

DECLARATION OF THE MEXICAN/U.S. ALLIANCE AGAINST DRUGS

Drug abuse and drug trafficking are a danger to our societies, an affront to our sovereignty and a threat to our national security. We declare our nations united in an alliance to combat this menace. With trust in one another and in our commitment as Chiefs of State, our collaboration will go forward based on the following fundamental principles: a) absolute respect for the sovereignty and territorial jurisdiction of Mexico and the United States; b) shared responsibility for confronting the problem of illegal drugs and related crimes, such as illegal arms trafficking and money laundering; c) adoption of an integrated approach against illegal drugs, which will confront the problem from the demand and supply sides simultaneously; d) balance and reciprocity in the actions, programs and rules developed to confront the drug threat in both countries; and e) effective application of the laws in both countries.

Our governments have issued a joint threat assessment detailing the nature of illegal drug use in both our societies, and the extent of drug trafficking and related crimes as they threaten both our peoples. Mexico and the United States are fully agreed on the magnitude of the problem in both countries, and are determined to combat it with all resources at our disposal.

Accordingly, we have instructed our responsible Cabinet Officers, acting through the U.S./Mexico High Level Contact Group for Drug Control, to work out a common counterdrug strategy, and to develop mutually reinforcing implementation plans for this common strategy, consistent with each other's National Drug Control Programs.

Acting together in accordance with this political commitment, and working to enhance trust, mutual support and confidence, Mexico and the United States will:

- Reduce the demand for illicit drugs through the intensification of anti-drug information and educational efforts, particularly those directed at young people, and through rehabilitative programs.
- Reduce the production and distribution of illegal drugs in both countries, particularly marihuana, methamphetamine, cocaine and heroin.
- Focus law enforcement efforts against criminal organizations and those who facilitate their operations in both countries.
- Strengthen U.S./Mexican law enforcement cooperation and policy coordination, and assure the safety of law enforcement officers.

- Ensure that fugitives are expeditiously, and with due legal process, brought to justice and are unable to evade justice in one of our countries by fleeing to or remaining in the other. To this end, we agree to negotiate a protocol to the extradition treaty that, consistent with the legal system in each country, will allow, under appropriate circumstances and conditions, individuals to be tried in both countries prior to the completion of their sentence in either country.
- Identify the sources of, and deter the illegal traffic in firearms.
- Work together to conclude a hemisphere agreement outlawing illegal traffic in firearms.
- Work together for the success of the Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly on Illicit Drugs in June 1998.
- Increase the abilities of our democratic institutions to attack and root out the corrupting influence of the illegal drug trade in both countries.
- Enhance cooperation along both sides of our common border to increase security.
- Control essential and precursor chemicals to prevent chemical diversion and illicit use, and improve information exchange on this subject.
- Implement more effectively the laws and regulations to detect and penalize money laundering in both countries, and enhance bilateral and multilateral exchanges of information and expertise to combat money laundering.
- Seize and forfeit the proceeds and instrumentalities of drug trafficking, and direct these to the use of drug prevention and law enforcement, in accordance with legal procedures in force in and between our countries.
- Improve our capacity to interrupt drug shipments by air, land, and sea.
- Implement training and technical cooperation programs to ensure that anti-drug personnel acquire needed capabilities and perform with the highest level of professionalism and integrity.
- Enhance and facilitate exchange of information and evidence to prosecute and convict criminals and deter drug trafficking, and ensure the security and appropriate use of the information and evidence provided.

Our Alliance's counterdrug strategy, along with respective plans of operations for its implementation shall be completed by the end of the year. Prior to that we will meet again with our respective responsible Cabinet Officers to resolve any outstanding issues and review the progress in our cooperation.

In pursuance of this Alliance Against Drugs, we hereby pledge the fullest support of ourselves and of our governments to construct drug-free societies for the twenty-first century. *W*

Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León

William Jefferson Clinton



Photo: The President's Press Office