

Spain, Mexico Renew Anti-terrorism Accord

Police training part of the deal

Spain and Mexico agreed to share resources to fight terrorism and organized international crime in an accord that also includes provisions for Spanish police to help train their Mexican counterparts.

Announcement of the accord came during the ninth meeting of the Mexico-Spain Binational Commission, held in October 2009 in Mexico City. The two-day meeting also covered economic, financial, legal and consular affairs, education, culture, science and technology.

Mexican Attorney General Arturo Chávez Chávez met with Spanish Justice Minister Francisco Caamaño Domínguez to sign the deal.

“Mexico’s commitment to assist Spain’s fight against terrorism is unwavering,” Chávez said.

Caamaño said the agreement helps Spain and “confronts those who do not respect freedom and basic human rights.”

The agreement builds on earlier accords between the two nations.

In a statement from the Mexican foreign ministry, Chávez said one of the priorities of President Felipe Calderón’s administration is to promote bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation to combat transnational crime.

The accord allows for more exchanges of information and intelligence to combat terrorism, drug trafficking, illegal immigration and human trafficking, fiscal offenses, money laundering, cybercrime and illegal arms trading.

As part of the deal, Spain agreed to train 10,000 Mexican ministerial federal police investigators, Spain’s EFE news agency reported. Training will take place in Mexico and Spain. Experts from Spain’s National Police Force and Guardia Civil gendarmerie will collaborate in training Mexican police in forensics and techniques to counter money laundering and terrorism funding.

Spanish Secretary of State for Security Antonio Camacho Vizcaino also met with Chávez. They agreed to update and extend current collaborative agreements that have produced successful results. “Spain and Mexico... will promote joint operational work and experience exchange, as well as reinforce cooperation in the area of training now in progress,” Vizcaino said.

The collaboration is working. In 2007, for example, Mexico extradited Basque separatist group ETA members to Spain to stand trial. In 2003, Mexico extradited Ricardo



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The capture and extradition from Mexico of Ricardo Miguel Cavallo, a former Argentine naval officer charged with terrorism, genocide and other crimes by Spain, proves the success of Mexico’s accord with Spain to collaborate in anti-terrorism efforts.

Miguel Cavallo — a former Argentine naval officer hiding in Mexico — to Spain because the country had charged him with genocide and terrorism. Spain then extradited Cavallo to Argentina in 2008 to stand trial.

Part of the binational commission’s work is to analyze the bilateral relationship, identify challenges, propose solutions and find new areas for mutually beneficial cooperation. The results will assist with the creation of cooperative projects between Mexico and the European Commission and will define the agenda of the binational meeting in late 2010, the Mexican government said in an October 2009 news release.

Mexico and Spain have a privileged and strategic partnership, Chávez said. “Mexico values its cooperation with Spain in sharing information to attack phenomena that damage our societies.”

Other issues the two nations will tackle include child pornography, kidnapping and extortion. Additionally, the two countries agreed to work to eliminate counterfeit documents that foreigners often use to enter Spain from Mexico.

Increased collaboration to solve the common challenges of terrorism, transnational crime and illegal migration is beneficial to all nations. Closer ties allow developed nations to pass on their expertise and knowledge to help developing countries.

“The challenges of our time are increasingly collaborative in nature,” U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in August 2009. “They require our full engagement, all nations working together — rich and poor, north and south, developed and developing.” □