



Latin America  
Working Group  
Education Fund

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### **President's Calderon's White House Visit: A Request to Transform the Rhetoric of Shared Responsibility into Reality.**

In the context of today's meeting between President Calderón and President Obama, we, civil society organizations from the U.S. and Mexico, are hopeful that our respective Presidents will move beyond the empty platitudes that typically characterize such meetings and instead capitalize on this historic visit to make concrete and meaningful commitments to transform the rhetoric of shared responsibility into reality.

Given the shared challenges posed by organized crime, arms trafficking and illicit drug use, it is critical that both countries move beyond ineffective and worn-out strategies and propose concrete, comprehensive solutions to address the root causes of these problems.

We urge both President Calderón and President Obama to focus their bilateral talks on the following aspects:

- Greatly expand community-oriented prevention programs and evidence-based drug treatment programs to reduce the demand for drugs in the United States. The United States owes it to its people and neighbors to the south to finally implement more effective and humane public health solutions to this enduring problem;
- Strengthen mechanisms which ensure thorough investigation, prosecution and sanctioning of human rights violations in Mexico - including the timely reforms of military jurisdiction so that members of the Mexican military responsible for abuses against civilians are tried in civilian, not military, courts;
- Make serious and specific commitments on the resources and political will necessary to stem the flow of arms from the United States into Mexico, including the expansion of "upstream" interdiction strategies to prevent guns from being acquired by traffickers rather than focusing on gun interdiction at the border;
- Leverage political will to facilitate the full and timely implementation of the judicial reforms in Mexico, which are particularly critical given the importance of these reforms in strengthening Mexico's ability to successfully identify, prosecute and punish criminals;
- Increase the enforcement of money laundering and bulk cash transfers that line the pockets of organized crime through tighter bi-national cooperation and national regulations; and
- Direct resources to professionalize and provide greater accountability and transparency for state and local police in Mexico, including civilian participation in the design, implementation and evaluation of security policies.

We hope that the Presidents will have meaningful discussions on rule of law on both sides of the border, and not just rhetoric. **We consider that the rule of law cannot be effectively strengthened without improving**

**conditions for human rights and targeting key public health concerns.** Now is the time for Mexico to make specific commitments to build strong foundations in the country that will lead to greater accountability, transparency and citizen security. And now is the time for the United States to expand its commitments to address its seemingly insatiable demand for drugs.

Neither President is doing the people of Mexico or the United States any favors by overlooking these grave problems.