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Embassy of Colombia in the United States

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Senate Caucus Holds Hearing on “Adapting U.S. Counternarcotics Efforts in Colombia”

Washington, DC — Today, the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control held a hearing, “Adapting U.S. Counternarcotics Efforts in Colombia.” The hearing was timely, as the government of Colombia is redoubling national efforts to combat illegal drug trafficking with the implementation of a new counternarcotics strategy, which is focused on enforcing two policies – forced eradication and crop substitution.

“Colombia is more committed than ever to ending the flow of drugs – from seed to shipment – and we remain a partner with the United States in this effort,” said Ambassador of Colombia to the United States Camilo Reyes. “The government of Colombia also recognizes the importance of increasing efforts to fight this problem to achieve and sustain lasting peace.”

Recently, the government has achieved a number of advances in the fight against drug trafficking:

- Thus far in 2017, 31,000 hectares of coca crops have been eradicated through forced eradication, more than 300 tons of cocaine have been seized and 2,301 production facilities have been destroyed.
- As part of the crop substitution effort, in 2017, 3,000 hectares have been voluntarily eradicated, and another 6,313 are covered by individual agreements with 7,581 small farmers and small farming families.
- Of all of Colombia’s municipalities, 83 percent are free of illicit crops – leaving 17 percent of municipalities as the areas of focus for eradication and substitution efforts.
- Nearly half (48 percent) of all illicit crops are located in 1 percent of municipalities.

“These advances will only increase as we move forward with the implementation of the Peace Agreement and the new strategy to combat illegal drugs,” said Reyes.

Increasing U.S.-Colombia cooperation to achieve concrete victories against transnational criminal networks, including drug trafficking networks, is one of five key recommendations made by the Atlantic Council’s bipartisan Colombia Peace and Prosperity Task Force in their May 2017 report, “[A Roadmap for U.S. Engagement with Colombia](#).” The Task Force is co-chaired by Senators Roy Blunt (R-MO) and Ben Cardin (D-MD).

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