



Building the Future in Central America Requires Smart Investments in Safe and Sustainable Communities

Last Friday, November 14, Vice President Joe Biden, the presidents of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras, and IDB President Luis Alberto Moreno, met to develop a joint plan to respond to the underlying conditions that are driving migration from Central America. The discussion focused on development and job opportunities, governability, and the challenges of citizen security.

Addressing the violence, poverty, and desperation that the region is experiencing is a shared responsibility. It is not merely a question of resources but one of smart investments—with a human rights-based approach—that prioritizes:



1. **Equitable Economic Development:** The call for economic development must focus first and foremost on job creation, training, and education in order to create new opportunities for youth, in both urban and rural settings.
2. **Violence Prevention:** Substantial support should be given to evidence-based violence prevention at the community level, the reintegration of youth seeking to leave the influence of gangs, and the protection of children who have suffered violence.
3. **Strengthening Civilian Institutions:** Tackling the problems of organized crime, street gangs and insecurity require solid criminal investigations, professional and accountable police forces, and an effective criminal justice system. These are roles for civilian institutions, not the military.
4. **Combatting Corruption and Increasing Accountability:** Robust programs must be put in place to enhance transparency and accountability and address the deep-seated corruption that hinders citizens' access to basic services, weakens state institutions, and erodes the foundations of democracy.
5. **Commitment from Central American Governments:** Support should be given to those governments and agencies where the senior leadership is committed to strengthening civilian-led law enforcement, criminal justice systems, and the rule of law.
6. **Civil Society Participation:** The effective participation of civil society will help build the consensus needed to advance any serious and meaningful strategy. We urge the Central American governments and donor agencies to ensure the active engagement of civil society in the process.



As civil society organizations in the United States and the Central American region, we look forward to working jointly on building safe, sustainable, and prosperous communities in Central America.

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