

APRIL 29, 2014

## **JOINT STATEMENT ON THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE U.S.-MEXICO TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY BORDER BILATERAL EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE**

As part of the shared commitment between the United States and Mexico on economic competitiveness and citizen security, Mexico and the United States held today in Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, the sixth Meeting of the 21st Century Border Bilateral Executive Steering Committee (ESC). In 2010, Mexico and the United States issued the Joint Declaration on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Border Management and committed to ensure that our common border promotes economic competitiveness and enhances security in both countries through the efficient, rapid and lawful movement of goods and people.

For the first time since the creation of the ESC, this high-level bilateral mechanism held its meeting at the border to discuss specific actions to be implemented in the following months to continue developing the border region through a comprehensive and long-term strategic approach. The meeting was co-chaired by the Executive Secretaries of the Committee, Sergio M. Alcocer, Undersecretary for North America, Amy Pope, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Transborder Security, and Ricardo Zuñiga, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Western Hemisphere Affairs of the White House. Officials from relevant federal agencies from both countries were in attendance.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Committee released the U.S.-Mexico 21<sup>st</sup> Century Border Management 2013 Progress Report, which highlights the substantial progress made since the last meeting. For example, the United States and Mexico coordinated on port of entry infrastructure projects, including the opening of five new northbound lanes at San Ysidro-El Chaparral port of entry, connecting San Diego and Tijuana; the beginning of the construction of the Mexican side of the Cross Border Facility at the Tijuana Airport, as well as the start of construction at the new Tornillo-Guadalupe International Bridge, and the expansion of the Veterans-Los Tomates International Bridge, which was completed in April, 2014.

Mexico and the United States continued to deepen and expand cross-border law enforcement cooperation between the U.S. Border Patrol and Mexico's Federal Police in key border corridors to increase safety and security in the border region. Significant progress was made in implementing the Border Violence Prevention Protocols and expanding law enforcement information sharing. Deterring and preventing border violence, including through a constructive dialogue on use of force, and continuing to enhance coordinated law enforcement efforts remain of the upmost importance.

Mexico and the United States will continue to build upon the substantial achievements made in managing our common border. Mexico implemented the "*Programa Viajero Confiable*" which speeds processing for previously authorized travelers at designated Mexican airports. Both countries also are coordinating traffic management strategies to allow expedited processing for trusted traders in both countries. Enhancing competitiveness will be advanced by reducing waiting

times and moving towards the mutual recognition of the trusted traveler programs of North America such as NEXUS, Global Entry and the “*Programa Viajero Confiable*,” as agreed by our leaders at the North American Leaders Summit. We also will reach major infrastructure milestones this year, such as the completion of the new Tornillo-Guadalupe International Bridge, the Nogales-Mariposa Port of Entry, and the Brownsville-Matamoros West Rail Bypass.

Recognizing the importance of public consultations, the ESC met with stakeholders from both sides of the border and held a productive discussion that will contribute to identifying additional projects and areas in which both governments could enhance economic competitiveness, facilitate trade and legitimate flows, expand border development, and strengthen public safety.

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