

Unfortunately, that number is just a small fraction of the cocaine and other drugs that still reach our shores, which we were unable to get at, due to asset shortfalls. Since 2012, Southern Command has faced limited and declining U.S. Government maritime and air assets required for detection and monitoring and end game interdiction missions. We also receive less than 5 percent of our annual airborne ISR requirements. These limitations mean less presence, less deterrence, and less awareness of what is moving on trafficking networks, be it drugs, weapons, cash, human beings, or something even more detrimental to our national security, like terrorist agent or WMD.

Make no mistake. Drug traffickers are exploiting our lack of presence, especially in the Caribbean. As we focus our limited assets off the Central American coast, we have started seeing a shift back to the old smuggling routes through the Caribbean. I worry that smaller Caribbean nations may soon be overwhelmed—I think they are being overwhelmed—by violence and powerful criminal networks as we have seen in some parts of Latin America—correction, Central America—already.

On a recent trip to Haiti I saw some real improvement in the right direction in that country, but I fear the shift to the Caribbean, if left unchecked, could change the positive direction Haiti has taken.

We are doing everything we can to at least partially mitigate this lack of assets. We are relying heavily on both the U.S. Coast Guard and Customs and Border Protection and other DHS assets, which now provide over 70 percent of the aircraft and cutters to support detection and monitoring mission. However, over the next few years, both the Department of Defense and the U.S. Coast Guard are facing an unprecedented downturn in the availability of large surface assets like U.S. Navy frigates and U.S. Coast Guard High Endurance Cutters.

In 2016, the Navy frigate inventory will go to zero. This makes our reliance on the U.S. Coast Guard—the Nation's reliance on the U.S. Coast Guard and its national security and planned Offshore Patrol Cutters all the more critical. And I am deeply concerned to hear that the U.S. Coast Guard is facing major budget cuts, as is DOD.

In closing, I share the Commandant's conviction—the Coast Guard Commandant's conviction that illicit trafficking by powerful criminal networks is a direct threat to our national security and the stability of our partners. I also share his concern that continued asset shortfalls pose a direct threat to the Department of Defense and U.S. Coast Guard's ability to counter drugs.

I look forward to discussing these and other issues with you. Thank you.

Mr. SALMON. I thank the distinguished panel. I yield myself 5 minutes to ask my questions.

My first question would be for you, Ambassador. There is a number of initiatives in the Western Hemisphere that share the objective of improving citizen security, including the Merida Initiative in Mexico, the Central America Regional Security Initiative, CARSI, the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, CBSI.

In what ways have State and USAID applied lessons learned from the various initiatives to maximize the effectiveness of their efforts across the Western Hemisphere? And maybe look at replicating success, as you mentioned—and I think yesterday, when we spoke, as well, we all agree that we have enjoyed tremendous success with Colombia. And I am wondering. How do we put all of that together and, from the lessons we have learned, how do we replicate some of those things?

And I know that there are different nuances, but I would like your thoughts.

Mr. ARREAGA. Thank you for your question. That—it is a very good question. And, as you know, Chairman, you have—different countries have different challenges, different levels of development. What we do try is to take the lessons learned from one to the other. And I think the case of Colombia is one case where Colombia is such a success story that they have become our partners. They export security. So we use them to train the forces, some of the forces in Central America on investigative techniques, polygraph management, interdiction techniques. And so—we take the success in one part of the country, we take it to another.

Now we—let me give you another example. We are just about to establish a nationalized customs training academy in Panama. Now, this is a training academy that was established with INL funds and with enormous support from the Department of Homeland Security and CBP. This academy is now going to become a regional training center, where we are going to bring people from other parts of the hemisphere, from Central America, from Guatemala, and other places, so that they have the same doctrine, the same approach, the same type of techniques to control borders.

Depending on the circumstances, when you think about, for example, our success in Peru, the success we have had in the Upper Huallaga Valley is because we have combined alternative development along with eradication. So we are looking at that model and

see what we can transfer it to other areas. We are beginning to see some potential plantings of coca plants, as in other parts of Peru.

Mr. SALMON. And I have said this before, and I think most people that worked with the Colombia initiative have recognized that, while the United States contribution to that process was substantial, I think all of you have said pretty much the same thing: there is no way that that would have been accomplished without the political will coming from the leaders themselves in Colombia.

And so, as we look to try to replicate some of those successes, I am really heartened to know that you are using folks who are in the trenches in Colombia to actually advise and consult and, you know, get their hands dirty with Mexico, with possibly other Latin American nations. But I think there is also another reason for that. Besides actually having the people that demonstrated the political will, I think that using them, you know, is a little bit more influential, because sometimes I wonder if we suggest it, if it might just be dead on arrival just because we suggested it and, you know, the fact that it is the Big Brother or, you know, the—you know, the United States, sometimes it causes more problems than solutions.

Why do you think in Colombia they finally turned the corner? Was it—you know, was it a rebound? Was it his efforts? Was it, you know, a combination of things? What are your thoughts? And I am interested in all three of you, because, as I look at some of the things going on in Mexico right now, I know a lot of people are kind of wait-and-see with the new administration in Mexico, and we have all been kind of pleasantly surprised with the tenacity that they have approached this problem.

I would like your thoughts on, you know, how can we better utilize some of the successes in the region, and what can we recommend, going forward, to do that? General, I will start with you.

General KELLY. Mr. Chairman, first I would say the term—you said the U.S. investment in Colombia was substantial, significant, or whatever the term was. You are right, except that is a very relative term. United States, I think, 4, 5, 6 cents on the dollar in terms of what was spent to, if you will, turn Colombia around in the drug fight. And, of course, virtually no boots on—they did their own bleeding. They did their own fighting and dying.

What we did—and they will be, I think, eternally grateful for—is the encouragement that this country, our country, gave them in the drug fight. I can remember when I worked up here on Capitol Hill some years ago, the discussion back in the late 1990s was should the United States allow Colombia to buy—not be given, but buy six Black Hawk airplanes, conventional helicopters. And the discussion in this room rotated around or oriented around the fact that why would we allow them to buy these things, it is a failed state, it is a narco state, it has gone over the edge, there is no hope for them. And, of course, here we are, 14 years later, 15 years later, and it is virtually a miracle, heroic effort. Why did they win? Because they were losing so badly. Why did they turn it around? Because they had no choice.

The good news is we, as I say, allowed them—we supported them, we encouraged them. We did, in fact, in a sense, unleash, but unleash a small number of advisors and trainers, U.S. military. And it turned the place around. But the Colombians really did that

themselves because they were losing so badly. Unfortunately, that same plan, that same attitude we are not focusing in the same way on countries that are today very close to going over the edge. Where Colombia was in the 1990s, they are just a few inches away from falling off the cliff. Yet we are restricted from working with them for past sins in the 1980s.

The beauty of having a Colombia—and they are such good partners, particularly in the military realm, they are such good partners with us—when we ask them to go somewhere else and train the Mexicans, the Hondurans, the Guatemalans, the Panamanians, they will do it almost without asking, and they will do it on their own. They are so appreciative of what we did for them. And, again, what we did for them was really encourage them for 20 years. And they have done such a magnificent job.

But that is why it is important for them to go. Because I am, at least on the military side, I am restricted from working with so many of these countries because of limitations that are really based on past sins. And I will let it go at that, Mr.——

Mr. SALMON. Thank you. I have run out of time. I am going to recognize Duncan Hunter.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Gentlemen, I guess it would be great if we could have the Judiciary Committee, where the money comes out for the counterdrug money that gets put into Federal grants throughout the United States. That is one big question, is why do you get so little of that. Is it because it is a jobs program throughout the United States for drug enforcement agencies at the municipal levels in the cities and States?

I mean if you collect—if you had that money, you could theoretically reduce their need for a job at all, right, when it comes to drug interdiction within the United States. So why do you think that is? Do they have better lobbyists than you do? That is my question. Why is there less money going to you, as opposed to all these different agencies that the Department of Justice doles out grants to these agencies? Every local sheriff and every local police gets drug money to interdict drugs, and you don't. So why is that? Admiral Papp?

Admiral PAPP. Mr. Chairman, I—that is a real great grenade to jump on.

[Laughter.]

Admiral PAPP. But——

Mr. HUNTER. Sorry I didn't ask one of the prescheduled questions.

Admiral PAPP. But truth be known, I don't know what the percentage is that they get, domestically. But what I do know is that I wear a number of hats. One of the hats I wear is——

Mr. HUNTER. General Kelly said 1.5 percent, 1.5 percent goes to SOUTHCOM and Coast Guard interdiction efforts. So that leaves 98.5 for everybody else.

Admiral PAPP. I can't confirm or verify or deny——

Mr. HUNTER. I trust——

Admiral PAPP [continuing]. On that figure. I would have to go back and research that.

But what I will say is that one of the hats I wear is as chairman of the Interdiction Committee, the TIC, which reports to the direc-

tor of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. We are focused on interdiction. But one of the things I have gained during my time as Commandant is an appreciation for the need for supply reduction and demand reduction. It has to be spread out. We can argue, and certainly I would advocate for more funds for what we do.

On the other hand, I can't make a good judgment, because I think it has to be—much like Mr. Meeks talked about, we have to have a balanced approach to this. We need to work on reducing the demand, while we reduce the supply, while we work on trying to disrupt the transnational criminal organizations as well.

Mr. HUNTER. I don't want to run out of time——

Admiral PAPP. So I am trying to respond to your question, but I just don't know the figures and the percentages to give you an accurate enough response.

[The information follows:]

> As part of the 11 statutory missions, the Coast Guard is the lead Federal agency for maritime drug interdiction (and co-lead agency for air interdiction). The Coast Guard receives appropriated funds to carry out these missions and does not receive grant money.

Mr. HUNTER. General Kelly?

General KELLY. Congressman, I think, first of all, the 1.5 percent is not what the Coast Guard gets. What I get to manage the detection and monitoring of—and to assist in interdiction, the drug flow. I would be guessing, though.

On your question about domestic funding, I would guess because we have tended to look at this issue as, you know, the cancer that is within our country. And we see the—you know, what it does to our youth and, for that matter, middle-aged people and older people, and the drug abuse. You know, 40,000 Americans die of drug overdoses every year. And you can't even count the human misery of the number of people living under bridges or selling their bodies for a fix, and all of this kind of thing.

So, I think, you know, we look at it and we say, "This is terrible, let's try to solve this problem at home." The last place to solve this problem—it is—part of the solution is here at home. But you know, once this drug gets ashore and makes its way into Mexico and the United States, it is impossible, really. I think we have a million law enforcement heroes in this country—DEA, local police, FBI—there is a million, and they get, about total, 20, 25 tons of cocaine every year. I can get 20—we can get, collectively, 25 tons of cocaine in a month, no violence.

Mr. HUNTER. That is not balanced. Admiral Papp, you said——

General KELLY. Well, but that is where the fight is.

Mr. HUNTER. That is not balanced at all.

General KELLY. I think the efficiency of the fight is before it gets ashore in Central America or, now, increasingly into Haiti and Dominican Republic. But we focused this war on drugs for 30 or whatever years on the streets of America, which is the last place you really want to kind of put your main effort. My thoughts.

Mr. HUNTER. I was reading, like, National Geographic or The Economist or something last week, and it said that the Sinaloa Cartel in the Sinaloa area in Mexico, that they are not growing

weed any more, they are not growing any marijuana. They are growing poppies. What is the big uptick on heroin coming in?

General KELLY. Surprise to me when I took this job. I thought heroin that fed the United States demand, the habit, came from other parts of the world. Virtually all of it now comes from Latin America—and if you talk to the DEA, they will confirm this—virtually all of the heroin that comes and feeds the drug habit in the United States is grown now and produced—grown throughout Latin America, poppies, and then turned into heroin in Mexico, and then comes in. Virtually all of it. A tiny bit may come down from Canada, through Canada from, say, Afghanistan, but not a lot. It is almost entirely—and, oh, by the way, methamphetamines, again, largely produced today in Mexico and comes across the border.

So, the zone that I live in, and that Admiral Papp, to a very large degree, fights alongside me, the zone that I live in, the three most detrimental influences in our society—cocaine, which is the big money-maker, by the way, cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine, is all produced south of the border and trafficked in on this incredibly efficient criminal network on which anything can ride: drugs, human beings, terrorists. Anything can ride on this network. It is—and it is globally linked.

It is an amazing thing to see, and it is virtually a wide open entry into the United States or, for that matter, the United Kingdom. Or, for that matter, Africa. Or, for that matter, the Middle East.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. SALMON. Thank you. Mr. Meeks?

Mr. MEEKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me—I guess I will just start with General Kelly, just so that I have an understanding of where the figure come from. I think I saw someplace that in March you told the Senate Armed Services Committee that you only had 5 percent of the assets you need to perform drug interdiction duties in the Caribbean region. And so, I was wondering, where that figure comes from, because I thought that the annual DOD's budget for counternarcotics funding was over a billion dollars. So if it was only 5 percent that you had, I was just wondering how could that be.

General KELLY. Sir, it is 5 percent of the ISR. That is airborne intelligence and reconnaissance. That is what—I only get 5 percent of what I think I need. And what that means is I only get 5 percent of aircraft like P–3 patrol aircraft, either from the United States Navy or from Homeland Security. The Border folks fly them and do tremendous work. We tend to fly those airplanes out of places like El Salvador, great partners. Or Honduras, great partners. But I only get 5 percent.

And how you track this stuff as it moves on the high seas is we have a very, very good idea of when it leaves either Ecuador or Colombia. And then, as it moves either side of Central America—or now, increasingly off towards Puerto Rico, Haiti, Dominican Republic—as we get the intel, human intel, if you will, that it is about to move, then we pick it up, we vector—if we have them, which we generally don't—ISR airplanes to pick up the go-fast—it is a speed boat carrying anywhere between 1 and, say, 4 tons of cocaine. And we pick that up, and then that airplane watches it until either a

Coast Guard or U.S. Navy helicopter—ship with a helicopter on it—can get close enough. And once the helicopter shows up, they basically stop and we seize and it is seized.

So, without that airborne assets—and, oh, by the way, we use anything we can get. I mean I have had B–52s flying training missions with ISR parts on them, B–1 bombers with ISR parts on them, flying over the Caribbean, not—in international airspace, doing that mission for me. So we beg for the assets. And, as I say, I will take any asset I can get. And sometimes, believe it or not, it is a bomber or a JSTARS airplane.

Mr. MEEKS. So, that—could there be some negotiations within DOD, or you talking about we need to give you additional assets or additional dollars to go to DOD to give you what you think you need?

General KELLY. Sir, the national security policy or strategy of the United States, of course, is to pivot the Pacific, and to deal with the wars in the Middle East, and to deter other countries—you know who they are. That leaves—with the size of the U.S. military getting smaller, that leaves almost nothing for SOUTHCOM. I am not criticizing; that is just the reality of it.

But again, this drug scourge causes our country 40,000 deaths a year, $200 billion in costs, and I think, to a very, very large degree, the biggest crime, or the biggest emotional thing, in my mind, is the human misery it causes. Because the dead are dead, but the people who are struggling with this stuff—and, again, living under bridges and selling their bodies for a hit, is just something that, to me, you know, keeps me awake at night.

But again, these are decisions made outside of my purview. I just define the problem.

Mr. MEEKS. And Admiral Papp, in your opening statement you indicated that you—we are continuing to work with Venezuela with reference to drug interdiction. Can you tell us how, and what is the relationship, or how—are they cooperating, or not cooperating?

Admiral PAPP. Yes, sir. We are getting good cooperation. I mentioned that we have 40 multilateral agreements. These have been worked out over the last 20 years with countries surrounding the Caribbean, South and Central America, based upon a partnership with the United States Coast Guard. And we work through the Department of Justice to hammer out these—and each one of them is a little bit different.

But we still do, in fact, have protocols in place where we have a suspected vessel or Venezuelan vessel, we are able to go through these protocols to the Government of Venezuela, primarily the Venezuelan Coast Guard, and get permission to board vessels. And sometimes we have to make decisions that the vessels are returned to Venezuela. Other times we can take them for prosecution. But we continue to have cooperation there.

And going back to what was—what Chairman Salmon answered, I have got a unique perspective on this, because I have been not only down there driving ships around the Caribbean, trying to do interdictions, but back in 1998 had a chance to do a diplomatic mission, going into Venezuela and Colombia. At the time, Venezuela was very friendly with us, and accepted us in there. When we pulled in Cartagena, in Colombia, quite a different situation

there. Cartagena was one of the few towns that you could go around in safely.

So I have had a chance to watch how Plan Colombia has worked, the partnerships we developed with the Colombians, and, in fact, have been down there dealing with their head of navy. And we are very proud of the way that they have taken on a regional leadership down there. In fact, they are running drug symposiums, bringing in other countries, and we continue to work with them and sustain that relationship.

And I think the key to that has been a continued commitment. They know we are not going away. But I have to admit that, as they see fewer and fewer resources devoted to the counterdrug mission down there, they begin to get a little anxious, because they perceive that as perhaps us backing away from sharing the battle with them.

Mr. MEEKS. Can I ask one more question, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. SALMON. I would like to go to the Ambassador now. I mentioned in my opening statement about this program that I saw in Haiti with New York City Policy Department officers there, working with them on a law enforcement and—on this—you know, this is, I think, good work on behalf of the State Department.

I was wondering whether or not—are there other partnerships like that, where you find law enforcement from the United States working on the ground in some of the Caribbean islands to help with their judicial systems, or helping with their police systems? That way we can also get information there, and they can, in fact, lock up hardened criminals there before they come to the United States and spread illicit drugs. So is there any other kind of cooperation that the State Department is working with like the Haiti program any place else in Central America or the Caribbean?

Mr. ARREAGA. Indeed, and thank you for your question. This is a great question, because it gives us a chance to highlight some of the partnerships that we have developed with States all over the United States. For instance, we have a relationship with the corrections department in New Mexico. So we train corrections officers so that jails in the region are actually jails that are meant to rehabilitate, as opposed to make them worse criminals. We work with attorneys general to teach about prosecution. We do this with a number of States. We work with—in fact, if I may, I would like to submit for the record a paper explaining all of the partnerships that we have.

But this is one of the unsung aspects of what—the work that the United States is doing overseas. We are taking the expertise developed at various States—for instance, the Miami-Dade Police Department does a lot of training in counternarcotics. We also have a partnership with the Port of Miami, where customs officers come to Miami to see how we handle port security.

You talked about doing some prosecutions there. Absolutely. That is exactly what we are trying to do. We are trying to build capacity on the investigation side and the prosecution side and the courts, because we want to empower these governments, these countries, to apprehend criminals, to try them, and to incarcerate them and, you know, do the whole range of judicial—the process. And we do that, depending on—it all depends on, of course, the

level of development. But that is part of our approach to security in the region.

We also work with the office of—that deals with money laundering. We are encouraging countries to pass asset—for future laws, so that a lot of these agencies that have no resources can use that law to resource their activities. So we have lots of partnerships. And I think it is one of the best parts, because it gives us the flexibility to provide different types of assistance, depending on what is needed.

Mr. SALMON. Thank you. Ms. Hahn?

Ms. HAHN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Admiral Papp, during the last Coast Guard hearing you mentioned that drug, weapon, and human smuggling from panga boats still remained a huge threat, but that budget cuts hindered the Coast Guard's ability to counter this danger, since they reduced the manpower and operating hours of the assets the Coast Guard needs to combat this continuing threat.

For instance, in your previous testimony, you stated that sequestration clearly affected the Coast Guard's drug interdiction efforts, as evidenced by the 35-percent reduction in marijuana seizures in fiscal year 2012 to 2013, when sequestration began to take effect. This clearly, obviously, shows that there is a direct correlation between the budget and operational capability, and that this common theme around here, that we all need to be doing more with less, is an impossible principle to constantly adhere to.

Chief Petty Officer Terrell Horne lived in my congressional district at the time of his death from one of these panga boats. I live a mile from where one of those boats made land on the Palos Verdes Peninsula recently. So, of course, in my area, I am concerned about the potential effect that the next round of sequestration cuts could have on this danger, and especially as more evidence is showing that smugglers are increasingly using the southwest maritime route more and more.

Just met last week in my district office with Admiral Schultz, the commander of the 11th District, and I also met with Captain Jenkins, the captain of the Port of Los Angeles. And I am very excited. And we also met with Captain Williams, who will be the incoming captain of the port, the first woman to hold that position in the history of the Coast Guard.

So, we are all excited about that, but want to know what you can tell me of how you are working with local and foreign partners to ensure that our major American ports along these popular drug-smuggling routes such as L.A. and Long Beach are fully protected against this threat. And maybe in your answer you can also tell us how important it is that the Coast Guard at least maintains its current funding levels in order to preserve its current capability.

Admiral PAPP. Thank you, Ms. Hahn. That is a great question, and I thank you for your advocacy. And also, once again, I will thank you for being out there for the memorial service with me for Senior Chief Horne, and the compassion that you showed for his family.

While I am answering your question, if I could ask for the slide that I brought with me, if I could get that up there, or, if not, we can use the table drop that we did. There we go.

[Slide]

Admiral PAPP. The challenge that you are talking about is right there, of course, along the border. And you are right. When we dropped our activities by 30 percent, we showed a 35-percent reduction in cocaine seizures for fiscal year 2013. And we are back to—we have restored our historic levels of operations right now. In fact, we have increased.

Two new things that we are doing out there in your area is we are more frequently putting one of our major cutters in the area, rather than just patrol boats, because we can operate airborne use of force, one of our HITRON helicopters that stops the go-fast, the pangas, through—with trained marksmen. That has been so successful that, rather than tie up a cutter, we are now using—and we have cleared through the Department of Justice—we are using land-based airborne use of force. In other words, putting our HITRON helicopters at a shore station, and flying them under direction of the sector out there.

The other thing that we are doing is we are leveraging our partnerships. We have the regional coordination mechanism, we call it. We have a command center at Sector San Diego, where we bring in our partners from Customs and Border Protection, Customs Air and Marine, the other Federal partners, and State and local law enforcement, as well, so we can coordinate and effectively synchronize all of our activities, get the most out of the resources that we have. We do that throughout the country.

Each one of our captains of the port or our sector commanders, as you noted there, has very broad authorities. They head up area maritime security committees, they do port safety committees, and they bring all the partners together The only way we can get our business done effectively is through these partnerships that the Coast Guard is able to develop because of our broad-based authorities.

Having said that, we are still limited by the amount of resources we can get out there. On this chart that I brought with me, we refer to these as threat vectors. But what they are, they are also vectors of prosperity. Those are our trade routes, as well, that we have to maintain and keep safe and secure.

The blue shaded areas surrounding both coasts around Alaska, around the Hawaiian Islands, and our trust territories out in the Pacific, that is our exclusive economic zone. That is about—over 4 million square miles of exclusive economic zone. It is the largest exclusive economic zone of any country in the world. And we have to distribute our major cutters over that entire area. So it is a lot of ground to cover. And we just have to make reasoned, risk-based decisions.

General Kelly generally asks for at least six Coast Guard cutters. We are only able to provide four nowadays. And if we move one up there off the Baja, we reduce him to three. So it is like squeezing a balloon. You only have so much in it. And if you have got threats and other areas, you have got to move them around, and it is zero-based right now, and really—we are really hurting for resources there.

Ms. HAHN. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Mr. SALMON. Thank you. Mr. Garamendi.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General Kelly, your testimony indicates that you are basically pulling your assets out of the Caribbean area. What percentage of your total budget is consumed by Guantanamo?

General KELLY. You mean the detainee ops at Guantanamo?

Mr. GARAMENDI. Yes.

General KELLY. It is a separate budget. It is a very separate mission. I own it, and we do it really well. But it is a separate budget. But it is about—I think we spend, just for the detainee ops, it is right at about $130 million, something on that order. And, of course, as you know, Congressman, we are tenants on the Navy base down there. So there are other—just by being there, you know, we don't have to buy electricity, and things like that. But $130 million is a good, round figure.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Well, we are—our task is to make choices about how we spend our taxpayers' money. And so, Guantanamo and the continuation of it is expensive. And that is money that might have been spent elsewhere.

Let's talk about UAVs and the deployment of UAVs for a patrol. You mentioned helicopters off the coast of California and other places. What use of—what is the use of—the potential of using UAVs to increase your patrol capacity? Let's start with Admiral Papp and then, General Kelly, if you could.

Admiral PAPP. Well, we will take maritime patrol aviation any way we can get it. There is really three key elements to doing these interdictions. First of all is having good intelligence. And I think probably we are strongest—out of the trifecta here I am going to talk about, we are strongest in intelligence. We have got a lot of actionable information. What we have is an absence of resources.

The next key thing after you have the intelligence is your ability to have maritime patrol aviation out there, whether it is manned aircraft or UAVs. It doesn't matter, as long as we can have something out there that is going to detect what we know is moving. At the end of the day, though, you have got to have a surface asset there that can interdict. And that is where our real shortfall is.

So, could we use more maritime aviation? Yes. Would UAVs help? Probably. Any additional hours we can get are going to be helpful. But at the end of the day you have got to have surface assets. And we have, as I said earlier, in terms of Coast Guard cutters for coverage, we are down to four down there right now. That is four today. We have a fleet of 44 cutters, total right now. We are building out new cutters. But at the end of this project, we are only going to have 33 cutters. So we are going in the wrong direction in order to provide what ends up being the most critical element of those three, as surface interdiction.

Mr. GARAMENDI. General Kelly?

General KELLY. Is there—don't have any drones of any kind right now. Certainly, if I could get some, I would love some. I mean, again, it is another form of ISR. The beauty of it is, you know, you—they don't get tired. So, you know, when an airplane has to go refuel, that kind—they can stay a lot longer, and the drone doesn't know that it is tired.

Mr. GARAMENDI. I am specifically thinking about the use of UAVs such as the Global Hawk, can stay in the air 36 hours, long

patrol areas, and provides—can provide, I should think, significant information. The Navy is coming up with its new Trident, which is a version of the Global Hawk, specifically designed for maritime purposes.

I would like the two gentlemen to get back to me about how you might deploy that asset to the benefit of the missions that you have.

[Information follows from General John F. Kelly, United States Marine Corps, Commander, U.S. Southern Command:]

> Any long-duration, multisensor unmanned aerial vehicles would be of tremendous value to accomplishing the entire spectrum of missions in the SOUTHCOM AOR. We have numerous mission areas that would benefit from the imagery, signals intelligence, and moving target indictor sensors on board the newer generation Global Hawk and Triton aircraft. The support the Global Hawk provided in Haiti proved extremely valuable to rescue and recovery efforts in the initial stages of Operation UNIFIED RESPONSE. The extended loiter time would help offset gaps we currently experience in our detection and monitoring mission, and assist meeting overland ISR information needs. As I have testified in the past, the Air Force E–8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (Joint STARS), with its moving target indictor capability, is a game changer in monitoring the maritime domain. The Global Hawk and the Triton, with their newest moving target indictor capabilities and extended duration, could prove to be equally important game changers. Additionally, these assets provide direct support to our partner nations in both South and Central America as we work together to build capability in Countering Transnational Organized Crime. I understand that the Triton may not be fully operational until 2017 and that the Air Force is still working their long-term force structure issues in regard to the composition of the Global Hawk fleet; however, the current Air Force Global Hawk Variant and the Navy BAMS–D aircraft would provide valuable support to my missions in both the maritime and overland domains.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Also, General Kelly, I believe it was earlier testimony in the House Armed Services Committee you said what you need, among others, is a platform on which to land helicopters. And I think you actually said an old barge might actually work well enough, if it had refueling capability. Could you expand on that, since your frigates are being removed? What could backfill?

General KELLY. Well, as—that phase of the process is called interdiction. The detection and monitoring, I do that to a very, very large degree. But it is an interagency process. So we see this stuff, whether in go-fast or an aircraft flying out of Venezuela, which is—virtually all of the aircraft movement of cocaine is coming out of Venezuela, either making its way to the Central American isthmus, or increasingly, up the West Indies to Dominican Republic, as an example, or Puerto Rico.

But the end-game part is, generally speaking, to put a helicopter in the air, vectored, over there by airborne ISR. They see the go-fast, they get astride the go-fast. On that helicopter is a marksman, United States coastguardsman. And he has, within his rules of engagement, he has the authority to shoot, if necessary, the engine or engines out of that go-fast. That hardly ever happens, because the go-fast knows it can't outrun the helicopter. So they tend to stop, throw the illicit cargo over the side, and then wait to be picked up by a cutter or a U.S. Navy ship.

So, in my view, at least, what you really need is something that the helicopter could fly off of. You don't need an aircraft carrier,

you don't need, you know, necessarily a big Navy ship or a Coast Guard cutter. In fact, 6 months last year we had the Royal Netherlands—they had a—I think it was a Coast Guard buoy tender. And—but it could put a helicopter on it, and it did great work for us in the interdiction mode.

So, we are looking now at renting, if you will, a merchant ship that would be able to take a—it would be able to land and take off a—you know, a Coast Guard or a Navy or a Marine Corps, for that matter, with a coastguardsman on board, a helicopter, and also turning that merchant ship into a mother ship, so that these other smaller countries that really do the yeoman work for us, including places like Nicaragua, they can go to sea, and have a mother ship arrangement so they can get fuel, get food, and help us in this fight.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Well, it is pretty clear—and I am just going to take another 30 seconds, Mr. Chairman, if I might—it is pretty clear that we are in tight budget situations, likely to continue for the next 5 to 10 years. And we need to be creative. As you were talking, General Kelly, I am thinking maritime reserve, the fleets that we have, is there any potential that we could use one or another of those ships, maybe with a modification? I like the idea of a mother ship. We are going to have to be very creative.

Obviously, Admiral Papp, we are going to be short of cutters. There is no—that is going to be at least for the next 5 years. Can we figure out a way of doing this with different kinds of assets?

Admiral PAPP. So, sir, I think General Kelly is right. We will take whatever we can get. However, at the end of the day, I have got a responsibility for the safety of my people in a very complex, fast-paced operation. Even landing helicopters at sea is not an easy thing when you have got weather out there, when you are launching them in the middle of the night. So I am reluctant to say that landing them on anything is a good thing.

Plus, the other thing is that, even when you stop the go-fast with your airborne use of force, you have got to have boats and a boarding team there to take custody, seize the people and the drugs, and you have got to launch that.

Now, we have used other things. We have great partnerships with Great Britain, with the Dutch, and with the Canadians and the French, and we make use of their platforms wherever we can. And they are professional. They know how to land helicopters. They can launch and recover boats safely. We put our law enforcement detachments on board, and we make use of them as much as we can. But those countries are facing budget shortfalls, as well, and their participation has been diminished over the last couple years.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Which brings us back to austerity budgeting. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Mr. SALMON. Thank you. The gentlewoman from Florida.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. First, I apologize for coming here on Latin time, but our subcommittee on Middle East and North Africa was meeting at the same time. So I am still over there and over here. Thank you, gentlemen, what a delight to be here.

Mr. Chairman, recently we heard the startling claim that Latin America has surpassed Africa as the world's most violent region, accounting for about one-third of all global homicides. And we must recognize this as one of the many alarming symptoms of a booming transnational drug trade that is the enemy of security, of good governance, and democratic principles. This is a particularly pernicious issue in Central America and the Caribbean.

An example of a proactive approach to the rise in drug-trafficking activity in the Caribbean is the partnership that we have established of INL and Port Miami, a major hub for travel and trade in the region. And through this initiative, Port Miami personnel provide training in anticrime and port security matters to their Caribbean counterparts. But this is just the beginning. The administration has put more resources into similarly targeted programs and show that it is serious about combating the illicit drug trade by doing so.

The administration's problem in Latin America is its failure to address the immediate needs of the region which affect our national security interests. And, General Kelly, your written testimony states, "Insufficient maritime service vessels and intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance platforms impair our primary mission to detect these threats and defend the southern approaches to the U.S. homeland." That is why last year I offered an amendment to the NDAA to rectify this impediment and fix this issue. I intend to offer a similar amendment again this year, because we should not abandon the Western Hemisphere. And engagement is the key with democratic allies.

With that in mind, what setbacks have we suffered due to the fact that our engagement with Honduras has been limited due to obstacles from the Senate? Has the positive progress of Operation Martillo evaporated due to the lapse of counternarcotics efforts?

And, General Kelly, you also mentioned in your written testimony that legislative restrictions such as the prohibition of FMF funding with the Guatemalans limit our engagement. It is my understanding that there is also a DOD policy that prevents SOUTHCOM from utilizing to the maximum extent possible our assets in JTF–Bravo and Honduras for a counternarcotics operation. Has this policy hindered our ability to make a larger dent in efforts to fight drug trafficking?

And these efforts are critical, not only because they threaten our security and that of our allies, but also because the illegal drug trade in this hemisphere impacts our national security interest through the world. Foreign terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah and the FARC engage in these illicit activities and fund their operations and advance the dangerous ambitions of regimes like that of Iran, which, as we have seen, is expanding its presence in the Western Hemisphere. Drugs equals terrorism financing.

And lastly, I would like to raise an issue with the Coast Guard. My office has received information that our Coast Guard, with the help of the State Department, traveled to Cuba and is seeking to reach an understanding with a State-sponsored terrorism on counternarcotics efforts. I think it is appalling that our Coast Guard wishes to have closer ties with the Cuban regime that is the same tyranny that actually gives refuge—it harbors drug traffickers. It

jails American citizens, supports terrorism, and was caught red-handed as recently as this summer, trying to smuggle military equipment to North Korea through the Panama Canal—and we thank Panama for stopping it—and provides, to this day, safe haven to American fugitives.

So, I share your concern with the rise in drug trafficking through the Caribbean, but doing business with the Cuban regime is not the solution, because they are actually part of the problem. And I will give it to anyone who would like to comment.

Thank you, Admiral.

Admiral PAPP. Thank you, ma'am. And, as always, thanks for your interest and support for the Coast Guard. And I regret that you are troubled by the activities. I will get more specifics and get a report back to you.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. It would be very helpful. Thank you so much. It concerns many of my constituents. I know that it is dismissed by some. But, as a person who lost her homeland to Communism—I was born in Cuba, came here as a refugee, represent thousands of people in similar ways—we don't have a romanticized view of the Communist tyranny in Cuba.

Admiral PAPP. Yes, ma'am. We do keep a line of communication open I think, first of all, to protect our people, to make sure that there is never any mistake. As you know, the Freedom Flotilla and other activities over the years, we have lost people. And we try to make sure that we at least have some line of communication open so that we can prevent any mistakes from happening and putting people in jeopardy. We also get good information on other illegal activities. But we will take a review of this and make a report back to you on——

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I would greatly appreciate it. Thank you so much, Admiral.

Admiral PAPP. Yes, ma'am.

[The information follows:]

The U.S. Coast Guard is the lead Federal agency for maritime safety, security and stewardship. The Coast Guard maintains a Telex link with the Cuban Border Guard for passing maritime counterdrug, illegal migration, and search and rescue information. The Telex link is the formal means of communication between the Coast Guard and Cuban Border Guard. The Telex system was established in 1980 to facilitate the transmittal of preapproved messages containing nonsensitive, real-time, tactical search and rescue information and suspicious aircraft and vessel movements.

On a case-by-case basis, the Coast Guard and Cuban authorities share tactical information related to vessels transiting Cuban territorial waters suspected of trafficking drugs or migrants through Cuban territorial waters. This exchange of information with Cuban Border Guard assists in enhancing the maritime security and maritime domain awareness of the U.S. The Telex link is facilitated by a Coast Guard Drug Interdiction Specialist assigned to the U.S. Interests Section in Havana.

Since July 2009, given an increased rate of maritime drug smuggling in the Caribbean, the Cuban Government has repeatedly asked to expand counter-narcotics cooperation. The Department of State (DOS) accepted the Government of Cuba's invitation to meet in Havana on April 10 and 11, 2014; at the request of the DOS, two members from the Coast Guard's Office of Law Enforcement Policy participated in this DOS-led engagement. At this meeting, the Cuban and U.S. delegations shared concerns over the rising levels of drug smuggling in the Caribbean, with a focus on the maritime route around Cuba's eastern tip between Jamaica and the Bahamas.

The U.S. delegation discussed nonbinding protocols for operational, on-scene maritime communication coordination between the U.S. Coast Guard and the Cuban Border Guard; and for streamlining the bilateral confirmation of suspect vessel registry and possible "stop, board, and search" authorization. If implemented, these procedures would help to prevent drug traffickers' exploitation of Cuban territorial waters and Cuban-flagged vessels as a means to evade law enforcement.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. And I thank the chairman and the chairman-in-waiting.

Mr. HUNTER [presiding]. Thank the gentlelady from Florida. We are going to go through one more round, if we have time. I just have—I have one last quick question that goes on what Mr. Garamendi was talking about.

Admiral, when you talk about the assets, and you talk about the system, kind of the in-the-box acquisitions programs, and Congress ruining all of that, when at the same time, if you get a platform—and I think—I know this is crazy, but to put it in visual terms, "Waterworld," you got Dennis Hopper on the big tanker, "Waterworld," you know, the movie? Kevin Costner? I thought it was a great movie.

[Laughter.]

Mr. HUNTER. But you have the big tanker, and you are able to operate off of that, why couldn't you use the Ready Reserve Fleet? Why couldn't you use—or why couldn't you use floating platforms out there? And if the Coast Guard feels that it is dangerous, why not man those with contractors? It is kind of like an icebreaker. It doesn't need to be manned by the U.S. military, be manned by people that know how to drive an icebreaker. They are not shooting at people who are shooting back.

So, why can't we think outside the box on this stuff? You have the Office of Naval Research, and a lot of other groups have a lot of other ships they can use for interdiction. They use them for testing purposes in San Diego and Norfolk, off of—in Florida, too. I mean these—there are interdiction assets out there. There are platforms out there, tons of them, which you could land a helicopter off and take off from.

So, if that is what is holding us back, you can't always be blaming it on sequestration and Congress is dumb. Why not go outside of the box a little bit and start doing—if you have everything down, why not do the interdiction part? If it is not that difficult.

Now, let me just—let me finish. Fifty years ago, if you had this problem you would have given this to somebody, given them $5 million, and they would interdict, and they would probably do a really good job of it. But instead, now, we kind of have this system that we have to work at. And if we don't get enough of our ships that we require by nature of our requirements and the whole shipbuilding fleet building those particular ships, then we are not going to do it, because we don't have the right ship to do it.

So why not think outside the box, like Mr. Garamendi was talking about? Why not use merchant mariners? Why not use the RAF? Why not use our people that we pay to be ready to go anyway?

Admiral PAPP. I can report back to you on all the innovative things that we have done. We actually look for anything that is passing through the area.

While not related to Western Hemisphere approaches, for instance, right now Admiral Locklear in Pacific Command, when he has ships that are transiting out to the WESTPAC, we are putting Coast Guard law enforcement detachments on them and running them through those—where I showed you the blue areas out in the Pacific around our trust territories and partner nations, we are sending them through there and doing fisheries law enforcement to protect the tuna fleet out there, things like that.

So, we look for those opportunities. And, as I said, we have had British oilers, Dutch oilers—anything that we can get that is going to be in the Caribbean or the eastern Pacific that we know is going through, we take advantage of. We work with Fleet Forces Command down in Norfolk to make sure that, if people are up doing training deployments, whatever—the Canadian vessels that we have had down there, that is, once again, the result of talking to Maritime Forces Pacific, Maritime Forces Atlantic, the Canadian commands. And when they have ships that have to go on workups, instead of sending them other places they are now sending them down to the Caribbean or the eastern Pacific, and we are putting Coast Guard law enforcement detachments on them.

So, we make use of anything that we know about. We will investigate and see what else is out there. Like anything else, if you are going to get a Ready Reserve Fleet ship underway, somebody has got to pay for that. Somebody has got to come up with the money, somebody has got to pay the mariners to come on board. We have reserve fleets that are out there, but I have seen the challenges that are faced when we have to work them up to get them ready. Just the one ship, the *Cape Ray*, that we sent over to deal with the Syrian chemicals, getting the mariners available and getting the money to run the ship and bring it up to standards, it is a challenge.

Granted, I will take a Coast Guard cutter or a U.S. Navy ship any time I can, because I know, when I put a Coast Guard helicopter out there, there is standardization of protocols for landing, recovery, hot refueling, and everything else, because landing helicopters is a dangerous business. We have lost people doing that.

So I—my only caution when I was talking to Mr. Garamendi was that you can't just—it is easy to say, "Let's put a barge out there," or, "Let's put a tanker out there," or something else. My Coast Guard pilots can land on anything in an emergency. Is it an effective platform for prosecuting go-fast vessels and be able to go back and hot refuel and carry ammunition and everything else?

Mr. HUNTER. I am going to be out of time.

Admiral PAPP. I don't know. We would have to work that through.

Mr. HUNTER. But I would argue that it is better than nothing, which is what you have now, or very little.

General KELLY. If I could add?

Mr. HUNTER. Yes.

General KELLY. We are already doing it, actually. Within the next couple of months I will have a—I have asked the system, and one of my fellow CO–COMS has found the money, and we will have about a 350-foot ship manned by U.S. merchant seamen, and we

will use that as a proof of concept—it is not modified yet—to launch and recover helicopters.

As we move to the next step and do that, of course, we will have the right kind of training and the right kind of procedures, and the right kind of gear and equipment. But that ship, at least for—it is coming on—it will be working for me within the next 6 or 8 weeks, and I will have it for at least a year before we then move on to the next step, with helicopters.

But while we are doing that, it will be working close in to Belize, Honduras, Guatemala. We already have U.S. Special Forces guys and gals, our U.S. Marines working with those partner nations on riverine ops, small boat—riverine ops are close in to the littorals. This ship will give them an opportunity to go further out, working for us, cued by our assets to go after go-fast, but they will be able to go further out because it will be a gas station. So we are actually doing everything you just described already in the next 6 or 8 weeks. And I will let you know how it goes.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank you. One last question. Do you have to be—you said Coast Guard snipers out of helicopters. Does it have to be Coast Guard snipers, or can it be—because they have the unique law enforcement, military side? Or can it be anybody from any service?

General KELLY. It is the law enforcement aspect. DOD, we can—you know, the DOD asset can do everything but the law enforcement part of it. So the shooter has got to be a Coast Guard or someone in law——

Mr. HUNTER. Or, like, DEA or FBI, or whoever.

General KELLY. Possible. But I think I would let the Commandant, you know, fill you in on that.

Admiral PAPP. Sir, it could be, as long as they go through the training. Getting the airborne use of force——

Mr. HUNTER. They would have to be a sniper, right?

Admiral PAPP. Airborne use of force authorities was very difficult and challenging for us. We have to take that through the Department of Justice, because we need to be able to get their support to defend our shooters if something happens or goes wrong.

So, who the shooter is, as long as we take them through our courses, get them certified. And, in fact, we have used other than Coast Guard. We have used Navy marksmen, as well, off Navy helicopters. And I am sure we could train other people. It is just a matter of taking them through the process.

Mr. HUNTER. That is all I have. I am going to yield now. But thank you, Admiral and General and Ambassador. Admiral, great to see you this last time. Wish you well. And I yield to Mr. Garamendi.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Working with you, I want to pursue thinking out of the box, and how we might be able to pursue the discussion and, quite possibly, the utilization, as we were just talking here. So we will leave that for the future and carry that on.

I do want to—I have been asked by one of our friends from the Foreign Affairs Committee to raise the issue with General Kelly about the expulsion of 20 U.S. Defense Department employees that were attached to the U.S. Embassy in Quito. I believe this hap-

pened over the last couple of weeks. Could you just briefly brief us on that, what it was all about, why it happened?

General KELLY. I think Quito's actions—Ecuador's actions are kind of in line with kind of a general loss of U.S. influence in this part of the world, in Latin America, and for a lot of different reasons.

In Ecuador's case, in particular, my folks that were there—and they were my folks—not all of the military, by the way; an awful lot of disinformation passed by the capital and by the President of that country. But at the end of the day, Ecuador has thrown its lot in with countries like Venezuela, like Russia, like China. That is where they see the future of Latin America. So they have made that move.

But the people that were in there working with them with full knowledge of the Ecuadorian Government, they have been there for years and years and years. They were working with them on the counterdrug effort, which is a real problem in Ecuador. They have been helpful, the Ecuadorians have. But they have decided to throw their lot in with other countries, so we are in the process of——

Mr. GARAMENDI. A geopolitical issue and——

General KELLY. Yes. And, you know, it is a great way to snub their nose at the United States.

Mr. GARAMENDI. OK. And this is a question from Representative Engel to you, Mr. Papp. I am just going to briefly go over it. The defense—a November 15, 2013, interview with Defense News, you stated that since you have lost naval ships in the eastern Pacific and Caribbean for drug interdiction, the Coast Guard would publish a Western Hemisphere strategy on how to fill these gaps. That is 5 months ago, and Mr. Engel wants to know when is the report due. What is the status of it?

Admiral PAPP. Yes, sir. We have been trying to come up with strategies for the specific areas, evolving missions. We put out an Arctic strategy just last year, and we have been working on our Western Hemisphere strategy.

My feeling is, with the focus of the Department of Defense assets going towards the Pacific, we still have responsibilities in the Pacific. But my primary responsibilities are along those threat vectors that were shown in the chart up there. So, how do we conduct that? How do we use that for support? How do we lay out what our doctrine is for the Service and get that approved by our Department is important.

We are very close. I have read through the draft. However, we have a new Commandant that is coming in in 30 days. And I thought that, rather than make it look like I am signing off on a Western Hemisphere strategy as I go out the door, there should be buy-in from the next Commandant, which I believe there is. And he will publish it shortly after taking command of the Service.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you very much, Admiral. I think that is exactly the right thing to do, let the next fellow coming in, let it be his program, also. And I am sure you will be building off yours. That was Mr. Engel's question.

I see our chairman has returned, and I believe Ms. Hahn has a question.

Mr. HUNTER. I yield to the gentlelady and our colleague from California.

Ms. HAHN. Thank you, Chairman. And I want to go on the record. Obviously, it is disheartening for me to hear about the incredible cuts that we have imposed on our Coast Guard and, again, continuing to ask them to do more with less. And we are the United States Coast Guard. To be talking about contracting out, and landing on barges, and—it is really unfortunate.

I wish we could restore the cuts we made, and not impose the next round of sequestration on our Coast Guard. We either believe in your mission and what you are trying to do, or we don't. And it is unfortunate that we are at this state. So I just want to go on the record saying I believe in your mission, and I really feel like we are shortchanging not only your Department, but certainly the American people.

Ambassador, one of the primary missions behind the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs is to build partnerships with State and local law enforcement agencies here at home in order to allow these agencies to provide their unique expertise to foreign agencies and governments that desperately need it. In order to incentivize State and local agencies to provide this expertise, the State Department reimburses these agencies for the cost incurred. That strengthens our overall international security. That also bolsters our relationships with our foreign partners, while simultaneously creating opportunities here at home.

I would like for you to talk about your agency's work with our Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the California Department of Corrections, and explain how their expertise and training has been critical in preventing violence in foreign countries, particularly Mexico.

Mr. ARREAGA. Thank you very much. The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation has provided training to Mexican and Salvadorian corrections officers. Now, these—the type of training they receive is the type of training to deal with some of the very hard-core issues that these institutions face in their own countries. For instance, riots, the protection of the facilities, and many times, facilities—we think of facilities of keeping people from going out. But a lot of times some of the challenges that they face is actually people trying to come in to free prisoners. So, we have a whole range of programs that are trying to provide those kinds of trainings to them.

I will owe you an answer on the question of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department. I don't have that with me right now, but I will certainly provide it. But we have many other opportunities. Let me give you a couple of examples.

The Superior Court of Arizona has provided forensic training to Costa Rica for judges, prosecutors, and defense attorneys. The New York Police Department, as it was mentioned, provides some training in Haiti. The Broward County sheriff has trained the Bahamian police and other agencies on gender-based violence. The Miami-Dade Police Department has trained Haitian police. The North Miami Police Department has trained the Trinidad and Tobago police on sex crimes. I mean the list goes on. For us, it is quite a pleasure to have these partnerships.

Another example is, for example, the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission hosted a study tour by the Mexican police managers. The California Department of Corrections—I think I mentioned that already, yes. So, we have a long list, and this is a list that is growing.

Of course, we have to be careful not to stretch ourselves too thin and find the comparative advantage that these institutions bring to the table, so that we can leverage it when we go overseas.

Ms. HAHN. Thank you. Admiral Papp, I just want to ask you one last question. One of the things you mentioned earlier was that you think we need to address in this war on drugs is the demand, along with the supply. And wondering if this trend in the United States—Colorado, Washington, probably California will be next in legalizing marijuana. Do you think that this is going to have a long-term impact, or effect, in stemming the U.S. demand for illegal drugs? Or have we had enough time to analyze what this is actually going to mean in this—in drug trade?

Admiral PAPP. I don't think we have had enough time. We discussed it at the last principals meeting of the Interdiction Committee. And, across the board for most of the agencies—and this includes all the homeland security agencies, DEA, Justice Department, FBI, NORTHCOM, SOUTHCOM, and others—the anecdotal information coming back from most of the partners in dealing with our South and Central American partners are that they are confused by the signals that the legalization sends.

They wonder about our commitment to continuing the fight. And when they are investing so much, both in resources and blood, they have to question that. They want to know about our commitment. Plus, they see fewer and fewer U.S. resources coming down there to join them. We reassure them. We tell them what the law is, and our continued commitment. But it can't help but create some doubts.

Other anecdotal information is because of changes in the market with legalization and homegrown marijuana, that is causing some people to switch to heroin production now, increasing the heroin on our streets. So it is a complex, multivariable equation, which I don't think we have a good handle on, but it is causing a lot of concern.

And I just want to give you my thanks for, once again, your advocacy and your comments here before you turn to the other question. And I don't want to leave anybody with the impression that I am unwilling to look at other things. We are trying to innovate and make use of whatever resources are available out there. My job, as the Commandant of the Coast Guard is to advocate for what I think, in my best military advice, is best for the country. I advocate for Coast Guard cutters because they are a known entity. We have qualified, trained Coast Guard people, and boarding parties, people who can handle boats, who can land and launch and recover helicopters safely.

And, if some other incident, whether it is a mass migration or a fisheries patrol or something in the Bering Sea, I can send them to do those activities, as well. Whereas as a barge that can land a helicopter is pretty much a single mission thing that I can't use for anything else in the Coast Guard. While it might be valuable

and give us something more, my job is to give you the optimal solution. Then yours is to decide whether we can afford it or not. But thank you.

Ms. HAHN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HUNTER. Thank the gentlelady.

Ms. HAHN. I yield.

Mr. HUNTER. And one last question that she just made me think of. Who is in charge of saying, "We are not going to go after weed any more, we are going to focus on"—and do you do that when it comes to targeting? I mean do you say there is a bunch of—there is, I don't know, tons of bales of marijuana coming in, and heroin and cocaine, and we are going to prioritize those according to—how? And who makes those decisions? Or is that not how it happens?

Admiral PAPP. There is no question, sir. It is illegal, and we continue to target it. And we will stop it to the best of our ability with the resources——

Mr. HUNTER. But what I am saying, though, is the opposite of that. If you are going to have—and you are, most likely, in the next 10 years—let's say 20 States legalize marijuana, it becomes decriminalized, which it basically is now anyway, especially in the western side of the country, why keep going after something that has been approved by the States? And I am asking who makes that decision? Who says, "Stop going after the marijuana loads. We are going to go after heroin and coke and meth," or the precursors, whatever—who makes that decision?

General KELLY. Well, at least in my realm, Congressman, I focus—we don't see a lot of marijuana moving from Latin America into—if you don't count Mexico—moving into the United States. It is cocaine, methamphetamines, heroin. It is my understanding most marijuana consumed in the United States now is grown all over the country.

Mr. HUNTER. Made in America.

General KELLY. Domestically, yes. You know, it is grown in cellars in Manhattan, it is grown in national forests in Colorado.

But to what the Commandant said about dealing with our partners, I mean we get—you know, our drug problem has caused many countries in Latin America, the most violent places on earth—Honduras being the most violent place on the planet, and much of that is due—almost all of it is due to our drug problem, as the drug traffics through. The police throughout most of the region are either entirely corrupt or so intimidated that they won't do their jobs, because they are so intimidated against—because of the violence. Courts and judges and all of the same thing.

So, to give you an example—or the example—when Colorado and Washington legalized marijuana, you know, I was queried by a lot of the partners. And I said, "Don't worry, it is still against Federal law, and the law will be enforced." And, of course, it is my understanding—I am not a domestic guy—but it is not being enforced. And the word—and, you know, I have said this before—the word "hypocrite" comes into the conversation. And, you know, as we are—everyone at this table is certainly trying to convince these countries to stay in the fight, fight our fight against drugs, we seemingly are not caring much about drugs any more.

So I find it pretty hard. And I am pretty close to a lot of ministers of defense, Presidents, you know, people like that. A very different relationship than even our State Department has with them. And, you know, they are pretty nondiplomatic with me, as I am to them. And they wonder what, frankly, what the hell we are doing.

But I don't—and you see an increasing number—start talking President Santos of Colombia. God, if they stop what they are doing in terms of our drug fight, we are really, really screwed. I mean they took 200 tons of cocaine off the market last year. They manually eradicated 30,000 hectares of coca before it was picked. They destroyed—found and destroyed 1,500 cocaine labs. If they stop doing that because they see less of a commitment in our country and a move towards legalization, we might as well, you know——

Mr. HUNTER. Why would you tie in the legalization of marijuana with heroin and coke?

General KELLY. Well, they see a general lack of enforcement and getting after some of these other drugs. And as everyone at this table has pointed out, the solution, to a large degree—not the elimination, but the solution to the drug problem is before it gets to Mexico and into the United States. And there is almost no commitment to do that, based on what they see, in spite of the fact we do work with them and we do give a certain amount of money, and we do have, you know, at least—like today we have three Navy ships, four Coast Guard cutters in the Caribbean and in the Pacific doing the work. That comes and goes. And they don't see the commitment. And they have got others things to spend their money on, as well.

Mr. HUNTER. That is all I have. I don't think there are any other Members here to ask questions. So, with that, this subcommittee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:51 a.m., the subcommittees were adjourned.]

U. S. Department of Homeland Security

United States Coast Guard

Commandant
United States Coast Guard

2703 Martin Luther King JR Ave SE
Washington, DC 20593-7000
Staff Symbol: CG-09
Phone: (202) 372-4411
FAX: (202) 372-8300

TESTIMONY OF
ADMIRAL ROBERT J. PAPP
COMMANDANT

ON
"DRUG INTERDICTION OPERATIONS"

BEFORE THE
HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS WESTERN HEMISPHERE AND
COAST GUARD & MARITIME TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEES

APRIL 29, 2014

Introduction

Good morning Chairmen Salmon and Hunter, Ranking Members Sires and Garamendi, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittees. It is a pleasure to be here today to discuss the Coast Guard's Drug Interdiction mission.

Today's Coast Guard is a direct descendant of the Revenue Cutter Service, created by Alexander Hamilton in 1790, to stem the flow of maritime contraband into the newly-formed Republic. While our missions and responsibilities have grown exponentially since then to address a variety of safety, security and stewardship concerns, our anti-smuggling roots continue to be an essential part of our service to the Nation. The Coast Guard is the lead federal maritime law enforcement agency, and the only agency with both the authority and capability to enforce national and international law on the high seas, outer continental shelf, and shoreward from the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) to our inland waters. The Coast Guard is also the lead federal agency for drug interdiction on the high seas, and it shares the lead for drug interdiction in the U.S. territorial seas with Customs and Border Protection (CBP). The Department of Defense (DOD), primarily through the Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S), has the statutory responsibility for the air and maritime detection and monitoring (D&M) of illicit drugs bound for the U.S. in support of law enforcement agencies such as the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard supports JIATF-S by providing aircraft and other forces to the D&M mission. It also contributes cutters and personnel in leading the critical phases of maritime interdiction and apprehension (I&A) of suspect vessels and their crews, and delivers suspects, contraband, and evidence to investigators and prosecutors in support of the President's National Drug Control Strategy (NDCS) goals.

The U.S. Government's Drug Interdiction programs stem the supply of illegal drugs into the U.S. through at-sea interdiction and seizure of smuggling vessels carrying contraband in the maritime Western Hemisphere Transit Zone.

Though these missions most often take place in distant waters, they help to combat Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) networks that generate crime and violence throughout Central America and Mexico.

The Coast Guard's Drug Interdiction mission is characterized by continuously evolving interdiction capabilities, tactics, and authorities employed to disrupt and apprehend drug traffickers who are motivated and fueled by massive profits, unconstrained by international borders, and highly adaptive to changes in the external environment. TOC networks rapidly adjust their maritime trafficking tactics, routes and transportation modes with an ever-changing combination of boats, low profile vessels, ships, and aircraft to evade law enforcement efforts. Beyond common fishing or recreational vessels that have always had a role in drug smuggling, the non-commercial vessels used to transport the bulk of illegal drugs in recent decades have grown increasingly specialized and sophisticated, and are often designed exclusively as drug trafficking vessels. Examples include speedboats, semi- and fully-submersible vessels, vessels with hidden compartments, and vessels constructed around their illicit cargo.

To counter this challenging and dynamic threat, the Coast Guard employs a comprehensive approach to maritime counterdrug law enforcement. The cornerstones of the Coast Guard strategy are: (1) maintain a strong interdiction presence to deny smugglers access to maritime routes and deter trafficking activity; (2) strengthen ties with source and transit zone nations to increase their willingness and ability to reduce the production and trafficking of illicit drugs within their sovereign boundaries, including territorial seas; and (3) integrate counterdrug efforts in a whole-of-government approach to combat drug smuggling through increased cooperation, coordination, intelligence, and information sharing.

A Layered Approach to Drug Interdiction

The Coast Guard maintains a multi-faceted, layered approach to combat TOC networks and their transport of illicit contraband from South America toward the United States via the Caribbean Sea, the Eastern Pacific Ocean, and through Central America and Mexico. The overarching strategy is to increase maritime border security through a layered system that extends beyond our land borders. This system begins overseas, spans the offshore regions, and continues into our territorial seas and our ports. The Coast Guard's mix of cutters, aircraft, boats, and deployable specialized forces, as well as international and domestic partnerships, allow the Coast Guard to leverage its unique maritime security authorities and competencies to address threats and to improve security throughout the maritime domain. Coast Guard efforts include removing illegal drugs as close to their origins in South America as possible, where drug shipments are in their most concentrated, bulk form. Moreover, these illicit cargoes are most vulnerable when they are being moved at sea. This is where the interdiction community has the highest visibility of, and best opportunity to interdict drug movements. When bulk loads reach shore, typically in Central America, they are continually broken down, cut, and smuggled on land in smaller, harder-to-detect loads. Additionally, the targeting, detection, monitoring, and interdiction of drug loads that depart the source zone may provide direct intelligence and evidence that assists U.S. and partner nation law enforcement agencies in identifying the leaders of drug trafficking organizations.

International Cooperation

Layered security begins overseas. Coast Guard personnel are posted as attachés, liaisons, drug interdiction specialists, and maritime advisors within key U.S. embassies around the world. To detect, deter and counter threats as early as possible, the Coast Guard fosters strategic relationships with partner nations.

To more effectively address maritime threats in the Western Hemisphere, the United States, through the efforts of the Departments of State and Justice and the Coast Guard, has established more than 40 bilateral and multilateral maritime counterdrug agreements and operational procedures with Western Hemisphere partners. These agreements facilitate coordination of operations and the forward deployment of boats, cutters, aircraft, and personnel to deter and interdict threats close to their origin. These agreements increase the operational reach of U.S. assets, close the seams between international borders and provide the support our international partners need to better patrol and control their sovereign waters.

In partnership with the State Department, the Coast Guard sponsors semi-annual engagements with more than 30 participating countries that focus on strengthening international partnerships and disrupting illicit drug trafficking and associated violence in the transit zone. These multilateral summits were established to improve interdiction and prosecution cooperation by building regional interoperability among primary transit zone partners in the Central American and Caribbean drug smuggling vectors.

In addition, the Coast Guard provides international training and education through a variety of courses at Coast Guard training centers and "on the job training" at operational units in the U.S., and through Mobile Training Teams deployed to host countries. Exportable training is one of the Coast Guard's most versatile and cost effective international training tools, serving an average of 2,000 international students in approximately 40 countries each year. The end state is to build and sustain capable partners that can respond to threats and conduct maritime operations vital to their interests. In 2013, the Coast Guard provided resident training to international maritime partners from 25 countries and deployed mobile training teams to 25 countries.

Offshore Presence

At the forefront of detection, monitoring, interdiction, and apprehension operations, the Coast Guard deploys a variety of offshore assets against drug traffickers in the transit zone, including major cutters, long and medium range fixed-wing aircraft, Airborne Use of Force (AUF) capable helicopters, and Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDETs) embarked on U.S. Navy ships and Allied Nation vessels that supplement organic Coast Guard capabilities. The Coast Guard also continues to pursue testing and future acquisition of small unmanned aircraft systems (sUAS) to enhance its future interdiction capability.

Major cutters and surface combatants, combined with AUF capable aircraft and supported by long range search aircraft have continuously proven to be an incredibly effective interdiction system when employed in the Western Hemisphere Transit Zone. During a recent patrol aboard one of our new National Security Cutters, the Coast Guard tested the ScanEagle UAS, which proved to be a superb force multiplier in two separate law enforcement cases, resulting in the removal of 570 kilograms of cocaine and the detention of six suspected smugglers.

In coordination with JIATF-S, the Coast Guard also works closely with partner nations in Central and South America, leveraging their capabilities and local knowledge to improve maritime governance in the littoral regions of the transit zone that have been increasingly exploited by illicit smuggling networks. Closer to home, Coast Guard Operational Commanders work across the interagency to provide a robust presence in the U.S. maritime approaches by deploying patrol boats, pursuit-capable small boats, medium range fixed-wing aircraft, and land-based AUF capable helicopters. The Coast Guard capitalizes on the unique authorities and capabilities of interagency partners to bring a unified, whole-of-government effort to defend our nation from threats posed by illicit actors. The Coast Guard continually seeks to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its surface and air assets that support the drug interdiction mission and the Administration's National Drug Control Strategy.

Since 1995, the Coast Guard has interdicted more than 500 vessels transporting shipments of cocaine from South America. This includes the arrest or detention of nearly 2,000 smugglers. Over the last five years, Coast Guard Cutters and LEDETs operating in the offshore regions of the transit zone have removed more than 500 metric tons of cocaine, with a wholesale value of nearly $17 billion.

Domestic Partnerships

Closer to U.S. shores, the Coast Guard coordinates and conducts joint operations with other Department of Homeland Security components and interagency partners in a whole-of-government response to drug trafficking.

The Regional Coordinating Mechanism (ReCoM) is a good example of the evolution of coordinated domestic operations. The ReCom located in Puerto Rico, and the three ReComs in the California Coastal Region cities of San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, coordinate with the Department of Justice (DOJ) and consist of personnel from the Coast Guard, CBP, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), DOD, and state and local law enforcement agencies. The ReCoMs provide a structured and joint approach to coordinated air and maritime interdiction operations by fostering collaborative law enforcement operations as members share criminal information, plans and strategies, and use multiagency operations to target TOC activities in the maritime domain.

To counter the drug smuggling threat in waters off Southern California, the Coast Guard, in partnership with other federal, state, and local agencies, increased its commitment to the standing Coast Guard Operation *Baja Tempestad*. This combined operation brings coordinated resources to detect and interdict the panga boats smuggling drugs and migrants up the California coast.

Assets include flight deck-equipped cutters with airborne and surface use-of-force capability; Coast Guard and CBP maritime patrol aircraft flights; non-compliant vessel use-of-force endgame capabilities from our shore based boats; the recent addition of shore-based Coast Guard helicopter AUF, and enhanced intelligence collection, analysis, and dissemination. In 2013, this interagency effort resulted in the removal of more than 90,900 pounds of marijuana and the apprehension of over 400 undocumented migrants attempting illegal entry into the United States.

In Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Coast Guard is part of a broad federal effort to strengthen the region's defenses against the scourge of drug trafficking. The Coast Guard is conducting targeted surge operations in the maritime domain and collaborating with international stakeholders to stem the flow of illicit drugs into Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. As a result of these joint efforts, 24,000 kilograms of cocaine and 9,500 pounds of marijuana were removed in 2013.

Conclusion

Our authorities, capabilities, competencies, and partnerships provide the President, Secretaries of Homeland Security, Defense and State and other national leaders with a ready force and the capabilities to lead or support a range of operations to ensure safety, security, and stewardship in the maritime domain. Through this interconnected system, the Coast Guard stands ready to meet offshore, coastal, and inland drug trafficking threats in the maritime domain. We execute our interdiction mission through our efforts to improve maritime domain awareness to our international and domestic partnerships, and investments in cutter, boat and aircraft recapitalization.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and thank you for your continued support of the U.S. Coast Guard. I would be pleased to answer your questions.

Question#:	1
Topic:	U.S. Navy ships
Hearing:	Drug Interdiction Operations
Primary:	The Honorable Eliot L. Engel
Committee:	FOREIGN AFFAIRS (HOUSE)
Date:	APR 29, 2014

Question: The presence of U.S. Navy ships in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific has been critical in the fight against drug trafficking and other illegal activities. Given that the Navy is currently decommissioning all of its frigates which usually were the ship deployed to this region, I am concerned that the United States will be left without a naval presence in the Americas in either ocean. This will leave a dangerous vacuum which is likely to be filled by criminal elements. It has been reported that the Coast Guard will pick up a large portion of the missions once carried out by the Navy.

What can the Committee expect the U.S. Naval and Coast Guard presence to be in this region in the coming years?

Response: The Coast Guard remains committed to conducting operations in this region as it is one of its eleven statutory missions. Improved integration of intelligence activities with operations will help ensure Coast Guard resources are appropriately balanced to provide presence in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific on the basis of risk prioritization. New assets coming online, such as the National Security Cutter and Long-Range Surveillance aircraft, will be heavily involved in providing long-range support to the Coast Guard's drug interdiction mission in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific.

Question: The Coast Guard will soon be presenting a Western Hemisphere strategy. What will be the role of the relevant interagency components be in the development of this strategy and in deploying counternarcotics assets to this region?

Response: The Coast Guard's Western Hemisphere Strategy is an internal document to help guide Coast Guard's planning for operations in Caribbean and Eastern Pacific. It will emphasize DHS's *Unity of Effort* model. The Coast Guard will continue collaboration with all DHS Components, including U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to optimize effectiveness and capitalize on their unique authorities and capabilities. The Coast Guard will also continue collaboration and coordination efforts with numerous federal, state and local partners, as well as foreign governments through established bi-lateral agreements, and the forging of new relationships.

Question#:	2
Topic:	high risk
Hearing:	Drug Interdiction Operations
Primary:	The Honorable Eliot L. Engel
Committee:	FOREIGN AFFAIRS (HOUSE)

Question: The Congressional Research Service reports: "The Coast Guard estimates that with the POR's [Program of Record] planned force of 91 NSCs, OPCs, and FRCs, the service would have capability or capacity gaps in 6 of its 11 statutory missions search and rescue (SAR); defense readiness; counter-drug operations; ports, waterways, and coastal security (PWCS); protection of living marine resources (LMR); and alien migrant interdiction operations (AMIO). The Coast Guard judges that some of these gaps would be 'high risk' or 'very high risk.'"

How would these capability or capacity gaps affect missions in the Western Hemisphere?

Response: The Coast Guard is committed to performing all of its statutory missions in all areas of operations. The Program of Record balances affordability and performance. The Coast Guard allocates available resources in a manner that addresses the most pressing operational challenges with the resources that are available. The Coast Guard focuses on the greatest risks across all eleven statutory missions given operational demands and circumstances.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS
AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AFFAIRS

Prepared Statement of:

Ambassador Luis Arreaga
Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for
International Narcotics & Law Enforcement Affairs

Hearing Before the:

House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere
House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation

"Confronting Transnational Drug Smuggling:
An Assessment of Regional Partnerships"

Tuesday, April 29, 2014

Chairman Salmon, Chairman Hunter, Ranking Members Sires and Garamendi, and other distinguished Members, thank you for the opportunity to appear today, with my colleagues General Kelly and Admiral Papp, to discuss our work to improve citizen security in the Western Hemisphere, undermine transnational organized crime, and minimize its impact on the United States.

At the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, we help to train, mentor, and empower foreign partners to understand and undermine criminal groups and the ways in which they operate. We partner with the best and brightest in the United States to impart expertise and training, including the men and women of the United States Coast Guard and others at the Department of Homeland Security, the Departments of Justice, Defense, and Treasury, and numerous law enforcement organizations from our own backyards – our States, counties, and cities. While the State Department has no direct role in interdiction efforts, the governments we assist in the Western Hemisphere do. Our assistance efforts often result in enhanced foreign government capacity to interdict drugs, investigate crimes, and prosecute and jail criminals. Our assistance efforts have had a significant impact, enhancing maritime law enforcement capacity in the Bahamas, Jamaica, Panama, and Costa Rica. These successes, large and impressive as they are, pale in comparison to the magnitude of the drug transit threat in the hemisphere. However, we are making progress in building partner nation capacity.

Introduction of Transnational Crime in the Western Hemisphere

The destructive power of transnational criminal organizations, including drug trafficking organizations, threatens our communities and civil institutions without regard to borders. In fact, multi-faceted criminal groups exploit national borders and the latest technology to move drugs and other contraband around the globe. Weak public institutions are overwhelmed by these criminal groups, which operate with relative impunity. The results include increased crime and violence, which undermine economic development and threaten democratic institutions. These criminal groups are very well financed, organized and determined. They systematically look for new ways to expand their profits and their influence, and they respond and adapt quickly to law enforcement techniques to find the path of least resistance. When the Colombian cartels dominated the hemispheric drug trade, Central America was largely bypassed. Today, however, many of the main drug trafficking routes run straight through Central America with approximately 80 percent of the drugs arriving in Central America via maritime conveyance. The Caribbean is also experiencing an increase in drug flows, with the majority of

transshipment occurring via maritime means. In 2011, cocaine transiting the Caribbean to the U.S. totaled approximately five percent, which increased to nine percent by 2012. By the end of 2013, cocaine flowing within the Western Hemisphere Transit zone increased to 16 percent of the 646 metric tons total flow.

Partnerships in the Hemisphere

The United States has established partnerships in the hemisphere to offset shared threats and advance common interests. The collection of the Merida Initiative with Mexico, our long standing partnership with Colombia, the Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI), and the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) represent a strategic approach to enhance and professionalize civilian law enforcement institutions, court systems, and corrections capacity to investigate and undermine criminal groups, prosecute criminal offenders, and remove them from their operations.

With strong support from the United States Congress, and substantial commitment from the Government of Mexico, the Merida Initiative has helped to create new capabilities in Mexico's federal institutions, which have freed up resources previously not available to work with U.S. and other regional partners on narcotics interdiction programs and information sharing partnerships. In Colombia, our partnership over the past decade has given birth to expanded state presence in former conflict areas, many of which are known for the production or movement of narcotics, forcing traffickers to shutter or move their operations with regularity. As a strategic partner, the Colombian National Police is increasingly providing security expertise in the region, including anti-crime and counternarcotics assistance programs, that has trained nearly 22,000 law enforcement and police officials from 61 countries.

Central America remains a priority as approximately 80 percent of documented drug flow from South America transits Central American territory. Under CARSI, the United States is implementing a comprehensive and integrated approach to stem illegal trafficking. Make no mistake; it will take many more years to see the fruits of our efforts in Central America due to the magnitude of threats to rule of law and credible government institutions. But we're making progress. Model police precincts have brought increased security to some communities and excellent new vetted units are seizing drugs and illicit assets and making critical arrests which contribute to the unraveling of powerful drug trafficking organizations. We are actively partnered with host nation institutions to develop capacity for maritime interdiction operations and, in Honduras, we are planning for

a regional aviation program to curb the drug trafficking routes that are flourishing in under-governed spaces. In the Caribbean, CBSI focuses on training and capacity building, crime prevention, and working with our partners to ensure sustainability of these efforts, with an emphasis on increased cooperation and information sharing. .

Support for Interdiction

Enhanced interdiction capabilities are one element of each of our partnerships in the hemisphere and they have demonstrated results. With Merida-funded equipment and training, the Government of Mexico reports they have seized over $3.8 billion in narcotics and illegal currency. Merida assistance, combined with the Government of Mexico's own investment in non-intrusive inspection equipment (NIIE), has helped the Government of Mexico develop an operational network of approximately 600 pieces of NIIE designed to seize drugs, cash and other contraband at ports of entry and between them.

In 2013, Colombian authorities reported seizing 211.8 metric tons (MT) of cocaine both domestically and by other governments with the support of Colombian intelligence. The Colombian National Police, with which the U.S. interagency works very closely, reported seizing 105.8 MT of cocaine and cocaine base in Colombia, worth over an estimated $2 billion on American streets. In addition, tens of thousands of hectares of coca cultivation are destroyed every year, scores of cocaine laboratories are dismantled, and operations against drug trafficking organizations are conducted with the support of the United States.

In Central America, Costa Rica's DEA-mentored Maritime Interdiction Vetted Unit launched its first successful interdiction operation in early February of this year, seizing more than 900 kilograms of cocaine and apprehending three suspects. The Vetted Unit combines Coast Guard interdiction capacities with investigative police personnel to effectively prosecute traffickers operating off of Costa Rica's Pacific Coast.

And in the Caribbean, we are partnering with the U.S. Coast Guard to support three efforts that promote maritime security, an annual maritime exercise to validate the interoperability of U.S.-funded and donated boats; regular Counter Drug Maritime Summits to bring together maritime security and law enforcement and justice sector officials; and a Technical Assistance Field Team, or TAFT, that includes U.S. Coast Guard and military personnel. Within the State Department, both the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs and INL support the TAFT, which

advises Caribbean maritime security forces on how to sustain their operational equipment.

In addition, as a result of the combined efforts of the Departments of State and Justice, and the U.S. Coast Guard, the United States currently has over 41 bilateral and multilateral maritime counternarcotics agreements and operational procedures in force, some of which provide the United States with enhanced littoral access throughout the primary corridors of illicit trafficking and prevent traffickers from operating with impunity at the expense of partner nation sovereignty. In support of interagency and international efforts coordinated by USSOUTHCOM's Joint Interagency Task Force – South, Coast Guard maritime law enforcement operations and interdictions pursuant to these agreements bolster our regional success related to safety, security, and stability, and the Coast Guard is the lynchpin of our success.

Conclusion

Hemispheric security is a work in progress, and far from an easy objective to achieve. When credible law enforcement capacity and systems of justice are built, criminal justice information sharing, judicial cooperation, human rights, and counternarcotics programs can take hold. Where they are absent, transnational criminals operate with impunity, threatening the safety and security of our citizens at home and abroad. While the task at hand is incredibly challenging, we know our coordinated efforts are yielding results. The partnerships between the State Department, partner nations, the Coast Guard, and USSOUTHCOM provide a proven and trusted mechanism that is being leveraged every day. Regional partnerships between nations are flourishing, joint operations have become more common, and information sharing is happening in a near real-time basis. These are all important developments that curtail, but do not cease trafficking operations. U.S. foreign assistance expertise and operations from our law enforcement and interagency partners are both critical to our interest in shaping a safer security environment in the region. The interdiction assets available from the United States may never be sufficient to make up for the inherent capability gaps abroad; however, our assistance efforts can enhance foreign government capacity to interdict drugs, investigate crimes, and prosecute and jail criminals.

Chairman Salmon, Chairman Duncan, Ranking Members Sires and Garamendi, and other distinguished Members, thank you for your sustained support and for your focus on this important topic. I look forward to answering your questions.

POSTURE STATEMENT OF

GENERAL JOHN F. KELLY, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

COMMANDER, UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND

BEFORE THE 113TH CONGRESS

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

26 FEBRUARY 2014

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Introduction

Chairman McKeon, Ranking Member Smith, and distinguished Members of the Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss U.S. Southern Command's efforts in Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. Mr. Chairman, Members, even our significantly reduced engagement continues to yield dividends in a region of increasing importance to our national interests. While other global concerns dominate the headlines, we should not lose sight of either the challenges or opportunities closer to home. In terms of geographic proximity, trade, culture, immigration, and the environment, no other part of the world has greater impact on daily life in our country than Latin America and the Caribbean.

During my first year in command, I established four priorities for U.S. Southern Command—continuing humane and dignified detention operations at Joint Task Force Guantanamo, countering transnational organized crime, building partner capacity, and planning for contingencies—all of which I look forward to discussing with you today. I thank the Congress for recognizing U.S. Southern Command's vital role in defending our southern approaches and building enduring partnerships with the Americas. I remain concerned, however, by the impact of budget cuts on our ability to support national security interests and contribute to regional security.

Over the next ten years, the Services are reducing deployments of personnel, ships, and aircraft in the context of tightening fiscal constraints. As an economy of force Combatant Command, these reductions have a disproportionately large impact on our operations, exercises, and engagement activities. Insufficient maritime surface vessels and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance platforms impair our primary mission

to detect threats and defend the southern approaches to the U.S. homeland. Similarly, reductions in force allocation severely limit our security cooperation activities, the primary way we engage with and influence the region. Sequestration only exacerbated these challenges, and while its near-term effects may have been mitigated, this reprieve is temporary. As the lowest priority Geographic Combatant Command, U.S. Southern Command will likely receive little, if any, "trickle down" of restored funding. Ultimately, the cumulative impact of our reduced engagement will be measured in terms of U.S. influence, leadership, and relationships in the Western Hemisphere. Severe budget constraints have serious implications for all three, at a time in which regional security issues warrant greater attention.

Overview of Regional Security Issues

Transnational Organized Crime. Mr. Chairman, Members, transnational organized crime is a national security concern for three primary reasons. First, the spread of criminal networks is having a corrosive effect on the integrity of democratic institutions and the stability of several of our partner nations. Transnational criminal organizations threaten citizen security, undermine basic human rights, cripple rule of law through corruption, erode good governance, and hinder economic development.[1] Second, illicit trafficking poses a direct threat to our nation's public health, safety, and border security. Criminal elements make use of the multitude of illicit pathways in our hemisphere to smuggle drugs, contraband, and even humans directly into the United States. Illegal drugs are an epidemic in our country, wasting lives and fueling violence

[1] Director of National Intelligence, James R. Clapper. *Statement for the Record: Worldwide Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community.* Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, March 12, 2013.

between rival gangs in most of our nation's cities. The third concern is a potential one, and highlights the vulnerability to our homeland rather than an imminent threat: that terrorist organizations could seek to leverage those same smuggling routes to move operatives with intent to cause grave harm to our citizens or even quite easily bring weapons of mass destruction into the United States. I would like to briefly talk about each concern in greater detail to underscore the magnitude of the threat posed by transnational organized crime.

Destabilizing Effects in the Region. The unprecedented expansion of criminal networks and violent gangs is impacting citizen security and stability in the region. Skyrocketing criminal violence exacerbates existing challenges like weak governance; as a United Nations report recently noted, despite improvements, Latin America remains the most unequal and insecure region in the world.[2] In some countries, homicides are approaching crisis levels. High levels of violence are driving Central American citizens to seek refuge in other countries, including the United States. Driven by economic pressures and rising criminal violence, the number of Hondurans, Guatemalans, and Salvadorans attempting to cross the U.S. Southwest border increased 60 percent in 2013.[3]

This challenge, however, extends far beyond a threat to public safety; some areas of Central America are under the direct influence of drug trafficking organizations. These groups use their illegally gained wealth to buy off border agents, judges, police officers, and even entire villages. This criminal power and the enormous flow of crime-generated profits are serious threats to the stability of democratic institutions, rule of law, and the international financial system. Corruption also poses an indirect threat to U.S.

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[2] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). *Human Development Report for Latin America 2013-2014.*
[3] Information provided by U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

national security interests, as corrupt government officials in the region can be bribed to procure official documents such as visas or citizenship papers and facilitate travel of special interest aliens. In my view, this vulnerability could be exploited by any number of actors seeking to do us harm.

Illicit Trafficking to the United States. The U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility is the distribution hub for drug trafficking destined for the United States. The majority of heroin sold in the United States comes from either Colombia or Mexico, and we are seeing a significant increase in heroin-related overdoses and deaths in our country.[4] Additionally, opium poppy production now appears to be increasing in Guatemala. Thousands of tons of precursor chemicals are trafficked into our hemisphere from China, aiding Mexican-based drug cartels that are extending production of U.S.-bound methamphetamine into Guatemala, Nicaragua, and potentially other Central American countries. With an estimated $84 billion in annual global sales,[5] cocaine trafficking remains the most profitable activity for criminal networks operating in the region, as the Andean Ridge is the source of every single ounce of cocaine consumed on the planet.[6] Upon landfall in Central America, bulk cocaine is broken down into multiple smaller shipments for transit into Mexico and the United States, making large interdictions at the U.S. border extremely difficult, despite the heroic efforts of local law enforcement, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and Immigrations and Customs Enforcement. If bulk shipments are not interdicted before making landfall, there is almost no stopping the majority of this cocaine as it moves through Central America and

[4] U.S. Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration. *2013 National Drug Threat Assessment.*
[5] United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC). *Estimating illicit financial flows resulting from drug* trafficking and other transnational organized crime, 2011.

Mexico and eventually lands on street corners across America, placing significant strain on our nation's health care and criminal justice systems and costing American taxpayers an estimated $193 billion in 2007 alone, the most recent year for which data is available.[7,8]

Cocaine trafficking remains the predominant security challenge throughout the entire region, and I am growing increasingly concerned by the situation in the Caribbean.

According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, there was a 483% increase in cocaine washing up on Florida's shores in 2013 compared to 2012.

Due in part to counterdrug asset reductions, some old routes appear to be reviving, including ones that lead directly into Florida. In 2013, U.S.-bound cocaine flow through the Caribbean corridor increased to 14% of the overall estimated flow; this number is likely higher and will continue to grow, but we lack a clear picture of cocaine flow due to asset shortfalls. The discovery of cocaine processing lab equipment in the Dominican Republic suggests criminal organizations may be seeking to broaden production in the Caribbean. This may be an indication of an emerging trend, similar to what we saw in Central America in 2012. Additionally, the Caribbean is particularly vulnerable to the violence and insecurity that often comes with illicit trafficking and organized crime. As trafficking from the Dominican Republic into Puerto Rico has increased, so too have violence, crime, and corruption. Once cocaine successfully reaches Puerto Rico, it has reached the U.S. homeland; most of the cocaine arriving in Puerto Rico is successfully transported into the continental United States. According to

[7] Note: Upon landfall in Central America, bulk cocaine is broken down into multiple smaller shipments for transit into Mexico and the United States, making large interdictions extremely difficult.
[8] National Drug Intelligence Center (2011). *The Economic Impact of Illicit Drug Use on American Society.* Department of Justice.

the DEA, traffickers are also transporting Colombian heroin, often via Venezuela, to Puerto Rico for onward shipment to Miami, New York, and Houston.

Mr. Chairman, gone are the days of the "cocaine cowboys." Instead, we and our partners are confronted with cocaine corporations that have franchises all over the world, including 1,200 American cities,[9] as well as criminal enterprises like the violent transnational gang Mara Salvatrucha, or MS-13, that specialize in extortion and human trafficking. The FBI has warned that MS-13 has a significant presence in California, North Carolina, New York, and northern Virginia, and is expanding into new areas of the United States, including Indian reservations in South Dakota.

Additionally, migrant smuggling organizations are increasingly active in the Caribbean, as new laws in Cuba and erroneous perceptions in Haiti of changes in U.S. immigration policy have led to increased migration flows. Smuggling networks are expanding in the Eastern Caribbean, as Cubans and Haitians attempt to reach the United States via Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Islands. These networks are opportunistic and easily expand into other illicit activities, such as the drug trade, special interest alien smuggling, and human trafficking, including exploiting vulnerable migrants by subjecting them to forced labor, a form of modern-day slavery. In 2012, the International Labor Organization estimated that 20.9 million people are victims of forced labor worldwide.[10] Foreign nationals are trafficked for sex and labor, as well as for

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[9] U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration. *2011 National Drug Threat Assessment.*
[10] ILO Global Estimate of Forced Labour, ILO. See: http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_182004.pdf

commercial sex acts, into the United States from many countries around the world, including Central America, South America, and the Caribbean.[11]

It has been many years since U.S. Southern Command supported a response to a mass migration event, but I am concerned by the trends we are seeing, especially in Haiti, where we have witnessed a 44-fold increase in Haitian migrants in the Mona Passage. As of February 2013, more than 2,000 Haitians had been documented trying to use this narrow passage as a migration vector, compared to less than 200 in the past eight years *combined.* Smuggling operations have a high human toll; rough seas endanger the lives of rescuers and migrants and have resulted in the death of more than 50 Haitians to date. Thankfully, the Dominican Republic is an important partner in stemming migration flows, and they are working hard to reach a solution on the issue of the roughly 200,000 Haitians residing in the Dominican Republic. However, additional increases in migration would place additional burdens on already over-stretched U.S. Coast Guard and Dominican Republic assets. Absent resource adjustments, stemming these smuggling operations and preventing future loss-of-life will pose major challenges to the United States and our Caribbean partners.

Crime-Terror Convergence. Clearly, criminal networks can move just about anything on these smuggling pipelines. My concern, Mr. Chairman, is that many of these pipelines lead directly into the United States, representing a potential vulnerability that could be exploited by terrorist groups seeking to do us harm. Supporters and sympathizers of Lebanese Hezbollah are involved in both licit and illicit activities in the

[11] U.S. Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. *2013 Trafficking in Persons Report.* Retrieved from: *http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/210742.pdf.*

region, including drug trafficking. Additionally, money, like drugs and people, has become mobile; it is easier to move than ever before, and the vast global illicit economy benefits both criminal and terrorist networks alike. Clan-based, Lebanese Hezbollah-associated criminal networks exploit free trade zones and permissive areas in places like Venezuela, and the Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay Tri-Border to engage in money laundering and other illegal endeavors, as well as recruitment and radicalization efforts. The exact amount of profits generated by these illicit activities in the region is unclear, but it is likely—and at least—in the tens of millions of dollars.

External Actors: Iran and Islamic Extremist Groups. Lebanese Hezbollah has long considered the region a potential attack venue against Israeli and other Western targets, and I remain concerned that the group maintains an operational presence there. Lebanese Hezbollah's partner and sponsor, Iran, has sought closer ties with regional governments, largely to circumvent sanctions and counter U.S. influence. As a state-sponsor of terrorism, Iran's involvement in the Western Hemisphere is a matter for concern. Additionally, members, supporters, and adherents of Islamic extremist groups are present in Latin America. Islamic extremists visit the region to proselytize, recruit, establish business venues to generate funds, and expand their radical networks. Some Muslim communities in the Caribbean and South America are exhibiting increasingly extremist ideology and activities, mostly as a result from ideologues' activities and external influence from the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia. Mr. Chairman, we take all these activities seriously, and we and our partners remain vigilant against an evolution in capability of *any* group with the intent to attack the United States, our interests, or our allies. I remain concerned, however, that U.S. Southern Command's limited intelligence

assets may prevent full awareness of the activities of Iranian and terrorist support networks in the region.

Other External Actors. Mr. Chairman, there has been a great deal of attention on the increased regional influence of so-called "external actors" such as China and Russia. Ultimately, we should remember that engagement is not a zero-sum game. Russia and China's expanding relationships are not *necessarily* at our expense. However, if we want to maintain our partnerships in this hemisphere and maintain even minimal influence, we must *remain engaged* with this hemisphere. Budget cuts are having a direct and detrimental effect on our security cooperation activities, the principal way we engage and promote defense cooperation in the region. The cumulative effect of our reduced engagement is a relative but accelerated decline of trust in our reliability and commitment to the region. Our relationships, our leadership, and our influence in the Western Hemisphere are paying the price.

Russia continues to build on its existing strategic partnerships in Latin America, pursuing an increased regional presence through arm sales, counterdrug cooperation, and bilateral trade agreements. Last year marked a noticeable uptick in Russian power projection and security force personnel in the region. It has been over three decades since we last saw this type of high-profile Russian military presence: a visit by a Russian Navy Interfleet Surface Action Group to Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela, and the deployment of two Russian long-range strategic bombers to Venezuela and Nicaragua as part of a training exercise.

As part of its long-term strategy for the region, China is also expanding relationships in Latin America, especially in the Caribbean. In contrast to the Russians,

Chinese engagement is focused primarily on economics, but it uses all elements of national power to achieve its goals. Major investments include potentially $40 billion to construct an alternative to the Panama Canal in Nicaragua and $3 billion to Costa Rica and Caribbean nations for myriad infrastructure and social development projects. China is the single biggest source of financing to Venezuela and Ecuador, due to China's thirst for natural resources and contracts for Chinese state-owned companies. Chinese companies hold notable investments in at least five major ports and are major vendors of telecommunications services to 18 nations in the region. In the defense realm, Chinese technology companies are partnering with Venezuela, Brazil, and Bolivia to launch imagery and communications satellites, and China is gradually increasing its military outreach, offering educational exchanges with many regional militaries. In 2013, the Chinese Navy conducted a goodwill visit in Brazil, Chile, and Argentina and conducted its first-ever naval exercise with the Argentine Navy.

Mr. Chairman, I am often asked if I view engagement by these "external actors" as a direct threat to the United States. Generally speaking, I see potential for greater partnership with China in areas such as humanitarian assistance and disaster response. However, I would like to see the Chinese place greater emphasis on respecting human rights—like we do—as part of their overall engagement efforts in the region. The U.S. government continues to encourage China to address shared security challenges in a positive way, such as taking concrete steps to address the massive illicit trafficking of counterfeit pharmaceuticals and precursor chemicals used for methamphetamine and heroin production in Central America and Mexico. While Russian counterdrug cooperation could potentially contribute to regional security, the sudden increase in its

military outreach merits closer attention, as Russia's motives are unclear. Given its history, the region is sensitive to any appearance of increased militarization, which is why it is important that Russia and China promote their defense cooperation in a responsible, transparent manner that helps maintain hemispheric stability and hard-won democratic gains.

Command Priorities

Mr. Chairman, the U.S. military plays an integral role in a whole-of-government approach to address many of these regional security issues. To advance the President's vision and the Department of Defense's policy for the Americas in a resource-constrained environment, U.S. Southern Command focuses our efforts on four priorities. We can accomplish quite a lot with relatively modest investment, but continued budget limitations imperil our ability to build on this progress.

Priority: Detention Operations. Mr. Chairman, I want to speak for a moment about the most important people at Guantanamo: the outstanding men and women that are part of the Joint Task Force at Guantanamo Bay. First, I want to make clear—we who wear the uniform are responsible for one thing at Joint Task Force Guantanamo: detention operations, a mission of enormous complexity and sensitivity. We do not make policy; we follow the orders of the President and Secretary of Defense with the utmost professionalism and integrity.

I have never been prouder of any troops under my command than I am of the young military professionals who stand duty day and night at Guantanamo, serving under a microscope of public scrutiny in one of the toughest and most unforgiving military

missions on the planet. These young men and women are charged with caring for detainees that can often be defiant and violent. Our guard and medical forces endure constant insults, taunts, physical assaults, and splashing of bodily fluids by detainees intent on eliciting a reaction.

And in response, each and every military member at Guantanamo exhibits professionalism, patience, and restraint. This is the story that never gets written: that our service members treat every detainee—even the most disruptive and violent among them—with respect, humanity, and dignity, in accordance with all applicable international and U.S. law. Our troops take very seriously their responsibility to provide for the detainees' safe and humane care. In my opinion, *this* story is worth telling, because our country needs to understand that the young Americans sent by the President and the Congress to do this mission are exceptional; they live and work by an unbreakable code of honor and courage and are among the best one percent of their generation.

Mr. Chairman, as you are aware, I am responsible not just for the welfare of my troops, but also for the welfare of every detainee under my care at Joint Task Force Guantanamo. Over the past year, we implemented improvements to enhance the well-being of the detainees. To adequately address the complex medical issues of the aging detainee population, we expanded and emphasized detailed reporting within our comprehensive system to monitor the health, nutrition, and wellness of every detainee. Last year, some detainees went on self-proclaimed "hunger strikes," although many of these detainees continued to consume meals—maintaining or even gaining weight throughout the "strike"—and were at no medical risk. As you know, we have

transitioned away from publicly releasing tallies of such hunger strike claims, which in our experience had served to encourage detainee non-compliance and had left the public with a very distorted picture of the overall health of the detainee population.

We continue to support ongoing military commissions, habeas corpus proceedings, periodic review boards, and visits by Congressional and foreign government delegations and non-governmental organizations like the International Committee of the Red Cross. We have taken steps to reduce costs and expenses wherever possible, while continuing to maintain the level of humane care that makes Joint Task Force Guantanamo a model for detention operations worldwide. We reduced the cost of the program supporting the detainee library by 45 percent, and reduced contract requirements and expenses in the Intelligence and Security Program, saving an estimated $6.1 million per year. We also worked with the International Committee of the Red Cross to provide expanded Skype capability to improve detainees' regular communication with family members, at no cost to U.S. taxpayers.

Concerns. Although detention operations have not been adversely affected by budget cuts, I remain concerned by two issues at Guantanamo: advanced medical care and deteriorating infrastructure. Although Naval Station Guantanamo and detainee hospitals are capable of providing adequate care for most detainee conditions, we lack certain specialty medical capabilities necessary to treat potentially complex emergencies and various chronic diseases. In the event a detainee is in need of emergency medical treatment that exceeds on-island capacity, I cannot evacuate him to the United States, as I would a service member.

As a former commander once remarked, we have not been doing detention operations at Guantanamo for twelve years, we have been doing them for one year, twelve times. The expeditionary infrastructure put in place was intended to be temporary, and numerous facilities are showing signs of deterioration and require frequent repair. First and most urgently, some facilities are critical to ensuring the safety and welfare of our troops stationed at Joint Task Force Guantanamo and for the continued humane treatment and health of the detainees. For example, the mess hall—a temporary structure built in the 1990s to support mass migration operations—is at significant risk of structural failure and is corroding after eleven years of continuous use, with holes in the roof and structural support beams. This facility must provide food services to all detainees and over 2,000 assigned personnel on a daily basis. As another example, the High Value Detention Facility is increasingly unsustainable due to drainage and foundation issues. Additionally, I am concerned over inadequate housing for our troops. This housing has other long-term requirements even after detention operations at Guantanamo end; it will be utilized by Naval Station Guantanamo to support a full range of Title 10 missions and nationally-directed contingency requirements for disaster response or mass migration. I am working within the Office of the Secretary of Defense to find solutions to these ongoing facility issues.

On October 5, 2013, a U.S.-contracted aircraft carrying one U.S. service member, four DOD contractors, and a Panamanian Air National Guardsman crashed in Colombia, killing four crew members, three of whom were U.S. citizens. The crew was monitoring coastal drug trafficking lanes in the Western Caribbean in support of Operation MARTILLO.

Priority: Countering Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC). In response to the challenges posed by the spread of transnational organized crime, U.S.

Southern Command is working with our interagency partners to counter the threats posed by criminal networks and illicit trafficking, focusing on those networks that threaten citizen safety in the region and the security of the United States. Mr. Chairman, our contribution to this effort is relatively small but important, and comes with real sacrifice. In 2013, the crash of a counternarcotics flight in Colombia led to the tragic death of Air Force Master Sergeant Martin Gonzales, two other dedicated American contractors, and a Panamanian officer, and the serious injury of the two pilots, highlighting the true human cost of this fight. The individuals who died will be remembered for their service and their commitment to fighting drug trafficking and criminal networks whose products are killing so many of our countrymen and women every year.

Support to CTOC Efforts in Central America. Last year, we redirected our focus to Central American security institutions involved in appropriate defense missions like border and maritime security. This refinement capitalizes on minimal Department of Defense resources, while also being sensitive to perceptions of militarization of the region. We are prioritizing our support to interagency counter-threat finance efforts and expanding our focus on converging threats, including illicit trafficking via commercial shipping containers, which could be exploited to move weapons of mass destruction into the United States. By supporting the targeting of key illicit financial nodes and commercial linkages, we aim to help degrade the capacities of both criminal and terrorist groups.

Now entering its third year, Operation MARTILLO continues to demonstrate commitment by the United States, our partner nations and European allies to counter the

spread of transnational criminal organizations and protect citizens in Central America from the violence, harm, and exploitation wrought by criminal networks. However, force allocation cuts by the Services are taking their toll on operational results; in 2013, Operation MARTILLO disrupted 132 metric tons of cocaine, compared with 152 metric tons of cocaine in 2012, due to limited assets. On a positive note, the operation has led to improved interoperability and increased partner nation contributions. Our partners helped prevent 66 metric tons of cocaine from reaching the United States last year; 50 percent of Joint Interagency Task Force South's successes would not have occurred without the participation of partner nations. Limited and declining Department of Defense assets will influence the next phase of the operation, as Operation MARTILLO's original objectives may no longer be achievable. In the year ahead, we will seek to employ non-traditional solutions, within our current authorities, to partially mitigate detection and monitoring shortfalls. However, lack of assets will continue to constrain the operation's full effectiveness, and has the potential to be perceived as lack of political will on the part of the U.S. government to continue this fight.

Operation MARTILLO FY 13 Disruptions	
Cocaine	***132,191 kgs***
Marijuana	***41,232 lbs***
Bulk cash	***$3.5 million***
Conveyances	***107***

Interagency Partnerships. Our CTOC efforts focus on providing support to our law enforcement partners. These partnerships ensure a whole of government approach to both operations and capacity building efforts. To mitigate asset shortfalls, we rely heavily on the U.S. Coast Guard and Customs and Border Protection, which now provide the bulk of the ships and aircraft available to disrupt drugs bound for the United States. The heroic men and women of DEA's Foreign Deployed Advisory and Support Team

(FAST) provide critical support to partner nation interdiction operations, and we are fortunate to have nine DEA Special Investigative Units working to improve regional law enforcement capacity. In my view, DEA is a known, essential partner, and their focus on building the investigative and intelligence capacities of vetted law enforcement units complements our own efforts to professionalize regional defense and security forces.

In late 2013, U.S. Southern Command and the Treasury Department created a Counter-Threat Finance Branch, an analytical unit that will map illicit networks, combat the financial underpinnings of national security threats in the region, and support the development of targeted financial measures and U.S. law enforcement actions. As one example, we provided analytic support to the Treasury Department's financial sanctions against Los Cachiros in Honduras. We also work with Immigration and Customs Enforcement to aggressively target criminal networks that traffic in special interest aliens and contraband throughout the region. Additionally, U.S. Southern Command and the FBI expanded their analytic partnership to include the FBI's International Operations and Criminal Investigative Divisions. This enhanced partnership helps both agencies further develop partner nation capacity in countering transnational organized crime. We also partnered with the Department of Homeland Security to provide network analysis in support of Operation CITADEL, which targeted the movements of illicit proceeds in Central America. In Colombia, we are working with the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization to assist our Colombian partners in countering the threat of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) used by terrorist groups like the FARC. Finally, we are also

U.S. Southern Command has 34 representatives from 15 different federal agencies assigned and embedded in our headquarters staff.

coordinating with the Department of State's Bureaus of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement and Western Hemisphere Affairs to explore the possibility of providing logistical support to regional law enforcement operations.

Impact of Budget Cuts—CTOC. Severe budget constraints are significantly degrading our ability defend the southern approaches to the United States. Sequestration merely compounds the ongoing challenge of limited and declining U.S. government maritime and air assets required for detection, monitoring, and "end-game" interdiction missions. Irrespective of sequestration cuts, we face a sharp downtown in availability of large surface assets such as U.S. Navy frigates and U.S. Coast Guard High Endurance Cutters, which face decommissioning or are approaching the end of their expected lifespan. The eighth and final U.S. Coast Guard National Security Cutter, which will be delivered in the next few years, will be a critical asset to U.S. government efforts to protect our southern approaches.

In 2013, Joint Interagency Task Force South was unable to take action on 74% of actionable illicit trafficking events due to lack of assets.

Mr. Chairman, the impact of diminishing asset allocation will continue to impede our mission even if sequestration is reversed; our operational effectiveness is directly proportional to the number of assets we can put against detection, monitoring, and interdiction operations. When better resourced several years ago, we were able to disrupt a significant amount—more than 240 metric tons—of cocaine heading towards the United States. Last year, 20 more metric tons of cocaine reached the United States due to reduced asset availability, a number that will increase inversely as the availability of U.S. government assets decreases.

Other Issues. Additionally, I remain concerned over the planned construction of wind farm sites in North Carolina that will interfere with our Relocatable Over-The-Horizon Radar (ROTHR) radar system in Virginia. I am also concerned over wind projects in Texas that will impact ROTHR systems in that state. These wind farms could and likely will adversely impact our ROTHR systems, the only persistent wide-area surveillance radars capable of tracking illicit aircraft in Latin America and the Caribbean. We are working within the Department of Defense and with developers and stakeholders to develop potential mitigation solutions, but I have little confidence we will succeed.

Priority: Building Partner Capacity. Having strong partners is the cornerstone of U.S. Southern Command's engagement strategy and is essential for our national security. Capable and effective partners respect human rights, share in the costs and responsibilities of ensuring regional security, and help us detect, deter, and interdict threats *before* they reach the U.S. homeland. Our persistent human rights engagement also helps encourage defense cooperation, trust, and confidence, which cannot be surged when a crisis hits, and cannot be achieved through episodic deployments or chance contacts. Trust must be built, nurtured, and sustained through regular contact.

Engagement with Colombia. Our partner Colombia has paid the ultimate price in terms of their blood and national treasure to bring the FARC—who have been serial human rights violators for decades—to the negotiating table. The Colombians have fought heroically for a peaceful, democratic Colombia, which will be a powerful symbol of hope and prosperity, but it is far too soon to declare victory. Mr. Chairman, it is absolutely imperative we remain engaged as one

According to a Colombian NGO, between 2001 and 2009, nearly 750,000 women were victims of sexual violence, rape, and enslavement at the hands of illegally armed groups like the FARC.

of our strongest allies works to consolidate its hard-won success. To that end, U.S. Southern Command is providing advice and assistance to the Colombian military's transformation efforts, as it works to improve interoperability and transition to an appropriate role in post-conflict Colombia. With Colombia increasingly taking on the role of security exporter, we are facilitating the deployment of Colombian-led training teams and subject matter experts and attendance of Central American personnel to law enforcement and military academies in Colombia as part of the U.S.-Colombia Action Plan on Regional Security Cooperation. This is a clear example of a sizeable return on our relatively modest investment and sustained engagement.

Engagement in South America. In Peru, U.S. Southern Command and the DEA are working together to support Peru's ongoing efforts against the Shining Path, which are beginning to yield significant operational successes. An investment of 6 U.S. personnel, who trained combat medical instructors from Peru and El Salvador, resulted in the training of over 2,000 members of the Peruvian and Salvadoran military, including Salvadoran soldiers destined for stability operations in Afghanistan, Lebanon, and Haiti. We are working with Chile on capacity-building efforts in Central America and exploring possible future engagements in the Pacific. In Brazil, broader bilateral challenges have affected our defense relations. Our military-to-military cooperation at the operational and tactical levels, however, remains strong, and we are committed to supporting the United States' growing global partnership with Brazil. We continue to engage with Brazilian security forces in the run-up to the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympics. Brazil participated in several of our multinational exercises last

In 2013, U.S. Southern Command facilitated the delivery of life-saving medicine to 140 patients in Brazil following a tragic nightclub fire.

year, including playing a leading role in PANAMAX, which focuses on the defense of the Panama Canal.

Engagement in Central America. In 2013, U.S. Southern Command provided critical infrastructure and operational support to the new Guatemalan Interagency Task Force, which has contributed to significant disruption of illicit trafficking along the Guatemalan-Mexican border and is now viewed by the Government of Guatemala as a model for future units. In collaboration with U.S. Northern Command, we are planning initiatives in Guatemala and Belize to support Mexico's new southern border strategy. I recently visited Guatemala and was struck by the government's strong commitment to work with human rights groups and strengthen its democratic institutions, while also doing its part to stem the massive flow of illicit trafficking heading to our country. Unfortunately, current legislative restrictions on provisions such as Foreign Military Financing and International Military Education and Training, found in the FY14 Consolidated Appropriations Act, limit the United States' ability to fully engage with the Guatemalan military and security forces. In another example of successful interagency partnerships, Joint Task Force Bravo supported the Belizean Defense Force and DEA in the eradication of 100,446 marijuana plants and the seizure of 330 pounds of marijuana.

Along Panama's Pacific Coast, we constructed three key maritime facilities and are providing counternarcotics training to Panamanian coast guard and maritime security forces. Mr. Chairman, I applaud the Government of Panama in their handling of last year's smuggling incident involving Cuban military equipment aboard a North Korean vessel. We are fortunate to have partners like Panama that are committed to ensuring international security. Finally, I am particularly proud of our support to the third

Since 2003, the El Salvador Armed Forces have contributed 11 rotations in support Operation Iraqi Freedom and three rotations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

deployment of members of the El Salvador Armed Forces to Afghanistan. Augmented by the New Hampshire National Guard, the Salvadoran unit returned this past December from serving as a Police Advisory Team that provided training to Afghan security forces. Like Panama, El Salvador is just one example of the outstanding partners we have in this part of the world—partners that are doing their part to ensure peace and security within and beyond their borders.

Engagement in the Caribbean. Throughout Central America and the Caribbean, U.S. Southern Command has constructed or improved partner nation naval and coast guard operating bases and facilities and delivered more than $3 million in counternarcotics training and non-lethal equipment, including a total of 42 high-speed interceptor boats provided since 2008 that have supported Joint Inter-Agency Task Force (JIATF) South interdiction operations. In support of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), we are working to improve maritime patrol and intercept capabilities of our Caribbean partners. Through CBSI, a maritime Technical Assistance Field Team—comprised of joint Coast Guard and Department of Defense personnel—provides hands-on technical assistance, in-country mentoring, and training to 13 CBSI partner nations, with the goal of helping these countries develop accountable and sustainable engineering, maintenance, and logistics and procurement systems. The TAFT program is a collaborative interagency effort funded by the U.S. Department of State, using Foreign Military Financing and INCLE funding. In Haiti, the government is committed to improving its disaster response capabilities. Haiti continues to make gradual social and

economic progress after 2010's devastating earthquake, and the Government of Haiti is committed to improving its disaster response capabilities. Led by Brazil and comprised of a multinational force that includes personnel from Uruguay, Chile, and Guatemala, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) has played a critical role in Haiti's efforts to rebuild, working with the Haitian National Police to ensure security. As MINUSTAH draws down, I see a continued need for international engagement in Haiti to guarantee lasting stability.

Cooperation on Counterterrorism. We also work with the interagency, U.S. Embassy Country Teams, and our partner nations to counter the encroachment of both Sunni and Shi'a Islamic extremism, recruitment, and radicalization efforts that support terrorism activities. We conduct multiple engagement efforts—including Joint Combined Exchange Training, subject matter expert and intelligence exchanges, counterterrorism-focused exercises, and key leader engagements—here in the United States and in countries throughout the region. Sustained engagement helps build relationships, an essential tool in the fight against terrorism. Through intelligence and counterterrorism cooperation, our partners are better able to mitigate terrorist threats before they can cause mass destruction, destabilize a country, or reach the U.S. homeland.

Human Rights and Defense Professionalization. Everything we do at U.S. Southern Command begins and ends with human rights. Mr. Chairman, a lot of people talk about human rights, but the U.S. military *does* human rights. We live it. We teach it. We enforce it. U.S. Southern Command's Human Rights Initiative continued to break new ground in 2013, promoting dialogue and cooperation between regional military forces and human rights groups and strengthening institutional capacity in Guatemala and

Honduras. Since its inception, our Human Rights Initiative has helped promote reform throughout the region, and the results speak for themselves. Military forces serving democratic governments in the region understand, and take seriously, their responsibility to respect and protect human rights. Ten partner nations have formally committed to implementing the Human Rights Initiative, building an institutional culture of respect for human rights within their militaries.

U.S. Southern Command also promotes human rights through law of armed conflict programs led by the Defense Institute of Legal Studies and through academic institutions like the Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies, the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, and the Inter-American Air Forces Academy. Additionally, the entire premise of the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program promotes an environment conducive to students learning and sharing U.S. values and democracy, with human rights portions embedded in nearly every course. Mr. Chairman, IMET is one of our most valuable engagement tools; professional military education improves how our partners work with us in a joint, interoperable world. Participants not only better understand our culture; they share our perspective, and want to work with us to advance U.S. and regional interests.

In 2013, 1,417 students from the region participated in the International Military Education Training (IMET) program, an invaluable investment in future defense leaders.

Cyber Security and Information Operations. In the region, U.S. Southern Command works to ensure the continued security of Department of Defense networks and communication infrastructure. We are also slowly making progress in strengthening regional cyber defense and information operations capabilities. In 2013, U.S. Southern

Command, working with the Perry Center, brought together strategy and policy officers from the region to share information on current cyber security threats. Colombia, Chile, and Brazil have each expressed interest in sharing "lessons learned" on building effective cyber security institutions. Through Operation SOUTHERN VOICE, 50 information operation practitioners from 11 Western Hemisphere countries shared capabilities and best practices. In the year ahead, we are partnering with Colombia to build information-related capabilities in Guatemala and Panama, and with U.S. Northern Command to do the same in Mexico.

Multinational Exercises and Humanitarian Assistance. U.S. Southern Command's multinational exercise and humanitarian and civic assistance programs encourage collective action and demonstrate our values and commitment to the region. Last year's UNITAS and TRADEWINDS exercises helped improve interoperability among our hemisphere's maritime forces. During our annual humanitarian and civic assistance exercises NEW HORIZONS and BEYOND THE HORIZONS, U.S. forces improved their readiness and provided medical care to 34,677 patients in El Salvador, Panama, and Belize. These humanitarian missions are one of the most effective tools in our national security toolkit, and one that I believe warrants greater employment. In any given year, we are able to send around 700 medical professionals to the region; Cuba, in contrast, sends around 30,000, mostly to Venezuela. In 2013, our collaboration with the private sector and non-governmental organizations resulted in contributions of $4.3 million in gifts-in-kind and services to our humanitarian activities. Mr. Chairman, I cannot overstate the importance of these types of activities by

In 2013, we executed 140 minimal cost projects and worked with local populations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to construct and supply schools, community shelters, clinics, and hospitals.

the U.S. military, especially in terms of influence and access. As Secretary Hagel noted, our humanitarian engagement offers the next generation of global citizens direct experience with the positive impact of American values and ideals.

Perceptions of "Militarization." Mr. Chairman, I want to close this section by responding to the perception by some that our engagement is "militarizing" the region. In my view, these concerns reflect a misunderstanding of the actual role the U.S. military plays in this part of the world. As an example, our Special Operations Forces are among the most qualified, culturally sensitive, and linguistically capable trainers in the U.S. military, and above all, they excel at building trust and forging personal relationships that are essential to supporting our national interests. Whether it's a small team at the tactical level or an official engagement at my level, all our efforts are focused on *professionalizing* military and security forces, to help our partners become more accountable to civilian authority, more capable, and to above all respect the human rights of the citizens they are charged to protect. Our efforts are part of a whole-of-government approach—involving DEA, Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, Department of State, and many others—to strengthen governance and foster accountable, transparent, and effective institutions throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Mr. Chairman, engagement by the U.S. military can make a real and lasting difference, especially in terms of promoting respect for human rights. Ultimately, if we want regional militaries to honor, respect, and accept civilian control and demonstrate an institutional culture of respect for human rights, that message must come from a military that lives by that code. For the U.S. military, our own training begins and ends with human rights; it is at the center of everything we do and an integral part of every

interaction with partner nations. I regularly meet with human rights groups in Washington and throughout the region, and human rights is a major theme in every engagement with my counterparts in regional militaries.

Throughout the world, the U.S. military has a unique network of alliances and partnerships, and our regional approach can provide a framework for engagement by the broader U.S. interagency. Thanks in part to our efforts, Colombia is now a beacon of hope and stability with one of the most highly professionalized militaries in the region; Central America is now the focus for numerous interagency initiatives; the Caribbean now routinely shares information in support of international counterdrug operations; and perhaps most importantly, today the hemisphere is characterized by militaries under civilian control that recognize their fundamental responsibility to respect human rights. In my mind, there is no more valuable return on engagement than that.

Impact of Budget Cuts—BPC. In FY 13, we began seeing the initial effects of sequestration, which resulted in drastic force allocation cuts by all the Services. In turn, reduced availability of forces adversely impacted our execution of plans and engagement activities. Severe budget constraints are affecting our established military-to-military relationships that took decades to establish, limiting our ability to build on the progress I just described. Mr. Chairman, let me be frank: reduced engagement risks the deterioration of U.S. leadership and influence in Central America, South America, and the Caribbean.

In FY 13, budget uncertainty caused the cancellation of four major exercises, including FUERZAS COMANDO—one of only two exercises focused on counterterrorism—and 225 engagement activities that are critical to building capable and

effective defense and security forces in the region. The Navy's cancelled deployment of CONTINUING PROMISE was felt throughout the region; it is our single most impactful humanitarian mission, demonstrating U.S. values and creating goodwill and positive views towards our country. We rely heavily on the National Guard's State Partnership Program to conduct our activities, and the cancellation of 69 events was detrimental to our efforts to maintain long-term security relationships. Reductions in force allocation also created significant gaps in persistent Civil Affairs coverage. The cancellation of Civil Affairs deployments has created a loss of credibility with our partner nations and our partners in U.S. Embassies in the region, who have questioned U.S. Southern Command's ability to fulfill our commitments. Finally, the Perry Center, which helps build capacity at the ministerial level, is facing a severe 50 percent cut in funding over the several upcoming fiscal years.

Priority: Planning for Contingencies. Lastly, planning and preparing for possible contingencies is one of U.S. Southern Command's core missions. Every year, we regularly exercise our rapid response capabilities in a variety of scenarios, including responding to a natural disaster, mass migration event, an attack on the Panama Canal, or evacuating American citizens. In 2013, we conducted our INTEGRATED ADVANCE exercise, which focuses on improving coordination with interagency partners in response to a mass migration event in the Caribbean. On this issue, we are fortunate to have an excellent exercise, operational, and planning relationship with Homeland Security Task Force Southeast, and together we work to defend the southern approaches to the United States. That mission, however, continues to be significantly impacted by force allocation cuts.

Impact of Budget Cuts—Contingency Response. Mr. Chairman, our ability to respond to regional contingencies such as a mass migration event or natural disaster was impaired in 2013, a trend that could continue in 2014. U.S. Southern Command has minimal assigned and allocated forces, and we rely on the Services—especially the Navy—to "surge" forces and assets when a crisis hits. As the Services absorb large reductions to their budgets, this will affect U.S. Southern Command's ability to immediately respond to crises and disasters, which could lead to preventable human suffering and loss-of-life. As I mentioned earlier, I am deeply concerned by the uptick in Haitian migration in the Mona Passage and the continued scarcity of U.S. government assets in the Caribbean. As currently resourced, U.S. Southern Command faces considerable challenges to rapidly support a mass migration response.

Our People

Headquarters Budget. Mr. Chairman, as you can see, we can accomplish a lot with a relatively small portion of the Department of Defense budget. Last year, the forced furloughs of 572 civilian employees had a significant impact on our ability to conduct our missions. Fortunately, the temporary budget reprieve should spare our workforce the pain of furloughs in FY 14 and FY 15, but continued budget uncertainty will likely lead to an inevitable "talent drain" as our best and brightest civilian employees seek more stable employment opportunities. Although we appreciate the near-term budget solution, the long-term challenge of sequestration has not been resolved. It has merely been deferred.

Partial Mitigation to Budget Cuts. Per guidance from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, U.S. Southern Command must strive for a goal of 20 percent

reductions in our headquarters budget and military and civilian personnel by FY 2019. Combined with the potential of continued sequestration, resource cuts require a fundamental re-look at what U.S. Southern Command will and will not be able to do with limited resources. Due to ongoing resource constraints, I have directed a transformation effort at our headquarters to look holistically at our strategy and resources. Limited defense dollars must be applied wisely, and we are seeking to preserve our core military missions and functions. As we work through this process, we will continue to emphasize our partnerships with the interagency, NGOs, and private sector to help mitigate ongoing fiscal challenges. U.S. Southern Command has proven success in this area, averaging $16 million in return on investment annually from this collaboration, all of it directly impacting our missions.

To ensure our workforce has mission-critical capabilities, our Joint Training Program offered training opportunities to 85 military and civilian joint staff officers, and also delivered cultural training to enhance our interactions in the region.

Support Services. U.S. Southern Command's most important resource is its Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsman, and civilian employees. The safety and security of our people is of utmost importance, and I am concerned by the severe funding cuts to the security force that guards our headquarters. Additionally, my assigned service members, especially junior enlisted personnel, continue to face significant financial hardships trying to make ends meet under the current Cost of Living Allowance—a mere $28 for an E3 and just $33 for an E9—in Miami, one of the most expensive cities in the world, especially when it comes to car and home insurance rates.[12]

[12] UBS. *Pricings and Earnings Report, Edition 2012.* Geneva: September, 2012; Center for Housing Policy. *Losing Ground: The Struggle for Middle Income Households to Afford the Risings Costs of Housing and Transportation.*

Compounding this concern is the uncertainty over military compensation and reductions in retirement benefits.

Our family support services also face significant funding strains, forcing us to breach sacred promises to our Armed Forces families. We take suicide prevention very seriously at our headquarters, and last year we delivered four separate programs aimed at preventing suicides and raising awareness. However, the Army was forced to decrement support services at nearly every installation and facility, including U.S. Army Garrison Miami. As a result, our Substance Abuse and Suicide Prevention Programs have lost the Clinical/Treatment Program and will lose both the Prevention Program Coordinator and the Suicide Program Manager/Employee Assistance Coordinator by 2015.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, in closing I would like to offer a personal observation from my first year in command. This region does not ask for much. Most nations in this part of the world *want* our partnership, our friendship, and our support. They *want* to work with us, because they recognize that we share many of the same values and interests, many of the same challenges and concerns. Some of my counterparts perceive that the United States is disengaging from the region and from the world in general. We should remember that our friends and allies are not the only ones watching our actions closely. Reduced engagement could itself become a national security problem, with long-term, detrimental effects on U.S. leadership, access, and interests in a part of the world where

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October 2012. According to apartment market research firm AXOIMetrics, the average effective rent (which includes concessions) in Miami is $1,269 per month, compared to the U.S. as a whole at $964. According to the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University, the Miami rental market has the greatest share of severely cost-burdened renters (i.e. renters who pay more than half their income to rent) in the country.

our engagement has made a real and lasting difference. And in the meantime, drug traffickers, criminal networks, and other actors, unburdened by budget cuts, cancelled activities, and employee furloughs, will have the opportunity to exploit the partnership vacuum left by reduced U.S. military engagement. Thank you.

Annex: 2013 Component Accomplishments
U.S. Army South (ARSOUTH)
Headquarters: San Antonio, Texas

- **Security Cooperation:** ARSOUTH conducted 166 security cooperation events in 19 countries in U.S. Southern Command's area of responsibility. These events represent 166 instances of engagement and building partner nation capabilities with the other militaries in the region.
- **Building Partner Nation Capacity to Counter Terrorism:** ARSOUTH conducted 26 Subject Matter Expert Exchanges in ten countries that included over 800 host nation soldiers. The engagements included: Medical, Mountain Operations, Search and Rescue, Logistics, Force Protection, Communications and Personal Security Detail.
- **Countering Transnational Organized Crime (CTOC):** ARSOUTH conducted training with the newly organized Guatemalan Interagency Task Force (IATF). The IATF consists of 242 personnel from the Army, Police, Customs, and Attorney General's Office. Training consisted of instruction focused on driving tactical vehicles, basic tactics, weapons qualification on all assigned systems, Harris Radio procedures, logistics, combat lifesaving, advanced maneuver, combat medic, and crowd control. The IATF is currently conducting border security operations on the Guatemala/Mexico border.
- **Civil Military Relations:** Civil Military Relations Professional Development Exchanges provide a forum for bilateral executive-level information exchanges. Participants include Partner Nation Civil Affairs Officers and Government Officials, U.S. Military and government officials, National Guard State Partnership Program representatives, and Non-Governmental and Intergovernmental Organizations. ARSOUTH conducted Civil Military Relations Professional Development Exchanges in Belize, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, improving the ability of these countries to conduct inter-organizational coordination during humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations.
- **Personnel Recovery Operations:** ARSOUTH conducted seven engagements with six countries, focused on increasing partner nation capabilities and capacity to conduct search and rescue operations. This focus was a direct result of lessons learned during the Haiti earthquake. Due to budget uncertainty, ARSOUTH has significantly reduced engagement planning in FY 14 and FY 15.
- **Intelligence Security Cooperation:** The ARSOUTH Intelligence Team conducted 18 major Intelligence Security Cooperation engagement activities enabling military intelligence capacity building in support of countering transnational threats in the following countries: Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama and Peru.
- **Logistics Security Cooperation**: The ARSOUTH Logistics Team conducted 25 Security Cooperation engagements, which enabled military logistics capacity building in support of CTOC, Staff Talk Agreements, and Building Partner Nation Capacity in 10 countries.
- **Latin American Cooperation:** ARSOUTH Latin American Cooperation Funds (LACF) supported 46 engagements/activities in eight countries in support of

ARSOUTH Security Cooperation objectives. LACF support includes: Army-to-Army Staff Talks with key countries, Foreign Liaison Officers assigned to ARSOUTH, Conference of American Armies, professional development exchanges on multiple topics, Army commander and distinguished visitor program, and Joint/Combined/Multinational Exercises and Operations.

- **Humanitarian Assistance Program (HAP):** HAP conducts activities to build partner nation capacity in providing essential services to its civilian population including, responding to disaster and other crises; reinforcing security; and sustaining stability in a host nation or region. ARSOUTH, the HAP construction program manager, completed ten projects in Belize, Panama and Peru, and initiated planning for 19 new construction projects in Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, and Peru.
- **Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI):** GPOI is a U.S. government-funded security assistance program to enhance international capacity to effectively conduct United Nations and regional peace support operations. ARSOUTH, the GPOI construction program manager, completed four GPOI projects in Guatemala, Paraguay, and Peru, and initiated planning for 4 new construction projects in El Salvador and Guatemala.
- **Staff Talks:** ARSOUTH, representing the Army Chief of Staff, conducted four Steering Committee Meetings and four Executive Session Staff Talks with the Armies of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and El Salvador, and one Working Group with Peru resulting in strengthened key leader relationships and more than 130 Agreed-to-Actions planned through 2018, supporting bilateral and regional goals and interests.
- **INTEGRATED ADVANCE 2013:** INTEGRATED ADVANCE 2013, a joint operational exercise, focused on conducting migrant operations in the Caribbean Sea, marked the first large scale deployment of ARSOUTH personnel and capabilities since Operation Unified Response in Haiti in 2010. Over 300 U.S. Army personnel, 100 sister service personnel, and almost 100 personnel from other governmental agencies came together in a whole-of-government response. INTEGRATED ADVANCE 2013 exercised ARSOUTH's commitment to form the core of a US Southern Command Joint Task Force, rapidly integrate other joint and interagency forces, and conduct mission command of joint operations.
- **PANAMAX 2013:** PANAMAX is a joint and combined operational exercise focused on the defense of the Panama Canal by a multi-national joint task force. USSOUTHCOM significantly de-scoped PANAMAX 2013 resulting in a small table-top exercise focused on conducting mission planning in a time-constrained environment. ARSOUTH provided mentorship to the Brazilian led Combined Forces Land Component Command, which included 38 participants from nine countries. This exercise coincided with the first major deployment of an ARSOUTH team to Panama to participate in a Government of Panama national exercise (PANAMAX – Alpha). This team of 40 U.S. personnel worked with the Government of Panama coordinating U.S. forces assistance during a simulated national disaster event to significantly increase cooperation and trust between the Governments of Panama and the United States.
- **BEYOND THE HORIZON 2013:** BEYOND THE HORIZON is a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, US Southern Command-sponsored Joint, Interagency, and Combined Field Training Exercise. The exercise provides and incorporates

Humanitarian and Civic Assistance construction projects, Medical Readiness Exercises, and other infrastructure projects. ARSOUTH was the executive planning agent for these exercises conducted in El Salvador and Panama, which involved the deployment of approximately 2700 U.S. service members into two supported countries. BEYOND THE HORIZON 2013 resulted in the completion of 11 engineer projects including schools and clinics, 4 Medical Readiness Exercises, one Dental Readiness Exercise and one Specialty Medical Readiness Exercise that provided care to approximately 23,641 patients and approximately 6,634 animals for veterinary support. The exercises were supported by over 200 El Salvadoran and Panamanian military and interagency personnel working side-by-side with U.S. personnel.

- **Conference of the American Armies (CAA):** The Conference of the American Armies (25 countries and two International Military Organizations) contributes to peacekeeping operations and disaster relief operations through the creation and use of mechanisms and procedures that improve the collective capacities and interoperability of its members. This year, ARSOUTH represented the Army Chief of Staff at the Emerging Threats Conference in Colombia, Disaster Relief exercise in Mexico, Extraordinary Commander's Conference in Mexico, Civil-Military Cooperation Exercise in Canada, Environmental Conference in Brazil, IED Ad-Hoc meeting in Colombia, Procedures Training & Education conference in Uruguay, Communications exercise via CAA Webpage, Army commanders VTC and the Preparatory Commanders Conference in Mexico.
- **Reintegration:** ARSOUTH, as supported Commander for Personnel Recovery Phase III (Reintegration operations), executed a Reintegration Operation following the crash of an operational theater aircraft. The aircraft was operating over Colombia in support of Operation MARTILLO. Following the successful recovery of the survivors by the Colombian Army, ARSOUTH coordinated transfer and movement of the survivors to Brooke Army Medical Center, San Antonio, Texas where all aspects of the reintegration were completed.
- **Continuous Operational Intelligence Support:** The ARSOUTH Intelligence Team provided continuous intelligence reach-back support and direct support forward to Joint Task Force Bravo, Joint Interagency Task Force South, Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay, the U.S. Interagency, and partner nations in Central and South America in support of numerous named operations. Throughout the year, persistent forward intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) support was maintained in Colombia, Guatemala, and Honduras. U.S. Army Force Protection Detachments also maintained permanent presence in nine countries.

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command (COMUSNAVSO)
Headquarters: Mayport, Florida

- **Operation MARTILLO:** Six frigates, High Speed Vessel (HSV) SWIFT, four fixed-wing Maritime Patrol aircraft and two Scientific Development Squadron ONE detachments deployed to support Operation MARTILLO, conducting Countering

Transnational Organized Crime (C-TOC) Operations under the direction of Joint Interagency Task Force South.

- **Southern Partnership Station 2013:** Southern Partnership Station (SPS) is a series of Navy/Marine Corps engagements focused on Theater Security Cooperation, specifically Building Partner Capacity, through subject matter expert exchanges with partner nation militaries and civilian security forces. SPS engagements include Community Relations Projects that focus on our partnerships, shared interests, and shared values. SPS Deployments included:
    - **HSV 2013:** HSV SWIFT deployed to the U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) area of responsibility (AOR) February to May 2013 to conduct Building Partner Capacity engagements in Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras, and to participate in Operation MARTILLO.
    - **Oceanographic 2013:** Survey Ship USNS PATHFINDER conducted bilateral hydrographic surveys with Chile in the Eastern Pacific and with Panama in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific.
- **PANAMAX 2013:** Commander USNAVSO served as the Commander of Multi-National Forces South, leading a coalition of 19 partner nations in the 11th annual exercise designed to execute stability operations under the support of UN Security Council Resolutions, provide interoperability training for participating multinational staffs, and build partner nation capacity to plan and execute complex multinational operations. PANAMAX 13 was executed as a table-top exercise, and focused on multinational crisis action planning.
- **UNITAS 2013:** Commander USNAVSO planned and executed the 54th iteration of multinational maritime exercise UNITAS, which included 16 partner nations, 17 ships, one submarine, and 12 helicopters and aircraft. Conducted every year since 1960, UNITAS is the longest-running international military training exercise in the world. Colombia employed maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations in order to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships that foster regional security in the USSOUTHCOM AOR.
- **INTEGRATED ADVANCE 2013:** USNAVSO participated in Exercise INTEGRATED ADVANCE 2013, which examined a whole-of-government response to a Caribbean Mass Migration crisis. USNAVSO provided the deputy commander for Joint Task Force Migrant Operations, while also designating Destroyer Squadron FOUR ZERO as the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander and standing up a Maritime Coordination and Control Element within the Joint Task Force construct. The highly successful exercise focused on strengthening interoperability and cooperation between DOD and Interagency organizations.
- **Continuing Promise 2013:** In lieu of CONTINUING PROMISE 2013, a team of Navy medical providers conducted medical exchanges with Peru and Honduras, working side-by-side with partner nation medical professionals to generate a baseline for future CONTINUING PROMISE Missions.
- **Navy Seabees:** 85 Seabees deployed to Naval Station Guantanamo Bay to support construction/refurbishment projects throughout the USSOUTHCOM AOR. From this detachment, Seabee details deployed in support of HSV SPS 2013 and Operation MARTILLO while also completing projects in support of Naval Station Guantanamo Bay and the Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay Commander. Additionally, Seabees

supported Naval Station Guantanamo Bay with Public Works Officer discretionary projects and clean-up/relief projects following Hurricane Sandy. Following the cancelation of Continuing Promise 2013, the Seabees still supported a Subject Matter Expert Exchange with Peruvian Engineers.

12th Air Force (Air Forces Southern)
Headquarters: Tucson, Arizona

- **Security Cooperation:** Air Forces Southern (AFSOUTH) conducted 19 security cooperation events in eight countries in U.S. Southern Command's area of responsibility. Engagements focused on improving partner nation communications, maintenance, intelligence, air patrol operations, space capabilities, close air support, public affairs, and flight medicine capabilities.
- **Sovereign Skies Expansion Program:** AFSOUTH used successful lessons learned from the Dominican Republic and Colombia programs to strengthen air force capabilities in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Training included helicopter maintenance; ISR; logistics; command and control; and night operations.
- **571 Mobility Support Advisory Squadron (MSAS):** MSAS completed six deployments of air adviser teams to Peru, Guatemala, Uruguay, Honduras, and two to Colombia, while training 313 partner nation military members. MSAS delivers some of the Air Force's highest return on investment in partner nation capabilities, resulting in trainee compliance with NATO, International Civil Aviation Organization and FAA standards, and enabling participation in coalition exercises and regional security initiatives. MSAS's achievements have been praised by multiple partner nation air chiefs.
- **NEW HORIZONS 2013 (Belize):** AFSOUTH trained 471 US Airmen, Soldiers, and Marine personnel in joint/combined/interagency environments, in addition to 10 Canadian Medical Personnel, 40 Belize Defense Force (BDF) Engineers, over 100 BDF Security Personnel, and five Project Hope volunteer participants. Personnel built 4 classroom buildings and hurricane shelters with 17,000 square feet for teachers and 430 students; constructed 3 playgrounds; restored 3 schools and one shelter, increasing hurricane shelter capacity by 900; and treated over 18,000 patients through eight medical operations. Subject Matter Expert Exchanges covered maternal & child health, public health and biomedical equipment topics.
- **ISR Missions:** AFSOUTH provided command and control for ISR missions in support of USSOUTHCOM priorities. Over 900 missions and 4,600 flight hours resulted in over 28,000 images, 2,000 signals intelligence reports and nearly 17,000 minutes of video resulting in the largest drug seizure in Belize history – $12.5 million worth of marijuana. AFSOUTH also deployed a ground-based radar to Honduras for 90 days supporting Operation MARTILLO, facilitating the interdiction of 1.4 metric tons of cocaine and seven aircraft.
- **Airlift Missions:** AFSOUTH executed 95 theater airlift missions moving more than 5,000 passengers and 200 tons of cargo throughout USSOUTHCOM's area of responsibility.

- **Medical Deployments:** AFSOUTH International Health Specialists participated in global health Subject Matter Expert Exchange engagements to address Flight Medicine topics relevant to our partner nations. USAF flight medicine physicians met with Colombian counterparts to develop aerospace physiology programs addressing safety, human factors and hypobaric chambers, and focusing on aeromedical standards and aeromedical evacuation/patient movement/critical care air transport teams.

Marine Corps Forces South (MARFORSOUTH)
Headquarters: Doral, Florida

- **Building Partner Capacity:** MARFORSOUTH employed multiple assets to support partner nation and interagency efforts to counter regional threats throughout South and Central America.
    - In Central America, MARFORSOUTH developed partner nation security force ability to counter transnational organized crime. The MARFORSOUTH Security Cooperation Team is a small team of Marines from a variety of occupational specialties focused on developing, building and sustaining partnerships, and increasing regional stability through tailor-made training to fit the unique needs of partner nation forces.
    - Joint Riverine Training Teams (JRTT) composed of 10 to 15 personnel from the Marine Corps and Navy provided training support to partner nations. For approximately one month, the JRTT trained partner nation riverine and littoral security units, focusing on the interoperability of waterborne and ground units. Each JRTT team contains a task organized mix of occupational specialties tailored to the host nation requirements.
    - MARFORSOUTH employed Civil Affairs Teams in Belize and Honduras to develop partner nation ability to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and integrate appropriate government services in areas threatened by transnational organized crime. A Military Information Support Team in Colombia built the Colombian military's expertise and complemented Joint Interagency Task Force South's Operation MARTILLO by encouraging reports of illicit trafficking to appropriate authorities.
- **Southern Partnership Station – High Speed Vessel SWIFT 2013:** Southern Partnership Station (SPS) is a series of Navy/Marine Corps engagements that build partner capacity through subject matter expert exchanges with partner nation militaries and civilian security forces. SPS includes Community Relations Projects that focus on partnerships, shared interests, and shared values. A USMC detachment, embarked on HSV SWIFT, deployed to the USSOUTHCOM AOR February to May 2013 to conduct building partner capacity engagements in Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras.
- **Exercise TRADEWINDS**: TRADEWINDS is an exercise supporting the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) that facilitates cooperation to reduce illicit trafficking within the Caribbean. In 2013, MARFORSOUTH was Executive Planning Agent for over 230 personnel from the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, and 16

partner nations who exchanged knowledge and expertise in countering illicit trafficking, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and human rights. Due to funding reductions, the ground phase of TRADEWINDS was cancelled, but the Maritime Phase and the Senior Leaders Seminar were executed. The Maritime Phase, led by the U.S. Coast Guard, trained regional partner nations in maritime humanitarian assistance and counter-drug interdiction while the seminar consisted of table-top discussions on a Caribbean regional approach to countering drug trafficking in the Eastern Caribbean.

- **Exercise INTEGRATED ADVANCE:** MARFORSOUTH participated in Exercise INTEGRATED ADVANCE 2013, which examined a whole-of-government response to a Caribbean Mass Migration crisis. During this exercise, MARFORSOUTH augmented the 24 hour operations center with the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) Crisis Augmentation Cell, increasing the ability of Commander, MARFORSOUTH, to command and control USMC forces in the AOR, and advising and ensuring the proper utilization of force by the ARSOUTH-led Joint Task Force.
- **Exercise NEW HORIZONS:** From June to September 2013, MARFORSOUTH provided rotations of Marine Reserve Combat Engineer Teams and Civil Affairs personnel in support of the U.S. Air Forces Southern NEW HORIZONS Humanitarian and Civic Assistance exercise. Over fifty USMC Reserve Marines conducted combat engineering/construction training in Belize supporting citizen safety and governance in under-governed areas of Belize.
- **Exercise UNITAS – Partnership of the Americas (POA):** This exercise enhances multinational operational readiness, interoperability, and security cooperation among U.S. and nine partner nation naval infantries. In 2012, the exercise focus was amphibious operations, and the demand for training in amphibious operations by Latin American navies continues to be strong. However, due to budget uncertainty, USSOUTHCOM cancelled the POA 2013 portion of Exercise UNITAS. POA 2014 is planned for execution in Chile.

Special Operations Command South
Headquarters: Homestead, Florida

- **Building Partner Capacity:** In 2013, SOCSOUTH maintained small elements in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador working with key units to improve ground and maritime interdiction, civil affairs, and intelligence capacities. In the Andean Ridge, SOCSOUTH partnered with Colombia and Peru to confront narco-terrorist insurgencies whose illicit trafficking operations extend throughout the hemisphere. Despite our fiscally constrained environment, SOCSOUTH used episodic engagements with key Southern Cone and Caribbean partners to facilitate relationships essential for maintaining future capacity building.
- **Civil Affairs:** In 2013, 11 civil affairs teams helped eight partner nations reduce the vulnerability of key populations intimidated by transnational organized crime or violent extremism. These teams assisted with counter-recruitment programs and, in many cases, helped partner nations build civil affairs capacities.

- **Information Operations:** SOCSOUTH maintained military information support teams (MIST) in seven key partner nations supporting the DOD Rewards Program, U.S. Government Anti-trafficking in Persons Program, partner nation counter-recruitment programs, and active tip lines in support of efforts against transnational organized criminal and violent extremist organizations. MISTs also conducted over 25 Subject Matter Expert Exchanges throughout the area of responsibility.
- **Intelligence Analytical Support to US Country Teams:** SOCSOUTH provides intelligence and counter-threat financing support to U.S. Country Teams focusing on terrorism, human smuggling networks, and transnational organized crime. In Colombia and Peru, SOCSOUTH helped develop host nation capabilities and country team support through a number of subject matter exchanges, and mentored them in institutionalizing intelligence pipelines.
- **Logistics Training and Advisory Team:** SOCSOUTH priority for building logistics capacity was in the Andean Ridge where they provided subject matter expertise to enable key Colombian partner units to establish a sustainable weapons-repair capability and initiate the development of an aerial delivery capability
- SOCSOUTH also assisted Peruvian units engaged in counter narco-terrorism operations in conducting a weapons inspection, which will serve as a starting point for future SOCSOUTH logistics engagement activities.
- **Building Intellectual Capital:** SOCSOUTH, in conjunction with the Colombian Joint Staff College, conducted a Counter-terrorism Fellowship Program-funded seminar in Bogota, Colombia, September 16-20, 2013. The event featured a cross-section of U.S. and Colombian subject matter experts and speakers, and included 70 participants from 12 countries in the Western Hemisphere
- **FUERZAS COMANDO 2013:** FUERZAS COMANDO 2013 was cancelled due to budget uncertainty.
- **FUSED RESPONSE 2013:** SOCSOUTH executes an annual CJCS-directed exercise to validate time sensitive crisis action planning, as well as training, readiness, interoperability and capability of Special Operations Forces in support of regional crises and contingencies. FUSED RESPONSE 2013 was a table-top exercise held at Homestead Air Reserve Base. It involved SOCSOUTH staff and lead planners from each of its components. The exercise focused on the areas of personnel planning, objectives development, and joint integration. Its aim was to improve the interoperability of the participant forces and increase the staff's capacity to confront common threats such as illicit traffic, organized crime, and terrorism.

Joint Task Force Guantanamo (JTF-GTMO)
Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

- **Safe and Humane Care and Custody:** JTF-GTMO conducted safe, humane, legal, and transparent care and custody of detainees, including those convicted by military commission. Detainees maintained family contact via mail, telephone calls and, in areas which support this service, videophone conferences coordinated by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). High quality Level II routine and

urgent medical care was provided to detainees on a 24-hour basis. General surgical care, dental care, preventative medicine, optometry and mental health services were provided, or arranged, as was targeted specialty care on a recurring basis.

- **Legal and Transparent Operations:** Assessments of detention conditions by the ICRC continued with four visits in 2013. The ICRC verifies compliance with international standards of custody (as specified in the Geneva Conventions and other international standards) and provides confidential advice for suggested improvements to the Joint Task Force Commander and U.S. Southern Command. Detainees are granted routine visits by legal representatives, and received more than 1177 Military Commissions and 350 Habeas attorney visits in 2013. JTF-GTMO, committed to transparency, hosted 126 media representatives from 83 domestic and international news organizations; supported 77 visits with a combined total of 815 visitors; and answered hundreds of media queries during the past year.
- **Military Commissions:** Smooth execution of the Military Commissions process is another priority of JTF-GTMO. Military Commissions proceedings are open to observation by the media, victim family members, and non-governmental organizations. In 2013, JTF-GTMO supported eight hearings to address pre-trial motions of the five individuals accused of coordinating the September 11, 2001 attacks on the U.S. (referred to in the press as "the 9/11 Five"), and motion hearings for the alleged USS COLE bomber. Additionally, the court has entered a scheduling order, setting the trial for the alleged USS COLE bomber to commence on September 2, 2014.

Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S)
Key West, Florida

- **Joint Interagency Task Force South** contributed to the disruption of 132 metric tons of cocaine in FY2013, worth nearly $2.6 billion wholesale. JIATF-S employs an integrated defense forward capability for the ongoing efforts at the U.S. Southwest Border and for U.S. operations in the Western Hemisphere using tactical control (TACON) ship days, TACON flight hours, and the operating cost of Forces Surveillance Support Center relocatable over-the-horizon radar support.
- **The vast majority of JIATF-S successes came as a result of JIATF-S leadership and coordination of Operation (OP) MARTILLO,** the multi-lateral effects-based operation designed to deny the Central American littoral routes by illicit traffickers. Begun on January 15, 2012, OP MARTILLO to date results include the disruption of 272 metric tons of cocaine, the seizure of $10.7 million in bulk cash, and the seizure of 198 vessels and aircraft. Following its two year anniversary, OP MARTILLO is beginning to show its desired effects: trafficking in the Western Caribbean and Eastern Pacific littorals is decreasing while the activity in the Eastern Pacific non-littoral route is rising.
- **Operational Results and Impact:** In the air domain, over the past year, JIATF-S documented a 34 percent decrease in illicit air tracks destined for Central America (primarily Honduras). The illicit air corridor into Hispaniola was nearly absent during FY13 with only two flights documented moving into Haiti. In the maritime domain,

during the same period, JIATF-S assessed a decrease of maritime activity in the Western Caribbean littoral and non-littoral trafficking areas of 43 percent and 45 percent for each vector respectively. In line with the goals of OP MARTILLO, JIATF-S recently documented a significant decrease in trafficking via "go fasts" boats using the littoral routes and, during the first month of FY14, an increase in go fasts bypassing the littoral routes in favor of more direct routes toward Honduras. JIATF-S continues to monitor this trend and hopes that recent success against go fasts employing these deeper routes does not push traffickers back to littoral routes. In the Eastern Pacific, the trafficking shows a steady decrease in the littorals (characterized by an overall increase of 71 percent at the end of FY12 to a 20 percent decrease in FY13), while the activity in the Eastern Pacific non-littorals appears to be increasing (from an increase of 12 percent in FY12 to an increase of 28 percent in FY13, including a recent increase in the use of routes South of the Galapagos). These changes are assessed to be a continued result of OP MARTILLO assets working in the littoral areas along the Guatemala/Mexico border, and may reflect the start of achieving the anticipated end result of the operation, driving the traffickers out of the littorals.

- **Supporting Defense of the Homeland.** Since its inception in September 2012, OP UNIFIED RESOLVE, the counter illicit trafficking operation supporting Puerto Rico, has substantially improved and formalized interoperability between JIATF-S, Coast Guard District 7, Coast Guard Sector San Juan, and the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Office of Air and Marine Caribbean Air and Marine Branch in our shared Counter Illicit Trafficking operations in the following ways. Real time information sharing between JIATF-S and operational forces from USCG District 7, CBP's Caribbean Air and Marine Branch, and Coast Guard Sector San Juan has improved OP UNIFIED RESOLVE's effectiveness against secondary movements of cocaine to Puerto Rico from the primary Hispaniola corridor. This collaborative orchestration enhanced the effective sharing of resources in an austere operating environment. The maturity, strategic leadership, and tactical collaboration between JIATFS, the USCG, and CBP have greatly enhanced the effectiveness of countering illicit trafficking CIT operations in the Northeastern Caribbean.
- **Role of Partner Nations:** In FY 2013, 68 percent of JIATF-S disruptions were marked by partner nation participation. The role of our Latin American partners should not be understated. Of the 147 illicit trafficking events disrupted by JIATF-S in FY 2013, 74 of these (50 percent) would not have been successful without the support of our international partners. The existing and future contributions to the Transit Zone effort by the U.K., France, the Netherlands, and Canada continue to be significant and needed.

- **Information Dominance and Innovating to Meet Converging Threats:** JIATF-S continues to innovate in the face of asset reductions, and has developed several initiatives to enhance effectiveness and efficiency with the tools under their tactical control. JIATF-S is adept at Counter Threat Finance, tying the flow of illicit proceeds to the movement of drugs and other threat streams. The Container Cell Initiative is expanding the interdiction community's awareness of trafficking via commercial means, and their newest Network Discovery Initiative will gain insights into the highly connected and converging organizations at work in their JOA. For all of these

reasons, JIATF-S remains at the forefront of supporting the delivery of focused success against transnational organized crime in the Western Hemisphere.

Joint Task Force Bravo (JTF-B)
Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras

- JTF-B supported Central American (CENTAM) countries in disrupting transnational organized crime by supporting the movement of partner nation law enforcement agencies and units in denying illicit airfields; destroying cash crops; disrupting lines of communication; providing medical evacuation support to partner nation military, law enforcement, and civilians; maintaining forward operating locations to stage and sustain Honduran and U.S. interagency operations; treating more than 8,243 medical patients, 1,754 dental patients, 1,052 immunizations, and 313 surgical patients; partnering with the Government of Honduras to build capacity for responding to natural and manmade disasters; and improving local firefighting capabilities.
- JTF-B supported the Honduran Army in destroying illicit airfields within the department of Gracias a Dios. JTF-B provided lift support for 6,350 lbs of demolitions to Forward Operating Location Mocoron for use by the Honduran 5th Infantry Battalion to crater 6 airfields being utilized by drug trafficking organizations.
- JTF-B supported the BDF by providing movement to 16 marijuana plantations for marijuana crop eradication. This assistance allowed the BDF to destroy 61,146 plants, 221 lbs of seeds, and 330 lbs processed marijuana, ultimately removing $12.5 million from the Belizean streets where Drug Trafficking Organizations would utilize the money to disrupt law and order in Belize.
- JTF-B provided air movement support to Homeland Security Investigations and Honduras Law Enforcement along the Honduran/Guatemalan border to disrupt illicit trafficking routes and enhance regional effects against Transnational Organized Crime operations.
- JTF-B conducts medical evacuation throughout Honduras. Over the past year, JTF-B provided 29 medical evacuation missions for 6 Honduran military members and 29 U.S. personnel.
- JTF-B conducted nine Medical Readiness Training Exercises (MEDRETEs) and Medical Surgical Teams (MSTs) (6 within Honduras, and 3 within CENTAM), as well as weekly MST missions to Santa Teresa Regional Hospital in Comayagua and a monthly trip to the Hospital Escuela in Tegucigalpa. Over the past year, JTF-B, with partner nation support, treated over 8,243 medical patients, 1,754 dental patients, 1,052 immunizations, and 313 surgical patients. The MEDRETEs and MSTs provide alternatives to transnational organized crime and gang patronage in isolated villages. Partner nation Military and Law Enforcement Agencies support the exercises, enabling interaction with isolated villages.
- JTF-B's CENTAM Survey and Assessment Team (C-SAT) provides a limited, but immediate, disaster response and relief capability within the region. It routinely integrates with the Government of Honduras in large-scale natural disaster exercises. JTF-B also conducted their first multinational exercise in C-SAT history with several

Belize government agencies and British forces, resulting in cooperative operations between C-SAT members, and an invite to Belize's hurricane planning conference.

- JTF-B supported more than a thousand children in several different orphanages, interacting with the children, donating much-needed supplies, and doing construction work on their buildings. For village support, JTF-B Chaplains organized 6 chapel hikes that donated and distributed 18,000 lbs of food, clothes, toys, and school supplies to approximately 3,900 community members. In October 2012, JTF-B partnered with the Se Pudo NGO to build 14 homes for families in 45 days, and, over the past year, participated in the Ajuterique Housing Project, which already helped construct 29 homes for families.
- JTF-B also provided critical support to Multi-national Search and Rescue Operations. JTF-B's unique capability to fly over water and provide recovery and extraction proved instrumental in the life-saving efforts of nine people lost at sea last July, including two U.S. personnel.

Hon. Eliot L. Engel, a Representative in Congress from the State of New York, Questions for the Record to General John F. Kelly, United States Marine Corps, Commander, Southern Command, U.S. Department of Defense

Question 1: The presence of U.S. Navy ships in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific has been critical in the fight against drug trafficking and other illegal activities. Given that the Navy is currently decommissioning all of its frigates which usually were the ship deployed to this region, I am concerned that the United States will be left without a naval presence in the Americas in either ocean. This will leave a dangerous vacuum which is likely to be filled by criminal elements. It has been reported that the Coast Guard will pick up a large portion of the missions once carried out by the Navy.

What can the Committee expect the U.S. Naval and Coast Guard presence to be in this region in the coming years?

Response: Airborne Use of Force (AUF) is the key operational capability required, so flight deck equipped cutters or Navy ships are vital in the deep transit zone. I defer to Admiral Papp regarding the Coast Guard presence. As for Naval presence, unfortunately we only expect a combined Fast Frigate/Littoral Combat Ship (FFG/LCS) presence of .24 in FY15. In FY16, we expect a Patrol Coastal presence of .53 and a Cruiser-Destroyer (CRUDES) presence of .25. But here again, I defer to the U.S. Navy to confirm and provide the most updated numbers.

Question 2: The Coast Guard will soon be presenting a Western Hemisphere strategy. What will be the role of the relevant interagency components be in the development of this strategy and in deploying counternarcotics assets to this region?

Response: We are working with the force providers, USCG and USN, on how to best support their strategy, to include the fielding of assets to the region. We are also working with USCG to determine how our existing structure can best complement their strategy.

Question 3: The Congressional Research Service reports: "The Coast Guard estimates that with the POR's [Program of Record] planned force of 91 NSCs, OPCs, and FRCs, the service would have capability or capacity gaps in 6 of its 11 statutory missions search and rescue (SAR); defense readiness; counter-drug operations; ports, waterways, and coastal security (PWCS); protection of living marine resources (LMR); and alien migrant interdiction operations (AMIO). The Coast Guard judges that some of these gaps would be 'high risk' or 'very high risk.'"

How would these capability or capacity gaps affect missions in the Western Hemisphere?

Response: Any capability gaps in the Western Hemisphere add risk to mission. This could include slower search and rescue response times, or less patrol ability to protect the Southern Approaches of the United States or to respond to migrant events. It would also likely mean more drugs on American streets.

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