



Testimony of

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before

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Committee on Homeland Security  
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## **Introduction**

Chairman Miller, Ranking Member Vela, and Distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, it is a privilege to appear before you today. My name is Alan Bersin; I am the Assistant Secretary of International Affairs and Chief Diplomatic Officer in the Office of Policy at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

Canada and Mexico are the United States' first and third largest trade partners and the first and second largest destination for U.S. goods, and are therefore a top priority for DHS activities and resources. The Caribbean represents a third geographic border, and many of its countries share a robust social-cultural, economic, political, and security connection with the United States on account of strong trade and historic immigration ties. DHS continues to work closely with Canada to implement the *Beyond the Border Declaration and Action Plan for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness*. Similarly, with Mexico, DHS continues work through the *Declaration on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Border Management* and the *High Level Economic Dialogue* toward an efficient secure border that encourages legitimate trade, travel, and commerce, and also deters criminal activity. These efforts with Canada and Mexico demonstrate the degree of success we can achieve when governments collaborate to jointly address issues of common interest based on a shared agenda.

Our close partnerships with counterparts in Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean have contributed to a more secure and economically prosperous homeland. The expedited movement of lawful trade and travel through our ports of entry is central to DHS's mission and a key component of our nation's economic security interests. Today, I will highlight a series of international programs that have advanced the Department's efforts to simultaneously enhance the security of our nation and facilitate legitimate trade and travel. Our efforts support the key priorities outlined in the Quadrennial Homeland Security Review to:

- 1) Prevent terrorism and enhance security;
- 2) Secure and manage our borders;
- 3) Enforce and administer our immigration laws;
- 4) Safeguard and secure cyberspace; and
- 5) Strengthen national preparedness and resilience.

In addition to these goals, from the Secretary's Unity of Effort initiative, we have developed an institutional mechanism called the DHS International Footprint Review which establishes and achieves international goals, such as dismantling transnational criminal organizations and deterring illicit flows of goods and people, through an appropriate alignment of resources.

DHS achieves these goals through coordination, cooperation, and when appropriate, joint action with our international partners in all domains: land, air, and sea, as well as where applicable, public health security and cyberspace cooperation.

### Land Domain

In the land domain, the Department has outlined strategies for cooperation along both the northern and southern borders. In 2012, DHS released the Northern Border Strategy, which takes a Department-wide look at the northern border, considers all of DHS's authorities, responsibilities, and capabilities, and sets out a cross-cutting and all-missions approach. Similarly, in early 2015, the Department promulgated the Southern Border and Approaches Campaign Plan, which creates three new Joint Task Forces and utilizes component assets and

resources toward a series of unified goals within the Western Hemisphere. These task forces include:

- Joint Task Force—East, which is responsible for our Southeast Maritime approaches, led by U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Vice Admiral William “Dean” Lee;
- Joint Task Force—West, which is responsible for our southwest land border, led by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Commander Robert L. Harris; and
- Joint Task Force for Investigations, which will support the work of the other two Task Forces and focus on investigations throughout the nation and with our foreign partners, led by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations Special Agent-in-Charge David Marwell.

Additionally, we have Border Enforcement Security Task Forces (BEST) along both borders that include investigative teams focused on cross-border crime, with participation from foreign law enforcement personnel. The BESTs have proven to be an effective law enforcement mechanism to identify threats, address vulnerabilities, and identify, disrupt, and dismantle transnational criminal organizations.

The United States also strengthens its law enforcement and emergency management capabilities in the land domain with reciprocal information sharing practices, the development of cross-border communication networks, and the sharing of best practices. Through *Beyond the Border* and the *21<sup>st</sup> Century Border Initiative*, the United States partners with our Canadian and Mexican counterparts to improve technology to increase communication among emergency management personnel. These partnerships also extend to increasing communication among law enforcement personnel to better dismantle the transnational criminal organizations that threaten our citizens’ security. Similarly, the U.S. works with our Canadian counterparts to coordinate research and development, acquisition, and operational activities to maximize resources in order to protect the homeland against weapons of mass destruction threats.

As part of the *Beyond the Border Declaration and Action Plan*, the United States and Canada have developed coordinated Entry/Exit Information Systems at their shared land border to facilitate exchanges of biographical entry information such that an entry into one country is considered an exit from the other. This exchange helps enhance the integrity of the immigration system and border management practices, as it is important for Canada and the United States to be able to determine when individuals both enter and depart our respective countries. Since June 2013, our countries exchange exit data for third-country nationals, including permanent residents of Canada and the United States, at all common automated land ports of entry. The final phase, now anticipated to occur in 2016, will expand the program to share information on all travelers including U.S. and Canadian citizens.

DHS also recently implemented Criminal History Information Sharing (CHIS) agreements with three Central American and three Caribbean nations that share criminal history information on foreign nationals who were convicted of certain offenses, prior to their removal from the United States.

### Air Domain

In the air domain, DHS relies heavily on its Electronic Advance Passenger Information System (eAPIS) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) data, along with the Secure Flight Program, to assess passengers’ level of risk and provide instructions to border officers and airlines on how to handle inbound passengers, including identifying those who require further inspection. DHS

collaborates with Canada, Mexico, and Caribbean nations through joint information exchange programs, including a liaison exchange program that has Canadian and Mexican analysts co-located at the U.S. National Targeting Center. U.S. and Caribbean nations likewise have established information sharing and response operations with the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM). Through the *Beyond the Border Action Plan*, Canada will implement an electronic travel authorization similar to DHS's Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) program for travelers from Visa Waiver Program countries. The United States and Canada are seeking to enhance the sharing of information in this domain through the ongoing implementation of automated sharing of biographic and biometric visa and immigration information.

Additionally, CBP partners with foreign nations to share joint technologies and information to counter multiple threats from Transnational Criminal Organizations. The Office of Air and Marine shares an exclusive version of the Air and Marine Operations Surveillance System (AMOSS) with the countries of Mexico and the Bahamas, in addition to incorporating sensor data from Mexico, Canada, the Bahamas, and the Dominican Republic to enhance Domain Awareness and international response capability beyond their respective borders. In addition to AMOSS, Mexico also utilizes CBP's Advanced Targeting System – Global (ATS-G) to create rule sets which aid in identifying potential threats.

Furthermore, CBP has preclearance locations in four Caribbean and eight Canadian airports. Preclearance enables the Department to simultaneously secure our borders while facilitating lawful trade and travel by conducting in foreign airports immigration, customs, and agriculture inspections of international air passengers that would otherwise be performed on arrival in the United States. Currently, CBP is considering expanding preclearance operations into additional airports world-wide. Passengers are also screened in accordance with the Transportation Security Administration's domestic standards, which enable passengers to exit directly into the sterile area of the destination airport. Three of the Canadian preclearance locations also screen checked baggage to domestic standards per the "No Hassle Flying Act of 2012". This allows baggage to be transported directly to connecting flights. Currently, CBP is looking to expand this effort into other countries.

### Sea Domain

In the sea domain, DHS' USCG maintains high levels of cooperation with foreign partners. The USCG engages with the Mexican navy on a variety of issues, including: interdictions, training exercises, search and rescue, and environmental challenges such as oil spills. In addition, the Canada-U.S. Shiprider program trains and cross-designates Canadian and U.S. law enforcement officers who enforce the law on both sides of the international boundary while riding together on the same vessels. Through Shiprider, armed Canadian and U.S. law enforcement officers are able to transit back and forth across the border to help secure it from threats to national security, as well as to prevent cross-border smuggling and trafficking. Through the North American Maritime Security Initiative (NAMSI), the Coast Guard also works jointly with Canadian and Mexican sea services to exercise emergency response plans, policies, and procedures as they pertain to maritime security and defense readiness events.

The United States likewise has had effective engagement with Caribbean nations in the sea domain. The U.S. Government provided Defender Class SAFE boats to several Caribbean nations. The USCG in partnership with the Department of Defense helps maintain their mission readiness for search and rescue and law-enforcement interdiction operations with maintenance

and programmatic support through the State Department's Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI)-funded Technical Assistance Field Teams. Additionally, in an effort to codify and standardize a comprehensive approach to effective, consistent international maritime security in the post-9/11 world, the International Maritime Organization and its Member States developed the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code. The ISPS Code is the principal international blueprint for the implementation of maritime security measures and supporting infrastructure. Furthermore, the USCG conducts the TRADEWINDS exercise, which is a maritime training exercise for the Eastern Caribbean and regional partner nations. This exercise brings together police and defense forces to exercise regional information sharing networks, improve maritime interdiction coordination, develop regional training capacity, improve asset sustainment and maintenance, and address illicit trafficking.

*Public Health Security and Cyberspace Cooperation*

In addition to engagement with our international partners in the air, land, and sea domains, DHS also works with our neighboring countries to strengthen our defenses against threats that are borderless. For instance, DHS coordinates closely with our North American partners on public health security issues. During the Ebola outbreak, DHS worked with international partners to share information and best practices, coordinate efforts, and align screening procedures. Canada is following protocols similar to those of CBP with regard to active and passive targeting of travelers from affected countries and stationing quarantine officers at its six largest airports.

Beyond the response to Ebola, both Canada and Mexico are part of the North American Plan for Animal and Pandemic Influenza (NAPAPI). DHS is one of four U.S. Government agencies that participate in the NAPAPI Senior Coordinating Body and is represented by the Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs and Chief Medical Officer. In March 2015, DHS participated with our health security working group partners as a Senior Coordinating Body Member in a trilateral table top exercise which focused on information sharing and emergency communications, sample-sharing, and the availability of and access to medical countermeasures.

Cyberspace is a global, borderless domain that is an engine of economic growth and social opportunity yet presents unique challenges requiring close cooperation with our international partners. DHS works with international partners to exchange threat and vulnerability information, jointly address cyber-crime, and build capacity to secure cyberspace for the common good. The DHS National Protection and Programs Directorate/Cybersecurity and Communications (NPPD/CS&C) office also works closely with Canada. NPPD/CS&C maintains a strong partnership with Public Safety Canada (PS) on cybersecurity issues, including the regular exchange of cyber threat and vulnerability information, and incident response coordination between the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center (NCCIC) and the Canadian Cyber Incident Response Center. CS&C and PS also work toward improved collaboration on issues of mutual interest through implementation of the Cybersecurity Action Plan, agreed to in 2012. Also, the Cyber Security Division of DHS Science and Technology's Homeland Security Advanced Research Projects Agency has engaged in several jointly funded collaborative cybersecurity research and development projects covering multiple areas of cybersecurity with Defense Research and Development Canada (DRDC).

DHS's bilateral cybersecurity collaboration with Mexico has focused on incident management coordination, industrial control systems security, and cybersecurity awareness-raising, and DHS and Mexico are exploring ways to increase this collaboration including issues such as cybercrime and critical infrastructure security and resilience. CS&C and Mexico also cooperate through regional and international fora, particularly the Organization of American States.

The United States Secret Service (USSS) and ICE likewise have equally important relationships with Canada and Mexico on cyber. The ICE Attachés in Canada and Mexico support Canadian and Mexican law enforcement in the investigation of cyber-related crime. These cases include, but are not limited to: child exploitation investigations; mass marketing fraud; identity theft; online illegal marketplaces; counter-proliferation; intellectual property rights violations; and related money laundering via the Internet. The USSS international engagement in Mexico and Canada regarding cyber is primarily focused on investigations of transnational cybercrime and training foreign law enforcement on cybercrime investigations.

### Conclusion

Collaboration with our neighboring countries and partners is a key element to strengthening homeland security. DHS will continue to partner with countries around the world to most effectively carry out our core missions. Through international collaboration—in particular our work at our land and maritime borders with our North American partners—we not only enhance our ability to prevent terrorism and transnational crime, but we also leverage the resources of our international partners to more efficiently and cost-effectively secure global trade and travel. The successes in our partnerships with Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean highlight the importance of the Department's international engagement.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I welcome the opportunity to address your questions.

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