

## **Joint Statement from Mexico and the United States on the Launch of Phase II of the Bicentennial Framework for Security**

At the North American Leaders' Summit on January 9-10, Presidents López Obrador, President Biden, and Prime Minister Trudeau instructed their Cabinets to intensify efforts to address the synthetic opioid epidemic that is ravaging communities across North America. The three leaders committed to intensify and expand coordinated efforts to prosecute drug traffickers, dismantle criminal networks, disrupt the supply of precursor chemicals used to make illicit fentanyl, and prevent the trafficking of drugs, firearms, and people across our shared border.

To follow through on this commitment, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador welcomed a high-level U.S. delegation led by White House Homeland Security Advisor Dr. Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall. Senior U.S. and Mexican officials recognized the success of the Bicentennial Framework for Security, Public Health, and Safe Communities as a mechanism to coordinate security actions between both countries, focusing particularly on countering the scourge of fentanyl. Mexico and the United States reaffirmed their commitment to deepen law enforcement cooperation and improve citizen security through the Bicentennial Framework, a long-term and dynamic partnership based on shared responsibility and respect for each country's sovereignty.

At the high-level meeting hosted by President López Obrador that took place on March 9, 2023 in Mexico's National Palace, the two delegations agreed to launch the second phase of the Bicentennial Framework to further increase cooperation to combat illicit fentanyl production, the trafficking of high-caliber weapons and ammunition into Mexico, and transnational organized crime. The two sides discussed a program to improve U.S. and Mexican interagency coordination and bilateral sharing of criminal intelligence to target key nodes in the synthetic drug supply chain. Mexico and the U.S. will also begin a new comprehensive binational public health campaign to prevent and reduce the risks of consuming fentanyl and other drugs. The two governments noted recent successes, including Mexico's arrest of Lupe Tapia, one of the largest producers of U.S.-bound synthetic drugs, and Ovidio "El Raton" Guzman Lopez, a key driver of fentanyl production for the Sinaloa Cartel.

President López Obrador announced that Secretary of Security and Civil Protection, Rosa Icela Rodríguez, will be the counterpart for leadership of the counter-Fentanyl effort with Dr. Sherwood-Randall. This appointment will ensure the effective coordination of the two countries' security and public health agencies to implement this second phase. Authorities from Mexico and the United States will meet again within two months in Washington, D.C.

to further review and analyze the effectiveness of the enhanced policies and improve intelligence and information sharing on transnational criminal organizations.

President López Obrador welcomed the unprecedented location, recovery, and return to the federal government of Mexico of approximately \$25 million in funds that had been stolen by criminal actors from the Mexican government through embezzlement and fraud, and seized and forfeited by the U.S. Department of Justice. The United States and Mexico agreed that the funds will be remitted in the spirit of, and will be used to advance the goals of, the Bicentennial Framework.

The U.S. delegation and Mexican government officials also discussed the recent kidnapping of four U.S. citizens in Matamoros, which resulted in one Mexican and two U.S. citizens losing their lives. The first priority of President Biden and President López Obrador is to protect the lives of U.S. and Mexican citizens and the law enforcement agencies of the two governments committed to do everything in their power to identify, find, and hold accountable those responsible for this deadly attack. The United States and Mexico will bring all of their resources to bear against cartels and transnational criminal organizations who kill and exploit our citizens for enormous profits. The United States and Mexico stand firm in the commitment to disrupt these criminal networks that are impacting both countries.

The Mexican high-level delegation included Foreign Secretary Marcelo Ebrard; Secretary of Security Rosa Icela Rodríguez; Secretary of Defense General Luis Cresencio Sandoval; Secretary of the Navy José Rafael Ojeda, and Chief Officer for North America, Roberto Velasco.

Dr. Sherwood-Randall's high-level delegation included White House Director of National Drug Control Policy Dr. Rahul Gupta; Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco; Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security John Tien; U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Ken Salazar; Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Charisse Phillips; and Senior Directors on President Biden's National Security Council Juan González and Katie Tobin.

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