

## Strengthening DHS Partnerships to Secure Our Borders

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Greetings from the Department of Homeland Security -

When Secretary Janet Napolitano took the reigns at Homeland Security, she pledged to improve and strengthen DHS' collaboration with the Department's many partners.

Her promise is on full display this week, with back-to-back visits to Mexico and Texas, where she is meeting with local and state officials, international leaders, law enforcement officers, and private sector and community partners about securing America's borders - one of DHS' most critical missions.

During the President's North American summit on Monday, Secretary Napolitano [met](#) with Mexican Interior Secretary Fernando Francisco Gómez-Mont. The two leaders discussed joint initiatives to combat transnational crime like drug smuggling and human trafficking. They also addressed enforcement efforts along the U.S.-Mexico border, and a coordinated response to the H1N1 virus.

On Tuesday Secretary Napolitano was in El Paso, Texas to meet with the [Homeland Security Advisory Council's Southwest Border Task Force](#), visit U.S. Border Patrol operations, and participate in a live video teleconference with partners across the Southwest border.

Secretary Napolitano also delivered a major speech on Southwest border issues at the 2009 Border Security Conference. She detailed the new approach of the Obama Administration, which links border security, immigration enforcement in the nation's interior, narcotics enforcement and a streamlined citizenship process into a unified strategy.

This approach recognizes that these challenges cannot be addressed independently, and underscores how DHS is pursuing more strategic, more cooperative and more effective methods than ever before to keep America safe. Secretary Napolitano was in San Antonio on Thursday for the [Border Enforcement Security Taskforce \(BEST\) Conference](#). Bringing together more than 500 border law enforcement officials from the U.S., Mexico, Canada and Argentina, the BEST conference continues team building, coordination and partnership on pressing border safety issues like drug smuggling and cartel violence.

In addition, the Secretary and other US law enforcement agencies signed a [Letter of Intent](#) with Attorney General Eduardo Medina Mora of Mexico. The arrangement develops a coordinated and intelligence-driven response to the threat of cross border smuggling and trafficking of weapons and ammunition. By building and enhancing our partnerships with stakeholders from across the spectrum, DHS is pursuing a more strategic and more effective border security policy. To learn more about these efforts, visit DHS' newest online social networking tool: <http://ourborder.ning.com/>.