



Integrated Country Strategy

Colombia

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Over the last two decades, the United States has been a vital partner in Colombia's efforts to achieve lasting peace and stability. As a result of this support and the country's own efforts, Colombia is now a key U.S. economic and security partner in Latin America. Through Plan Colombia, and its successor programs, the United States helped the government build a capable police and military, pursue good governance, and increase economic opportunities. The government's historic peace accord with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) has improved security along some key fronts and set Colombia on a path to realize its full potential as a leader in the region and partner on U.S. global priorities. While the accord is principally an achievement by and for the Colombian people, sustained U.S. support helped establish the conditions for this foreign policy success. A stable and prosperous Colombia is better equipped to combat transnational criminal organizations, which affect the health and national security of the United States, and more capable of taking a leadership role in promoting regional security. Prosperity in Colombia also creates the conditions for Colombian companies to increase investments in the United States, its preferred trade and investment partner, promoting job creation within our borders.

Since the signing of the peace accord in November 2016, 7,000 former guerrillas have disarmed and thousands more have demobilized; the government has passed crucial peace accord legislation; and a UN political mission has helped verify accord security guarantees and FARC reincorporation into civilian life. At the same time, the peace process has highlighted ongoing challenges, including the dramatic and troubling increase in coca cultivation and cocaine production, transnational criminal networks and illegal armed groups that continue to thrive in conflict-affected regions, continued vulnerability of civilian populations, and public skepticism about the FARC's commitment to peace. A stable Colombia at peace is a stronger partner for the United States. The United States will continue to work with our most willing and capable partner in the region to address these challenges, including through the Plan Antioquia initiative – a unique public-private partnership between the Embassy, private sector, Colombian military and Colombian government at the federal, state, and local levels to improve counternarcotics, public security and socioeconomic development.

To this end, the United States will support efforts to expand the presence of the Colombian state and increase licit economic opportunities in areas afflicted by criminal groups, violence, and narco-trafficking. Colombian police and military forces, with U.S. assistance, more than doubled coca eradication and achieved record levels of cocaine seizures in 2017, and at the March 2018 High Level Dialogue, Colombia and the United States agreed to the ambitious goal of reducing coca cultivation and cocaine production by 50 percent by 2023. Nevertheless, more must be done to prevent narco-trafficking and related corruption and violence that not only contribute to drug addiction and violence in the United States but undermine sustainable peace in Colombia. The new Duque administration has acknowledged U.S. concerns about rising coca cultivation and cocaine production and publicly committed to take steps to combat these illicit activities. Continued U.S. support for reducing cocaine production, dismantling organized

criminal groups, expanding state presence, and enhancing rural investment to boost licit economic opportunities will be critical to reducing the flow of drugs north.

Embassy Bogota will continue to assist Colombia's long-term transition to peace in the areas of good governance, respect for human rights, and support for vulnerable populations, including conflict victims, human rights defenders, labor leaders, persons with disabilities, Afro-Colombians, and indigenous groups. Embassy Bogota will also support the Colombian government in confronting new challenges, such as the arrival of mixed migration flows from Venezuela, to convert these initial challenges into long-term opportunities. Efforts to expand state presence, increase access to justice, promote reconciliation, and support judicial cooperation will contribute to a Colombia at peace and a partner more capable of furthering U.S. foreign policy priorities.

Colombia continues to be the United States' most willing and capable ally in Latin America and plays a positive role in regional organizations such as the Organization of American States (OAS). Colombia is an important partner on Venezuela within the OAS and as a member of the 11-country Lima Group. The government has issued strong statements against the Maduro regime and accepted U.S. humanitarian assistance to deal with the influx of Venezuelans. Colombia continues to set the standard for regional law enforcement and counternarcotics cooperation and now exports military and police training to its neighbors, including Mexico and Central America. In addition, extraditions are powerful and important for the U.S. justice system, the Colombian justice system, and victims.

Our strategic partnership with Colombia includes a flourishing economic and commercial relationship, underpinned by the 2012 U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement (CTPA). Most importantly, this relationship supports U.S. prosperity and creates jobs in the United States. Colombia's economic success is also of strategic importance: a prosperous, stable partner able to achieve inclusive economic growth and play a positive regional role is in our national interest. Embassy Bogota is focused on ensuring Colombia meets its CTPA obligations, including on labor issues, to achieve a level playing field for U.S. businesses and workers, improve its investment climate, and attract the capital it needs to improve the lives of its citizens. Colombia has taken important steps to foster economic growth, reduce poverty and unemployment, uphold labor rights, and achieve historic levels of investment and trade. The United States also has a new partner in encouraging Colombia to adopt sound public policies: the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). After a multiyear push, Colombia received an invitation to join as the organization's 37th member state in May, and is expected to formally complete accession to the OECD by the end of 2018. OECD membership will bring benefits to the economy and people of Colombia, along with important responsibilities to level the playing field on trade and enhance protections for U.S. investors.

The United States is viewed favorably by almost 80 percent of Colombians. Public diplomacy efforts communicate the positive impact of U.S. support for peace accord implementation, democratic governance, humanitarian and development assistance, counternarcotics, and

human rights, and targeted programming strengthens Colombian institutions, communities, and networks to ensure prosperity, peace, and social inclusion. Under the Plan Antioquia initiative, Public Affairs supports civic education, bilingualism, and strategic messaging to promote security, prosperity and economic development. Active promotion of the 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative has galvanized higher education institutions to build more links and exchanges with U.S. counterparts, and the University Peacebuilding Initiative promotes the role of higher education in Colombia's peace implementation. Fulbright Colombia enjoys robust support, with the highest local government contributions in the world. In addition, 80 Peace Corps Volunteers are currently serving in Colombia's Caribbean region to support bilingualism, financial literacy, entrepreneurship, small business development, and other community activities.

Embassy Bogota's Consular Section is one of the world's highest volume processors of visa applications and supports a community of more than 90,000 resident U.S. citizens and nearly one million American visitors annually. The section works closely with the government, the Regional Security Office, and other U.S. agencies to protect U.S. borders and American citizens. The Fraud Prevention Unit has uncovered multiple fraud rings, resulting in thousands of visa revocations, as well as preventing travel for Colombians facing criminal charges.

With more than 1,000 permanent staff and approximately 2,100 contractors, Embassy Bogota utilizes technological innovation, business process improvements, and consolidation to provide essential support services and effective management while maintaining a highly motivated and well-trained staff. We anticipate our customer base growing by 50 to 100 U.S. direct hires plus family members over the next several years and a need to grow our ICASS support staff. We are currently bringing on seven new positions to increase our level and quality of support in Cartagena and Bogota. These modest increases will allow us to better support our Mission's goals and objectives.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: Promote and support a whole-of-government strategy to strengthen government institutions, build capacity to address domestic and regional security and health threats, develop licit economies, foster citizen security, and combat organized crime.

Mission Objective 1.1: Dismantle organized crime and significantly reduce drug production and coca cultivation through improved law enforcement and military institutions.

Mission Objective 1.2: Increase the effectiveness of Colombia's security and criminal justice institutions to safeguard Colombia's national territory, consolidate legitimate governance across the country, bring sustainability to coca cultivation reduction efforts, promote coalition interoperability, and establish the conditions for Colombia to take a more active role in regional and global security.

Mission Goal 2: Promote and enhance U.S. prosperity and job creation through trade promotion, inclusive growth, and an improved investment climate.

Mission Objective 2.1: Create U.S. jobs, and augment bilateral trade and investment through trade advocacy and compliance with the U.S. – Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement (CTPA).

Mission Objective 2.2: Improve the investment climate for U.S. companies by encouraging the Colombian government to implement a more transparent regulatory environment and commercial legal framework.

Mission Objective 2.3: Promote legitimate travel for Colombians to the United States.

Mission Goal 3: Advance Colombia's capacity to strengthen governance and transition to a sustainable peace.

Mission Objective 3.1: The government and civil society extend the effective presence of democratic institutions and processes in targeted areas. (CDCS Development Objective 1)

Mission Objective 3.2: Advance reconciliation among victims, ex-combatants, and other citizens. (CDCS Development Objective 2)

Mission Objective 3.3: Improve conditions for inclusive rural economic growth and sustainable development. (CDCS Development Objectives 3 and 4)

Mission Goal 4: U.S. government foreign policy objectives supported through public diplomacy programming and strategic messaging.

Mission Objective 4.1: Strategic cultural, educational, media, and digital engagement increase the Colombian public's understanding of and affinity for U.S. policies and priorities, especially among vulnerable communities.

Management Objective 1: Improve the quality of life, productivity, and overall morale of Mission Employees through the purchase of government owned residential properties, securing respect of reciprocity rights by the Government of Colombia, and the introduction of new technologies to support mission and policy objectives.

Management Objective 2: Create financial synergies by merging additional customers into existing ICASS services to support the mission.

Management Objective 3: Provide an increasingly high level of customer service by the Mission to its employee customer base both in Bogota and at the Embassy Branch Office in Cartagena.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1: Promote and support a whole-of-government security strategy to strengthen government institutions, build capacity to address domestic and regional security and health threats, develop licit economies, foster citizen security, and combat organized crime.

Description and Linkages: This Mission Goal supports GOAL 1 of the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan (Protect America's Security at Home and Abroad) and PILLAR 1 of the National Security Strategy (Protect the American People, the Homeland, and the American Way of Life). Those documents and the ICS specifically target efforts to strengthen government capacity to counter extremist threats and transnational organized crime. The Colombian government is the closest partner of the United States in the hemisphere, and a willing and capable supporter of U.S. regional security goals. The Embassy supports Colombia's integrated, whole-of-government approach to disrupting criminal organizations and reducing coca cultivation and cocaine production, through targeted assistance to police and military forces and the development of programs to move coca growers into licit economic opportunities. These efforts protect our national security by preventing transnational criminal organizations from expanding their operations to American shores and stopping cocaine and other drugs from reaching our population. By improving the Colombian government's capacity to fight crime and provide for its own population, the Embassy protects American security.

Mission Objective 1.1 Dismantle organized crime and significantly reduce drug production and coca cultivation through improved law enforcement and military institutions.

Justification: In 2016, cocaine accounted for nearly 11,000 deaths in the United States, representing a 58 percent increase over the previous year. Furthermore, the influx of cocaine, heroin, and marijuana from Colombia affects U.S. public health and contributes to criminal activity nationwide. More than 90 percent of the cocaine seized in the United States originates in Colombia. During the 2018 High Level Dialogue, Colombia and the United States agreed to expand counternarcotics cooperation over the next five years, implementing a national, integrated, whole-of-government counternarcotics strategy that aims to cut cultivation and production by 50 percent by 2023. This will reduce the level of cocaine that reaches U.S. shores, and therefore enhance the security and public health of the U.S. population.

Embassy Bogota provides interagency support to the Government of Colombia's 2015 strategy to reduce illicit drug production and trafficking, which consists of three lines of effort: (1) rural development programs to reduce drug cultivation; (2) law enforcement to dismantle organized crime groups; and (3) public health approaches to address domestic

drug consumption. Counternarcotics assistance to the Colombian National Police (CNP) and military enables them to attack every link in the drug trafficking chain: manually eradicating coca, interdicting precursors, destroying laboratories, and dismantling transnational criminal organizations.

Mission Objective 1.2: Increase the effectiveness of Colombia's security and criminal justice institutions to safeguard Colombia's national territory, consolidate legitimate governance across the country, bring sustainability to coca cultivation reduction efforts, curtail illegal gold mining, promote coalition interoperability, and establish the conditions for Colombia to take a more active role in regional and global security.

Justification: Transnational criminal organizations exploit Colombia's ungoverned regions and international maritime domains. To address this challenge, Embassy Bogota assists Colombian security institutions through a variety of interagency security assistance programs in three major areas: mitigating the underlying causes of conflict and extremism, institution building, and enhancing interoperability.

Colombian police and military forces remain critical to defeating internal security threats, safeguarding Colombia's national territory, supporting civilian efforts to consolidate legitimate governance across the country, and serving as an interoperable and self-sustaining regional and global partner in coalition operations.

Colombian military forces advance U.S. regional objectives by reducing illicit trafficking destined for the United States by reaching areas and riverine and littoral domains in which police forces cannot currently operate, and by leading multilateral maritime interdiction initiatives with regional partners. The ongoing Defense Institution Reform Initiative (DIRI) and Capabilities Based Planning (CBP) continue to support military modernization and force transformation in a post-accord environment. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) programs remain critical for new capabilities, while sustaining efforts in counter-narcotics (CN), counter-terrorism (CT), counter-transnational organized crime (CTOC); border and maritime security; and potential future UN peacekeeping operations and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations.

Over 80 percent of gold production in Colombia is carried out by organized criminal actors and armed groups or small operators without proper permits, with most of this gold being exported to the United States. The practice finances armed actors, harms human health and the environment, robs the government of tax revenue, and keeps licit producers out of the market. To counter illegal gold mining, the Embassy engages in bilateral cooperation and provides assistance on small-scale mining formalization, detection, and elimination of

mercury use, generation of alternative livelihoods, recuperation of affected lands, and law enforcement.

In addition, Embassy Bogota works closely with the Colombian government to protect U.S. borders and American citizens through the vigilant adjudication of visas. Visas Viper and Law Enforcement Working Groups share critical and time-sensitive information on drug traffickers, terrorists, alien smugglers, and other criminals to ensure mala fide travelers do not obtain visas to enter the United States. Embassy Bogota works closely with the CNP and Colombia Migration to disrupt and dismantle major fraud rings.

The arrival of an estimated one million Venezuelans has resulted in new economic, social, and security challenges for Colombia. The expectation that Venezuelans will continue to flow into Colombia requires continued capacity building and material support to Colombian institutions. In particular, U.S. support to border authorities will develop migration policies for mixed migrant flows (Venezuelans and returned Colombians) and ensure the enforcement of protocols that prevent the crossing of third country nationals with possible terrorist links, while allowing safe and orderly migration. Technical assistance to the newly-formed Special Migration Group, comprised of security and social welfare agencies, will help combat the recruitment of vulnerable populations and trafficking of illicit goods and people along Colombia's porous border with Venezuela. Support to the broader health sector will help prevent the spread of communicable diseases and strengthen public institutions such as schools and municipalities.

The United States and Colombia are strong partners in responding to health challenges such as the Zika epidemic. Colombia has the capacity and willingness to take a greater regional role in health issues, including the growing emergency posed by Venezuela. The United States will continue to partner with Colombia to increase its disease surveillance and real-time reporting capabilities, further refine the country's emergency response capabilities, and ensure Colombia is better prepared to respond to health emergencies.

Mission Goal 2 Promote and enhance U.S. prosperity and job creation through trade promotion, inclusive growth, and an improved investment climate.

Description and Linkages: This Mission Goal is directly tied to GOAL 2 of the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan (Renew America's Competitive Advantage for Sustained Economic Growth and Job Creation) and PILLAR 2 of the National Security Strategy (Promote American Prosperity). Promoting job creation, investment, and market-oriented reforms are shared features of all three documents. Mission Goal 2 advances these priorities by leveraging embassy outreach, contacts, and knowledge to enhance trade and investment, create U.S. jobs, and improve the economic and commercial climate in Colombia.

Mission Objective 2.1 Create U.S. jobs, and augment bilateral trade and investment through trade advocacy and compliance with the U.S. – Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement (CTPA).

Justification: The CTPA does away with many trade and investment barriers, but many U.S. companies are not taking full advantage of Colombian markets due to ongoing bilateral trade irritants. Additionally, there are more opportunities for Colombian companies to invest in U.S. markets. By promoting the benefits of the agreement, the Embassy can help to create U.S. jobs and improve our bilateral relationship.

Mission Objective 2.2: Improve the investment climate for U.S. companies by encouraging the Colombian government to implement a more transparent regulatory environment and commercial legal framework.

Justification: A number of critical sectors face overregulation and restrictions in the Colombian market, and excessively high corporate taxes in Colombia discourage cross-border investment. By advocating for regulatory reform, including eliminating or limiting unnecessary regulations, reducing corruption, and increasing transparency, the embassy can provide the U.S. business community with better access to and opportunities in one of the region's most important and promising markets.

Mission Objective 2.3: Promote legitimate travel for Colombians to the United States.

Justification: Colombian travelers and U.S. businesses are key to our bilateral trade and investment relationship. By leveraging Embassy contacts and resources, Post can buttress both the U.S. jobs that support Colombian visitors to the United States and those U.S. jobs that are produced by U.S. businesses activities in Colombia.

Mission Goal 3: Advance Colombia's capacity to strengthen governance and transition to a sustainable peace.

Description and Linkages: This Mission Goal supports several goals under the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) as well as various pillars of the National Security Strategy (NSS). The United States and Colombia have benefitted from a long-standing bilateral relationship. Since the late 1990s, the United States has been a vital partner, assisting the Colombian government to advance toward stability and improved security. Under Plan Colombia, the two countries delivered a cross-cutting response to an inherently security-driven problem: drug trafficking, organized crime, and insurgency threatening the state. Those successful efforts allowed the relationship to evolve into a peace-focused partnership. Moving forward, the United States will support Colombian efforts to consolidate gains in the areas of governance, justice, and security in conflict-affected regions of the country. By supporting Colombia's transition to peace, the United States is bolstering a strategic partner

and its most capable and willing ally in the region (JSP goal 3; NSS pillars 3, 4). Efforts to expand state presence, increase access to justice, promote reconciliation, reintegrate demobilized combatants, strengthen community resilience, expand opportunities for licit livelihoods, and deploy greater security to rural areas will result in a Colombia more capable of furthering U.S. foreign policy priorities (JSP goal 1; NSS pillar 1). Key to these efforts is humanitarian demining and efforts to return land to Colombian citizens. A Colombia at peace will also be a stable force in the region, disrupting narcotrafficking, reducing coca cultivation, providing regional security cooperation, and dismantling criminal networks that pose a threat to national security. A Colombia at peace will also serve as a strong trading partner and open up new markets for U.S. businesses and investment opportunities (JSP goal 2; NSS pillar 2).

Mission Objective 3.1 The government and civil society extend the effective presence of democratic institutions and processes in targeted areas (CDCS Development Objective 1).

Justification: The absence of effective state institutions in many parts of Colombia has fueled conflict for decades. In some areas, governance has even been imposed by illegal armed groups financed by illicit sources. Weak government institutions have been unable to deliver key services, guarantee human rights, provide access to justice, and invest public resources effectively. U.S. support for effective presence of democratic institutions and processes directly addresses core underlying causes of the conflict and helps to provide the necessary base for a sustainable peace. A durable peace also requires strong civil society organizations that can represent citizen interests democratically, channel citizen demands to government, demand accountability and transparency, and actively monitor public expenditures for corruption. This targeted assistance will contribute to Colombia's stability and long-term capacity to counter transnational criminal networks that have thrived in its conflict-affect regions. U.S. interests are also served by strengthening Colombia's responsiveness to citizens, internal security, democracy, and respect for human rights and rule of law.

Mission Objective 3.2: Advance reconciliation among victims, ex-combatants, and other citizens (CDCS Development Objective 2).

Justification: The conflict in Colombia has left in its wake over eight million victims (of which over seven million were displaced from their homes), 220,000 Colombians killed, and over 12,900 former FARC combatants in need of reincorporation into society. Advancing reconciliation and rehabilitation among victims, ex-combatants, and other citizens is critical to fostering a sustainable peace. The United States supports government, civil society, and UN efforts to: enhance victims' rights to truth, reparations, and guarantees of non-

repetition; promote respect of ethnic minority rights and inclusion by providing them with economic and education opportunities; provide direct humanitarian assistance to new victims to stabilize their situations and facilitate their local integration or return; highlight the importance of reintegration of individual ex-combatants; prevent recruitment of at-risk youth and children by illegal armed groups; and promote reconciliation by changing perceptions and attitudes affected by over 50 years of conflict. Together these actions will lead to a safer, more stable, and more productive Colombia, which can sustain domestic development efforts and become a stronger economic partner with the United States. This work contributes to the overall security of the country and the region by preventing violence, increasing stability, and enhancing legal opportunities for the most vulnerable populations. U.S. activities partner with the private sector to advance this work in a way that promotes Colombian self-reliance over the long-term.

Mission Objective 3.3: Improve conditions for inclusive rural economic growth and sustainable development (CDCS Development Objectives 3 and 4).

Justification: Improved conditions for inclusive rural economic growth are essential for transitioning to a sustainable peace, since poverty and inequality have been at the root of the conflict and are central to the 2016 peace accord. U.S. assistance supports rural economic growth by building Colombian government capacity to accelerate land restitution and formalization processes; spurring private sector investment in former conflict zones; expanding access to credit and financial services; and effectively connecting producer associations to markets. Rural economic growth provides a counterweight to the lures of the drug trade for small farmers, thereby contributing to regional security concerns, and contributes to growing regional markets that are open for U.S. businesses and investment.

Natural resource management, biodiversity protection, and energy security in Colombia are also critical to long-term sustainable economic development. For decades, a lack of effective state presence Colombia's most biodiverse areas allowed illegal armed groups to take refuge and generate profit from illegal activities. Reasserting the authority of the state in these environmentally important areas and ensuring that improved natural resource management creates benefits for local populations are important contributions to peace and to rural economic growth. U.S. assistance supports the protection of key ecosystems; improved natural resource management; increased environmental resiliency; and the formalization of small-scale informal gold mining operations, which improves environmental practices and reduces a key source of income for illegal armed groups. U.S. assistance also advances the increased access to low-cost renewable energy which is a required input for economic develop in Colombia while also creating opportunities for U.S. companies and investment.

Another key enabler of rural economic growth is humanitarian demining. After decades of conflict, many departments are believed to be heavily contaminated by mines, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and other explosive ordnance. Though landmine injuries and deaths have declined significantly in recent years, landmines continue to be a grave issue for Colombian citizens, limiting their mobility, discouraging economic development, and preventing the return of internally displaced persons. The Colombian government has prioritized humanitarian demining as a means to enable peace accord implementation in rural areas, and is working to develop a humanitarian demining capacity within the Colombian military. The United States supports this effort to increase capacity for demining, improve national coordination capability, and deploy trained civilian and military forces capable of designing responses for local at-risk populations. In addition, the 2016 peace accord expanded the need to improve demining capacity to support land restitution activities and a nascent role for mine action services within the FARC reintegration process as a form of reparations.

Mission Goal 4: U.S. government foreign policy objectives supported through public diplomacy programming and strategic messaging.

Description and Linkages: Public Affairs Section (PAS) Bogota programs are designed to advance U.S. government priorities and create understanding of the United States, U.S. policy, and the U.S.-Colombia relationship among Colombian target audiences. This activity supports the National Security Strategy's Pillar 3 on advancing information statecraft to preserve peace through strength, and supports Pillar 4 of the National Security Strategy on advancing American influence by championing American values. PAS programs and messages aim to build a favorable perception of and/or relationship with the United States in which our target audiences become amplifiers of our positions, policies, and priorities.

Mission Objective 4.1: Strategic cultural, educational, media, and digital engagement increase the Colombian public's understanding of and affinity for U.S. policies and priorities, especially among vulnerable communities.

Justification: Continuous, positive messaging on the United States and our government's positions, policies, and priorities through programming and strategic communications is necessary to build support among Colombian decision makers and average citizens for U.S. policies. As more Colombian citizens actively participate in Colombian society due to the advances in security and services in the post-accord era, we must also engage vulnerable communities (often poor, indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and located outside major cities) to ensure that they also develop a nuanced and favorable understanding of our country's interests.

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1: Improve the quality of life, productivity, and overall morale of Mission Employees through the purchase of government owned residential properties, securing respect of reciprocity rights by the Government of Colombia, and the introduction of new technologies to support mission and policy objectives.

Justification: In our housing section, we continue to convert Short Term Residential Leases to Government Owned Residential Leases, and this effort has already begun to bear fruit. We have seen savings of approximately USD 1.6 million per year and anticipate additional savings as we convert additional properties. For our continued Short Term Residential Leases, we continue to shift leasing efforts to newer properties constructed after 2010 due to better construction standard to withstand seismic events. We anticipate this effort will increase the overall safety in the housing situation in Bogota.

Through our facilities section we plan improvements to the compound including repairs and renovations to two of our three entries, replacement of the elevators, repairs to the perimeter wall and upgrading the ambassador's residence to fix critical deficiencies in the Embassy's primary representational space. In the residences we will be conducting over 15 commissionings of new government owned properties and make-readies in existing properties.

Finally, in the information technology space we anticipate rolling out new technologies that will allow unfettered access to foreign affairs information anywhere, anytime and through any device. This will greatly enhance workforce ability to work where and when they need to. We also plan to roll out increased use of commercial cloud computing services to enhance real-time collaboration capabilities internally among embassy customers.

Management Objective 2: Create financial synergies by merging additional customers into existing ICASS services to support the mission.

Justification: Management Section will focus on improving service delivery by integrating several sections within the embassy into existing cost centers to achieve savings through maximizing resources available. We anticipate over the next several years that the remaining DOD positions in the Embassy will convert to the Housing Pool and Furniture and Appliance Pools. This will constitute approximately 40 additional families using those cost centers. Additionally, we anticipate by 2021 the addition of as many as 50 additional families from CBP to arrive at the embassy and for them to need support from various ICASS service centers. We will be adding ICASS positions as necessary to support the additional personnel and maximize efficiency.

Management Objective 3: Provide an increasingly high level of customer service by the Mission to its employee customer base both in Bogota and at the Embassy Branch Office in Cartagena.

Justification: One of our main focuses over the next few years will be the Embassy Branch Office (EBO) in Cartagena and improving customer service there. One of our principal goals will be to keep the Office of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) engaged in the projects in Cartagena. To that end we have recently concluded a visit of the OBO Director to the site to look at a possibility of a new building and to examine the problems in the current building. We will be following up this visit with visits from teams comprising physical security from Diplomatic Security and Real Estate within OBO to assess the various options and come up with a way forward for the EBO. Further supporting the EBO, we plan to expand the use of the Enterprise Service request platform to the EBO in Cartagena.

To maintain high levels of customer service in Bogota, we will be going to the ICASS council to request several new ICASS positions to support current operations and anticipated future needs. These positions will be spread throughout the Management section. For U.S. Direct Hire positions we will continue to advocate for a new GSO position to replace the loss of the FICA position in the summer of 2018. That would bring our GSO office back up to full strength and allow us to continue a high level of customer support.

For motorpool we continue to respond to the needs of the post and anticipate replacing the oldest vehicles in the fleet to improve the average age of the fleet. Additionally, we will be introducing more non-armored vehicles into the fleet when and where we are able to in order to reduce the cost of new vehicles and be able to replace vehicles in a more timely fashion.

Within the Human Resources Office we anticipate focusing on the Local Compensation Plan to bring it into compliance with local labor laws and comparator benefit levels. The locally engaged staff has had several reductions in their benefit levels recently and we plan to try and push for a high level of health care coverage and move to a merit-based compensation plan to better serve our local employed staff.

Furthermore, we plan to improve the employment process by reducing recruitment time and improving communication with mission personnel so that they have a broader understanding of Management and HR initiatives. Additionally, we plan to focus on increasing employment diversity throughout the Embassy to have a workforce that better reflects Colombia and better serves the Embassy's needs. We will do this through education internally and outreach externally as well as using social media to reach broader audiences and communities when advertising for jobs.