

The Central America Regional Security Initiative: Strong, Capable, and Accountable Central American Governments



“Strengthening the rule of law, attacking criminal organizations head-on, rehabilitating those who do fall into criminality while preventing young people from doing that in the first place, rooting out corruption, and ensuring accountable and effective institutions are essential.”

– Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton

CARSI – An Integrated, Collaborative Regional Security Program

The Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) responds to regional threats by supplementing the strategies and programs Central American nations implement on their own and in cooperation with other countries. CARSI is coordinated with other nations, international financial institutions, the private sector, civil society, and the Central American Integration System (SICA), and draws upon the expertise and efforts of like-minded donors supporting the citizen safety goals of Central American countries.

Developing Institutional Capacity

One of the key objectives of CARSI is supporting the development of strong, transparent and effective Central American governments and institutions. The violence and impunity of the region’s drug, gang, and criminal organizations present overwhelming challenges to governments already struggling to develop and maintain effective institutions. Central America needs greater investment in rule of law institutions, sufficient government revenues to support social services for the citizens of the region, and the creation of a culture that resists corruption. These investments will build confidence in public officials and government institutions by Central American citizens.

U.S. Assistance – Working with Governments to Strengthen Governments

The United States, through CARSI and complementary U.S. assistance programs supports host nation efforts to conduct profound and self-sustaining democratic reform to their law enforcement, prosecutorial, judicial, prison, and related rule of law institutions to increase institutional transparency and protect government institutions from criminal penetration and influence. Strong, accountable government presence in communities at risk to gangs, traffickers, and crime is also a critical objective. CARSI is assisting host government efforts to develop community and neighborhood-based programs to address the social and economic causes of crime and violence, and to increase citizen participation with law enforcement and government institutions in such efforts. CARSI is supporting Central American nations in their efforts to assess and collect taxes equitably from citizens and businesses as a means of funding government programs that will enhance citizen safety, improve rule of law institutions, and provide basic services to citizens.

The Five Goals of CARSI in Central America:

1. Create safe streets for the citizens of the region;
2. Disrupt the movement of criminals and contraband to, within, and between the nations of Central America;
3. **Support the development of strong, capable, and accountable Central American governments;**
4. Re-establish effective state presence, services and security in communities at risk; and
5. Foster enhanced levels of coordination and cooperation between the nations of the region, other international partners, and donors to combat regional security threats.

For more information related to the Central America Regional Security Initiative, please visit our website at <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rt/carsi/index.htm>