

CAPSTONE 19-4 WHEM Field Study 29 July- 9 August 2019



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THE WORLD WITH COMMANDERS' AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY



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WORLD CYLINDRICAL PROJECTION

THE REPRESENTATION OF BOUNDARIES IS NOT NECESSARILY AUTHORITY.

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General Terrence J. O'Shaughnessy

Commander

North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and
United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM).

General Terrence J. O'Shaughnessy is Commander, North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM). NORAD conducts aerospace warning, aerospace control, and maritime warning in the defense of North America. USNORTHCOM partners to conduct homeland defense, civil support, and security cooperation to defend and secure the United States and its interests.

General O'Shaughnessy is a 1986 distinguished graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy. He has commanded at the squadron, group and wing levels, including the 57th Wing, Nellis AFB, Nevada, the 35th Fighter Wing at Misawa AB, Japan, and the 613th Air and Space Operations Center, Hickam AFB, Hawaii. General O'Shaughnessy has served as the U.S. Pacific Command Director of Operations responsible for joint operations in a region encompassing more than half the globe and 36 nations. General O'Shaughnessy's joint experience also extends to his time as the Joint Staff J5 Deputy Director for Politico-Military Affairs for Asia where he shaped regional planning and policy in the Asia-Pacific and Central Asia regions, supporting the commanders of U.S. Pacific Command and U.S. Central Command. Prior to his current assignment, General O'Shaughnessy was Commander, Pacific Air Forces and Air Component Commander for U.S. Pacific Command, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii; Deputy Commander, United Nations Command Korea; Deputy Commander, U.S. Forces Korea; Commander, Air Component Command, Republic of Korea/U.S. Combined Forces Command; and Commander, 7th Air Force, Pacific Air Forces, Osan Air Base, South Korea. General O'Shaughnessy is a command pilot with more than 3,000 hours in the F-16 Fighting Falcon, including 168 combat hours.

His personal decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters; Legion of Merit with three oak leaf clusters; Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters; Air Medal with oak leaf cluster; Aerial Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster; Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster; Air Force Achievement Medal with two oak leaf clusters.



STATEMENT OF
GENERAL TERRENCE J. O'SHAUGHNESSY, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
COMMANDER
UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND
AND
NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND



BEFORE THE
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
26 FEBRUARY 2019

Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Reed, and distinguished members of the Committee, I am honored to appear today as the Commander of United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) and North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD)—two complementary but distinct commands.

USNORTHCOM is the Geographic Combatant Command laser-focused on defending our homeland from an increasingly assertive set of competitors who are committed to holding the United States at risk in multiple domains. USNORTHCOM is also responsible for defense support of civil authorities (DSCA) and theater security cooperation (TSC) within our area of responsibility. Nested under the broader homeland defense mission, DSCA and TSC play a critical and visible role in protecting our citizens and enhancing security for the United States and our international partners.

NORAD is the bi-national U.S.-Canadian command that deters, detects, and, if necessary, defeats air threats to the United States and Canada while also providing aerospace warning and maritime warning. The six decades of NORAD's unmatched experience and shared history are proving more vital than ever as we face the most complex security environment in generations. This unique and longstanding command serves as both a formidable deterrent to our adversaries and a clear symbol of the unbreakable bond between the United States and Canada.

USNORTHCOM and NORAD are driven by a single unyielding priority: defending the homeland from attack. Revisionist powers Russia and China have changed global strategic dynamics by fielding advanced long-range weapons systems and engaging in increasingly aggressive efforts to expand their global presence and influence, including in the approaches to the United States and Canada. Our competitors currently hold our citizens and national interests

at risk, and we must anticipate attacks against our defense and civilian infrastructure in the event of a conflict. As a result, it is clear that the homeland is no longer a sanctuary.

These shifting global military and political dynamics will be with us for the foreseeable future. Our competitors have fielded weapons systems and employed new methods in a concerted effort to exploit perceived vulnerabilities and erode our strategic advantage. The successful defense of our homeland today relies more than ever on constant vigilance by USNORTHCOM and NORAD, tightly coupled with a reinvigorated emphasis on close integration with our fellow combatant commands, the intelligence community, and our allies and partners. Collectively, these dynamics reinforce the importance of nuclear deterrence to our national security, given that nuclear deterrence backstops all U.S. military operations and diplomacy across the globe.

The threats facing our nation are not hypothetical; our competitors' reach is now global, and they are conspicuously undermining international norms and standards of behavior while possessing the capability to strike targets in North America with both nuclear and advanced non-nuclear weapons launched from well beyond our territory. In light of this reality, the homeland defense mission is more essential than ever, and USNORTHCOM and NORAD must be energized, proactive, and determined to actively shape our strategic environment. Together with our Department of Defense (DOD), interagency, and international partners, we have taken active measures to ensure the homeland defense enterprise is globally integrated, well-exercised, and positioned to take quick, decisive action to protect our interests and preserve the ability to project all of the elements of our national power. And, should deterrence fail, USNORTHCOM and NORAD stand always ready to defeat any threat to our nations.

Our collective ability to confront these challenges is dependent on a national commitment to protecting and defending the homeland. Budget stability and predictability are essential underpinnings of this commitment, and I ask for the committee's support of the President's budget for FY20—and specifically for relief from the budget caps directed in the Budget Control Act of 2011. A return to sequestration will devastate total force readiness and delay or terminate modernization efforts that are necessary to maintaining our strategic and technological advantage. Simply put, sequestration will make it impossible for USNORTHCOM and NORAD to advance necessary homeland defense efforts and shape our changing national security environment as articulated in the National Defense Strategy.

Threat

Russia:

Russia has posed a nuclear threat to North America for over half a century, but has only recently developed and deployed capabilities to threaten us below the nuclear threshold. Russia continues to hone and flex its offensive cyber capabilities, and its new generation of air- and sea-launched cruise missiles feature significantly greater standoff ranges and accuracy than their predecessors, allowing them to strike North America from well outside NORAD radar coverage.

Since 2015, Russia has employed its new air- and sea-launched cruise missiles against anti-regime targets in Syria, providing real-world training for Russian crews and demonstrating its growing precision-strike capabilities to the West. In a parallel effort, Russia has implemented a modernization program for its heavy bombers that will ensure their ability to perform nuclear and non-nuclear deterrence and strike missions in the coming decades.

Russian heavy bombers such as the Tu-95MS BEAR and Tu-160 BLACKJACK continue to conduct regular air patrols in the international airspace along the coastlines of other countries to underscore Russia's capabilities. Russian bomber crews are demonstrating increasing proficiency in their flight activities, developing a new generation of air crews capable of employing this highly visible implement of Russian deterrence and messaging in peacetime, crisis, and war.

Patrols by Russian military aircraft off the coasts of the United States and Canada have grown increasingly complex in recent years. NORAD fighter aircraft routinely intercept Russian military aviation missions inside the U.S. and Canadian Air Defense Identification Zones, and there is no indication that Russian leadership intends to reduce the number of these missions in the near future.

In addition to its highly capable cruise missiles that enable its anti-ship and land-attack missions, Russia has introduced the Severodvinsk-class guided missile submarine, which is armed with advanced land-attack cruise missiles and is much quieter and more lethal than previous generations of Russian attack submarines. Russia's growing non-nuclear capabilities provide Moscow a range of options to dissuade an adversary from escalating and to terminate a conflict on terms favorable to Moscow, increasing the potential for miscalculation or opportunistic actions.

Russia has demonstrated a willingness to conduct disruptive cyberattacks and cyber-enabled influence operations against its competitors, as it demonstrated during the 2016 election cycle in the United States. In a crisis or conflict, we would expect Russia to conduct cyber operations against critical infrastructure in an attempt to compel de-escalation.

In the Arctic, Moscow is planning to deploy surface vessels armed with the modular KALIBR-NK cruise missile system that will offer highly precise land-attack capabilities and

introduce a new cruise missile threat from our northern approaches. Separately, Moscow continues to bolster its military defenses in the Arctic with the deployment of a K-300P Bastion coastal defense cruise missile system on the New Siberian Islands, significantly increasing Russia's ability to defend and control a large stretch of the Northern Sea Route.

Finally, Russia is developing multiple weapon systems specifically designed to circumvent U.S. missile defenses and hold our homeland at risk. This includes the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM)-delivered AVANGARD hypersonic glide vehicle, which was highlighted in a speech by Vladimir Putin in March 2018 and is expected to become operational in the next few years, complicating our missile warning mission.

China:

China is pursuing a comprehensive military modernization program that includes a rapid expansion of its strategic nuclear capabilities while working to improve the survivability of its nuclear forces and increase their ability to ensure a credible second-strike capability. Over the last decade, China has supplemented its modest silo-based ICBM force with dozens of road-mobile ICBMs capable of delivering multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles that could significantly increase the number of survivable warheads available for a retaliatory strike. During that same timeframe, China operationalized its first class of ballistic missile submarines, adding a second leg to its strategic deterrent. China maintains its longstanding no-first-use nuclear policy, but its growing nuclear, conventional, and cyber capabilities are significant.

China's military strategy and ongoing People's Liberation Army (PLA) reforms reflect the abandonment of its historically land-centric mentality, as evidenced by emerging doctrinal references to strategies that would move potential conflicts away from Chinese territory, suggesting that PLA strategists envision an increasingly global role for their military.

On the economic front, China plans to invest heavily in infrastructure projects in Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Africa through its Belt and Road Initiative in a major effort to develop stronger economic ties with other countries and shape their interests to align with China's, simultaneously seeking to deter confrontation or international criticism of China's approach to sensitive issues.

In the cyber domain, Chinese leaders view computer network operations as a low-cost deterrent that demonstrates capabilities and resolve to an adversary and allows them to manage the escalation of a conflict by targeting critical military and civilian infrastructure. Ongoing military reforms are aimed at accelerating the incorporation of information systems that enable forces and commanders to carry out missions and tasks more effectively.

Advanced Threat Technologies:

Defending the United States and Canada against long-range weapons systems capable of striking targets in the homeland is a major focus of both USNORTHCOM and NORAD. Russian aircraft and submarines are now armed with long-range cruise missiles designed to evade radar detection, while both Russia and China are developing and testing maneuverable hypersonic glide vehicles. In the cyber domain, our adversaries continue their non-stop efforts to penetrate defense and civilian networks. Collectively, these advanced technologies could be capable of creating strategic effects with non-nuclear weapons, potentially affecting national decision making and limiting response options in both peacetime and crisis.

North Korea:

After decades of research and development activity marked more by failure than success, North Korea's ICBM program turned the corner in 2017 when North Korea successfully flight-tested multiple ICBMs capable of ranging the continental United States and detonated a

thermonuclear device, increasing the destructive yield of its weapons by a factor of ten.

Following these successes, Kim Jong Un declared the completion of his nuclear ICBM research and development program, implying the production and deployment of these systems would soon follow.

Kim Jong Un developed these strategic weapons to deter the U.S. from overthrowing his regime, and he almost certainly has plans to use them against our Homeland should a conflict erupt on the Peninsula. Meanwhile, North Korea's cyber capabilities continue to grow, as does the country's willingness to employ them during peacetime, as North Korea demonstrated by its cyber attacks on Sony Pictures in 2014.

Iran:

Iran is not yet able to strike the United States with strategic weapons, and its leaders have declared a unilateral 2000 kilometer range restriction that limits its missile force to threatening only regional targets in the Near East. Iran's SIMORGH space launch vehicle has yet to successfully place a satellite in orbit, but its most recent launch in January 2019 demonstrated continued progress on long-range missile technologies. Although we have no information to indicate that Iran intends to test and deploy an ICBM, the SIMORGH would be capable of ICBM ranges if configured for that purpose, and progress on the vehicle could enable Iran to field an ICBM in as little as a few years if its leaders chose to pursue that objective.

However, Iran has the largest ballistic missile arsenal in the region and has expended significant resources on its space launch and civil nuclear capabilities that could enable it to develop a nuclear-armed ICBM relatively quickly if its leaders chose to do so. In the meantime, Iran retains the ability to conduct attacks abroad via covert operations, terrorist proxies, and its growing cyber capabilities. Iran considers disruptive and destructive cyberspace operations as a

valid instrument of statecraft and a means of imposing costs on its adversaries, even during peacetime.

Violent Extremist Organizations:

The terrorist threat to our homeland has grown more diffuse, typified by simple attacks inspired from afar and carried out by individuals or small networks that are difficult to detect and interdict. Foreign terrorist groups remain committed to attacking the United States, either directly or by inspiring homegrown violent extremists to act in their stead. Despite their territorial losses, the Islamic State and their counterparts in al-Qa'ida remain highly adaptive foes committed to attacking the United States.

Commercial aviation persists as a preferred target, probably because of the potential for large numbers of casualties, economic damage, and widespread media coverage generated by such attacks. I am concerned that terrorists could also continue to pursue 9/11-style fly-and-crash attacks or the use of unmanned aerial systems against soft targets. Meanwhile, terrorists continue to target U.S. military personnel both on and off base, compounding our force protection challenges.

Defending the Homeland

Homeland defense is USNORTHCOM's essential mission and the number one priority of the DOD per the 2018 National Defense Strategy. In light of the complex and significant threats to our homeland, USNORTHCOM and NORAD take assertive, proactive measures each day to shape our strategic environment, deter aggression, and ensure that we are always ready to defeat any adversary should deterrence fail. As the Commander of USNORTHCOM and NORAD, I view everything the commands do through the lens of homeland defense, and I am committed to

ensuring that each of our missions help to preserve decision space and maintain the ability for our national leaders to project power and exert influence in the best interest of our nations.

In pursuit of their own perceived national and ideological interests, our competitors have developed advanced capabilities and demonstrated their intent to hold our homeland at risk in multiple domains and along numerous avenues of approach to North America. In light of that reality, we simply do not have the luxury of waiting for others to act before we formulate a response. Instead, USNORTHCOM and NORAD work constantly to shape our theater while making it obvious to potential adversaries that they will face overlapping dilemmas and extraordinary costs should they choose to challenge us. This active and continuous enterprise requires strong relationships and close coordination with our fellow combatant commands, the military Services, the U.S. Federal interagency community, and our international allies and partners.

The diverse threats arrayed against the United States and Canada challenge our defenses in a number of domains and along multiple avenues of approach. The men and women of USNORTHCOM and NORAD work around the clock to monitor those approaches and are ready to respond at a moment's notice should our adversaries chose to challenge our defenses.

Ballistic Missile Defense:

USNORTHCOM continues to prioritize our mission to defend the United States against potential intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) attacks from North Korea and Iran, should Iran develop that capability. I remain cautiously optimistic that the ongoing negotiations will lead North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons and ICBM programs. But, in the meantime, I continue to emphasize the necessity of fielding improved discriminating radars, a more

survivable sensor network, and improving the reliability and lethality of our interceptor fleet in order to remain well ahead of North Korea or Iran's capability to strike the defended area.

I am confident in the ability of the Ground-based Midcourse Defense System to defend the United States against ICBMs fired from North Korea or Iran, if Iran develops an ICBM, but that confidence is contingent on our continued pursuit of system-wide enhancements to outpace our adversaries' rapid technological advancements.

The success of the Ballistic Missile Defense mission is also dependent on strong cooperation between USNORTHCOM as the supported warfighting command and the technical experts of the Missile Defense Agency (MDA). The MDA Director, Lt Gen Sam Greaves, is an outstanding partner, and I am grateful to him and the entire MDA team for their dedicated support of this enormously complex, no-fail mission. I fully support MDA's plans to field the Long-Range Discriminating Radar, Homeland Defense Radar-Hawaii, and Pacific Radar, along with the Redesigned Kill Vehicle and a selectable 2- or 3- stage interceptor booster. Additionally, I believe we must pursue space-based sensors to detect and track advanced threats from Russia and China. Each of these improvements to our sensor network and interceptor fleet will help to ensure our ability to defend the United States against an ICBM attack now and into the foreseeable future.

Going forward, advanced technologies such as space-based sensors and directed-energy missile defense weapons systems show significant promise—and will, in fact, become a necessity in the foreseeable future in order to defend the homeland against a rapidly developing missile threat. At present, I believe the DOD is striking an effective balance between ensuring our ability to defend against current and near-term threats while simultaneously investing in the research and development of advanced technologies capable of defeating future threats. This

vision for meeting anticipated requirements is well articulated in the recently published Missile Defense Review, and I fully support the plan for defending the homeland.

Arctic Northern Approaches:

It has become clear that defense of the homeland depends on our ability to detect and defeat threats operating both *in* the Arctic and passing *through* the Arctic. Russia's fielding of advanced, long-range cruise missiles capable of flying through the northern approaches and striking targets in the United States and Canada has emerged as the dominant military threat in the Arctic, while diminished sea ice and the potential for competition over resources present overlapping challenges in this strategically significant region. Meanwhile, China has declared that it is not content to remain a mere observer in the Arctic and has taken action to normalize its naval and commercial presence in the region in order to increase its access to lucrative resources and shipping routes.

I view the Arctic as the front line in the defense of the United States and Canada, and as the DOD Advocate for Arctic Capabilities and the Combatant Commander responsible for defending the approaches to the homeland, I constantly assess the changing environmental and strategic conditions throughout the region—across borders and operational boundaries—in an ongoing, active, and collaborative effort to mitigate the risks associated with increased civilian and military presence in the northern approaches to North America.

The effort to rapidly adapt to the evolving strategic landscape and associated challenges in the Arctic includes a deliberate and ongoing effort to fully assess our collective missions and associated requirements in the region. As one key example of those ongoing assessments, in 2018, USNORTHCOM planners conducted a Homeland Defense Mission Analysis for the Arctic Region. This comprehensive, classified assessment of our capability to operate in the far north

revalidated a number of known capability gaps in the region and provided an updated overview of current and future requirements.

As confirmed by our Mission Analysis, civil and military operations in the Arctic continue to be impeded by limited communications capability, harsh environmental conditions, and vast distances between population centers. Improving communications and domain awareness in the region are among my top priorities for the region, and the DOD and the military Services have demonstrated their support of those requirements through investment in programs such as the Multi User Objective System (MUOS)—a satellite-based communications network that significantly expands the ability of U.S. and Canadian assets to operate in the far north.

To detect and track potential airborne threats, to include Russian long-range bombers and cruise missiles, USNORTHCOM and NORAD both rely on radar systems such as the North Warning System (NWS), a network of aerospace surveillance radars in northern Canada. In August 2018, NORAD, working in close coordination with USNORTHCOM, the Canadian NORAD Region, and the U.S. Navy's Naval Air Warfare Center, conducted an operational assessment of the NWS against representative targets, and the data collected from the test will inform the design for the air domain defense of the United States and Canada for years to come.

And, in recognition that the number of military and civilian activities in Alaska and the Canadian Arctic will only continue to grow, USNORTHCOM is working hand-in-glove with the U.S. Air Force and the National Guard Bureau (NGB) to procure additional Arctic Sustainment Packages (ASPs) for use by the Alaska National Guard. Each ASP is a palletized, air-droppable shelter kit that provides shelter, heat, and other life support capability for several weeks in Arctic environments in the event that weather or other environmental factors delay a rescue operation.

The ability of the joint force to fight and win in the extreme cold and isolation of the far north increasingly depends on placing specialized technology in the hands of military personnel who routinely train and operate in the region. Fortunately, there are units and DOD installations who are already well positioned to share that expertise. Essential experience resides in the units stationed in the far north—from the airborne brigade and fighter wings stationed in Alaska to the LC-130 Skibird pilots and crewmembers of the New York Air National Guard, we have a solid foundation to build on as we continue to increase Arctic experience across the force.

The military Services have committed to building on that that foundational experience and expertise through a number of efforts that will further the ability of the joint force to operate, fight, and win in the far north. In a key example, between 3,000 and 5,000 personnel will participate in the next iteration of USNORTHCOM's premier Arctic exercise, ARCTIC EDGE 2020, more than doubling the number of troops who participated in 2018. Arctic Edge 2020 will take advantage of the vast training area and unmatched training opportunities afforded by the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) and will integrate personnel and platforms from all four Services—to include ground, air, and cyber operations. This deliberate evolution sends the clear signal that USNORTHCOM, strongly supported by the Services, is fundamentally committed to expanding the ability of the joint force to defend our Arctic approaches and our vital interests in the region.

Air Domain:

Variants of the advanced cruise missiles that could fly through our northern approaches also present a threat along our coasts. Russian Severodvinsk-class submarines are capable of firing low radar cross section cruise missiles against critical targets along our coasts. This emerging threat requires advanced capabilities to ensure surveillance, detection, identification,

targeting, and destruction to protect the homeland and key strategic targets in the United States and Canada.

The Homeland Defense Design will be a phased approach to employ advanced detection and tracking technologies to defeat a cruise missile attack against the homeland. However, the rapidity of our competitors' development of advanced cruise missile technology demands a continued, aggressive, and focused commitment to ensure our ability to defeat a cruise missile attack.

In addition, small unmanned aerial systems (UAS) continue to present challenges to safety and security within U.S. airspace. NORAD has the capability to address larger UAS, but systems that are readily available in the commercial marketplace are difficult to detect and track due to their small size and relatively slow speeds. While we work to enhance our ability to detect, and—if necessary—neutralize potential threat UAS in the national airspace, the authorities provided by the FY19 Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Bill that extend counter-UAS authorities to the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) reflect the need for a whole-of-government approach to address the potential security challenges presented by this rapidly emerging technology.

As with emerging military cruise missile technologies, the proliferation of small UAS requires us to consider new approaches for how best to defend the homeland. We cannot address these new capabilities with outdated technology or with old ways of thinking, and I look forward to working with the Committee to develop innovative technology and strategies to ensure that we are capable of outpacing the threat.

Southern Approaches:

The threats to our nation from our southern border are not military in nature, but they are significant and deadly. The flow of illegal narcotics into the United States continues to inflict a heavy toll on our citizens, as clearly demonstrated by the 72,000 Americans who were killed by drug overdoses in 2017. USNORTHCOM is proud of our role in the counter narcotics fight in support of Federal law enforcement and our military partners in Mexico and The Bahamas as they battle transnational criminal organizations that have inflicted such harm on both sides of the border.

USNORTHCOM personnel actively collaborate with partners throughout the U.S. interagency and in Mexico to illuminate the networks used by the cartels to transport drugs, victims of human trafficking, and other illicit goods in a strategic effort to strike at the heart of these massive and well-financed criminal enterprises.

On the U.S. side of our southern border, USNORTHCOM's subordinate element Joint Task Force North (JTF-N) supports U.S. Federal law enforcement efforts to interdict narcotics shipments into the United States. Employing military personnel, unique technologies, and specialized skill sets developed in contingency operations overseas, JTF-N provides critical support to Federal law enforcement interdiction missions operations.

Theater Security Cooperation

USNORTHCOM's theater security cooperation mission pays enormous dividends for our defense of the homeland as well as for our relationships with our international partners. These collaborative efforts with our international partners seek to sustain our strategic advantage in the

Western Hemisphere while always seeking to strengthen our regional security and reinforce our defense in depth throughout the region.

In particular, USNORTHCOM's relationship with the Mexican military is strong. USNORTHCOM supports Mexico's efforts to expand its role as a regional defense and security leader. The ties between USNORTHCOM and our Mexican military partners are close at every level of leadership and continue to grow thanks to concerted efforts by commanders on both sides of the border. I am proud of the fact that every Mexican Marine has trained with a U.S. Marine, just as I am honored to share close relationships with the Mexican Secretary of National Defense (SEDENA), General Luis C. Sandoval Gonzalez, and the Secretary of the Navy (SEMAR), Admiral Jose Rafael Ojeda Duran. I am proud to work with partners who share our commitment to regional stability and security throughout North America.

The Bahamas remains a willing partner with whom the United States enjoys a deep and long-standing bi-national relationship, and our shared theater security cooperation focus is improving The Bahamas' air and maritime domain awareness. In 2018, the United States provided the first maritime surveillance system to The Bahamas and secured funding for two more systems that will be networked with existing surveillance assets, generating a significant increase to The Bahamas' maritime surveillance capacity. The Bahamas remains a strong partner in the defense of North America as they invest heavily in new capabilities that will make them a more significant contributor to our shared defense and security.

Finally, Canada continues to be our indispensable partner in reinforcing the defense and security of our countries. USNORTHCOM's security cooperation activities with Canada are extensive and reflect many years of shared effort and common cause with our allies to the North. In June 2017, Canada announced a new approach to defense investment that will provide

significant benefit to the common defense of our nations. This approach, titled “Strong, Secure, Engaged,” acknowledges the significant shifts in the global strategic environment and commits accordingly to an active and renewed NORAD partnership and investments that will directly benefit the security of both our nations.

In a military-to-military context, the tri-command partnership between USNORTHCOM, NORAD, and the Canadian Joint Operations Command is of tremendous importance to all three commands. The bond between these organizations reflects the cooperative approach we share with our Canadian partners as we work together to outpace the threats arrayed against the United States and Canada, maintain a credible deterrent, and take steps forward together to ensure the combined defense of our nations.

Defense Support of Civil Authorities

USNORTHCOM’s mission to provide defense support of civil authorities provides military personnel and assets to support Federal law enforcement and disaster relief agencies in times of need. In the nine months since I assumed command, USNORTHCOM has supported DHS, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and the National Interagency Firefighting Center during hurricane relief operations, wildland firefighting missions, interagency collaboration to ensure that our elections were free from cyber interference, and presidentially-directed efforts to secure our southern border. For each of these events, USNORTHCOM rapidly delivered military-unique capabilities and skilled personnel to augment and enable our Federal partners.

In September 2018, Hurricane Florence provided USNORTHCOM the first opportunity to execute the Commander of USNORTHCOM’s expanded role as the DOD Synchronizer for

defense support of civil authorities. The consolidation of the DOD effort under one Synchronizer enabled significantly improved coordination and collaboration across the entire spectrum of the DOD response and consolidated the responsibility for collecting and delivering timely and accurate information to the Secretary of Defense. In addition, the DOD Synchronizer role increased the coordination and information exchange amongst the DOD agencies with major roles in the response, to include the National Guard Bureau, the Defense Logistics Agency, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM).

USNORTHCOM support of hurricane relief operations had barely ended last fall, when, in response to requests for assistance from DHS and U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Command was directed by the Secretary of Defense to deploy active duty military personnel and equipment to support Federal law enforcement operations along the southern border of the United States. Beginning in October 2018, this operation has demonstrated the close partnership between USNORTHCOM and our Federal law enforcement partners, as well as the outstanding support provided by each of the military Services and the Joint Staff in response to a USNORTHCOM request for forces.

Within hours of notification, Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines from installations across the United States were on the move to support our DHS partners, and they have performed their assigned tasks with extraordinary professionalism and skill. From laying over 70 miles of concertina wire to reinforce existing border obstacles, flying support missions, delivering medical care, and providing security, the USNORTHCOM border support mission has improved our nation's border security while providing our forces with training and real-world experience that will serve them well in both peace and conflict.

Every mission presents unique challenges, and each is dependent on collaboration, strong partnerships, and close relationships throughout the Federal interagency and between the active and reserve component. In a key demonstration of the strong collaboration between the components in the combined response to Hurricane Florence, North Carolina and South Carolina established Dual Status Commanders and successfully integrated National Guard and Title 10 personnel and assets in a wide variety of rescue and recovery operations.

I am proud of the great partnership demonstrated by USNORTHCOM and the National Guard Bureau before and during each of those responses. My friend and wingman Gen Joe Lengyel and the citizen Airmen and Soldiers he leads are a tremendous group of professionals who proved time and again their selflessness and readiness to respond whenever and wherever needed.

While hurricane relief operations may have been the most visible DSCA mission for the Command over the last several years, USNORTHCOM serves as the designated DSCA synchronizer for the DOD in a variety of other efforts. In a notable example of innovative interagency collaboration, prior to the 2018 midterm election season, USNORTHCOM partnered with U.S. Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM) to determine how best to provide DOD cyber support to the DHS-led mission to secure the elections infrastructure. The partnership between USCYBERCOM, USNORTHCOM, the National Guard Bureau, and DHS was groundbreaking, and each of the agencies involved learned a number of important lessons for future interagency efforts.

Interagency cooperation in the defense of our critical cyber infrastructure will remain an enduring necessity as networks throughout the United States continue to weather near-constant attacks and infiltration attempts. In light of this need, I am grateful to the Congress for its strong

support for the establishment of the DHS Cyber Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA). Although CISA was only established in November 2018, it is already clear that we have an energized, high-level interagency partner dedicated to our shared mission to address and mitigate cyber threats against civilian networks and critical infrastructure. Within weeks of its establishment, CISA assigned a senior liaison officer to the USNORTHCOM headquarters to work alongside the rest of our whole-of-government team, and I look forward to many years of close collaboration with our newest partner in the defense of our nation's vital interests.

Whenever our assistance is requested by our Federal partners, USNORTHCOM relies on the military Services to provide trained and ready personnel and assets whenever and wherever needed. As we saw firsthand in the days before Hurricane Florence made landfall in September 2018 and in the initial stages of our support to U.S. Customs and Border Protection along the southern border, the Joint Staff and all four of the military Services worked around the clock to identify, source, and deploy the personnel and equipment necessary to fulfill all anticipated requests for support from our Federal partners.

Due to the unhesitating support of the Joint Staff and each of the Service Chiefs, the requested forces were on station and ready to execute their support missions in a matter of hours and days following notification. In both scenarios, the remarkable men and women of our armed forces were ready to deploy on short notice and executed their assigned missions thanks to their training, professionalism, and discipline. USNORTHCOM will continue to work closely with the Joint Staff and the Services to exercise our response forces in anticipation of future needs, and I am grateful to the Committee for your ongoing support of the Services' modernization and readiness requirements.

United Efforts to Defend the Homeland

USNORTHCOM's defense of the homeland would not be possible without cooperation, collaboration, and a fundamental commitment to mission success across a remarkable interagency and intergovernmental enterprise. Over 27 unique Federal agencies, from DHS to the Federal Aviation Administration and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, have permanently-assigned liaisons and representatives in our USNORTHCOM and NORAD headquarters in Colorado Springs. Nearly 150 Canadian military personnel are assigned to NORAD billets in our headquarters, and we are proud to host two permanently assigned Mexican military liaison officers, along with liaison officers and representatives from a host of DOD agencies and commands to include the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), the Defense Intelligence Agency, and U.S. Strategic Command. National Guard personnel are also fully integrated into our headquarters staff and maintain a full-time office specifically dedicated to coordinating actions between our headquarters and the National Guard Bureau. The National Guard continues to be an essential and integral part of our USNORTHCOM and NORAD team.

Our command's integration with the U.S. interagency community is a requirement for success, which is why those interagency representatives are not simply assigned to the headquarters; they are truly integrated members of the USNORTHCOM team. Whenever possible, they are invited to participate in command briefings and updates, and I rely on their subject matter expertise and professional judgment on a daily basis as we work hand in glove to address the challenges and threats facing the command.

The commitment to cooperation shared by each of our interagency partners has contributed immeasurably to the broader USNORTHCOM mission. For example, during the 2018 hurricane season, DTRA provided around-the-clock modeling support that located all of

the hazardous material production and storage facilities in the storms' paths and allowed our planners to develop well-researched plans to mitigate potential impacts if the sites were damaged.

Our collective ability to meet threats head on and to provide a rapid, effective response in the wake of natural and manmade disasters is absolutely dependent on constant communication, routine interagency exercises, and close working relationships between each and every one of the civilian and military professionals who strive each day to keep our nation and our citizens safe from harm.

From USNORTHCOM's components and subordinates to NORAD, which has served as the absolute gold standard for international collaboration for over 60 years, and our locktight relationship with FEMA, we work every day to exercise the interagency and inter-DOD processes required to ensure that we are always ready to deliver the right assets in the right place at the right time to meet whatever mission we are assigned. To ensure USNORTHCOM and our interagency partners are ready at a moment's notice in the event of a crisis, we conduct regular command-led exercises in each of our mission sets, such as ARDENT SENTRY for DSCA and VIGILANT SHIELD for homeland defense.

Finally, I would like to make special note of USNORTHCOM's support to the state funeral of former President George H. W. Bush in December 2018. The men and women of USNORTHCOM's Joint Task Force – National Capital Region, under the superb leadership of MG Mike Howard, demonstrated exemplary professionalism and decorum throughout a three-day program in Texas and Washington, DC. The flawless execution of this mission was made possible by many months of rigorous planning, close communication with President Bush and his family, coordination with dozens of Federal, state, and local agencies, and multiple rehearsals

to ensure no detail was overlooked. USNORTHCOM's support of this historic event was both a profound honor for all involved and a conspicuous example of the no-fail nature of all USNORTHCOM missions.

Conclusion

Today and every day, the men and women of USNORTHCOM and NORAD are standing watch over our homeland. These dedicated professionals work around the clock surveilling our skies, monitoring our oceans, and ensuring that we are always ready to counter a staggering range of threats to our homeland, ranging from intercontinental ballistic missiles and long-range bombers to lethal opioids and cyberattacks. The strategic and technological innovation that will be required to defend our nation in the coming years depends entirely on the quality and experience of our people.

Today and always, our people are our strength, and I am proud to lead the outstanding Airmen, Sailors, Soldiers, Marines, and civilians of USNORTHCOM and NORAD. While the threats facing our nation can be daunting, I have absolute confidence in our ability to meet any challenge and defeat any adversary because of the dedicated professionals I am honored to lead. We Have the Watch.

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NORAD and USNORTHCOM



Command Narrative

February 27, 2017

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Two Commands... Common Purpose

“We Have the Watch.” NORAD and USNORTHCOM’s motto highlights the sacred obligation of both commands: the common defense of Canada and the United States. Each day, NORAD and USNORTHCOM defend our nations, our peoples...our families. Our shared purpose of common defense is the very reason our governments founded these two commands: NORAD, during the Cold War, and USNORTHCOM following the September 11th, 2001 attacks. The commands are proud of their histories, but the preservation of freedom demands that we not rest there. Looking to the future, we will continue to adapt and evolve to meet ever-changing threats.

Together, NORAD and USNORTHCOM, in collaboration with key partners, defend Canada and the United States through a flexible, and resilient defense enterprise. Underpinning our success are strong relationships, ready commands, and responsive capabilities, fulfilling the commands' roles in the shared responsibility of the defense of our nations.

Strategic Environment

The U.S. Department of Defense has identified five principal threats that represent varying security risks: Russia, China, North Korea, Iran and terrorism. Canada and the United States continue to work together to ensure the defense of our two nations. NORAD and USNORTHCOM must partner globally and be prepared to defeat both nation-state and terrorist threats.

The Arctic is of national security interest to both the U.S. and Canada. Changing Arctic conditions - receding seasonal sea ice and increased military and non-military activity - necessitate a measured and responsible approach to enable routine and contingency operations in the region across NORAD and USNORTHCOM mission sets.

Americans expect that their military will support them during their time of need. USNORTHCOM’s civil support missions involve a complex mixture of state and federal interagency organizations, all with different missions, authorities, and cultures. In this domestic mission space, the Department of Defense and USNORTHCOM play a supporting role to civil authorities. It is essential that members of USNORTHCOM understand the complexities of this domestic environment and our unique roles, authorities, and limitations as a supporting mission partner.

Our other USNORTHCOM regional partners, Mexico and The Bahamas, face the shared challenges of illicit trafficking and criminal violence. The large and capable organized criminal networks that drive these activities challenge regional security and stability. While the focus of our near-term security cooperation efforts with Mexico and The Bahamas address these challenges, longer-term goals seek to enable those partners to increase their contributions to regional security.

Strategic Framework

NORAD and USNORTHCOM’s strategic framework — **Roles, Relationships, Readiness, and Responsiveness** — is a way of thinking about our missions. The four components of the framework provide focus and direction to both commands and leverage the strengths of an integrated and combined headquarters.

Roles: NORAD and USNORTHCOM's defensive missions are complementary. NORAD defends Canada and the United States against air-breathing aerospace threats, and conducts Integrated Tactical Warning and Attack Assessment (ITW/AA) for all aerospace threats. NORAD also warns each nation of potential maritime threats. USNORTHCOM's defense responsibilities focus on countering ballistic missile threats and threats in the maritime and land domains. Together, these commands contribute complementary, multi-domain defensive capabilities towards the defense of Canada and the United States. There is, however, complexity in this two-command structure in that many of us have both distinct NORAD and USNORTHCOM roles. Consequently, we must approach our defense responsibilities with precision and a clear understanding of what command authority we are leveraging to accomplish the mission. In addition to its defensive mission, USNORTHCOM conducts Defense Support of Civil Authorities and Theater Security Cooperation missions.

Relationships: NORAD and USNORTHCOM maintain relationships to enable accomplishment of our missions. The NORAD and USNORTHCOM defensive missions closely align with those of our Tri-Command partner, the Canadian Joint Operations Command. The commands' relationships with other geographic and functional combatant commands enable a defense in depth that further protects Canada and the United States. USNORTHCOM's relationships with key interagency partners enables whole of government approaches both to protect the United States and to respond in crisis. USNORTHCOM's increasingly robust relationships with Mexico and The Bahamas enhance each country's capacity to contribute to regional security.

Readiness: NORAD and USNORTHCOM must have the right mix of trained and ready forces and capabilities available on timelines to meet our mission requirements. Appropriate access, basing, and infrastructure further enable readiness. Integrating our planning with mission partners readies NORAD and USNORTHCOM for defensive missions and USNORTHCOM for civil support missions. Realistic training and exercises prepare staffs and units to execute their missions in the ambiguity of a crisis.

Responsiveness: In addition to trusted relationships and high readiness, NORAD and USNORTHCOM require appropriate command authorities and the ability to anticipate requirements in order to respond. Although not all authorities will be available pre-crisis, we must establish processes that enable rapid approval at the time of need. For our defense missions, we must anticipate actions based on an understanding of the threats and the environment. For USNORTHCOM's civil support and security cooperation missions, we can anticipate the needs of our partners by developing a clear understanding of what they aim to achieve and how we can contribute to their success.

Strategic Approach

Deter and counter nation-state threats and enhance the commands' ability to defend: NORAD's and USNORTHCOM's nation-state security challenges are exceptional in that the threat scenarios we face would likely start as regional conflicts in other theaters and subsequently escalate to the point that they threaten Canada and the United States. This reality demands strong partnerships with other commands to create the depth necessary to defend successfully. Combined and complementary NORAD and USNORTHCOM

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defensive capabilities must counter threats across multiple domains, with a critical focus on ballistic missile defense, aerospace defense, maritime defense, and land defense. As threats continue to evolve, we must pursue innovative ways to defend our nations.

Partner to counter threat networks: As threat networks continue to evolve, so too must the commands' approach to countering them. Building friendly networks – with other Department of Defense, federal interagency, and regional partners – to identify, illuminate, and disrupt threat networks will be vital. Although the primary aim of these activities is to protect Canada and the United States from terrorist threat networks, they also include providing support for regional partners to mitigate the adverse effects of transnational organized criminal networks whose size, scope, and capabilities threaten security interests. In the majority of scenarios, the commands provide timely and effective support to mission partners to enable them to counter terrorist or transnational organized criminal networks and enhance regional security. NORAD and USNORTHCOM must also be prepared, if directed, to counter terrorism directly. In this circumstance, USNORTHCOM will counter terrorist threats on land or at sea and NORAD will counter them in the air.

Respond to crisis in support of mission partners: Manmade and natural disasters pose significant threats to the population and infrastructure of the United States. USNORTHCOM's civil partners are directly responsible for domestic crisis response. To provide timely support to response efforts, USNORTHCOM must maintain trusted partnerships, integrate planning, and rapidly source and deploy capabilities. As a supporting partner in the whole of government response, USNORTHCOM must understand partner authorities and concerns, and create streamlined structures and processes that simplify the delivery of capabilities to our mission partners.

Continue to strengthen regional partners and relationships: The shared interests of Canada and the United States have enabled the development of a security partnership of extraordinary strength. The bi-national ties between the two countries form the foundation for the combined defense of Canada and the United States. Maintaining the strength of this security relationship among NORAD, USNORTHCOM, and Canadian Joint Operations Command is paramount. USNORTHCOM must also continue to strengthen cooperative efforts with Mexico and The Bahamas. Mexico is a trusted and growing partner demonstrating an increased desire to contribute to cooperative defense and regional security. Bahamian capacity building and dedication to regional integration are instrumental in securing maritime approaches to the United States.

Conclusion

NORAD and USNORTHCOM — two distinct commands with common purpose — fulfill complementary roles to **deter and counter nation-state and terrorist threats**. The relationships of each command help **support security partners** and **strengthen partnerships and security** throughout the region. As NORAD and USNORTHCOM increase readiness, the ability to support security partners and **respond to crises** also increases. This further enhances each command's ability to **deter and to defend**, and empowers NORAD and USNORTHCOM's capability to protect Canadian and American citizens, their values, and their interests against malign behavior and aggression.

Together, **“We Have the Watch.”**

U.S. Army Col. Paul N. Garcia
Joint Task Force North
Acting Commander

U.S. Army Col. Paul N. Garcia was commissioned an infantry officer upon graduation from the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, in 1992.

His first duty assignment was to Fort Hood, Texas, where he served with 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division as a Bradley platoon leader, scout platoon leader, company executive officer, and assistant battalion operations officer. Following completion of the Infantry Officer's Advanced Course, he was assigned to United States Forces-Korea, where he served as the operations officer for the Secretary Combined-Joint Staff, UNC/CFC/USFK.

Garcia was then assigned to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, where he served as the brigade assistant S3 and B/3-187 IN company commander with 3rd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (AASLT). Following company command, he served as a platoon, company and battalion level observer-controller at the Joint Readiness Training Center. Following CGSC, he was assigned to the 3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, New York, where he served as the squadron executive officer for 3-71 Cavalry, BN S-3 for 1-32 Infantry, and division G3, chief of operations, deploying with the division to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He then served as the aide-de-camp and deputy G3 to the commanding general, United States Army Accessions Command (USAAC) at Fort Monroe, Virginia.



Garcia then commanded the 4th Squadron, 9th US Cavalry Regiment as part of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas, deploying to Diyalla Province, Iraq, in support of Operation New Dawn. Following squadron command, he served as a senior observer-coach/trainer with the Tarantula Team at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California. Following completion of the Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, he served as the G3 for the Joint Modernization Command at Fort Bliss, Texas. He then commanded the 5th Armored Brigade at Fort Bliss as part of Division West – First Army. Garcia is now assigned as the acting commander for Joint Task Force North on Fort Bliss.

Garcia is a graduate of the Command and General Staff College and United States Army War College. He holds a Masters of General Administration from Central Michigan University and a Masters of Strategic Studies from the Army War College.

He is married to the former Melinda Molina of McAllen, Texas. They have two children, Aaron and Karina.

JOINT TASK FORCE NORTH PARTNERS

- **Department of Homeland Security (DHS)**
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)
- Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
- United States Coast Guard (USCG)
- DHS Joint Task Force – West (JTF-W)
- DHS Joint Task Force – East (JTF-E)
- DHS Joint Task Force – Investigations (JTF-I)

Department of Justice

- Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)
- El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC)

High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program

Regional Partnerships

- Caribbean Border Interagency Group (CBIG)
- Corpus Christi Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RECOM)
- New Mexico/West Texas Alliance to Combat Transnational Threats (ACTT)
- Arizona Alliance to Combat Transnational Threats (ACTT)
- California Coastal Regional Coordinating Mechanism (RECOM)
- San Diego Regional Coordination Mechanism (RECOM)

National Guard

- National Guard Bureau (NGB)
- States' National Guard Counter Drug Programs

MILITARY SUPPORT TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

JTF-N missions support counter drug law enforcement agencies with active-duty and Reserve military forces. JTF-N works closely with the National Guard Bureau and states' National Guard counter drug programs to synchronize active-duty and National Guard counter drug support maximizing DoD's contribution. Federal law enforcement partners from the Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice, and High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) programs submit support requests to JTF-N. JTF-N provides operational support based on these requests and a comprehensive threat assessment.

Once a military unit agrees to participate, JTF-N facilitates mission planning and execution with the unit and the supported agency.

JTF-N is an effects multiplier, assisting law enforcement agencies to secure the homeland by providing supplemental and unique capabilities.

NOTE: JTF-N can support any Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security or High Intensity Drug Trafficking area organization or component.

MILITARY OPERATIONAL SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES

In after-action reports, participating military units have repeatedly remarked that JTF-N homeland security support missions are among the best readiness opportunities in which they have ever participated. Missions yield significant real-world operational experience that enhance unit's combat effectiveness against dynamic transnational threats.

Military units are able to exercise 90 percent of their wartime mission tasks in austere environments, which may include desert or mountainous terrain. Military support operations to law enforcement closely mirror duties that units will perform in overseas contingency deployments, to include support civilian authorities.



While executing JTF-N operational missions, units may also concurrently enhance readiness at some of the nation's best ranges located near the mission sites. Moreover, flexibility in mission execution dates allows units to integrate JTF-N missions into their pre-deployment training cycle.

To maximize value to the unit, JTF-N assigns field grade officers as mission planners to assist participating units throughout the mission planning and execution process.

JTF-N normally funds most mission-related costs to include transportation of personnel and equipment, billeting and rations, expendable supplies, and service support contracts required for mission accomplishment.

"I wish we conducted this ground recon mission before our CTC rotation. Our troops would have performed area reconnaissance and security operations at a higher level." -6-1 CAV Commander.

CATEGORIES OF JTF-N SUPPORT TO FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES:

Operational Support

- Air, ground and maritime surveillance radar
- Aviation support missions
- Aviation reconnaissance
- Ground sensor operations
- Ground reconnaissance operations
- Ground transportation
- Unmanned aircraft systems

Engineering Support (Southwest border only)

- Road/bridge construction and improvement
- Border lights installation
- Personnel/vehicle barriers

Intelligence Support

- Intelligence analytic support
- Intelligence preparation of the operational environment
- Geospatial intelligence support
- Reserve intelligence analyst support

General Support

- Transportation
- Tunnel detection
- Sustainment
- Mobile Training Teams/Table Top Exercises

Interagency synchronization

- Cooperative defense – facilitating binational information sharing
- Point of integration operations
- Support interagency planning process

Technology Integration

- Biometrics
- Ground/air/maritime sensor integration
- Information efficiency and networks
- Leverage Department of Defense science and technology investment



"It is an absolute honor to serve as the commander of this great organization which partners with law enforcement professionals and forces from the National Guard to counter transnational criminal organizations and deter the flow of illicit drugs into the United States. I have been involved in counter drug operations for over five years and I have been awed by the dedication and expertise displayed by the individuals and organizations dedicated to this important mission. However, our adversaries are equally determined and they are adaptive."



Drug overdoses are now the leading cause of death among Americans under age 50 with over 60,000 deaths estimated in 2016. These substances sap the strength and intellect of our fellow citizens, lead them to financial and social ruin, and bring violence to our neighborhoods. Further, the potential exists for transnational criminal organizations to develop alliances with terrorist or insurgent groups while sharing infrastructure, financial networks, and logistical corridors – all of which would foster crime, corruption and ever growing regional instability.

The Department of Defense brings hard earned skills and unique capabilities to the fight against these threats. In the process of providing invaluable support to our law enforcement partners, units perform their mission essential tasks, often in an austere expeditionary environment to sustain or improve their readiness for their wartime mission.

Joint Task Force North has proudly supported this mission for nearly 30 years and remains unwavering in our commitment to Protecting the Homeland!"

- Army BG Laura L. Yeager
Commander, Joint Task Force North

JOINT TASK FORCE NORTH
PROTECTING THE HOMELAND

HISTORY

For nearly 30 years, Joint Task Force North (JTF-N) has played an integral role in supporting law enforcement efforts in the nation's counterdrug campaign along the U.S. border.

Based on Fort Bliss, Texas, JTF-N serves as a joint service command comprised of active-duty and Reserve Component Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, Department of Defense (DoD) civilian employees, and contracted support personnel.

JTF-N provides DoD active-duty support to U.S. law enforcement agencies in the identification and interdiction of transnational criminal organizations' activities within and along the nation's borders and entities into the United States.

As an element of U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) and under operational control of U.S. Army North (ARNORTH), JTF-N operates within NORTHCOM's entire area of responsibility – encompassing most of North America and the Caribbean and including air, land and sea approaches.

Over its history, JTF-N has conducted more than 6,400 missions in support of law enforcement agencies. In the last 16 years, it has assisted these agencies in the seizure of over \$15.2 billion in illegal drugs, keeping them off American streets.

Joint Task Force North
Building 11603,
Old Ironsides Drive
Fort Bliss, Texas 79918-0058

To request support or to inquire about training opportunities, please contact:

JTF-N Joint Operations
Coordination Center
915.313.7777

Email:
n.nc.bliss.jtf.n.list-jocc-all-dl@mail.mil

www.jtfn.northcom.mil

October 2017



JOINT TASK FORCE NORTH
PROTECTING THE HOMELAND



MISSION

Joint Task Force North supports federal law enforcement agencies in the conduct of counter drug/counter transnational organized crime operations and facilitates Department of Defense training in the USNORTHCOM area of responsibility to disrupt transnational criminal organizations and deter their freedom of action in order to protect the homeland and increase DoD unit readiness.

Chargé d'Affaires – John S. Creamer



A career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, John Creamer assumed duties as Chargé d'Affaires at U.S. Embassy Mexico City on July 16, 2018. Previously, he served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Cuba, Mexico, Central America, and Western Hemisphere Regional Economic Policy and Summit issues. Mr. Creamer is a career Foreign Service Officer with over 30 years of experience. His overseas tours include service in Nicaragua, South Africa, Haiti, Argentina, Colombia, Brazil, and Bolivia. Mr. Creamer has also served in Washington, DC, as Senior Desk Officer for Brazil, South Africa, and Colombia, Deputy Director of the Office of Andean Affairs, and Executive Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Western

Hemisphere Affairs. Mr. Creamer served as Civilian Deputy to the Commander and Foreign Policy Advisor, U.S. Southern Command, Miami, FL.

Mr. Creamer has been awarded the State Department's Superior Honor Award four times as well as numerous Group awards.

Before joining the Department of State in 1986, Mr. Creamer received a Bachelor's degree in Government from Georgetown University, as well as a Juris Doctor from Georgetown University Law Center. He also holds a Masters in National Security Strategy from the National Defense University. In 1985, Mr. Creamer received a Fulbright Scholarship to Malaysia. He speaks Spanish and Portuguese.



United States Department of State

U.S.-MEXICO RELATIONS

U.S. relations with Mexico are strong and vital. The two countries share a 2,000-mile border with 55 active ports of entry, and bilateral relations between the two have a direct impact on the lives and livelihoods of millions of Americans, whether the issue is trade and economic reform, education exchange, citizen security, drug control, migration, entrepreneurship and innovation, or energy cooperation. The scope of U.S.-Mexican relations is broad and goes beyond diplomatic and official relations. It encompasses extensive commercial, cultural, and educational ties, with some 1.7 billion dollars of two-way trade and hundreds of thousands of legal border crossings each day. In addition, 1.5 million U.S. citizens live in Mexico, and Mexico is the top foreign destination for U.S. travelers.

Bilateral Economic Issues

Mexico is the United States' second-largest export market (after Canada) and third-largest trading partner (after Canada and China). In 2018, two-way trade in goods and services totaled \$678 billion. Mexico's exports rely heavily on supplying the U.S. market, but the country has also sought to diversify its export destinations. About 80 percent of Mexico's exports in 2018 went to the United States. In 2018, Mexico was the third-largest supplier of foreign crude oil to the United States, as well as the largest export market for U.S. refined petroleum products and U.S. natural gas. Top U.S. exports to Mexico include machinery, electrical machinery, vehicles, mineral fuels, and plastics. The stock of foreign direct investment by U.S. companies in Mexico stands at \$109.7 billion, while reciprocal Mexican investment in the United States is \$18 billion.

The United States, Canada, and Mexico cooperate on hemispheric and global challenges, such as managing trans-border infectious diseases and seeking greater cooperation to respond to challenges of transnational organized crime. In 2018, all three countries signed the United States.-Mexico-Canada Agreement to address the needs of the twenty-first century economy.

Mexico is a strong promoter of free trade, maintaining free trade agreements with the most countries of any nation in the world, including pacts with Japan, the EU, and many Latin American partners. In 2012, Mexico joined Chile, Colombia, and Peru to launch an ambitious regional economic integration effort, the Pacific Alliance, focused on liberalizing trade and investment, as well as facilitating the movement of citizens. Eleven Pacific Rim countries, including Mexico, signed the renamed Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership March 8, 2018.

Protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights (IPR) is essential to foster economic growth and innovation. Mexico has seen continued challenges on the IPR front, particularly on enforcement. The 2018 U.S. Trade Representative Special 301 Report, a yearly evaluation of IPR and market access conditions with U.S. trading partners, designated Mexico as a “Watch List” country. Long-awaited updates to Mexico’s copyright and enforcement laws, as well as ineffective IP enforcement, particularly with respect to counterfeit goods and online piracy, remain significant challenges. The United States continues to support and urge Mexico to take the necessary steps to improve the IPR protection and enforcement environment in Mexico.

U.S.-Mexico Border

The border region represents a combined population of approximately 15 million people. Cooperation between the United States and Mexico along our border includes coordinating with state and local officials on cross-border infrastructure, transportation planning, and security, as well as collaboration with institutions that address migration, natural resource, environment, and health issues. In 2010, the United States and Mexico created a high-level Executive Steering Committee for 21st Century Border Management to spur advancements

in promoting a modern, secure, and efficient border. The multi-agency U.S.-Mexico Binational Bridges and Border Crossings Group meets three times a year to further joint initiatives that improve the efficiency of existing crossings and coordinate planning for new ones. The ten U.S. and Mexican border states are active participants in these meetings. We have many mechanisms involving the border region, including Border Master Plans to coordinate infrastructure and development and close collaboration on transportation and customs issues.

The United States and Mexico have a long history of cooperation on environmental and natural resource issues, particularly in the border area, where there are challenges caused by rapid population growth, urbanization, and industrialization. Cooperative activities between the United States and Mexico take place under a number of arrangements, such as the Border 2020 Program; the North American Development Bank; the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation; the Border Health Commission; and a variety of other agreements that address health of border residents, wildlife and migratory birds, national parks, and similar issues. The International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC), created by a treaty between the United States and Mexico, is an international organization responsible for managing a wide variety of water resource and boundary preservation issues.

The two countries also have cooperated on telecommunications services in the border area for more than 50 years. Agreements cover mobile broadband services, including smartphones and similar devices. We continue to hold regular consultations on telecommunications to promote growth in this dynamic sector and to help facilitate compatible telecommunications services in border areas.

Educational and Cultural Exchanges

The United States has a robust series of exchange programs with Mexico. These programs work with young leaders, students, civil society, and entrepreneurs. They assist in English language learning, and advance STEM education, especially for girls. They include music and sports diplomacy, the Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation, leadership

programs like Jóvenes en Acción (Youth in Action), the Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLA), the Study of the U.S. Institutes (SUSI), which target indigenous and Afro-Mexican populations, and English language programs such as the Access program, and English Language Fellows.

The U.S.-Mexico Bilateral Forum on Higher Education, Innovation, and Research expands opportunities for educational exchanges, scientific research partnerships, and cross-border innovation. The Bilateral Forum complements the U.S. 100,000 Strong in the Americas initiative, which seeks to increase student mobility between the United States and the countries of the Western Hemisphere, including Mexico,

The Fulbright program, initiated in Mexico in 1948, is one of the largest in the world. Since the establishment of the binational Fulbright Commission in 1990 with joint U.S. and Mexican funding, more than 3,500 students on both sides of the border have received Fulbright-Garcia Robles scholarships. Fulbright alumni have risen to prominent positions in Mexican business, academics, culture, and politics.

U.S. Security Cooperation with Mexico

Through the Merida Initiative, the United States and Mexico have forged a partnership to combat transnational organized crime and drug trafficking, while strengthening human rights and the rule of law. Merida fosters greater cooperation between U.S. and Mexican law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and judges as they share best practices and expand capacity to track criminals, drugs, arms, and money to disrupt the business model of transnational crime. From 2008-2018, the United States has appropriated \$2.8 billion in equipment, training and capacity building support under the Merida Initiative. Because of our collaboration, our shared border is more secure, information sharing more fluid, and Mexico now has more professionally trained officials and state-of-the-art equipment to confront transnational crime. Our cooperation with Mexico has never been more vital in the fight to combat the deadly threat of illicit fentanyl, heroin, and synthetic drugs. Merida funding has provided training, equipment, and technical assistance to complement Mexico's much larger investment in building the capacity of Mexican institutions to counter

organized crime, uphold the rule of law, and protect our shared border from the movement of illicit drugs, money, and goods.

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) programs under the Merida Initiative support Mexican efforts to address key challenges to improving citizen security. USAID programs help communities resist the effects of crime and violence and support Mexico's implementation of criminal justice constitutional reforms that protect citizens' rights.

Mexico's Membership in International Organizations

Mexico is a strong supporter of the United Nations (UN) and Organization of American States (OAS). Mexico and the United States belong to a number of the same international organizations, including the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); International Energy Agency (IEA); International Monetary Fund (IMF); World Bank (WB); World Trade Organization (WTO); International Maritime Organization (IMO); and the Wassenaar Arrangement on conventional arms.

Bilateral Representation

The Department's Key Officers List includes principal U.S. embassy and consulate officials in Mexico.

Mexico maintains an [embassy](#) in the United States at 1911 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20006 (tel. 202-728-1600).



NORTH AMERICA :: MEXICO

Introduction :: MEXICO

Background:

The site of several advanced Amerindian civilizations - including the Olmec, Toltec, Teotihuacan, Zapotec, Maya, and Aztec - Mexico was conquered and colonized by Spain in the early 16th century. Administered as the Viceroyalty of New Spain for three centuries, it achieved independence early in the 19th century. Elections held in 2000 marked the first time since the 1910 Mexican Revolution that an opposition candidate - Vicente FOX of the National Action Party (PAN) - defeated the party in government, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). He was succeeded in 2006 by another PAN candidate Felipe CALDERON, but Enrique PENA NIETO regained the presidency for the PRI in 2012. Left-leaning antiestablishment politician and former mayor of Mexico City (2000-05) Andres Manuel LOPEZ OBRADOR, from the National Regeneration Movement (MORENA), became president in December 2018.

The global financial crisis in late 2008 caused a massive economic downturn in Mexico the following year, although growth returned quickly in 2010. Ongoing economic and social concerns include low real wages, high underemployment, inequitable income distribution, and few advancement opportunities for the largely indigenous population in the impoverished southern states. Since 2007, Mexico's powerful drug-trafficking organizations have engaged in bloody feuding, resulting in tens of thousands of drug-related homicides.

Geography :: MEXICO

Location:

North America, bordering the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, between Belize and the United States and bordering the North Pacific Ocean, between Guatemala and the United States

Geographic coordinates:

23 00 N, 102 00 W

Map references:

North America

Area:

total: 1,964,375 sq km

land: 1,943,945 sq km

water: 20,430 sq km

country comparison to the world: 15

Area - comparative:

slightly less than three times the size of Texas

Area comparison map:



Land boundaries:

total: 4,389 km

border countries (3): Belize 276 km, Guatemala 958 km, US 3155 km

Coastline:

9,330 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 12 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

contiguous zone: 24 nm

continental shelf: 200 nm or to the edge of the continental margin

Climate:

varies from tropical to desert

Terrain:

high, rugged mountains; low coastal plains; high plateaus; desert

Elevation:

mean elevation: 1,111 m

lowest point: Laguna Salada -10 m

highest point: Volcan Pico de Orizaba 5,636 m

Natural resources:

petroleum, silver, antimony, copper, gold, lead, zinc, natural gas, timber

Land use:

agricultural land: 54.9% (2011 est.)

arable land: 11.8% (2011 est.) / permanent crops: 1.4% (2011 est.) / permanent pasture: 41.7% (2011 est.)

forest: 33.3% (2011 est.)

other: 11.8% (2011 est.)

Irrigated land:

65,000 sq km (2012)

Population distribution:

most of the population is found in the middle of the country between the states of Jalisco and Veracruz; approximately a quarter of the population lives in and around Mexico City

Natural hazards:

tsunamis along the Pacific coast, volcanoes and destructive earthquakes in the center and south, and hurricanes on the Pacific, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean coasts

volcanism: volcanic activity in the central-southern part of the country; the volcanoes in Baja California are mostly dormant; Colima (3,850 m), which erupted in 2010, is Mexico's most active volcano and is responsible for causing periodic evacuations of nearby villagers; it has been deemed a Decade Volcano by the International Association of Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth's Interior, worthy of study due to its explosive history and close proximity to human populations; Popocatepetl (5,426 m) poses a threat to Mexico City; other historically active volcanoes include Barcena, Ceboruco, El Chichon, Michoacan-Guanajuato, Pico de Orizaba, San Martin, Socorro, and Tacana; see note 2 under "Geography - note"

Environment - current issues:

scarcity of hazardous waste disposal facilities; rural to urban migration; natural freshwater resources scarce and polluted in north, inaccessible and poor quality in center and extreme southeast; raw sewage and industrial effluents polluting

rivers in urban areas; deforestation; widespread erosion; desertification; deteriorating agricultural lands; serious air and water pollution in the national capital and urban centers along US-Mexico border; land subsidence in Valley of Mexico caused by groundwater depletion

note: the government considers the lack of clean water and deforestation national security issues

Environment - international agreements:

party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Dumping, Marine Life Conservation, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands, Whaling

signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

Geography - note:

note 1: strategic location on southern border of US; corn (maize), one of the world's major grain crops, almost certainly originated in Mexico

note 2: Mexico is one of the countries along the Ring of Fire, a belt of active volcanoes and earthquake epicenters bordering the Pacific Ocean; up to 90% of the world's earthquakes and some 75% of the world's volcanoes occur within the Ring of Fire

note 3: the Sac Actun cave system at 348 km (216 mi) is the longest underwater cave in the world and the second longest cave worldwide, after Mammoth Cave in the United States (see "Geography - note" under United States)

note 4: the prominent Yucatan Peninsula that divides the Gulf of Mexico from the Caribbean Sea is shared by Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize; just on the northern coast of Yucatan, near the town of Chicxulub (pronounce cheek-sha-loob), lie the remnants of a massive crater (some 150 km in diameter and extending well out into the Gulf of Mexico); formed by an asteroid or comet when it struck the earth 66 million years ago, the impact is now widely accepted as initiating a worldwide climate disruption that caused a mass extinction of 75% of all the earth's plant and animal species - including the non-avian dinosaurs

People and Society :: MEXICO

Population:

125,959,205 (July 2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 11

Nationality:

noun: Mexican(s)

adjective: Mexican

Ethnic groups:

mestizo (Amerindian-Spanish) 62%, predominantly Amerindian 21%, Amerindian 7%, other 10% (mostly European) (2012 est.)

note: Mexico does not collect census data on ethnicity

Languages:

Spanish only 92.7%, Spanish and indigenous languages 5.7%, indigenous only 0.8%, unspecified 0.8% (2005)

note: indigenous languages include various Mayan, Nahuatl, and other regional languages

Religions:

Roman Catholic 82.7%, Pentecostal 1.6%, Jehovah's Witness 1.4%, other Evangelical Churches 5%, other 1.9%, none 4.7%, unspecified 2.7% (2010 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 26.61% (male 17,143,124 /female 16,378,309)

15-24 years: 17.35% (male 11,072,817 /female 10,779,029)

25-54 years: 40.91% (male 24,916,204 /female 26,612,272)

55-64 years: 7.87% (male 4,538,167 /female 5,375,867)

65 years and over: 7.26% (male 4,079,513 /female 5,063,903) (2018 est.)

population pyramid: 

Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 51.4 (2015 est.)

youth dependency ratio: 41.6 (2015 est.)

elderly dependency ratio: 9.8 (2015 est.)

potential support ratio: 10.2 (2015 est.)

Median age:

total: 28.6 years

male: 27.5 years

female: 29.7 years (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 135

Population growth rate:

1.09% (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 101

Birth rate:

18.1 births/1,000 population (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 93

Death rate:

5.4 deaths/1,000 population (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 180

Net migration rate:

-1.8 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 158

Population distribution:

most of the population is found in the middle of the country between the states of Jalisco and Veracruz; approximately a quarter of the population lives in and around Mexico City

Urbanization:

urban population: 80.2% of total population (2018)

rate of urbanization: 1.59% annual rate of change (2015-20 est.)

Major urban areas - population:

21.581 million MEXICO CITY (capital), 5.023 million Guadalajara, 4.712 million Monterrey, 3.097 million Puebla, 2.354 million Toluca de Lerdo, 2.058 million Tijuana (2018)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 1.05 male(s)/female

0-14 years: 1.05 male(s)/female

15-24 years: 1.03 male(s)/female

25-54 years: 0.94 male(s)/female

55-64 years: 0.84 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 0.81 male(s)/female

total population: 0.96 male(s)/female (2018 est.)

Mother's mean age at first birth:

21.3 years (2008 est.)

Maternal mortality rate:

38 deaths/100,000 live births (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 107

Infant mortality rate:

total: 11.3 deaths/1,000 live births

male: 12.6 deaths/1,000 live births

female: 9.8 deaths/1,000 live births (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 125

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 76.3 years

male: 73.5 years

female: 79.2 years (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 89

Total fertility rate:

2.22 children born/woman (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 94

Contraceptive prevalence rate:

66.9% (2015)

Health expenditures:

6.3% of GDP (2014)

country comparison to the world: 101

Physicians density:

2.25 physicians/1,000 population (2016)

Hospital bed density:

1.5 beds/1,000 population (2015)

Drinking water source:

improved:

urban: 97.2% of population

rural: 92.1% of population

total: 96.1% of population

unimproved:

urban: 2.8% of population

rural: 7.9% of population

total: 3.9% of population (2015 est.)

Sanitation facility access:

improved:

urban: 88% of population (2015 est.)

rural: 74.5% of population (2015 est.)

total: 85.2% of population (2015 est.)

unimproved:

urban: 12% of population (2015 est.)

rural: 25.5% of population (2015 est.)

total: 14.8% of population (2015 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

0.3% (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 85

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:

230,000 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 25

HIV/AIDS - deaths:

4,000 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 35

Major infectious diseases:

degree of risk: intermediate (2016)

food or waterborne diseases: bacterial diarrhea and hepatitis A (2016)

vectorborne diseases: dengue fever (2016)

note: active local transmission of Zika virus by Aedes species mosquitoes has been identified in this country (as of August 2016); it poses an important risk (a large number of cases possible) among US citizens if bitten by an infective mosquito; other less common ways to get Zika are through sex, via blood transfusion, or during pregnancy, in which the pregnant woman passes Zika virus to her fetus

Obesity - adult prevalence rate:

28.9% (2016)

country comparison to the world: 29

Children under the age of 5 years underweight:

4.2% (2016)

country comparison to the world: 87

Education expenditures:

5.2% of GDP (2015)

country comparison to the world: 59

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write (2016 est.)

total population: 94.9%

male: 95.8%

female: 94% (2016 est.)

School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):

total: 14 years

male: 14 years

female: 14 years (2016)

Unemployment, youth ages 15-24:

total: 6.9%

male: 6.5%

female: 7.6% (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 157

Government :: MEXICO

Country name:

conventional long form: United Mexican States

conventional short form: Mexico

local long form: Estados Unidos Mexicanos

local short form: Mexico

etymology: named after the Mexica, the largest and most powerful branch of the Aztecs; the meaning of the name is uncertain

Government type:

federal presidential republic

Capital:

name: Mexico City (Ciudad de Mexico)

geographic coordinates: 19 26 N, 99 08 W

time difference: UTC-6 (1 hour behind Washington, DC, during Standard Time)

daylight saving time: +1hr, begins first Sunday in April; ends last Sunday in October

note: Mexico has four time zones

Administrative divisions:

32 states (estados, singular - estado); Aguascalientes, Baja California, Baja California Sur, Campeche, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Colima, Ciudad de Mexico, Durango, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Mexico, Michoacan, Morelos, Nayarit, Nuevo Leon, Oaxaca, Puebla, Queretaro, Quintana Roo, San Luis Potosi, Sinaloa, Sonora, Tabasco, Tamaulipas, Tlaxcala, Veracruz, Yucatan, Zacatecas

Independence:

16 September 1810 (declared independence from Spain); 27 September 1821 (recognized by Spain)

National holiday:

Independence Day, 16 September (1810)

Constitution:

history: several previous; latest approved 5 February 1917

amendments: proposed by the Congress of the Union; passage requires approval by at least two-thirds of the members present and approval by a majority of the state legislatures; amended many times, last in 2019 (2019)

Legal system:

civil law system with US constitutional law influence; judicial review of legislative acts

International law organization participation:

accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations; accepts ICtJ jurisdiction

Citizenship:

citizenship by birth: yes

citizenship by descent only: yes

dual citizenship recognized: not specified

residency requirement for naturalization: 5 years

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal and compulsory

Executive branch:

chief of state: President Andres Manuel LOPEZ OBRADOR (since 1 December 2018); note - the president is both chief of state and head of government

head of government: President Andres Manuel LOPEZ OBRADOR (since 1 December 2018)

cabinet: Cabinet appointed by the president; note - appointment of attorney general, the head of the Bank of Mexico, and senior treasury officials require consent of the Senate

elections/appointments: president directly elected by simple majority popular vote for a single 6-year term; election last held on 1 July 2018 (next to be held in July 2024)

election results: Andres Manuel LOPEZ OBRADOR elected president; percent of vote - Andres Manuel LOPEZ OBRADOR (MORENA) 53.2%, Ricardo ANAYA (PAN) 22.3%, Jose Antonio MEADE Kuribrena (PRI) 16.4%, Jaime RODRIGUEZ Calderon 5.2% (independent), other 2.9%

Legislative branch:

description: bicameral National Congress or Congreso de la Union consists of:

Senate or Camara de Senadores (128 seats; 96 members directly elected in multi-seat constituencies by simple majority vote and 32 directly elected in a single, nationwide constituency by proportional representation vote; members serve 6-year terms)

Chamber of Deputies or Camara de Diputados (500 seats; 300 members directly elected in single-seat constituencies by simple majority vote and 200 directly elected in a single, nationwide constituency by proportional representation vote; members serve 3-year terms)

elections:

Senate - last held on 1 July 2018 (next to be held on 1 July 2024)

Chamber of Deputies - last held on 1 July 2018 (next to be held on 1 July 2021)

election results:

Senate - percent of vote by party - percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - MORENA 58, PAN 22, PRI 14, PRD 9, MC 7, PT 7, PES 5, PVEM 5, PNA/PANAL 1; composition - men 65, women 63, percent of women 49.3%

Chamber of Deputies - percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - MORENA 193, PAN 79, PT 61, PES 58, PRI 42, MC 26, PRD 23, PVEM 17, PNA/PANAL 1; composition - men 259, women 241, percent of women 48.2%; note - total National Congress percent of women 48.4%

note: for the 2018 election, senators will be eligible for a second term and deputies up to 4 consecutive terms

Judicial branch:

highest courts: Supreme Court of Justice or Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nacion (consists of the chief justice and 11 justices and organized into civil, criminal, administrative, and labor panels) and the Electoral Tribunal of the Federal Judiciary (organized into the superior court, with 7 judges including the court president, and 5 regional courts, each with 3 judges)

judge selection and term of office: Supreme Court justices nominated by the president of the republic and approved by two-thirds vote of the members present in the Senate; justices serve 15-year terms; Electoral Tribunal superior and regional court judges nominated by the Supreme Court and elected by two-thirds vote of members present in the Senate;

superior court president elected from among its members to hold office for a 4-year term; other judges of the superior and regional courts serve staggered, 9-year terms

subordinate courts: federal level includes circuit, collegiate, and unitary courts; state and district level courts

Political parties and leaders:

Citizen's Movement (Movimiento Ciudadano) or MC [Clemente CASTANEDA]

Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional) or PRI [Claudia RUIZ Massieu]

Labor Party (Partido del Trabajo) or PT [Alberto ANAYA Gutierrez]

Mexican Green Ecological Party (Partido Verde Ecologista de Mexico) or PVEM [Carlos Alberto PUENTE Salas]

Movement for National Regeneration (Movimiento Regeneracion Nacional) or MORENA [Andres Manuel LOPEZ Obrador]

National Action Party (Partido Accion Nacional) or PAN [Damian ZEPEDA Vidales]

Party of the Democratic Revolution (Partido de la Revolucion Democratica) or PRD [Manuel GRANADOS]

International organization participation:

APEC, Australia Group, BCIE, BIS, CAN (observer), Caricom (observer), CD, CDB, CE (observer), CELAC, CSN (observer), EBRD, FAO, FATF, G-3, G-15, G-20, G-24, G-5, IADB, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC (national committees), ICCT, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCs, IHO, ILO, IMF, IMO, IMSO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO, ITSO, ITU, ITUC (NGOs), LAES, LAIA, MIGA, NAFTA, NAM (observer), NEA, NSG, OAS, OECD, OPANAL, OPCW, Pacific Alliance, Paris Club (associate), PCA, SICA (observer), UN, UNASUR (observer), UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, Union Latina (observer), UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WFTU (NGOs), WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador Martha BARCENA Coqui (since 11 January 2019)

chancery: 1911 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20006

telephone: [1] (202) 728-1600

FAX: [1] (202) 728-1698

consulate(s) general: Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Denver, El Paso (TX), Houston, Laredo (TX), Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Nogales (AZ), Phoenix, Sacramento (CA), San Antonio (TX), San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose (CA), San Juan (Puerto Rico), Saint Paul (MN)

consulate(s): Albuquerque (NM), Anchorage (AK), Boise (ID), Brownsville (TX), Calexico (CA), Del Rio (TX), Detroit, Douglas (AZ), Eagle Pass (TX), Fresno (CA), Indianapolis (IN), Kansas City (MO), Las Vegas, Little Rock (AR), McAllen (TX), Minneapolis (MN), New Orleans, Omaha (NE), Orlando (FL), Oxnard (CA), Philadelphia, Portland (OR), Presidio (TX), Raleigh (NC), Salt Lake City, San Bernardino (CA), Santa Ana (CA), Seattle, Tucson (AZ), Yuma (AZ); note - Washington DC Consular Section is located in a separate building from the Mexican Embassy and has jurisdiction over DC, parts of Virginia, Maryland, and West Virginia

note: Martha BARCENA Coqui is Mexico's first-ever female ambassador to the United States

Diplomatic representation from the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant); Charge d'Affaires John S. CREAMER (since 16 July 2018)

embassy: Paseo de la Reforma 305, Colonia Cuauhtemoc, 06500 Mexico, Distrito Federal

mailing address: P. O. Box 9000, Brownsville, TX 78520-9000

telephone: (011) 52-55-5080-2000

FAX: (011) 52-55-5080-2005

consulate(s) general: Ciudad Juarez, Guadalajara, Hermosillo, Matamoros, Merida, Monterrey, Nogales, Nuevo Laredo, Tijuana

Flag description:

three equal vertical bands of green (hoist side), white, and red; Mexico's coat of arms (an eagle with a snake in its beak perched on a cactus) is centered in the white band; green signifies hope, joy, and love; white represents peace and honesty; red stands for hardiness, bravery, strength, and valor; the coat of arms is derived from a legend that the wandering Aztec people were to settle at a location where they would see an eagle on a cactus eating a snake; the city they founded, Tenochtitlan, is now Mexico City

note: similar to the flag of Italy, which is shorter, uses lighter shades of green and red, and does not display anything in its white band

National symbol(s):

golden eagle; national colors: green, white, red

National anthem:

name: "Himno Nacional Mexicano" (National Anthem of Mexico)

lyrics/music: Francisco Gonzalez BOCANEGRA/Jaime Nuno ROCA

note: adopted 1943, in use since 1854; also known as "Mexicanos, al grito de Guerra" (Mexicans, to the War Cry); according to tradition, Francisco Gonzalez BOCANEGRA, an accomplished poet, was uninterested in submitting lyrics to a national anthem contest; his fiancée locked him in a room and refused to release him until the lyrics were completed

0:00 / 1:41

Economy :: MEXICO

Economy - overview:

Mexico's \$2.4 trillion economy – 11th largest in the world - has become increasingly oriented toward manufacturing since the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) entered into force in 1994. Per capita income is roughly one-third that of the US; income distribution remains highly unequal.

Mexico has become the US' second-largest export market and third-largest source of imports. In 2017, two-way trade in goods and services exceeded \$623 billion. Mexico has free trade agreements with 46 countries, putting more than 90% of its trade under free trade agreements. In 2012, Mexico formed the Pacific Alliance with Peru, Colombia, and Chile.

Mexico's current government, led by President Enrique PENA NIETO, has emphasized economic reforms, passing and implementing sweeping energy, financial, fiscal, and telecommunications reform legislation, among others, with the long-term aim to improve competitiveness and economic growth across the Mexican economy. Since 2015, Mexico has held public auctions of oil and gas exploration and development rights and for long-term electric power generation contracts. Mexico has also issued permits for private sector import, distribution, and retail sales of refined petroleum products in an effort to attract private investment into the energy sector and boost production.

Since 2013, Mexico's economic growth has averaged 2% annually, falling short of private-sector expectations that President PENA NIETO's sweeping reforms would bolster economic prospects. Growth is predicted to remain below potential given falling oil production, weak oil prices, structural issues such as low productivity, high inequality, a large informal sector employing over half of the workforce, weak rule of law, and corruption. Mexico's economy remains vulnerable to uncertainty surrounding the future of NAFTA — because the United States is its top trading partner and the two countries share integrated supply chains — and to potential shifts in domestic policies following the inauguration of a new president in December 2018.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$2.463 trillion (2017 est.)

\$2.413 trillion (2016 est.)

\$2.346 trillion (2015 est.)

note: data are in 2017 dollars

country comparison to the world: 11

GDP (official exchange rate):

\$1.151 trillion (2017 est.)

GDP - real growth rate:

2% (2017 est.)

2.9% (2016 est.)

3.3% (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 152

GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$19,900 (2017 est.)

\$19,700 (2016 est.)

\$19,400 (2015 est.)

note: data are in 2017 dollars

country comparison to the world: 90

Gross national saving:

21.4% of GDP (2017 est.)

21.6% of GDP (2016 est.)

20.7% of GDP (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 85

GDP - composition, by end use:

household consumption: 67% (2017 est.)

government consumption: 11.8% (2017 est.)

investment in fixed capital: 22.3% (2017 est.)

investment in inventories: 0.8% (2017 est.)

exports of goods and services: 37.8% (2017 est.)

imports of goods and services: -39.7% (2017 est.)

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

agriculture: 3.6% (2017 est.)

industry: 31.9% (2017 est.)

services: 64.5% (2017 est.)

Agriculture - products:

corn, wheat, soybeans, rice, beans, cotton, coffee, fruit, tomatoes; beef, poultry, dairy products; wood products

Industries:

food and beverages, tobacco, chemicals, iron and steel, petroleum, mining, textiles, clothing, motor vehicles, consumer durables, tourism

Industrial production growth rate:

-0.6% (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 174

Labor force:

54.51 million (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 12

Labor force - by occupation:

agriculture: 13.4%

industry: 24.1%

services: 61.9% (2011)

Unemployment rate:

3.4% (2017 est.)

3.9% (2016 est.)

note: underemployment may be as high as 25%

country comparison to the world: 42

Population below poverty line:

46.2% (2014 est.)

note: from a food-based definition of poverty; asset-based poverty amounted to more than 47%

Household income or consumption by percentage share:

lowest 10%: 2%

highest 10%: 40% (2014)

Distribution of family income - Gini index:

48.2 (2014)

48.3 (2008)

country comparison to the world: 24

Budget:

revenues: 261.4 billion (2017 est.)

expenditures: 273.8 billion (2017 est.)

Taxes and other revenues:

22.7% (of GDP) (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 131

Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):

-1.1% (of GDP) (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 83

Public debt:

54.3% of GDP (2017 est.)

56.8% of GDP (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 82

Fiscal year:

calendar year

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

6% (2017 est.)

2.8% (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 186

Central bank discount rate:

7.25% (31 December 2017)

5.75% (31 December 2016)

country comparison to the world: 44

Commercial bank prime lending rate:

7.34% (31 December 2017 est.)

4.72% (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 113

Stock of narrow money:

\$215.5 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$186.6 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 24

Stock of broad money:

\$215.5 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$186.6 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 24

Stock of domestic credit:

\$431.6 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$393.8 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 28

Market value of publicly traded shares:

\$402.3 billion (31 December 2015 est.)

\$480.2 billion (31 December 2014 est.)

\$526 billion (31 December 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 25

Current account balance:

-\$19.35 billion (2017 est.)

-\$23.32 billion (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 198

Exports:

\$409.8 billion (2017 est.)

\$374.3 billion (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 12

Exports - partners:

US 79.9% (2017)

Exports - commodities:

manufactured goods, electronics, vehicles and auto parts, oil and oil products, silver, plastics, fruits, vegetables, coffee, cotton; Mexico is the world's leading producer of silver

Imports:

\$420.8 billion (2017 est.)

\$387.4 billion (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 14

Imports - commodities:

metalworking machines, steel mill products, agricultural machinery, electrical equipment, automobile parts for assembly and repair, aircraft, aircraft parts, plastics, natural gas and oil products

Imports - partners:

US 46.4%, China 17.7%, Japan 4.3% (2017)

Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:

\$175.3 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$178.4 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

note: Mexico also maintains access to an \$88 million Flexible Credit Line with the IMF

country comparison to the world: 14

Debt - external:

\$445.8 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$450.2 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 28

Stock of direct foreign investment - at home:

\$554.3 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$473.5 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 16

Stock of direct foreign investment - abroad:

\$243.8 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$148.6 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 25

Exchange rates:

Mexican pesos (MXN) per US dollar -

18.26 (2017 est.)

18.664 (2016 est.)

18.664 (2015 est.)

15.848 (2014 est.)

13.292 (2013 est.)

Energy :: MEXICO**Electricity access:**

population without electricity: 1,231,667 (2012)

electrification - total population: 99% (2012)

electrification - urban areas: 100% (2012)

electrification - rural areas: 97% (2012)

Electricity - production:

302.7 billion kWh (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 13

Electricity - consumption:

258.7 billion kWh (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 14

Electricity - exports:

7.308 billion kWh (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 27

Electricity - imports:

3.532 billion kWh (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 47

Electricity - installed generating capacity:

72.56 million kW (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 17

Electricity - from fossil fuels:

71% of total installed capacity (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 106

Electricity - from nuclear fuels:

2% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 27

Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:

17% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 96

Electricity - from other renewable sources:

9% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 82

Crude oil - production:

1.981 million bbl/day (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 12

Crude oil - exports:

1.214 million bbl/day (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 11

Crude oil - imports:

0 bbl/day (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 166

Crude oil - proved reserves:

6.63 billion bbl (1 January 2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 19

Refined petroleum products - production:

844,600 bbl/day (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 23

Refined petroleum products - consumption:

1.984 million bbl/day (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 11

Refined petroleum products - exports:

155,800 bbl/day (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 35

Refined petroleum products - imports:

867,500 bbl/day (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 10

Natural gas - production:

31.57 billion cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 24

Natural gas - consumption:

81.61 billion cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 9

Natural gas - exports:

36.81 million cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 51

Natural gas - imports:

50.12 billion cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 8

Natural gas - proved reserves:

279.8 billion cu m (1 January 2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 38

Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:

454.1 million Mt (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 14

Communications :: MEXICO**Telephones - fixed lines:**

total subscriptions: 20,602,668 (2017 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 17 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 13

Telephones - mobile cellular:

total subscriptions: 114,326,842 (2017 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 92 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 14

Telephone system:

general assessment: adequate telephone service for business and government; improving quality and increasing mobile cellular availability, with mobile subscribers far outnumbering fixed-line subscribers; domestic satellite system with 120 earth stations; extensive microwave radio relay network; considerable use of fiber-optic cable and coaxial cable; two main MNOs despite efforts for competition; preparation for 5G and LTE-M services; Mexico's first local Internet Exchange Point opens in Mexico City (2017)

domestic: competition has spurred the mobile-cellular market; fixed-line teledensity exceeds 17 per 100 persons; mobile-cellular teledensity is about 92 per 100 persons (2017)

international: country code - 52; Columbus-2 fiber-optic submarine cable with access to the US, Virgin Islands, Canary Islands, Spain, and Italy; the Americas Region Caribbean Ring System (ARCOS-1) and the MAYA-1 submarine cable system together provide access to Central America, parts of South America and the Caribbean, and the US; satellite earth stations - 120 (32 Intelsat, 2 Solidaridad (giving Mexico improved access to South America, Central America, and much of the US as well as enhancing domestic communications), 1 Panamsat, numerous Inmarsat mobile earth stations); linked to Central American Microwave System of trunk connections (2016)

Broadcast media:

telecom reform in 2013 enabled the creation of new broadcast television channels after decades of a quasi-monopoly; Mexico has 821 TV stations and 1,745 radio stations and most are privately owned; the Televisa group once had a virtual monopoly in TV broadcasting, but new broadcasting groups and foreign satellite and cable operators are now available; in 2016, Mexico became the first country in Latin America to complete the transition from analog to digital transmissions, allowing for better image and audio quality and a wider selection of programming from networks (2016)

Internet country code:

.mx

Internet users:

total: 73,334,032 (July 2016 est.)

percent of population: 59.5% (July 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 7

Broadband - fixed subscriptions:

total: 17,131,820 (2017 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 14 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 11

Transportation :: MEXICO

National air transport system:

number of registered air carriers: 21 (2015)

inventory of registered aircraft operated by air carriers: 357 (2015)

annual passenger traffic on registered air carriers: 45,560,063 (2015)

annual freight traffic on registered air carriers: 713,985,467 mt-km (2015)

Civil aircraft registration country code prefix:

XA (2016)

Airports:

1,714 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 3

Airports - with paved runways:

total: 243 (2017)

over 3,047 m: 12 (2017)

2,438 to 3,047 m: 32 (2017)

1,524 to 2,437 m: 80 (2017)

914 to 1,523 m: 86 (2017)

under 914 m: 33 (2017)

Airports - with unpaved runways:

total: 1,471 (2013)

over 3,047 m: 1 (2013)

2,438 to 3,047 m: 1 (2013)

1,524 to 2,437 m: 42 (2013)

914 to 1,523 m: 281 (2013)

under 914 m: 1,146 (2013)

Heliports:

1 (2013)

Pipelines:

15,986 km natural gas (2019), 10,365 km oil (2017), 8,946 km refined products (2016)

Railways:

total: 20,825 km (2017)

standard gauge: 20,825 km 1.435-m gauge (27 km electrified) (2017)

country comparison to the world: 14

Roadways:

total: 398,148 km (2017)

paved: 174,911 km (includes 10,362 km of expressways) (2017)

unpaved: 223,327 km (2017)

country comparison to the world: 16

Waterways:

2,900 km (navigable rivers and coastal canals mostly connected with ports on the country's east coast) (2012)

country comparison to the world: 33

Merchant marine:

total: 617

by type: bulk carrier 6, general cargo 11, oil tanker 35, other 565 (2018)

country comparison to the world: 34

Ports and terminals:

major seaport(s): Altamira, Coatzacoalcos, Lazaro Cardenas, Manzanillo, Veracruz

oil terminal(s): Cayo Arcas terminal, Dos Bocas terminal

cruise port(s): Cancun, Cozumel, Ensenada

container port(s) (TEUs): Manzanillo (2,830,370), Lazaro Cardenas (1,149,079) (2017)

LNG terminal(s) (import): Altamira, Ensenada

Military and Security :: MEXICO

Military expenditures:

0.47% of GDP (2017)

0.58% of GDP (2016)

0.67% of GDP (2015)

0.67% of GDP (2014)

0.62% of GDP (2013)

country comparison to the world: 146

Military branches:

Secretariat of National Defense (Secretaria de Defensa Nacional, Sedena): Army (Ejercito), Mexican Air Force (Fuerza Aerea Mexicana, FAM); Secretariat of the Navy (Secretaria de Marina, Semar): Mexican Navy (Armada de Mexico (ARM); includes Naval Air Force (FAN), Mexican Naval Infantry Corps (Cuerpo de Infanteria de Marina, Mexmar or CIM)) (2013)

Military service age and obligation:

18 years of age for compulsory military service, conscript service obligation is 12 months; 16 years of age with consent for voluntary enlistment; conscripts serve only in the Army; Navy and Air Force service is all voluntary; women are eligible for voluntary military service; cadets enrolled in military schools from the age of 15 are considered members of the armed forces (2012)

Transnational Issues :: MEXICO

Disputes - international:

abundant rainfall in recent years along much of the Mexico-US border region has ameliorated periodically strained water-sharing arrangements; the US has intensified security measures to monitor and control legal and illegal personnel, transport, and commodities across its border with Mexico; Mexico must deal with thousands of impoverished Guatemalans and other Central Americans who cross the porous border looking for work in Mexico and the US; Belize and Mexico are working to solve minor border demarcation discrepancies arising from inaccuracies in the 1898 border treaty

Refugees and internally displaced persons:

refugees (country of origin): 55,000 (Venezuela) (economic and political crisis; includes Venezuelans who have claimed asylum or have received alternative legal stay) (2018)

IDPs: 338,000 (government's quashing of Zapatista uprising in 1994 in eastern Chiapas Region; drug cartel violence and government's military response since 2007; violence between and within indigenous groups) (2018)

stateless persons: 13 (2017)

Illicit drugs:

major drug-producing and transit nation; Mexico is estimated to be the world's third largest producer of opium with poppy cultivation in 2015 estimated to be 28,000 hectares yielding a potential production of 475 metric tons of raw opium; government conducts the largest independent illicit-crop eradication program in the world; continues as the primary transshipment country for US-bound cocaine from South America, with an estimated 95% of annual cocaine movements toward the US stopping in Mexico; major drug syndicates control the majority of drug trafficking throughout the country; producer and distributor of ecstasy; significant money-laundering center; major supplier of heroin and largest foreign supplier of marijuana and methamphetamine to the US market

Mexico country profile



Mexico is a nation where affluence, poverty, natural splendour and urban blight rub shoulders.

It has the second-largest economy in Latin America, and is a major oil exporter.

But prosperity remains a dream for many Mexicans, and the socio-economic gap remains wide. Rural areas are often neglected, and huge shanty towns ring the cities.

Many poor Mexicans have sought to cross the 3,000-km border with the US in search of a job, but in recent years more Mexicans immigrants have returned to Mexico than migrated to the US.

Tens of thousands of people have been killed in drugs-related gang violence in the past decade. Powerful cartels control the trafficking of drugs from South America to the US. Security forces ordered to crack down on them have been accused of abusing their power and acting with impunity.

- Read more **country profiles** - Profiles by **BBC Monitoring**

FACTS

United Mexican States

Capital: Mexico City

- **Population** 116 million
- **Area** 1.96 million sq km (758,449 sq miles)
- **Major language** Spanish
- **Major religion** Christianity
- **Life expectancy** 75 years (men), 80 years (women)
- **Currency** peso

UN, World Bank

Getty Images

LEADERS

President Andres Manuel López Obrador



The left-winger Andres Manuel López Obrador won an overwhelming victory in the July 2018 presidential election.

He says his priorities are to tackle corruption and reverse decades of free-market economic policy - which he blames for social inequality, endemic violence, and the desire of so many young people to leave the country in search of a better life.

Mr López Obrador, popularly known by his initials Amlo, is a former mayor of Mexico City, and stood for the presidency on two earlier occasions - losing to Enrique Peña Nieto of the centre-left Institutional Revolutionary Party in 2012.

He has pledged to set an example of personal probity by serving only one term, surrendering part of his salary, selling off his official plane, and not living in the presidential palace, while also proposing a law to allow the recall of any elected official by referendum.

MEDIA



Reporters Without Borders describes Mexico as "one of the hemisphere's most dangerous countries" for the media.

Drug cartels and corrupt officials are implicated in most of the crimes of violence against journalists, which almost always go unpunished.

Two big players, Televisa and TV Azteca, dominate the TV sector.

Mexico is one of Latin America's biggest internet markets.

- **[Read full media profile](#)**

TIMELINE

Some key dates in Mexico's history:



Mexico went through major changes as a result of the revolution led by Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata

1519 - Spanish army led by Hernan Cortes lands at Veracruz, marking the start of Spain's conquest of Mexico.

1521-1820 - Mexico forms part of the Viceroyalty of New Spain.

1810-21 - War of Independence ends with the creation of the short-lived Mexican Empire, which includes Central America to the southern border of modern-day Costa Rica, as well as what is now the south-western US.

1824 - Mexico becomes a federal republic. Central American provinces secede.

1846-8 - Mexican-American War ends with Mexico being forced to sell its northern provinces (including modern-day California, Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona and Utah) to the US.

1910-1920 - Mexican Revolution leads to establishment of a constitutional republic.

1929 - Formation of the National Revolutionary Party, which later becomes the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI, which dominates politics until 2000.

1968 - Student demonstration in Mexico City during the Olympic Games is fired upon by Mexican security forces. Hundreds of protesters are killed or wounded.

1976 - Huge offshore oil reserves discovered.

1994 - Zapatista rebels, led by the charismatic Subcommander Marcos, rise up demanding improved rights for some 10 million Indians in Mexico, four million of whom live in Chiapas.

2000 - Vicente Fox breaks ruling PRI party's seven-decade dominance by winning presidential election.

2006 - President Felipe Calderon launches crackdown on drug gangs, with violence escalating into a national security crisis.

2018 - Left-wing former mayor of Mexico City, Andres Manuel López Obrador, wins an overwhelming victory in presidential elections.

Mexico profile - Timeline

A chronology of key events:



The city of Teotihuacan was a major pre-Colombian cultural centre

c. **AD 250-900** Classical Maya city states flourish in the far south of modern-day Mexico, as well as in neighbouring Guatemala and Belize, before suffering a mysterious collapse.

c. **AD 0-500** - Major cultural and religious centre of Teotihuacán flourishes. Thought to have been one of the world's largest cities at the time, but little is known about its ethnic and political nature.

Aztecs



Aztec traditions are still being kept alive

Aztec-era traditions are still being kept alive

Mexico City to teach Aztec tongue

Festival highlights indigenous pride

6th-7th century - Influx of new peoples into central Mexico from the north, including speakers of Nahuatl.
800-1000 - High point of the Toltec culture, centred on the city of Tula, in modern-day Hidalgo province.
10th-16th centuries - Revitalised Maya civilisation blossoms in the northern Yucatan peninsula, creating major cities such as Chichen Itza and Uxmal.
1428-1521 - The latest of a long line of indigenous civilisations, the Aztec Empire - an alliance of Nahuatl-speaking city states led by Tenochtitlan - establishes hegemony over much of central Mexico.

Spanish conquest

1519 - Small Spanish army led by Hernan Cortes lands at Veracruz, marking the start of Spain's conquest of Mexico.

1521 - Allied with local anti-Aztec forces, Cortes' men capture the capital Tenochtitlan (modern-day Mexico City).

Conquest



The Spanish conquest took decades to complete

The Spanish conquest took decades to complete

BBC History: Story of the Conquistadors

1521-1820 - Mexico forms part of the Viceroyalty of New Spain.

Independence

1810-21 - War of Independence ends with the creation of the short-living Mexican Empire, which includes Central America to the southern border of modern-day Costa Rica, as well as what is now the southwestern US.

1824 - Mexico becomes a federal republic. Central American provinces secede, becoming Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

The new Mexican state is marked by tension between the conservative Spanish-origin landowning elite and the largely indigenous landless minority, resulting in instability and frequent armed conflict.

1836 - Former province of Texas, by now increasingly populated by English-speaking Americans, secedes after a war, going on to join the United States nine years later.

1846-8 - Mexican-American War ends with Mexico being forced to sell its northern provinces (including modern-day California, Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona and Utah) to the US.

1855-72 - "La Reforma" period, characterised by liberal reforms limiting the power and landholdings of the Catholic Church.



Pancho Villa was one of the leaders of the Mexican Revolution. His exploits have been recreated in a variety of books and movies

1864-7 - Archduke Maximilian of Austria is installed as emperor by France and conservative landowners, but is toppled and executed by Republican rebels.

1876-1911 - Porfirio Diaz's 35-year-long dictatorship brings stability, modernisation and economic growth, but at the price of political repression.

Revolution

1910-1920 - Mexican Revolution ends the Porfirio Diaz dictatorship and establishes constitutional government.

1913-14 - The liberal Francisco Madero introduces land reform and labour legislation before being assassinated. Victoriano Huerta seizes power. Political unrest continues with Emiliano Zapata leading a peasant revolt in the south.

Trotsky assassination



Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky (1) arrives in Mexico, where he was tracked down and killed by a Soviet agent

The ice pick assassination

1916-17 - Inconclusive US incursion against guerrilla leader Francisco "Pancho" Villa.

1920 - President Venustiano Carranza is murdered, followed by a decade of instability.

Institutional Revolutionary Party rule

1929 - Former president Plutarco Elias Calles forms what later becomes the Institutional Revolutionary Party(PRI), which dominates government for 71 years.

1934 - President Lazaro Cardenas begins programme of oil nationalisation, land reform and industrial expansion.



Up to 30,000 people were killed in the quake which struck Mexico City in 1985

1960s - Unrest amongst peasants and labourers over unequal wealth distribution is suppressed.

1968 - Student demonstration in Mexico City during the Olympic Games is fired on by security forces. Hundreds of protesters are killed or wounded. The extent of the violence shocks the country.

Oil discovery

1976 - Huge offshore oil reserves discovered; the Cantarell field becomes the mainstay of Mexico's oil production.

1985 - Earthquake in Mexico City kills thousands and makes many more homeless.

1993 - Parliament ratifies the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta) with the US and Canada.

Chiapas rebellion



Mexico hosted the football World Cup in 1986

1994 - A guerrilla rebellion in Chiapas by the Zapatista National Liberation Army is brutally suppressed by government troops. The government and Zapatistas agree on greater autonomy for the indigenous Mayans of Chiapas the following year.

1996 - The insurgency in the south escalates as the leftist Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR) attacks government troops.

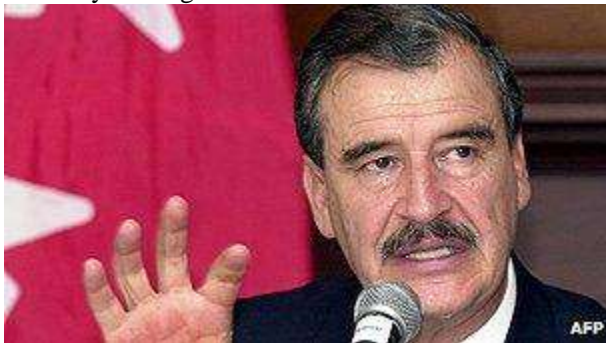


Mexico City in 1995: Thousands gathered in support of Zapatistas pressing for indigenous rights

1997 - The PRI suffers heavy losses in elections and loses its overall majority in the lower house of parliament for the first time since 1929.

Fox election victory

2000 July - Vicente Fox of the conservative Alliance for Change wins presidential elections, the first opposition candidate ever to do so. Parliamentary elections see the Alliance emerge as the strongest party, narrowly beating the PRI



Vincente Fox broke the ruling party's 71-year dominance with his election victory in 2000

2002 June - Millions of secret security files are released, shedding light on the repression of hundreds of political activists in the 1960s and 1970s.

2006 July - Conservative candidate Felipe Calderon is declared the winner of presidential elections with a razor-thin majority over his leftist rival, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador.

War on drugs

2006 December - A new federal police force is created to tackle drugs cartels; thousands of troops are deployed in the western state of Michoacan as part of a major anti-drug trafficking drive.

'Dirty War' - questions remain



Hundreds died or disappeared when Luis Echeverria was interior minister or president

New warrant for ex-leader

Mexicans dig for 'disappeared'

2007 October - Heavy rains flood nearly the entire southern state of Tabasco. Some 500,000 are made homeless in one of the country's worst natural disasters.

2009 March - Army troops enter Ciudad Juarez, on the border with the US, as open warfare erupts between rival drug gangs.

Drug wars



In 2006, President Calderon launched a crackdown on Mexico's brutal drugs gangs

- Over 50,000 people thought to have died from drug-related violence between 2006-12.
- Drugs traffic into US worth an estimated \$13bn
- Regions along Mexico's border with US worst-hit, but violence has spread to other areas.
- More than 50,000 troops and federal police involved in combating the gangs

Q&A: Mexico's drug-related violence

Mexico's gruesome killings

2012 July - The Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) candidate Enrique Pena Nieto wins presidential election.

2013 July - Miguel Angel Trevino Morales, head of the brutal Zetas drugs cartel, is arrested in the highest-profile arrest since President Pena Nieto adopted a policy of targeting local bosses rather than big names.

2014 August - Mexico's Congress approves sweeping reforms to the country's energy sector that will open the market to foreign oil firms and strip state-owned energy group Pemex of the monopoly it has held since nationalisation in 1938.



Drug kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman's dramatic 2015 prison escape once again highlighted the weakness of state institutions

2018 October - The US, Canada and Mexico reach a new trade deal - the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) - to replace the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta).

2018 - Left-wing former mayor of Mexico City, Andres Manuel López Obrador, is inaugurated president after winning an overwhelming victory in the July presidential election.

Admiral Craig Faller

Commander

US Southern Command

Admiral Craig Faller is a native of Fryburg, Pennsylvania and 1983 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy with a Bachelor of Science in Systems Engineering. He is also a 1990 graduate of the Naval Postgraduate School with a Master's in National Security Affairs (Strategic Planning).

At sea, Admiral Faller served as Reactor Electrical Division Officer, Electrical Officer and Reactor Training Assistant aboard USS South Carolina (CGN 37); Operations Officer aboard USS Peterson (DD 969); Station Officer aboard USS Enterprise (CVN 65), and Executive Officer of USS John Hancock (DD 981). As Commanding Officer of USS Stethem (DDG 63), he deployed to the Arabian Gulf and participated in maritime interception operations in support of United Nations sanctions against Iraq.

During his tour as Commanding Officer of USS Shiloh (CG 67), he assisted victims of the devastating tsunami off Indonesia. Finally, as Commander, John C. Stennis Strike Group / Carrier Strike Group 3, he deployed to the Middle East supporting Operations New Dawn (Iraq) and Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan).



Ashore, Admiral Faller served as a D1G Prototype Staff Officer at the Nuclear Power Training unit in Ballston Spa, NY; Action Officer in Navy Strategy and Concepts Branch (N513); Legislative Fellow on the staff of Senator Edward M. Kennedy; Program Manager, Surface Nuclear Officer Programs and Placement; Executive Assistant to the Commander U.S. Pacific Command; Executive Assistant to Commander U.S. Central Command; Executive Assistant to the Chief of Naval Operations; Commander, Navy Recruiting Command; Director of Operations (J3) U.S. Central Command; Chief of Navy Legislative Affairs; and Senior Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense.

Admiral Faller has earned various personal, unit, service and campaign awards.

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**POSTURE STATEMENT OF
ADMIRAL CRAIG S. FALLER
COMMANDER, UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND
BEFORE THE 116TH CONGRESS
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 7, 2019**



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Introduction. I want to thank the Congress, and especially this Committee, for your support to United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM). The men and women of our team work every day to earn the trust of partners in Latin America and the Caribbean. We are friends and neighbors, bound together by shared values and a shared stake in our common future. The nations of this neighborhood are connected in every domain—sea, air, land, space, and cyberspace. Our partnerships are vital to security and prosperity in this hemisphere, and to our collective ability to meet complex global challenges. We recognize that the success and security of future generations depend on how effectively we build trust with allies and partners in the hemisphere today, working with and through interagency partners like the Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and Department of Justice (DOJ). Ultimately, we want enemies to fear us, friends to partner with us, and the Western Hemisphere to shine as a beacon of peace, prosperity, and potential.

The strengths and opportunities of our hemisphere—democracy, respect for human rights and rule of law, and military-to-military relationships rooted in education, culture, and values—are matched with a troubling array of challenges and threats to global security and to our homeland. These include natural and man-made disasters, weak government institutions, corruption, under-resourced security organizations, violent crime, criminal organizations, and violent extremist cells. China has accelerated expansion of its Belt and Road Initiative at a pace that may one day overshadow its expansion in Southeast Asia and Africa. Russia supports multiple information outlets spreading its false narrative of world events and U.S. intentions. Iran has deepened its anti-U.S. Spanish language media coverage and has exported its state support for terrorism into our hemisphere. Russia and China also support the autocratic regimes in Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua, which are counter to democracy and U.S. interests. We are

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monitoring the latest events in Venezuela and look forward to welcoming that country back into the hemisphere's community of democracies. Where threats are transregional, multi-domain, and global, the United States must renew focus on our neighbors and our shared Western Hemisphere neighborhood.

Partnerships. Modest, smart, and focused investments in U.S. forces and security assistance continue to yield meaningful returns in the form of partners who are ready to address threats shoulder-to-shoulder with us. Strengthening partnerships is at the heart of everything we do. USSOUTHCOM's mission is about the smart, focused use of force—not economy of force.

Working from a foundation of mutual respect and shared interests in regional cooperation and interoperability, we are enhancing our partnerships with Brazil, Colombia, and Chile, which are forces for regional and global security. Argentina has reinvigorated military-to-military interaction, and co-hosted our annual South American Defense Conference. Peru continues a tradition of strong liaison officer exchanges with USSOUTHCOM and recently conducted training with a Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF). We reinitiated security cooperation with Ecuador, and are moving forward with a renewed military-to-military partnership.

In Central America, partners like El Salvador and Panama have stepped up cooperation in the area of counter-narcotics (CN); in addition, El Salvador co-hosted our Central American Security Conference last year. Honduras hosts our Joint Task Force (JTF) Bravo at Soto Cano, providing a regionally-based security cooperation platform, the presence of which allows a rapid response capability. Our support to Guatemala's defense institution building efforts has helped its Ministry of Defense increase efficiency, transparency, and sustainability of its investments.

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Across the Caribbean, our partners continue to look at USSOUTHCOM as their security partner of choice. Trinidad and Tobago co-hosted our annual Caribbean Nations Security Conference, and thwarted a terror attack with the support of U.S. special operations forces (USSOF). Jamaica has stepped up its CN efforts, recently purchasing a maritime patrol aircraft that will support regional drug interdiction operations.

We continue to expand our cooperation with allies and partners in humanitarian assistance/disaster response (HA/DR) missions and counter-threat efforts, such as drug detection and monitoring, and support to interdiction operations in Central America and the Caribbean. Allies and partners contributed to nearly half of the successful drug seizures credited to Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S) last year. In addition to continuing cooperation in traditional areas like peacekeeping and drug interdiction, we are building interoperability for high-end expeditionary operations and in the space and cyber mission sets. In the past year, Brazil became the first Latin American country to sign a Space Situational Awareness Agreement, Colombia became NATO's first global partner in Latin America, and Chile led the maritime component of the world's largest international naval exercise, Rim of the Pacific—a first for a Latin American sea power. Later this year, Brazil will send a Major General to serve as U.S. Army South's next Deputy Commander for Interoperability, the first Brazilian officer to serve in this role.

The majority of nations in this hemisphere share democratic values—including respect for human rights and adherence to the rule of law—and interests in advancing democracy and countering radical ideologies. These shared values and interests are the foundation of our military-to-military relationships. We reinforce and build on these shared values and interests through institutional capacity building efforts, information and intelligence sharing, education,

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personnel exchanges, and exercises. In the past year, we have improved the quality, depth, and frequency of information and intelligence exchanges with partners, producing joint products on transnational issues of mutual concern.

We also build on those shared values by working with our partners to elevate and integrate all elements of professionalism as a foundational component of every security conference we conduct. The professionalism of U.S. armed forces is the bedrock of our legitimacy, both as a fighting force and in our ability to build trust with our own people. Professionalism encompasses human rights, jointness, gender integration, and non-commissioned officer development.

Education and training—funded by the Department of Defense’s William J. Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies and the Department of State’s International Military Education and Training (IMET) program—and Foreign Military Sales (FMS) purchases made possible by Foreign Military Financing (FMF) grants are force multipliers. Our partners prefer U.S. education and training, and these exchanges facilitate mutual understanding of values, doctrine, and culture that enable us to operate together more effectively. Our participation in multinational exercises like UNITAS (a naval integration exercise), PANAMAX (defense of the Panama Canal), and Brazil’s CRUZEIRO DO SUL (regional air exercise) is another important way we increase mutual understanding, interoperability, and collective readiness.

In the absence of an enduring U.S. military presence in most of Latin America and the Caribbean, recurring rotations of small teams of USSOF, soldiers, Marines, and National Guard personnel¹ play central roles in building trust and enabling the exchange of critical expertise. By

¹ The State Partnership Program (SPP) links a unique component of the Department of Defense – a state’s National Guard – with the armed forces or equivalent of a partner nation, leveraging National Guard capabilities for engagements that build enduring relationships and advance mutual defense and security goals. 24 of the SPP’s 75 partnerships worldwide are in the USSOUTHCOM area of responsibility, including a partnership with Venezuela that is currently inactive.

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carefully tailoring these rotations, we ensure they build the readiness of U.S. forces as well as building partner nations' capabilities. On any given day, small USSOF teams conduct over 30 missions in support of about 12 partner nations throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Many live and work alongside regional forces, building the trust, confidence, and lasting relationships that reinforce our status as the partner of choice and enhance our ability to respond quickly to contingencies.

Humanitarian support efforts like medical engagements, civil affairs activities, and the recent deployment of the hospital ship USNS COMFORT demonstrate our enduring solidarity and friendship with neighbors, while countering negative messaging by adversarial nations. The international medical team aboard COMFORT treated more than 26,000 patients in Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, and Honduras. This team conducted more than 100 training engagements, relieving pressure on regional health systems caused by the Venezuelan migration crisis and giving local medical providers more flexibility to deliver care. The integration of more than 100 military and non-governmental organization (NGO) personnel from 10 other nations helped us build trust, tell our story effectively, and enhance regional perceptions of the United States. The U.S. military medical and command staff also returned from the deployment more ready, able to operate with foreign partners, and prepared to provide critical care to U.S. warfighters. These impacts will far outlast COMFORT's 70-day deployment.

Strengthening our partnerships is our best bid for addressing regional and global threats. We work by, with, and through partners to enhance the security of both the United States and our partners, and to help grow bilateral security relationships into regional and global security initiatives. Our networked approach to countering threats recognizes that nothing happens without robust and enduring partnerships across the U.S. interagency, region, and civil society.

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Our ultimate advantage is using the power of our ideals, ideas, and people to build trust with friends and create dilemmas for competitor nations. This is the primary dimension in which we expand the competitive space.

Threats. Six state actors (Russia, China, Iran, and their authoritarian allies in Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela) and a system of interrelated threats challenge the security of our partners and the region. Threats like natural and man-made disasters and criminal networks feed and fuel drivers of instability, including weak institutions, poverty, corruption, and violent crime. Addressing these challenges requires whole-of-government efforts, led by partner nations at a pace they can sustain, to strengthen democratic institutions and expand economic opportunity. Often, improving security is the first step.

Nation State Competition and Malign Actors. Russia and China are expanding their influence in the Western Hemisphere, often at the expense of U.S. interests. Both enable—and are enabled by—actions in Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba that threaten hemispheric security and prosperity, and the actions of those three states in turn damage the stability and democratic progress across the region. As the leading state sponsor of terrorism in the world, Iran’s activities in the region are also concerning.

Russia continues to use Latin America and the Caribbean to spread disinformation, collect intelligence on the United States, and project power. Russia’s deployment of two nuclear capable bombers to the Western Hemisphere was intended as a demonstration of support for the Maduro regime and as a show of force to the United States. Russia has also deployed intelligence collection ships to the region, as well as an underwater research ship to Latin America capable of mapping undersea cables—information it could use to cut critical lines of communication during a future crisis. Additionally, Russia is establishing joint space projects

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with partners in the region, which it could eventually leverage for counter-space purposes in the event of a global conflict.

China utilizes the same predatory, non-transparent foreign lending practices it has implemented around the world to exert political and economic leverage in certain countries. China has pledged at least \$150 billion in loans to countries in the hemisphere,² and 16 nations now participate in the Belt and Road Initiative. However, many countries are beginning to recognize the long-term consequences of mortgaging their future to China, as we've seen in Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Sierra Leone, Djibouti, and the Maldives. In the future, China could use its control of deep water ports in the Western Hemisphere to enhance its global operational posture. Particularly concerning is China's effort to exert control over key infrastructure associated with the Panama Canal.

China's presence and activities at Argentina's deep space tracking facility is also concerning. Beijing could be in violation of the terms of its agreement with Argentina to only conduct civilian activities, and may have the ability to monitor and potentially target U.S., Allied, and partner space activities. Additionally, Chinese firms like Huawei and ZTE have aggressively penetrated the region, placing intellectual property, private data, and government secrets at risk. If governments in Latin America and the Caribbean continue to gravitate toward using Chinese information systems, our ability and willingness to share information over compromised networks is likely to suffer.

Russia and China aggressively court students from Latin America and the Caribbean to attend their military schools, offering free training in cyber, policing, and CN. Since 2012,

² Gallagher, Kevin P. and Margaret Myers (2017) "China-Latin America Finance Database." Washington, DC: Inter-American Dialogue

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security officials from nearly all Central American countries and nearly half of South American countries have received Russian CN training. These engagements, combined with Russia's Counter Transnational Organized Crime Training Center (CTOC) in Nicaragua, potentially provide Moscow with a regional platform to recruit intelligence sources and collect information.

Russia and China also support their authoritarian partners in Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua, often through propaganda and other information-related tools. Moscow, for example, provides positive media coverage of its authoritarian allies, papering over repression and socioeconomic inequity in Nicaragua. Moscow also seeks to undercut U.S. policies and regional relationships through information operations and intelligence collection, and by influencing political systems, public opinion, and decision makers. Russia published hundreds of articles last year in its Spanish and Portuguese-language media that deliberately distorted our defense engagements.

The linkages between these malign actors are negatively reinforcing. Emboldened by Russian and Chinese³ support, Venezuela is engaging in increasingly provocative actions, threatening Guyana's sovereign rights and jurisdiction and providing sanctuary for National Liberation Army (ELN) fighters that threaten Colombian stability. Russia and Cuba are both complicit in Venezuela's descent into dictatorship, but Cuba is particularly influential in supporting Maduro. Following the Cuban government's advice and assisted by its intelligence machinery, Maduro is adhering to the autocratic blueprint Cuban leaders have ruthlessly executed for over six decades. Nicaragua appears to be going down a similar path following Cuba's playbook, with Cuba, Russia, and Venezuela enabling President Ortega's repression of

³ For example, China is Venezuela's single largest state creditor, saddling the Venezuelan people with more than \$50 billion in debt, even as their democracy vanishes.

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his political opposition. These relationships give Russia, in particular, a foothold close to our homeland. As tensions increase with Russia in Europe, Moscow may leverage these longstanding regional partners to maintain asymmetric options, to include forward deploying military personnel or assets.

Iran is also looking to reenergize its outreach after reducing its efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean in recent years. It has deepened its anti-U.S. influence campaign in Spanish-language media, and its proxy Lebanese Hezbollah maintains facilitation networks throughout the region that cache weapons and raise funds, often via drug trafficking and money laundering. Last September, Brazil arrested a Hezbollah financier in the tri-border area near Paraguay and Argentina, and in recent years Paraguay, Peru, and Bolivia have arrested multiple Hezbollah-linked suspects.

What we're doing. We are increasing cooperation with partners to better understand, expose, and counter the malign activities of Russia, China, and their authoritarian allies. We are also working more closely with other U.S. combatant commands and the Joint Staff to ensure that globally integrated plans and operations are informed by threats and opportunities in this hemisphere. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's globally integrated planning is exactly the right approach for addressing the transregional, transnational nature of today's threat environment.

Within the region, we have to be on the playing field to compete. The same presence that strengthens our partnerships sends a powerful signal to Russia, China, Iran, Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua (the six negative state actors) that the United States is committed to the region and to the security of our neighborhood.

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Strong partnerships—founded in effective and transparent institutions, intelligence and information exchanges, institutional capacity building, education, exercises, and presence—are our primary bulwark against the influence of malign actors in the hemisphere and are bolstered by our work together on military professionalism. Our work with partners to reinforce the hemisphere’s substantial, but incomplete, progress in human rights is even more critical in light of Russia and China’s own disregard for human rights. USSOUTHCOM’s Human Rights Initiative—which just celebrated its 20th anniversary—has conducted more than 200 human rights engagements that have enhanced the ability of partner nations to build professional forces that have legitimacy in the eyes of their populations.

As I told this Committee during my confirmation hearing, the Department of State’s security assistance programs—like IMET and FMF—are strategic game changers. Since 2009, IMET has provided opportunities for over 55,000 students from the region to attend schools like the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), the Inter-American Air Force Academy (IAAFA), and the Inter-American Defense College (IADC). These numbers aren’t just seats in a classroom. They represent lifelong relationships with future leaders⁴ who trust us, understand our culture and doctrine, and are prepared to work with us on a range of challenges.

In addition to strengthening partnerships, we support interagency efforts to hold individuals accountable for supporting the activities of negative actors. For example, in collaboration with the Department of Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), we provided information that supported the development of sanctions against Venezuelan

⁴ IMET has trained numerous individuals who have gone on to serve in key leadership positions, including the former President of Chile, Trinidad and Tobago’s Chief of the Defense Staff, and Argentina’s Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who helped foster our reengagement with the Argentine military after the political dynamics changed.

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government officials involved in drug smuggling, money laundering, corruption, and serious human rights abuses.

Drugs and Transnational Criminal Organizations. Drug trafficking threatens our national security and that of our regional partners. Drug overdoses killed more than 70,000 Americans last year, and nearly half a million people across the world in 2017.⁵ Fueled by drug demand—especially ours—drug traffickers transported enough metric tons of cocaine (that we know of) from South America by air, land, and sea last year to cover four football fields—and the majority of it was headed for our streets. Upon landfall, this bulk cocaine is broken down into multiple smaller loads and smuggled into the United States, making large interdictions exponentially more difficult. In addition to cocaine, traffickers also transport heroin, synthetic opioids like fentanyl, and precursor chemicals from China. While Mexico remains the primary source for heroin smuggled into the U.S. (and China the prime source of fentanyl), the Dominican Republic is emerging as a regional transit point for opioid trafficking into major U.S. cities like Philadelphia, Boston, and Miami.

Established drug trafficking routes and techniques provide opportunities for the illegal movement of other commodities and people—including terrorists. Several years ago, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) dedicated an article to a scenario in which its followers could leverage established trafficking networks to make their way to our border. This remains a potential vulnerability we watch as closely as we can.

Drug trafficking comes with significant costs, in more ways than one. After marijuana,

⁵ Centers for Disease Control, National Health Statistics; United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), *2018 World Drug Report*. Geneva.

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cocaine remains the second most valuable commodity in the global drug trade,⁶ generating dirty money that flows directly into the hands of criminal groups. In many cases, these groups are better funded than the security organizations confronting them. Dirty money fosters corruption and insecurity that tear at the fabric of communities, erode institutions of governance, and drain the region's potential. The vicious side effects of illicit trade also cost American taxpayers billions of dollars every year. This is more than a national security threat; it's also an economic one that affects every nation in our neighborhood.

What we're doing. Leveraging capabilities like information-sharing, network analysis, and the Department of Defense Rewards Program, we support operations by DHS and the DOJ's Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to interdict drug shipments and disrupt transnational criminal networks. For example, our intelligence support—enabled by our Army Military Intelligence Brigade—to operations by Homeland Security Investigations and other interagency partners helped dismantle one of the largest maritime illicit smuggling networks in Central America last year.

At the tactical level, JIATF-S continues to deliver steady returns on investment and improve its efficiency in targeting drug movements. Last year, it helped keep the equivalent of 600 minivans full of cocaine off U.S. streets. But even this isn't enough to keep pace with the increasing demand and the volume of drugs flowing north through the Eastern Pacific and Caribbean. While improving efficiency, we still only successfully interdicted about six percent of known drug movements.⁷ Doing more would require additional ships and maritime patrol aircraft and greater participation by interagency and international partners that form the

⁶ Global Financial Integrity, "Transnational Crime and the Developing World." March 2017.

⁷ Figure based on JIATF South utilization of Consolidated Counterdrug DataBase (CCDB) data.

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backbone of JIATF-S. The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) provide the bulk of JIATF-S's maritime and air capabilities. The United Kingdom, Canada, France, and the Netherlands lead multiple interdiction operations in the Caribbean, while we focus U.S. assets on the Eastern Pacific. Last year, 17 international partners conducted nearly half of the interdictions supported by JIATF-S. U.S. Northern Command remains our closest and best Department of Defense partner and we continuously look for ways to enhance our teamwork, recognizing that threats exploit our geographic combatant command boundaries.

Our capacity-building activities, whether at the tactical, operational, or institutional level, play a key role in this fight. For example, after years of USSOF training, Guatemala's Fuerzas Especiales Navales (FEN) is now among Central America's most competent and responsive maritime interdiction units. U.S. training, equipment, and interagency teamwork have also enabled Costa Rican and Panamanian forces to partner seamlessly with the USCG in interdiction operations. Partners are also working with us to address their ability to sustain capabilities that we have developed together. For example, Colombia has increased its eradication and interdiction efforts while also conducting increased operations against the ELN.

Drivers of Migration. Violence, unemployment, corruption, poverty, and impunity for gangs and transnational criminal organizations are some of the main drivers of insecurity that fuel migration to our southern border. 14 of the top 20 most violent countries in the world are in Latin America and the Caribbean.⁸ Migration challenges are exacerbated by weak institutions, corruption, violence and instability wrought by authoritarian governments. Migration from Venezuela is on track to approach the scale of the Syrian refugee crisis, straining the capacity

⁸ Igarapé Institute (Regional think tank), "The World's Most Dangerous Cities." March 31, 2017 (available at <https://igarape.org.br/en/the-worlds-most-dangerous-cities/>)

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and resources of its neighbors. The United Nations estimates that 5.3 million Venezuelans will have fled their country by the end of 2019—with over 2 million leaving this year alone.⁹ Last year, thousands of Nicaraguans fled to Costa Rica and other neighboring countries to seek protection, a number that will likely grow as President Ortega keeps a tight grip on power. Many Haitians continue to leave their country in hopes of finding economic opportunity elsewhere.

What we're doing. We are working closely with Central American and other partners to share information and provide training and equipment that enhance their ability to secure their borders. We assist partners in developing strong institutional foundations needed for legitimate, effective, and sustainable defense sectors through organizations like the William J. Perry Center¹⁰, the Center for Civil Military Relations¹⁰, and the Defense Institute for International Legal Studies, which help our partners build trust and confidence with their citizens. Through collaboration with the Department of State, USAID, and non-governmental partners, our civil affairs teams execute low cost, high impact civic action projects that help partner nations and extend governance to vulnerable communities.

Terrorism. As Deputy Secretary of State John Sullivan recently noted, transnational terrorism poses an immediate threat to the Western Hemisphere.¹¹ Groups like Lebanese Hezbollah, ISIS, and al-Qaida operate wherever they can garner support, raise funds, and pursue their terrorist agendas. ISIS and other groups have demonstrated their ability to inspire and recruit violent extremists to plan attacks in South America and the Caribbean. While the travel of foreign fighters from Latin America and the Caribbean to Iraq and Syria has diminished, the

⁹ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and International Organization for Migration (IOM), December 14, 2018.

¹⁰ The Washington, DC-based William J. Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies, one of DoD's five regional centers, develops and engages the Western Hemisphere's community of defense and security professionals to seek mutually supportive approaches to common challenges in order to develop effective and sustainable institutional capacity, and promote a greater understanding of U.S. regional policy.

¹¹ Remarks at the Western Hemisphere Ministerial on Counterterrorism, December 11, 2018.

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potential return of battle-trained extremists remains a threat. Another potential threat is posed by smuggling networks that move Special Interest Aliens from East Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia through the hemisphere to attempt entry into the United States.

What we're doing. USSOUTHCOM leads several annual exercises with interagency partners and partner nations to improve interoperability, preparedness, and response for a possible terrorist attack. Our neighbors are taking increasing steps to address the threat of terrorism in the hemisphere, as evidenced by the Caribbean Community's (CARICOM) development of a regional counter terrorism strategy in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State and USSOUTHCOM. In addition to these efforts, we work with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency to help regional partners build their capacity to combat weapons of mass destruction, another issue of growing interest to several partners.

We work closely with lead federal agencies and regional partners to detect and disrupt terrorist activity and strengthen counter-terrorism (CT) legislation. Trinidad and Tobago recently strengthened its CT legislation (including the creation of several new terrorism-related criminal offenses), and other countries are also updating theirs. In collaboration with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), DHS, and other interagency partners, we work with Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Chile, and others to share information and strengthen regional capacity to manage extremist threats. U.S. training and biometrics equipment are improving the ability of partners to control their borders, and in the past two years, we've helped interagency partners stop individuals with known or suspected ties to terrorism. Additionally, our small civil affairs teams work closely with U.S. embassies and USAID to counter radicalization and recruitment and amplify moderate voices in local communities.

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Detention operations also play an important role in the global fight against violent extremism by keeping enemy combatants off the battlefield. The medical and guard teams at Joint Task Force Guantanamo (JTF-GTMO) continue to conduct safe, legal, and humane detention operations. In line with Executive Order 13823, we are examining ways to address medical support, capacity, and infrastructure issues associated with continued detention operations.

Natural disasters. Our ability to respond rapidly in crisis is an important aspect of USSOUTHCOM's mission. Our neighborhood experiences approximately 50 natural disasters every year, of almost every type—from hurricanes to earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, wildfires, mudslides, and more. Protecting citizens before and after disaster strikes is a core mission for every military in our hemisphere. The question is not whether, but when, we will face the next disaster, and we must be ready.

What we're doing. Last October at the Conference of Defense Ministers of the Americas in Cancun, Mexico, the U.S. Secretary of Defense and his counterparts from across the hemisphere committed to strengthening regional military cooperation on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief in support of lead civilian agencies. In support, USSOUTHCOM works closely with partner nations, Department of State, USAID, NGOs, and multinational organizations like CARICOM's Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and the Regional Security System (RSS) to build national and regional response capacities. Our training, exercises, and low-cost humanitarian projects have helped our partners to be more prepared to respond to emergencies in their own countries, and more able to assist their neighbors in crisis. As an example, last year the Jamaican Defense Force deployed a team to Dominica for 60 days to provide medical aid and other emergency assistance in the wake of

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Hurricane Maria. We are assessing our authorities to ensure we can provide the necessary support for our partners to take on increasing responsibility for disaster responses.

When U.S. military support is required, our forward-deployed JTF-Bravo in Honduras, along with our annual SPMAGTF deployment, provide operational flexibility and agility. I'm proud to note that last year we integrated Chilean and Colombian officers into the SPMAGTF leadership team for the first time. Brazil will join the SPMAGTF this year, in addition to co-leading our UNITAS AMPHIB multinational naval exercise. This iteration of UNITAS will practice the establishment of a multinational task force to support humanitarian response, a capability we haven't employed since the Haiti earthquake in 2010. Building on this initiative, we are working with allies and partners to develop a concept for a scalable multinational task force that works within existing security cooperation frameworks to enhance our collective ability to respond rapidly to crises.

Congressional support for USSOUTHCOM's mission and this neighborhood. I invite you to visit our neighbors and reinforce the message that we value this region—the only region that is tied to our homeland by all domains—and the role our partners play in keeping our neighborhood safe.

I also thank the Congress for providing the Department's FY 2019 appropriations prior to the start of FY 2019, which minimized the impacts of the current partial government shutdown to the Department of Defense. As we look ahead, confidence in stable budgets and ensuring all of our U.S. government security partners, like our USCG, are open for business will reassure friendly nations that we are reliable security partners.

Support for our people. After several years of running the detention facility at JTF-GTMO as a temporary mission, we have been directed to keep the facility open. Much of the

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current infrastructure used by the JTF has long outlived its useful lifespan. We are undertaking a comprehensive review of the existing facilities to determine requirements for mission success, the safety of our forces, and operational efficiency. Closer to home, we are working to find ways to better support our personnel, including exploring ways to mitigate the limited military support services in the Miami area. I will keep this Committee informed of our progress.

Capabilities to defend our homeland. We appreciate the support of the Congress to ensure the continued operations of the USCG, which provides the majority of U.S. maritime assets supporting JIATF-S operations. The new National Security Cutters have proven very effective in the drug detection and monitoring mission, leveraging increased intelligence collection capability and on-scene endurance. Maritime patrol aircraft are also crucial to detection, monitoring, and interdiction by the USCG and partner nations. Continued congressional support for the new Offshore Patrol Cutter will enable the USCG to maintain its capacity in the hemisphere. While those new ships are beginning construction, maintenance funding is essential to keep the aging Medium Endurance Cutters—some of which are close to doubling their planned 30-year service lives—hard at work supporting JIATF-S. We also appreciate the support of the Congress to resource our intelligence capabilities like human intelligence (HUMINT) and innovative analytic tools utilized by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency's (DTRA) Joint Improvised-Threat Defeat Organization (JIDO) that allow us to exploit publicly available information and intelligence.

Thanks to congressional support, we contracted a Multi Mission Support Vessel (MMSV) to help fill capability gaps. True to its name, the MMSV was used for SOF training exercises and will now be employed to support U.S. and partner nation law enforcement in CN and CT operations. Increased U.S. joint and naval presence in regional operations and exercises will

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encourage partner forces, to include navies, to participate in regional security efforts such as HA/DR, CN, and CT. The Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) is mission fit for this region and we welcome its deployment this year. We are also leveraging our growing science and technology portfolio—including innovative projects like small-satellite and aerostat surveillance programs—to mitigate our intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance gaps, and help the Services to test new capabilities that hone the U.S. military's technological advantage.

Capabilities to strengthen our partnerships. We appreciate congressional support for initiatives that streamline security cooperation processes and help ensure we remain the security partner of choice. Your continued support to programs and capabilities that help build trust and long-term relationships with partners enhances our ability to defend the homeland by providing more capacity for defeating threats and sending a visible signal to our partners (and our competitors) about the depth of our commitment.

Conclusion. Partnership goes a long way in this part of the world. The right focused and modest investments in this hemisphere yield a solid rate of return for the United States and our partners. Our competitors benefit when we don't invest in our neighborhood.

Our partners share our vision of a hemisphere that is a beacon of peace, prosperity, and opportunity. They want to work with us to achieve this vision. It is in our national interest to work with them. Thank you.



2017-2027 THEATER STRATEGY



UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND
PARTNERSHIP FOR THE AMERICAS



04 April 2017

USSOUTHCOM is committed to working with our partners to defend our shared home of the Americas. Based on more than 50 years of shared values, challenges, and opportunities, the foundation of this Partnership for the Americas is our common desire to improve citizen security and for all people in the region to enjoy the benefits of political and economic freedom.

USSOUTHCOM is adapting to an evolving security environment by shifting our central focus from disrupting the flow of illicit commodities to degrading the growing web of transregional and transnational threat networks threatening regional stability across the southern approaches to the U.S. Homeland. Our refined focus requires that we understand the security environment, cultivate a friendly network of allies and partners, and undertake all of our activities as part of a comprehensively joint effort spanning this network and all of its Joint Force, interagency, intergovernmental, multinational, and nongovernmental elements.

USSOUTHCOM has entered a period requiring operational flexibility to accommodate the uncertain nature of resource and funding availability. Under these conditions, meeting our goals will demand a disciplined approach to resource allocation. USSOUTHCOM is committed to achieving our strategic objectives to ensure we meet our nationally directed objectives. Our intent is to ensure support to broader global challenges and leverage our talent, expertise, innovation efforts, and energy to make substantive contributions to our Nation's security.

Working with our partners in Central America, South America, and the Caribbean, is vital to the security, stability, and future of the western hemisphere. The nations of this region are deeply connected through trade, investment, and family remittances. Our collective success depends on all the nations working together towards a common goal of shared security and prosperity. We look forward to strengthening our Partnership for the Americas to realize the enormous potential of our common home.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K.W. Tidd', is positioned above the printed name and title.

K.W. TIDD
Admiral, USN
Commander

United States Southern Command

2017-2027 THEATER STRATEGY

OVERVIEW

The U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) area of responsibility (AOR) is a large and diverse region encompassing 31 countries and 16 dependencies in Central and South America, and the Caribbean. Nearly 500 million people speaking over 100 languages and dialects inhabit the region. The AOR is characterized by a variety of government types, from Presidential Republics to Parliamentary Republics and Democracies to one Communist State. Within this area, USSOUTHCOM promotes regional security and stability while supporting U.S. national security objectives and defending the southern approaches to the United States.

The United States and the region share wide-ranging interests. In 2016, U.S. trade with Central and South America exceeded \$200 billion.¹ Today, more than 18 percent of our citizens cite Hispanic roots, with a record 27.3 million of them eligible to vote in 2016.² These demographics are shaping the future of the United States. All of these factors reinforce deep U.S. ties with the region—strategic, economic, and cultural.


“Interconnectedness and the ability to transmit information instantly can endow small groups with unprecedented influence: the garage band, the dorm-room startup, the viral blogger, and the terrorist cell.”

-GEN (R) Stanley McCrystal
Team of Teams: New Rules of
Engagement for a Complex World

This strategy is the capstone document of USSOUTHCOM and represents an evolution in our focus toward becoming a networked, more agile organization. We will re-double our commitment to, and integration with, our partners as we tackle shared concerns. “Business as usual” is no longer sufficient: our new strategic direction requires us to understand the changing and interconnected

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¹ <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c0009.html>

² <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/09/15/facts-for-national-hispanic-heritage-month/>

security environment, cultivate a friendly network of allies and partners, and undertake our activities as part of a comprehensive effort by this friendly network spanning the Joint Force, interagency, intergovernmental, multinational, and nongovernmental elements.

Our Theater Strategy aligns with current U.S. government policy and strategic guidance and will be operationalized by our Theater Campaign Plan. It serves as our blueprint for defending the southern approaches to the United States and promoting regional security by degrading transregional and transnational threat networks (T3Ns), responding rapidly to crises, and building relationships to meet global challenges.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

Challenges

The illicit flows of goods and people, and the violence and corruption they fuel at home and abroad, are the visible manifestations of complex, adaptive, and networked threats. T3Ns are now the principal threat to regional security and stability. These networks operate unconstrained by national and geographic boundaries, unimpeded by rule of law, and fueled by enormous profits. Their interests, influence, capabilities, and reach undercut U.S. and partner nation interests across multiple domains. They prey on weak institutions and exploit the interconnected nature of our modern financial, transportation and technological systems, and the seams in our organizational boundaries.

T3Ns extend beyond transnational criminal organizations and gangs to ideologically motivated violent extremist organizations (VEOs) such as Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and Lebanese Hezbollah. VEOs

focus on spreading their influence and building a network of radicalized supporters and adherents—to include foreign terrorist fighters—especially in vulnerable populations in the Caribbean and parts of South and Central America. Their supporters move weapons, cash, and other contraband. The motivation for this activity could be personal profit or to further the financial or ideological aims of designated terrorist groups. Other criminal networks have expanded into weapons and people smuggling, including Special Interest Aliens (SIAs) — individuals who pose a potential threat to national security—through the region and into the U.S.

In addition to T3N, the region is also extremely vulnerable to natural disasters and the outbreak of infectious diseases. Uneven prevention, management, and response capabilities in the region—coupled with underlying challenges like poverty and inadequate governance—amplify the impact of disasters, extend human suffering, and exacerbate existing developmental challenges.

While threat networks and other humanitarian crises pose a near and persistent danger to regional stability and security, the U.S. and our partner nations also face strategic challenges. Over the past decade, China, Russia, and Iran have established a greater presence in the region. Their actions and rhetoric require separate and serious consideration. These global actors view the region's economic, political, and security landscape as fertile ground through which to achieve their respective, long-term objectives and to advance interests that may be incompatible with ours and those of our partners. Their vision for an alternative international order poses a challenge to every nation that values non-aggression, rule of law, and respect for human rights—the very same principles that

underlie the Inter-American system of peace and cooperation.

To address these security challenges, USSOUTHCOM developed a networked approach to defend our southern approaches, keep our nation safe, and secure our shared home. This approach recognizes the critical role friendly networks play in helping to counter transregional, multi-domain, and multi-dimensional (TMM) threats, as defined by the 2016 National Military Strategy (NMS).

Opportunities

Naturally, these strategic challenges also present opportunities to advance regional security and stability. Over the past five decades, USSOUTHCOM worked diligently to earn—and keep—the region’s trust. We now aim to build upon this trust to deepen bilateral cooperation and expand cooperation to trilateral, multilateral, or transregional dimensions. For example, we are encouraging Pacific-facing countries like Chile, Colombia, and Peru to better integrate and export security best practices to Asia Pacific partners.

Our new approach also includes increasing information and subject matter expert exchanges (SMEEs); developing multi-user interfaces to improve interagency and intergovernmental collaboration; and expanding the friendly networks to include new public and private sector partners to strengthen our collective capability, capacity, and interoperability. We seek to leverage cutting-edge technologies to advance how we process and share information. To this end, we are investing in advanced data analytics of publicly available information to further the collective understanding of the operational environment and the development of strategies to counter threat networks.

We will challenge ourselves to be a more responsive, outward-looking, networked organization through deepened integration and cooperation with our USG (United States Government), multinational, and civil society partners.

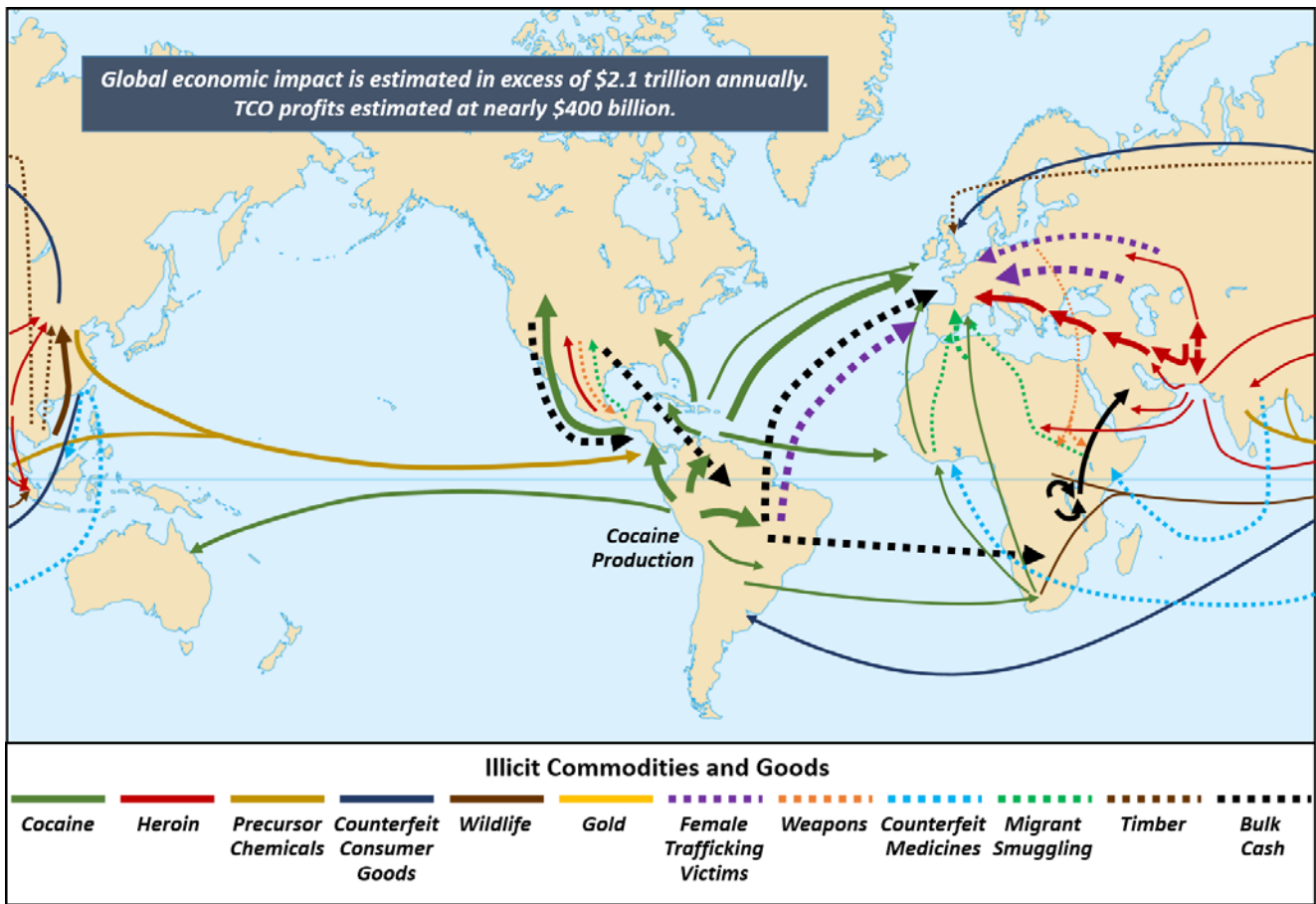


Figure 1: Global Illicit Pathways

THEORY OF SUCCESS: A NETWORK OF NETWORKS

Despite our history of supporting law enforcement, diplomatic, and development efforts, our capabilities and approach have not fully kept pace with the evolution of T3Ns. For years, we have been triaging the symptoms of the problem (commodities) rather than addressing the problem itself: the illicit networks, which develop, traffic, trade, and profit from those commodities (Figure 1). We will approach our challenges as a network of networks to degrade the effects of these T3Ns. Our Theory of Success is a friendly network of

interagency, regional, and non-governmental partners working together to disrupt T3N subnetworks (financial, transportation, leadership, etc.) and affecting the underlying conditions that allow them to flourish, enabling us to achieve the ultimate goal of degrading threat networks.

In USSOUTHCOM, we will operate using a networked defense. Operations in the region, in concert with our capable and willing USG partners, allies, and partner nations, are the forward presence in a layered defense against threat networks. This layered defense illuminates, degrades, and ensures threat networks and their enablers engaged in

nefarious operations cannot expand their operations. Success is defined as threat networks degraded in the region by our allies and partners with USG assistance provided through a combination of diplomacy, development, and defense.

Our strategy outlines our vision, mission, and strategic approach to provide guidance and assist in developing supporting plans for the USSOUTHCOM staff, components, Joint Task Forces, and Embassy Defense Teams.

Vision

We will be an innovative and trustworthy partner, enabling a networked defense approach that is grounded in mutual respect

and cooperative security to promote regional stability while advancing our shared interests.

Mission

U.S. Southern Command leverages rapid response capabilities, partner nation collaboration, and regional cooperation within our area of responsibility in order to support U.S. national security objectives, defend the Southern approaches of the United States, and promote regional security and stability.

Strategic approach

USSOUTHCOM’s strategic approach describes the ways we will use our means to achieve our strategic objectives while accounting for threats and risk to both the mission and to the force (Figure 2).

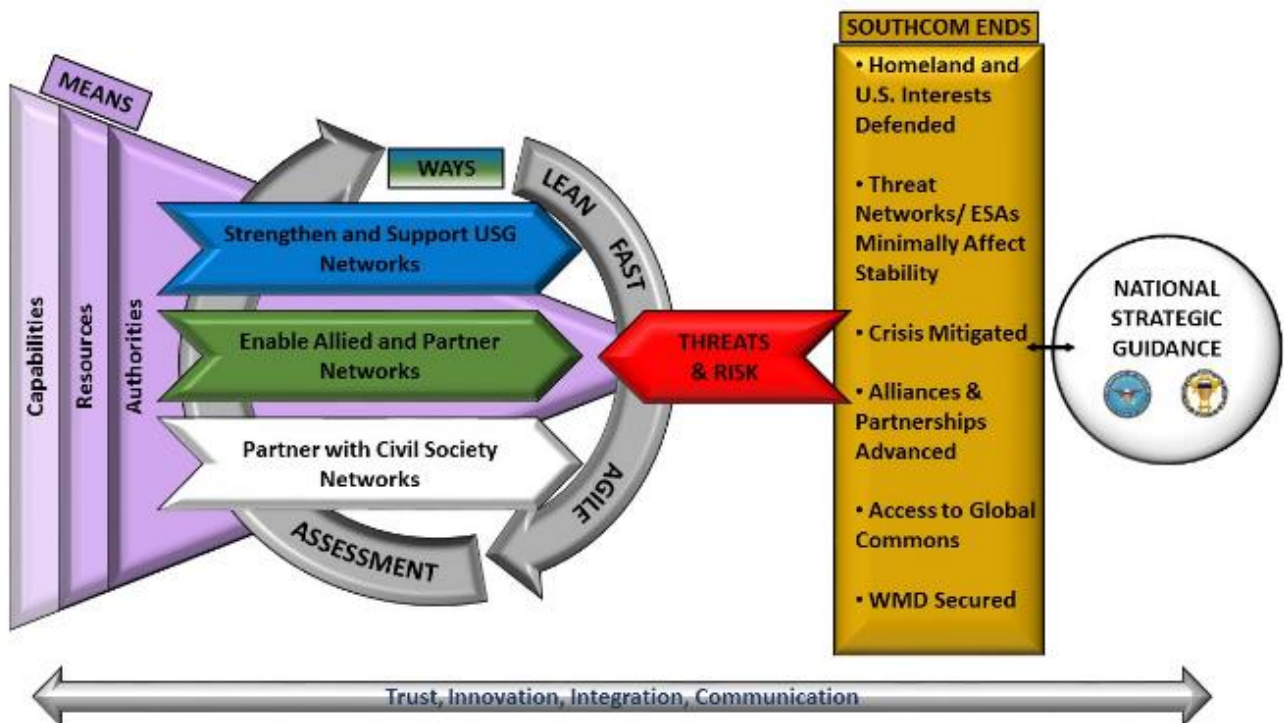


Figure 2: USSOUTHCOM Strategic Approach

OUR ENDS - STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

We are publishing USSOUTHCOM's Theater Strategy during a transitional period of national security guidance. Our objectives are derived from existing strategic guidance and nest with the 2016 NMS, which acknowledges the complex, TMM nature of the challenges and threats we face. Our strategic objectives are the desired conditions that guide the development of defined, decisive, and attainable campaign objectives.

- U.S. Homeland defended and U.S. interests secured against threats emanating from, or transiting through, the AOR
- Stability within the AOR minimally affected by threat networks and malign external state actors
- USSOUTHCOM and partner nations prepared to respond rapidly and mitigate the effects of crises
- Global Alliances and current and emerging security partnerships maintained/established
- The U.S. and International community maintains freedom of movement and strategic access through the Panama Canal and in the global commons (international maritime, air, space, and cyberspace domains) throughout the AOR
- WMD materials and technologies remain safeguarded and proliferation prevented in the AOR

WAYS

A networked approach consisting of three ways explains how we will accomplish our strategic objectives through the employment of our available means.

Strengthen and Support USG Networks

This is the foundational and most critical network. USSOUTHCOM primarily plays a supporting role to U.S. country teams, U.S. law enforcement, and other lead federal agencies. Trust underpins our efforts to strengthen this network and is critical to our indirect approach enabling and complementing activities planned and executed by others.

USSOUTHCOM's ability to achieve effects will be enhanced if the enterprise is networked via virtual and physical associations promoting and improving common awareness; intelligence, plans, and operations fusion; awareness of weak signals; and the ability to scale responses. Three examples of how we are implementing this approach are establishing communities of interest (COIs), the creation of a Network Engagement Team, and support to Homeland Security Investigation's Operation CITADEL.

There may be circumstances and threats where USSOUTHCOM will leverage our network relationships to respond to critical threats to national security directly. As the military command with the responsibility to defend the southern approaches to the U.S., USSOUTHCOM must be prepared to respond rapidly and directly in order to, for example, deter and, if necessary, disrupt T3Ns involved in developing, acquiring, or proliferating WMD.

Enable Allied and Partner Nation Networks

USSOUTHCOM will enable partners to manage internal security threats and crises and contribute to regional and international security efforts. We will focus on train and equip, infrastructure, and building capability and capacity programs for countering T3N (C-T3N) activities. We will strengthen our relationships with the region's security forces. We will continue to strengthen and build network linkages to regional militaries, civilian agencies, and experts with whom we will cooperate in the event of a crisis. And we will work to improve preparedness and response capabilities across the AOR.

“Regional players almost always understand their neighborhood’s security challenges better than we do. To make capacity building more effective, we must leverage these countries’ unique skills and knowledge to our collect[ive] advantage.”

-General Martin Dempsey
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
Foreign Policy, *“The Bend of Power”*
25 July 2014

Promoting the continued professionalization of partner nation defense and security institutions is a key tenet of our strategy. We have identified four key areas to enhance professionalism in militaries across the region: respect for human rights, the institutionalization of ‘jointness,’ the development of a professional non-commissioned officer (NCO) corps, and the integration of gender perspectives. These military imperatives describe the characteristics of modern national defense forces.

We will promote these military imperatives in all of our endeavors.

Partner with Civil Society Networks

USSOUTHCOM will partner with civil society, academia, the private sector, and populations that extend governance, improve community resilience, expand economic and social opportunities, and help vulnerable populations resist the corruptive influence of threat networks, the effects of natural and man-made disasters, and that of malign external actors.

MEANS

Our means are the resources, capabilities, and authorities we will use to achieve our strategic objectives. We do not anticipate any major increases in our means over the course of this strategy. USSOUTHCOM must devote increased attention to our fiscal management, assessment, and advocacy processes while leveraging resources, capabilities, and authorities from the functional combatant commands, components, and interagency partners. In addition, we will encourage partner nations to accept a greater role in achieving common security goals.

Our resources are the forces, footprint, and other assets and capabilities assigned or allocated to USSOUTHCOM to complete our mission. Figure 3 describes these resources and capabilities.

Components, Joint Task Forces, and Security Cooperation Organizations (SCOs)

USSOUTHCOM exercises its Combatant Command authority to accomplish missions through its service components, joint task forces, and other organizations; these organizations regularly conduct exercises, operations, and SMEEs. The military



Figure 3: USSOUTHCOM Components and JTFs

services provide USSOUTHCOM with component commands that perform our mission-specific and security cooperation activities. Joint Task Force-Bravo, located at Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras, provides an agile, responsive, and forward-stationed capability enabling security cooperation, C-T3N operations, and humanitarian assistance/disaster relief. Joint Task Force-Guantanamo, located at U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, conducts safe and humane legal care and custody of detainees supporting global contingency operations. Joint Interagency Task Force-South, located in Key West, Florida, conducts detection and monitoring operations to facilitate the interdiction of illicit trafficking and C-T3N operations. Our SCOs are our forward elements

in the region and conduct interagency coordination within the U.S. Embassy Country Teams ensuring the alignment of our security cooperation activities with the Embassy’s Integrated Country Strategy. The SCOs provide invaluable insight into partner nation requirements and perspectives.

The National Guard forces and capabilities employed through the National Guard Bureau’s State Partnership Program enable USSOUTHCOM to leverage enduring National Guard relationships as an instrument to advance civil-military cooperation.

Interagency, Civil Society, and broader Department of Defense (DoD) Collaboration

Through our organizational culture and unique regional security environment, USSOUTHCOM is

considered the premier interagency and public-private cooperation Geographic Combatant Command. Our interagency and private sector partners provide unique authorities, capabilities, and expertise that, in most cases, can only be found outside of DoD. Working by, with, and through interagency partners like the Department of State (DoS), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Justice, and collaborating with non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations, businesses, and academia enables progress toward national aims that would be impossible with military power alone. We also work closely with combat support agencies (CSAs) and other geographic and functional combatant commands. CSAs include both logistics and intelligence oriented agencies and provide unique expertise and enabling capabilities. The TMM challenges we face require the arrangement of cohesive Joint Force actions in time, space, and purpose. We can only achieve this through persistent coordination with other combatant commands.

Authorities

U.S. law provides authorities for USSOUTHCOM to perform specific activities especially those focusing on training and supporting U.S. Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs), supporting partner nation (PN) LEAs to counter T3N, and the authority to build partner capacity (BPC). The BPC authority supports C-T3N activities, maritime and border security, military intelligence, and other operations the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) determines to be in the national interest.

Other mission-critical authorities authorize USSOUTHCOM to support ongoing Special

Operations Forces (SOF) counterterror operations and provide logistics support, supply, and services to friendly foreign countries conducting SecDef-designated operations, such as joint operations with DoD, or military/stability operations benefitting U.S. Armed Forces or national security.

RISK

Strategy is about balancing our strategic objectives with our selected ways and available means. For the purposes of this strategy, we define risk as the probability and severity of failure, or unacceptable consequences in failing to achieve a strategic objective. Because we anticipate fewer means to apply to our strategic objectives, we must determine what we anticipate to be the likelihood of not meeting our objectives, the effects on the command and the region should we fail to do so, and what actions and activities we can undertake to mitigate those effects.

USSOUTHCOM is committed to achieving our strategic objectives to ensure we meet our nationally directed objectives; however, this Command cannot do more with less. Our intent is to tie our efforts to broader global challenges and leverage our talent, expertise, innovation efforts, and energy to mitigate negative consequences to our Nation's security, our AOR, and our collective interests.

Our major risk drivers are insufficient resourcing of maritime vessels and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance platforms. We are also critically dependent on SOF, which we rely on for our persistent forward presence. We will mitigate some of these resource limitations by leveraging and sharing capabilities within our partner networks.

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

The TCP and implementation orders will operationalize this strategy. The TCP will establish lines of effort, intermediate military objectives, and effects to guide our operations, actions, and activities. The TCP lines of effort will center on:

Countering Transnational and Transregional Threat Networks (C-T3N)

C-T3N is our main effort. The goal of our approach is to ensure the friendly networks degrade threat network capabilities, their operations, and affect the underlying conditions allowing them to flourish. We will undertake this approach to ensure regional stability and reduce threats to our mutual interests.

Building relationships to meet global challenges

Security partnerships are the foundation of everything we do. These partnerships—based on trust, shared values, mutual respect, and principled U.S. and regional leadership—ensure our hemisphere remains a beacon of peace and prosperity. To meet these challenges directly, we will work with our USG partners, including the Intelligence Community, and our regional partners to improve our shared understanding of what global challengers intend by their actions and how their activities in the AOR advance their respective global interests. We will continue to share information with our fellow Combatant Commands and multinational partners to support global planning.

USSOUTHCOM's capability and capacity-building efforts assist our partners to improve managing internal threats, securing their borders, responding to natural disasters, and delivering essential services like medical care and infrastructure to their citizens. But training is not an end in and of itself: it

is an opportunity to connect on a personal and professional level and to engage with regional militaries and security forces on important issues like human rights, rule of law, and accountable institutions. This engagement accomplishes several objectives: it helps us understand PN requirements and subsequently improve partner capabilities to stop threats before they destabilize the region; it helps deepen U.S. partnerships with the region; it encourages greater regional cooperation on shared challenges, such as threat networks and crisis response; and it reinforces the rules-based international order.

Enabling Rapid Response

We will help our partners, individual states, and regional organizations prepare for and mitigate crisis. This includes those actions taken supporting DoS and USAID to reduce risk, build resiliency, and develop emergency response capabilities throughout the region as well as our own efforts to build a culture of readiness within the Command. Our ability to negotiate the chaotic first 72 hours of any contingency is essential; we must be ready to stand alone, if necessary, until reinforcements arrive. Beyond crisis onset, we must simultaneously manage crisis and, to some degree, steady state operations potentially for an extended period. Key to this effort is an innovative and comprehensive exercise program that prepares us and our USG and multinational partners for contingency response, including the Defense of the Panama Canal and Panama Canal Area; Migration Operations; Humanitarian Assistance (HA); Disaster Response (DR) (including epidemic response); and unilateral, bilateral, or multilateral military operations by crisis response forces.

CONCLUSION

In terms of geographic proximity, trade, immigration, and culture, no other part of the world more greatly affects daily life in the United States than Central and South America and the Caribbean. The transregional challenges we must address provide opportunities to integrate our activities with our regional partners and to tie our collective efforts to the greater global whole. Flexibility will be crucial as we adjust to support the global security environment; we must be lean, fast, and agile. Together, with our network of partners, we will defend the southern approaches and ensure the Western Hemisphere remains a beacon of shared progress, shared prosperity, and shared democratic values.

Chargé d’Affaires a.i. Roxanne Cabral



Roxanne Cabral assumed duties as Chargé d’Affaires a.i. at U.S. Embassy Panama in March, 2018, and she arrived in Panama as Deputy Chief of Mission in August 2017. She has over twenty years of experience as a U.S. Diplomat with several high impact assignments in Washington and abroad. Her most recent assignment was as the Director of the Office of Policy, Planning and Resources for the Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs from 2015-2017, where she led the development of public diplomacy policy and management of global PD resources to advance key national security objectives. She held the 2013-14 Department of State Senior Fellowship at the Washington, D.C.-based think-tank The Atlantic Council, during which she co-authored a white paper entitled “Diplomacy for a Diffuse World.” Her last overseas assignment was as the Public Affairs Section Chief at the U.S. Consulate General in Guangzhou, China from 2010-2013. Previous overseas assignments include Taiwan, Albania, Mexico City, and Ukraine. She also served as the public diplomacy advisor in the Department of State’s Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs focusing on Balkans issues from 2006-2008. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Vanderbilt University and a Master of Public Health degree from Johns Hopkins University. She is married to fellow diplomat, David Schroeder, and has three boys, Quinn, Roman, and Evan.



United States Department of State

U.S.-PANAMA RELATIONS

The United States established diplomatic relations with Panama in 1903 following its declaration of independence from Colombia. That year, through the Hay/Bunau-Varilla Treaty, Panama granted the United States rights to a zone spanning the country to build, administer, fortify and defend an inter-oceanic canal. The Panama Canal opened in 1914. In 1977, the United States and Panama signed the Carter-Torrijos Treaties to set basic governing standards for the Canal through 1999 and guarantee its permanent neutrality. These treaties went into effect in 1979, and on December 31, 1999, Panama assumed full jurisdiction and operational control over the Canal.

Changes in Panama's government and tensions over the Canal led to the interruption of diplomatic relations several times during the 20th century. From 1987-1989, relations deteriorated sharply under the rule of Manuel Noriega. During Operation Just Cause in 1989, U.S. troops entered Panama and captured Noriega, who would not cede power following elections. Since the restoration of democracy, Panamanians have elected five presidents from three political parties in free and fair elections.

Panama's location and role in global trade make its success vital to U.S. prosperity and national security. Panama's key location along major land and sea transit routes makes it a critical partner in the interdiction of illegal drugs destined for the United States. While Panama's economic growth rate is among the highest in the hemisphere, the country faces the challenge of making this growth more inclusive. It also faces added pressure for more fiscal transparency as it enforces recent anti-money laundering legislation. Increasing pressure from drug trafficking and organized criminal activity – including migrant smugglers – contributes to security problems that threaten to undermine Panamanian security,

democratic institutions, and economic prosperity. Because of our shared history, cultural ties between both countries are strong.

U.S. Assistance to Panama

U.S. assistance to Panama aims to ensure Panama remains a secure, prosperous, and democratic country that continues to work with the United States as its principal partner in the region. The United States and Panama work together to advance common interests in improving citizen safety and strengthening the rule of law. They cooperate in many ways, including combating illegal drug trafficking and other criminal activity, as well as promoting economic, democratic, and social development through U.S. and international agencies.

The [U.S. Strategy for Central America](#) (Strategy) guides U.S. diplomatic efforts and foreign assistance in the region. The Strategy is a bipartisan, multiyear U.S. government plan covering all seven Central American countries (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama). The Strategy aims to secure U.S. borders and protect American citizens by addressing the security, governance, and economic drivers of illegal immigration and transnational crime, while increasing opportunities for U.S. and other businesses. The Strategy focuses on three overarching lines of action:

1) promoting prosperity, 2) enhancing security, and 3) improving governance.

Bilateral Economic Relations

The United States and Panama have signed a bilateral investment treaty and a Trade Promotion Agreement. The trade agreement eliminates tariffs and other barriers to U.S. exports, promotes economic growth, sets high standards for the treatment of investments, provides a framework for resolution of investment or trade disputes, and expands trade between the two countries. In 2016, Panama inaugurated the expansion of the Panama Canal, which has provided substantial benefits to Panama and many U.S. East Coast ports. U.S. exports to Panama include oil, machinery, aircraft, agricultural products, and low-value shipments. The United States is the number-one user of the Canal, with 68 percent of transits heading to or from U.S. ports. U.S. imports from Panama include fish and seafood, gold, cane sugar, bananas, and pineapples. The finance/insurance and wholesale trade sectors lead U.S. direct investment in Panama, while the manufacturing and real estate sectors lead Panamanian direct investment in the United States.

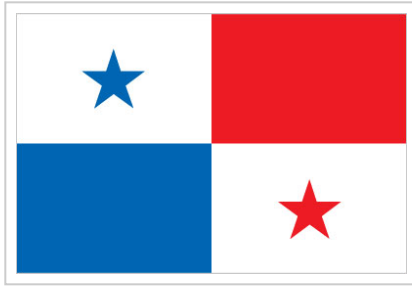
Panama's Membership in International Organizations

Panama and the United States belong to a number of the same international organizations, including the United Nations, Organization of American States, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, International Maritime Organization, and World Trade Organization.

Bilateral Representation

Principal U.S. embassy officials are listed in the Department's [Key Officers List](#).

Panama maintains an embassy in the United States at 2862 McGill Terrace, NW, Washington, DC 20008 (tel: 202-483-1407).



CENTRAL AMERICA :: PANAMA

Introduction :: PANAMA

Background:

Explored and settled by the Spanish in the 16th century, Panama broke with Spain in 1821 and joined a union of Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela - named the Republic of Gran Colombia. When the latter dissolved in 1830, Panama remained part of Colombia. With US backing, Panama seceded from Colombia in 1903 and promptly signed a treaty with the US allowing for the construction of a canal and US sovereignty over a strip of land on either side of the structure (the Panama Canal Zone). The Panama Canal was built by the US Army Corps of Engineers between 1904 and 1914. In 1977, an agreement was signed for the complete transfer of the Canal from the US to Panama by the end of the century. Certain portions of the Zone and increasing responsibility over the Canal were turned over in the subsequent decades. With US help, dictator Manuel NORIEGA was deposed in 1989. The entire Panama Canal, the area supporting the Canal, and remaining US military bases were transferred to Panama by the end of 1999. An ambitious expansion project to more than double the Canal's capacity - by allowing for more Canal transits and larger ships - was carried out between 2007 and 2016.

Geography :: PANAMA

Location:

Central America, bordering both the Caribbean Sea and the North Pacific Ocean, between Colombia and Costa Rica

Geographic coordinates:

9 00 N, 80 00 W

Map references:

Central America and the Caribbean

Area:

total: 75,420 sq km

land: 74,340 sq km

water: 1,080 sq km

country comparison to the world: 119

Area - comparative:

slightly smaller than South Carolina

Area comparison map:



Land boundaries:

total: 687 km

border countries (2): Colombia 339 km, Costa Rica 348 km

Coastline:

2,490 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 12 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm or edge of continental margin

contiguous zone: 24 nm

Climate:

tropical maritime; hot, humid, cloudy; prolonged rainy season (May to January), short dry season (January to May)

Terrain:

interior mostly steep, rugged mountains with dissected, upland plains; coastal plains with rolling hills

Elevation:

mean elevation: 360 m

lowest point: Pacific Ocean 0 m

highest point: Volcan Baru 3,475 m

Natural resources:

copper, mahogany forests, shrimp, hydropower

Land use:

agricultural land: 30.5% (2011 est.)

arable land: 7.3% (2011 est.) / permanent crops: 2.5% (2011 est.) / permanent pasture: 20.7% (2011 est.)

forest: 43.6% (2011 est.)

other: 25.9% (2011 est.)

Irrigated land:

321 sq km (2012)

Population distribution:

population is concentrated towards the center of the country, particularly around the Canal, but a sizeable segment of the populace also lives in the far west around David; the eastern third of the country is sparsely inhabited

Natural hazards:

occasional severe storms and forest fires in the Darien area

Environment - current issues:

water pollution from agricultural runoff threatens fishery resources; deforestation of tropical rain forest; land degradation and soil erosion threatens siltation of Panama Canal; air pollution in urban areas; mining threatens natural resources

Environment - international agreements:

party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Dumping, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Tropical Timber 83, Tropical Timber 94, Wetlands, Whaling

signed, but not ratified: Marine Life Conservation

Geography - note:

strategic location on eastern end of isthmus forming land bridge connecting North and South America; controls Panama Canal that links North Atlantic Ocean via Caribbean Sea with North Pacific Ocean

People and Society :: PANAMA

Population:

3,800,644 (July 2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 131

Nationality:

noun: Panamanian(s)

adjective: Panamanian

Ethnic groups:

mestizo (mixed Amerindian and white) 65%, Native American 12.3% (Ngabe 7.6%, Kuna 2.4%, Embera 0.9%, Bugle 0.8%, other 0.4%, unspecified 0.2%), black or African descent 9.2%, mulatto 6.8%, white 6.7% (2010 est.)

Languages:

Spanish (official), indigenous languages (including Ngabere (or Guaymi), Buglere, Kuna, Embera, Wounaan, Naso (or Teribe), and Bri Bri), Panamanian English Creole (similar to Jamaican English Creole; a mixture of English and Spanish with elements of Ngabere; also known as Guari Guari and Colon Creole), English, Chinese (Yue and Hakka), Arabic, French Creole, other (Yiddish, Hebrew, Korean, Japanese)

note: many Panamanians are bilingual

Religions:

Roman Catholic 85%, Protestant 15%

Demographic profile:

Panama is a country of demographic and economic contrasts. It is in the midst of a demographic transition, characterized by steadily declining rates of fertility, mortality, and population growth, but disparities persist based on wealth, geography, and ethnicity. Panama has one of the fastest growing economies in Latin America and dedicates substantial funding to social programs, yet poverty and inequality remain prevalent. The indigenous population accounts for a growing share of Panama's poor and extreme poor, while the non-indigenous rural poor have been more successful at rising out of poverty through rural-to-urban labor migration. The government's large expenditures on untargeted, indirect subsidies for water, electricity, and fuel have been ineffective, but its conditional cash transfer program has shown some promise in helping to decrease extreme poverty among the indigenous population.

Panama has expanded access to education and clean water, but the availability of sanitation and, to a lesser extent, electricity remains poor. The increase in secondary schooling - led by female enrollment - is spreading to rural and indigenous areas, which probably will help to alleviate poverty if educational quality and the availability of skilled jobs improve. Inadequate access to sanitation contributes to a high incidence of diarrhea in Panama's children, which is one of the main causes of Panama's elevated chronic malnutrition rate, especially among indigenous communities.

Age structure:

0-14 years: 26.13% (male 506,953 /female 486,129)

15-24 years: 16.84% (male 326,207 /female 313,894)

25-54 years: 40.35% (male 776,395 /female 757,008)

55-64 years: 8.11% (male 152,894 /female 155,353)

65 years and over: 8.57% (male 149,415 /female 176,396) (2018 est.)

population pyramid:**Dependency ratios:**

total dependency ratio: 54.8 (2015 est.)

youth dependency ratio: 43.1 (2015 est.)

elderly dependency ratio: 11.7 (2015 est.)

potential support ratio: 8.5 (2015 est.)

Median age:

total: 29.5 years

male: 29 years

female: 29.9 years (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 123

Population growth rate:

1.24% (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 89

Birth rate:

17.6 births/1,000 population (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 97

Death rate:

5 deaths/1,000 population (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 195

Net migration rate:

-0.2 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 111

Population distribution:

population is concentrated towards the center of the country, particularly around the Canal, but a sizeable segment of the populace also lives in the far west around David; the eastern third of the country is sparsely inhabited

Urbanization:

urban population: 67.7% of total population (2018)

rate of urbanization: 2.06% annual rate of change (2015-20 est.)

Major urban areas - population:

1.783 million PANAMA CITY (capital) (2018)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 1.04 male(s)/female

0-14 years: 1.04 male(s)/female

15-24 years: 1.04 male(s)/female

25-54 years: 1.03 male(s)/female

55-64 years: 0.98 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 0.85 male(s)/female

total population: 1.01 male(s)/female (2018 est.)

Maternal mortality rate:

94 deaths/100,000 live births (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 74

Infant mortality rate:

total: 9.6 deaths/1,000 live births

male: 10.3 deaths/1,000 live births

female: 8.9 deaths/1,000 live births (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 137

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 78.9 years

male: 76.1 years

female: 81.9 years (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 58

Total fertility rate:

2.28 children born/woman (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 89

Contraceptive prevalence rate:

62.8% (2013)

Health expenditures:

8% of GDP (2014)

country comparison to the world: 57

Physicians density:

1.57 physicians/1,000 population (2016)

Hospital bed density:

2.3 beds/1,000 population (2013)

Drinking water source:

improved:

urban: 97.7% of population

rural: 86.6% of population

total: 94.7% of population

unimproved:

urban: 2.3% of population

rural: 11.4% of population

total: 5.3% of population (2015 est.)

Sanitation facility access:

improved:

urban: 83.5% of population (2015 est.)

rural: 58% of population (2015 est.)

total: 75% of population (2015 est.)

unimproved:

urban: 16.5% of population (2015 est.)

rural: 42% of population (2015 est.)

total: 25% of population (2015 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

1% (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 45

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:

25,000 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 77

HIV/AIDS - deaths:

<1000 (2017 est.)

Major infectious diseases:

degree of risk: intermediate (2016)

food or waterborne diseases: bacterial diarrhea (2016)

vectorborne diseases: dengue fever (2016)

note: active local transmission of Zika virus by Aedes species mosquitoes has been identified in this country (as of August 2016); it poses an important risk (a large number of cases possible) among US citizens if bitten by an infective mosquito; other less common ways to get Zika are through sex, via blood transfusion, or during pregnancy, in which the pregnant woman passes Zika virus to her fetus

Obesity - adult prevalence rate:

22.7% (2016)

country comparison to the world: 73

Children under the age of 5 years underweight:

Education expenditures:

3.2% of GDP (2011)

country comparison to the world: 133

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write (2015 est.)

total population: 95%

male: 95.7%

female: 94.4% (2015 est.)

School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):

total: 13 years

male: 12 years

female: 13 years (2015)

Unemployment, youth ages 15-24:

total: 10.8%

male: 8.3%

female: 14.9% (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 121

Government :: PANAMA

Country name:

conventional long form: Republic of Panama

conventional short form: Panama

local long form: Republica de Panama

local short form: Panama

etymology: according to tradition, the name derives from a former indigenous fishing village and its nearby beach that were called "Panama" meaning "an abundance of fish"

Government type:

presidential republic

Capital:

name: Panama City

geographic coordinates: 8 58 N, 79 32 W

time difference: UTC-5 (same time as Washington, DC, during Standard Time)

Administrative divisions:

10 provinces (provincias, singular - provincia) and 3 indigenous regions* (comarcas); Bocas del Toro, Chiriqui, Cocolé, Colón, Darién, Embera-Wounaan*, Herrera, Guna Yala*, Los Santos, Ngobe-Bugle*, Panamá, Panamá Oeste, Veraguas

Independence:

3 November 1903 (from Colombia; became independent from Spain on 28 November 1821)

National holiday:

Independence Day (Separation Day), 3 November (1903)

Constitution:

history: several previous; latest effective 11 October 1972

amendments: proposed by the National Assembly, by the Cabinet, or by the Supreme Court of Justice; passage requires approval by one of two procedures: 1) absolute majority vote of the Assembly membership in each of three readings and by absolute majority vote of the next elected Assembly in a single reading without text modifications; 2) absolute majority vote of the Assembly membership in each of three readings, followed by absolute majority vote of the next elected Assembly in each of three readings with text modifications, and approval in a referendum; amended several times, last in 2004; note - in May 2018, President VARELA began the process to amend the constitution (2018)

Legal system:

civil law system; judicial review of legislative acts in the Supreme Court of Justice

International law organization participation:

accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations; accepts ICCt jurisdiction

Citizenship:

citizenship by birth: yes

citizenship by descent only: yes

dual citizenship recognized: no

residency requirement for naturalization: 5 years

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

Executive branch:

chief of state: President Juan Carlos VARELA (since 1 July 2014); Vice President Isabel de SAINT MALO de Alvarado (since 1 July 2014); note - the president is both chief of state and head of government

head of government: President Juan Carlos VARELA (since 1 July 2014); Vice President Isabel de SAINT MALO de Alvarado (since 1 July 2014)

cabinet: Cabinet appointed by the president

elections/appointments: president and vice president directly elected on the same ballot by simple majority popular vote for a 5-year term; president eligible for a single non-consecutive term); election last held on 5 May 2019 (next to be

held in 2024)

election results: Nito CORTIZO elected president; percent of vote - Nito CORTIZO (PRD) 33.3%, Romulo ROUX (CD) 31%, Ricardo LOMBANA (independent) 18.8%, Jose BLANDON (Panamenista Party) 10.8%, Ana Matilde GOMEZ Ruiloba (independent) 4.8%, other 1.3%; note - Nito CORTIZO will take office 1 July 2019

Legislative branch:

description: unicameral National Assembly or Asamblea Nacional (71 seats; 45 members directly elected in multi-seat constituencies - populous towns and cities - by proportional representation vote and 26 directly elected in single-seat constituencies - outlying rural districts - by plurality vote; members serve 5-year terms)

elections: last held on 4 May 2014 (next to be held in May 2019)

election results: percent of vote by party - CD 33.7%, PRD 31.5%, Panamenista Party 20%, MOLIRENA 7.2%, PP 3.3%, other 1%, independent 3%; seats by party - PRD 30, CD 25, Panamenista 12, MOLIRENA 2, PP 1, independent 1; composition - men 58, women 13, percent of women 18.3%

note: an alliance between the Panamenista Party and Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) fractured after the 2014 election, but a loose coalition composed of Panamenista and moderate PRD and CD legislators generally work together to support the president's agenda

Judicial branch:

highest courts: Supreme Court of Justice or Corte Suprema de Justicia (consists of 9 magistrates and 9 alternates and divided into civil, criminal, administrative, and general business chambers)

judge selection and term of office: magistrates appointed by the president for staggered 10-year terms

subordinate courts: appellate courts or Tribunal Superior; Labor Supreme Courts; Court of Audit; circuit courts or Tribunal Circuital (2 each in 9 of the 10 provinces); municipal courts; electoral, family, maritime, and adolescent courts

Political parties and leaders:

Democratic Change or CD [Romulo ROUX]

Democratic Revolutionary Party or PRD [Benicio ROBINSON]

Nationalist Republican Liberal Movement or MOLIRENA [Francisco "Pancho" ALEMAN]

Panamenista Party [Jose Luis "Popi" VARELA Rodriguez] (formerly the Arnulfista Party)

Popular Party or PP [Juan Carlos ARANGO Reese] (formerly Christian Democratic Party or PDC)

International organization participation:

BCIE, CAN (observer), CD, CELAC, FAO, G-77, IADB, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC (national committees), ICCt, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, IMO, IMSO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO, ITSO, ITU, ITUC (NGOs), LAES, LAIA, MIGA, NAM, OAS, OPANAL, OPCW, Pacific Alliance (observer), PCA, SICA, UN, UNASUR (observer), UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, Union Latina, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WFTU (NGOs), WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador Emanuel Arturo GONZALEZ-REVILLA Lince (since 18 September 2014)

chancery: 2862 McGill Terrace NW, Washington, DC 20007

telephone: [1] (202) 483-1407

FAX: [1] (202) 483-8413

consulate(s) general: Houston, Miami, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, Tampa, Washington DC

Diplomatic representation from the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant), Charge d'Affairs Roxanne CABRAL (since 9 March 2018)

embassy: Edificio 783, Avenida Demetrio Basilio Lakas Avenue, Clayton, Panama

mailing address: American Embassy Panama, Unit 0945, APO AA 34002; American Embassy Panama, 9100 Panama City PL, Washington, DC 20521-9100

telephone: [507] 317-5000

FAX: [507] 317-5445 (2018)

Flag description:

divided into four, equal rectangles; the top quadrants are white (hoist side) with a blue five-pointed star in the center and plain red; the bottom quadrants are plain blue (hoist side) and white with a red five-pointed star in the center; the blue and red colors are those of the main political parties (Conservatives and Liberals respectively) and the white denotes peace between them; the blue star stands for the civic virtues of purity and honesty, the red star signifies authority and law

National symbol(s):

harpy eagle; national colors: blue, white, red

National anthem:

name: "Himno Istmeno" (Isthmus Hymn)

lyrics/music: Jeronimo DE LA OSSA/Santos A. JORGE

note: adopted 1925

0:00 / 1:49

Economy :: PANAMA**Economy - overview:**

Panama's dollar-based economy rests primarily on a well-developed services sector that accounts for more than three-quarters of GDP. Services include operating the Panama Canal, logistics, banking, the Colon Free Trade Zone, insurance, container ports, flagship registry, and tourism and Panama is a center for offshore banking. Panama's transportation and logistics services sectors, along with infrastructure development projects, have boosted economic growth; however, public debt surpassed \$37 billion in 2016 because of excessive government spending and public works projects. The US-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement was approved by Congress and signed into law in October 2011, and entered into force in October 2012.

Future growth will be bolstered by the Panama Canal expansion project that began in 2007 and was completed in 2016 at a cost of \$5.3 billion - about 10-15% of current GDP. The expansion project more than doubled the Canal's capacity, enabling it to accommodate high-capacity vessels such as tankers and neopanamax vessels that are too large to traverse the existing canal. The US and China are the top users of the Canal.

Strong economic performance has not translated into broadly shared prosperity, as Panama has the second worst income distribution in Latin America. About one-fourth of the population lives in poverty; however, from 2006 to 2012 poverty was reduced by 10 percentage points.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$104.1 billion (2017 est.)

\$98.82 billion (2016 est.)

\$94.12 billion (2015 est.)

note: data are in 2017 dollars

country comparison to the world: 83

GDP (official exchange rate):

\$61.84 billion (2017 est.)

GDP - real growth rate:

5.4% (2017 est.)

5% (2016 est.)

5.8% (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 42

GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$25,400 (2017 est.)

\$24,500 (2016 est.)

\$23,700 (2015 est.)

note: data are in 2017 dollars

country comparison to the world: 80

Gross national saving:

38.9% of GDP (2017 est.)

39.2% of GDP (2016 est.)

36.8% of GDP (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 10

GDP - composition, by end use:

household consumption: 45.6% (2017 est.)

government consumption: 10.7% (2017 est.)

investment in fixed capital: 42.9% (2017 est.)

investment in inventories: 3% (2017 est.)

exports of goods and services: 41.9% (2017 est.)

imports of goods and services: -44.2% (2017 est.)

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

agriculture: 2.4% (2017 est.)

industry: 15.7% (2017 est.)

services: 82% (2017 est.)

Agriculture - products:

bananas, rice, corn, coffee, sugarcane, vegetables; livestock; shrimp

Industries:

construction, brewing, cement and other construction materials, sugar milling

Industrial production growth rate:

6.3% (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 38

Labor force:

1.633 million (2017 est.)

note: shortage of skilled labor, but an oversupply of unskilled labor

country comparison to the world: 129

Labor force - by occupation:

agriculture: 17%

industry: 18.6%

services: 64.4% (2009 est.)

Unemployment rate:

6% (2017 est.)

5.5% (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 91

Population below poverty line:

23% (2015 est.)

Household income or consumption by percentage share:

lowest 10%: 1.1%

highest 10%: 38.9% (2014 est.)

Distribution of family income - Gini index:

50.7 (2014 est.)

56.1 (2003)

country comparison to the world: 14

Budget:

revenues: 12.43 billion (2017 est.)

expenditures: 13.44 billion (2017 est.)

Taxes and other revenues:

20.1% (of GDP) (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 152

Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):

-1.6% (of GDP) (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 94

Public debt:

37.8% of GDP (2017 est.)

37.4% of GDP (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 138

Fiscal year:

calendar year

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

0.9% (2017 est.)

0.7% (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 47

Commercial bank prime lending rate:

7.52% (31 December 2017 est.)

7.53% (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 112

Stock of narrow money:

\$8.347 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$8.249 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 87

Stock of broad money:

\$8.347 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$8.249 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 89

Stock of domestic credit:

\$51.05 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$46.41 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 66

Market value of publicly traded shares:

\$12.54 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

\$10.68 billion (31 December 2011 est.)

\$8.348 billion (31 December 2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 71

Current account balance:

-\$3.036 billion (2017 est.)

-\$3.16 billion (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 176

Exports:

\$15.5 billion (2017 est.)

\$14.7 billion (2016 est.)

note: includes the Colon Free Zone

country comparison to the world: 75

Exports - partners:

US 18.9%, Netherlands 16.6%, China 6.5%, Costa Rica 5.4%, India 5.1%, Vietnam 5% (2017)

Exports - commodities:

fruit and nuts, fish, iron and steel waste, wood

Imports:

\$21.91 billion (2017 est.)

\$20.51 billion (2016 est.)

note: includes the Colon Free Zone

country comparison to the world: 73

Imports - commodities:

fuels, machinery, vehicles, iron and steel rods, pharmaceuticals

Imports - partners:

US 24.4%, China 9.8%, Mexico 4.9% (2017)

Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:

\$2.703 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$3.878 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 114

Debt - external:

\$91.53 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$83.81 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 52

Stock of direct foreign investment - at home:

\$56.7 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$50.62 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 57

Stock of direct foreign investment - abroad:

\$11.38 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$10.71 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 62

Exchange rates:

balboas (PAB) per US dollar -

1 (2017 est.)

1 (2016 est.)

1 (2015 est.)

1 (2014 est.)

1 (2013 est.)

Energy :: PANAMA**Electricity access:**

population without electricity: 300,000 (2013)

electrification - total population: 91% (2013)

electrification - urban areas: 94% (2013)

electrification - rural areas: 80% (2013)

Electricity - production:

10.6 billion kWh (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 101

Electricity - consumption:

8.708 billion kWh (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 103

Electricity - exports:

139 million kWh (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 80

Electricity - imports:

30 million kWh (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 110

Electricity - installed generating capacity:

3.4 million kW (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 97

Electricity - from fossil fuels:

36% of total installed capacity (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 175

Electricity - from nuclear fuels:

0% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 161

Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:

51% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 36

Electricity - from other renewable sources:

13% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 69

Crude oil - production:

0 bbl/day (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 184

Crude oil - exports:

0 bbl/day (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 178

Crude oil - imports:

0 bbl/day (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 180

Crude oil - proved reserves:

0 bbl (1 January 2018)

country comparison to the world: 180

Refined petroleum products - production:

0 bbl/day (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 188

Refined petroleum products - consumption:

146,000 bbl/day (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 67

Refined petroleum products - exports:

66 bbl/day (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 121

Refined petroleum products - imports:

129,200 bbl/day (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 45

Natural gas - production:

0 cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 182

Natural gas - consumption:

0 cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 186

Natural gas - exports:

0 cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 166

Natural gas - imports:

0 cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 171

Natural gas - proved reserves:

0 cu m (1 January 2014 est.)

country comparison to the world: 180

Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:

26.08 million Mt (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 79

Communications :: PANAMA

Telephones - fixed lines:

total subscriptions: 603,638 (2017 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 16 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 91

Telephones - mobile cellular:

total subscriptions: 5,977,641 (2017 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 159 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 114

Telephone system:

general assessment: domestic and international facilities well-developed; investmentn from international operators; competition among operators helps reduce price of services; launches LTE services;

domestic: fixed-line 16 per 100 and mobile-cellular telephone 159 per 100 and subscribership has increased rapidly

international: country code - 507; landing point for the Americas Region Caribbean Ring System (ARCOS-1), the MAYA-1, and PAN-AM submarine cable systems that together provide links to the US and parts of the Caribbean, Central America, and South America; satellite earth stations - 2 Intelsat (Atlantic Ocean); connected to the Central American Microwave System; extention of Deep Blue cable pan-Caribbean regional to Panama

Broadcast media:

multiple privately owned TV networks and a government-owned educational TV station; multi-channel cable and satellite TV subscription services are available; more than 100 commercial radio stations

Internet country code:

.pa

Internet users:

total: 2,000,833 (July 2016 est.)

percent of population: 54% (July 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 112

Broadband - fixed subscriptions:

total: 446,076 (2017 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 12 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 83

Transportation :: **PANAMA**

National air transport system:

number of registered air carriers: 4 (2015)

inventory of registered aircraft operated by air carriers: 103 (2015)

annual passenger traffic on registered air carriers: 12,018,103 (2015)

annual freight traffic on registered air carriers: 121,567,075 mt-km (2015)

Civil aircraft registration country code prefix:

HP (2016)

Airports:

117 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 50

Airports - with paved runways:

total: 57 (2017)

over 3,047 m: 1 (2017)

2,438 to 3,047 m: 3 (2017)

1,524 to 2,437 m: 3 (2017)

914 to 1,523 m: 20 (2017)

under 914 m: 30 (2017)

Airports - with unpaved runways:

total: 60 (2013)

1,524 to 2,437 m: 1 (2013)

914 to 1,523 m: 8 (2013)

under 914 m: 51 (2013)

Heliports:

3 (2013)

Pipelines:

128 km oil (2013)

Railways:

total: 77 km (2014)

standard gauge: 77 km 1.435-m gauge (2014)

country comparison to the world: 128

Roadways:

Waterways:

800 km (includes the 82-km Panama Canal that is being widened) (2011)

country comparison to the world: 71

Merchant marine:

total: 7,914

by type: bulk carrier 2585, container ship 590, general cargo 1327, oil tanker 808, other 2604 (2018)

country comparison to the world: 2

Ports and terminals:

major seaport(s): Balboa, Colon, Cristobal

container port(s) (TEUs): Balboa (2,905,049), Colon (3,891,209) (2017)

Military and Security :: PANAMA

Military branches:

no regular military forces; Panamanian Public Security Forces (subordinate to the Ministry of Public Security), comprising the National Police (PNP), National Air-Naval Service (SENAN), National Border Service (SENAFRONT) (2013)

Military - note:

on 10 February 1990, the government of then President Guillermo ENDARA abolished Panama's military and reformed the security apparatus by creating the Panamanian Public Forces; in October 1994, Panama's National Assembly approved a constitutional amendment prohibiting the creation of a standing military force but allowing the temporary establishment of special police units to counter acts of "external aggression"

Transnational Issues :: PANAMA

Disputes - international:

organized illegal narcotics operations in Colombia operate within the remote border region with Panama

Refugees and internally displaced persons:

refugees (country of origin): 15,614 (Colombia) (2016), 71,364 (Venezuela) (economic and political crisis; includes Venezuelans who have claimed asylum or have received alternative legal stay) (2018)

Illicit drugs:

major cocaine transshipment point and primary money-laundering center for narcotics revenue; money-laundering activity is especially heavy in the Colon Free Zone; offshore financial center; negligible signs of coca cultivation; monitoring of financial transactions is improving; official corruption remains a major problem

Panama country profile



Lying at the crossroads of the North and South American continents and the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, Panama is of immense strategic importance.

This has made Panama the frequent object of US attention. The United States supported its secession from Colombia in 1903, and secured a sovereign zone in which to build the Panama Canal - which remained under US control from 1914 until 1999.

The US invaded Panama in 1989 to depose a former ally, military ruler Manuel Noriega, over his repressive rule and use of the country as a centre for drug trafficking.

Panama has the largest rainforest in the Western Hemisphere outside the Amazon Basin.

However, it is for a feat of engineering, the canal connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, that Panama is famous. Every year more than 15,000 vessels make the eight-hour journey through the waterway, which makes a substantial contribution to the country's economy.

- Read **more country profiles** - Profiles by **BBC Monitoring**

FACTS

Republic of Panama

Capital: Panama City

- **Population** 3.6 million
- **Area** 75,517 sq km (29,157 sq miles)
- **Major languages** Spanish, English
- **Major religion** Christianity
- **Life expectancy** 74 years (men), 79 years (women)

- **Currency** balboa
UN, World Bank

Getty Images

LEADERS

President: Juan Carlos Varela



Juan Carlos Varela came from behind to win the presidential election in May 2014.

Panama's vice-president and a former ally of outgoing president Ricardo Martinelli, Mr Varela won a clear majority and easily defeated the president's hand-picked successor, Jose Domingo Arias.

Mr Varela leads the conservative Panamenista Party and helped Mr Martinelli get elected in 2009. But the two had a bitter falling out in 2011, when Mr Varela was fired from his job as foreign minister. He subsequently became one of Mr Martinelli's fiercest critics, accusing his government of corruption.

Mr Varela, aged 50 at the time of his election, is the scion of one of Panama's richest families and studied engineering in the United States.

MEDIA



Press freedom is protected by the constitution and journalists work in relatively safe conditions.

Most media outlets are privately owned. There are no restrictions on internet access.

- **Read full media profile**

TIMELINE

Some key dates in the history of Panama:



The US invaded and removed strongman Manuel Noriega before jailing him for drug trafficking

1502 - Spanish explorer Rodrigo de Bastidas visits Panama, which was home to Cuna, Choco, Guaymi and other indigenous peoples.

1519 - Panama becomes Spanish Vice-royalty of New Andalucia (later New Granada).

1821 - Panama becomes independent of Spain, but joins the confederacy of Gran Colombia, which also comprises Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia.

1830 - Panama becomes part of Colombia following the collapse of Gran Colombia.

1880s - France attempts to build a canal linking the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, but fails due to financial difficulties and the death of more than 20,000 workers from tropical diseases.

1903 - Panama splits from Colombia and becomes fully independent. US buys rights to build Panama Canal and is given control of the Canal Zone in perpetuity. The canal is completed in 1914.

1968-1989 - Period of military rule.

1989 - US invades and ousts Gen Manuel Noriega who became de facto ruler of Panama as head of defence forces in 1983.

1991 - Parliament approves constitutional reforms, including abolition of standing army.

1999 - Panama takes full control of the Panama Canal, ending nearly a century of American jurisdiction over one of the world's most strategic waterways.

2016 - "Panama Papers" lift lid on how the rich and powerful use tax havens to hide their wealth, and reveal Panama itself as one of most popular tax havens.

- **Read full timeline**



Global artery: The Panama Canal allows trade to pass easily between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans

Panama profile - Timeline

A chronology of key events:

1502 - Spanish explorer Rodrigo de Bastidas visits Panama, which was home to Cuna, Choco, Guaymi and other indigenous peoples.

Panama City



Panama City boomed as a result of the construction of the Panama Canal

- Old city founded in 1519
 - Population (metropolitan area): 1.2 million (2010)
- 1519** - Panama becomes Spanish Vice-royalty of New Andalusia (later New Granada).
1821 - Panama becomes independent of Spain, but joins the confederacy of Gran Colombia, which also comprises Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia.
1830 - Panama becomes part of Colombia following the collapse of Gran Colombia.
1846 - Panama signs treaty with US allowing it to build a railway across the isthmus.
1880s - France attempts to build a canal linking the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, but fails due to financial difficulties and the death of more than 20,000 workers from tropical diseases.

Independence, building the canal

1903 - Panama splits from Colombia and becomes fully independent. US buys rights to build Panama Canal and is given control of the Canal Zone in perpetuity.

Gen Noriega



- Became de facto ruler of Panama as head of defence forces in 1983
- Originally a close US ally, he was later accused by the US of drug-trafficking and election-rigging
- Surrendered to invading US troops in 1990

General Manuel Noriega's fall from grace

Noriega jailed on Panama return

1914 - Panama Canal completed.

1939 - Panama ceases to be a US protectorate.

1968-81 - General Omar Torrijos Herrera, the National Guard chief, overthrows the elected president and imposes a dictatorship.

1977 - US agrees to transfer the canal to Panama as from 31 December 1999.

1981 - Torrijos dies in plane crash.

1983 - Former intelligence chief and one-time US Central Intelligence Agency informant Manuel Noriega becomes head of the National Guard, builds up the size of the force, which he renames the Panama Defence Forces, and greatly increases its power over Panama's political and economic life.

1988 - US charges Noriega with drug smuggling; Noriega declares state of emergency in the wake of a failed coup.

US invades

1989 - Opposition wins parliamentary elections, but Noriega declares results invalid. Noriega declares "state of war" in the face of increased threats by Washington. US invades Panama, ousts Noriega and replaces him with Guillermo Endara.

1991 - Parliament approves constitutional reforms, including abolition of standing army; privatisation begins.

1992 - US court finds Noriega guilty of drug offences and sentences him to 40 years imprisonment, to be served in a US prison.

1999 - Mireya Moscoso becomes Panama's first woman president.

Panama Canal



The US controlled the Panama Canal for almost a century

- Length: 65km (40 miles)
- Officially opened on 15 August 1915
- Control passed to Panama by treaty on 1 January 2000
- Plan to double capacity approved in 2006

Eyewitness: Panama celebrates new era

Panama Canal : America's strategic artery

1999 December - Panama takes full control of the Panama Canal, ending nearly a century of American jurisdiction over one of the world's most strategic waterways.

2000 - Moscoso announces creation of a panel to investigate crimes committed while military governments were in power between 1968 and 1989.

2002 January - President Moscoso sets up a commission to investigate corruption. The move follows large street protests against alleged graft in government circles.

2002 April - Panama removed from international list of uncooperative tax havens after promising to make its tax system more transparent.

2003 September - National strike over management of social security fund paralyzes public services. More than 40 hurt in clashes.

2004 May - Martin Torrijos, son of former dictator Omar Torrijos, wins presidential elections.

2004 August-September - President Moscoso pardons four Cuban exiles Havana accuses of plotting to kill Cuban President Castro. Cuba severs ties. Newly-inaugurated President Martin Torrijos pledges to repair relations; both countries agree in November to restore ties.

2004 November - Panama Canal earns record revenues of \$1 billion for the financial year.

2005 May-June - Plans to increase pension contributions and raise the retirement age spark weeks of protests and strikes. President Torrijos had promised to reform the cash-strapped social security system.



The Centennial Bridge over the Panama Canal was completed in 2004

2006 - At least 50 people die after taking cough medicine tainted with an industrial solvent imported from China.

Canal upgrade

2006 October - Voters in a referendum back a \$5.2bn plan to upgrade the Panama Canal. The scheme aims to double the capacity of the waterway.

2006 December - Panama and the US agree on a free trade deal. The accord cannot come into force until it has been approved by the US Congress.

2007 September - Work to widen Panama Canal begins.

2008 February - Fatal shooting of union leader triggers violent clashes between police and construction workers in Panama City.

2008 December - A Russian warship sails through the Panama Canal for the first time since World War II. The canal was shut to the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

2009 May - Ricardo Martinelli wins presidential election.



Planned changes to mining laws sparked protests from indigenous groups

2010 July - Former military ruler Manuel Noriega is sentenced to seven years in prison by a French court for money laundering. He was extradited from the US in 2008 after serving a 17-year sentence for drug trafficking.

2010 October - Chinese freighter becomes the millionth vessel to cross the Panama Canal three years before its 100th anniversary.

2010 December - President Martinelli denies information from a US diplomatic cable released by Wikileaks suggesting he asked the US to help wiretap rivals, but acknowledges asking for help against criminals.

2011 March - Mining code reforms reversed following protests from indigenous groups and environmentalists.

2011 October - US Congress finally approves long-stalled free trade agreement with Panama. President Martinelli hails the agreement as a "tool for the economic development" of the country.

2011 December - Former military ruler Manuel Noriega is repatriated and taken straight to prison.

2012 January - Workers end a strike on a project to expand the Panama Canal after the consortium in charge agrees to increase the minimum wage. The \$5.25bn (£3.4bn) project to widen the Panama Canal and double its capacity is due to be completed in 2014.

2012 October - The government scraps plans to approve the sale of land in the duty-free zone of Colon after hundreds of protesters clash with police. The protesters feared the legislation would have cost jobs and cut incomes in the lucrative free trade port area at the Caribbean end of the Panama Canal.

2013 May - The government orders power rationing as a severe drought hits hydroelectric power supplies.

2013 July - Panama charges the crew of a North Korean ship detained in Panama after it was found to be carrying weapons.

2014 March - Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro breaks diplomatic relations and freezes economic ties with Panama, accusing it of being a "lackey" of the US and working against his country.

The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) approves a deal to end a dispute over \$1.6bn (£1bn) cost overruns that had delayed work to widen the waterway. The Spanish-led construction consortium and the ACP say each will invest an extra \$100m in the project.

Varela presidency

2014 May - Vice-president Juan Carlos Varela, a former ally turned critic of President Martinelli, scores a surprise victory in presidential elections.

2014 July - President Varela offers a month-long amnesty to criminal gangs operating in the country if they disarm and sever links with organised crime.

2014 December - Investigators in Panama arrest 59 members of a drug trafficking ring linked to Colombian FARC rebels and the Mexican Sinaloa drugs cartel.

2015 January - Supreme Court votes to open a corruption investigation against former president Ricardo Martinelli.

2015 February - Government announces ban on building on environmentally-significant wetlands around Panama City, reversing policy of previous administration.

2015 June - Panama tops an annual ranking of well-being for the second year in a row. The Gallup-Healthways Global Well-Being Index includes a person's sense of purpose, financial well-being and health in its measure.

2016 April - The "Panama Papers" - files leaked from one of the world's most secretive companies, the Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca - lift the lid on how the rich and powerful use tax havens to hide their wealth. The leaked documents reveal Panama itself to be the second most popular tax haven with Mossack Fonseca's clients, after the British Virgin Islands.

President Varela announces creation of international panel of experts to help Panama improve transparency of its offshore financial industry.

2016 June - A giant Chinese container ship becomes the first vessel to use the newly-enlarged Panama Canal.

2017 June - Panama cuts long-standing ties with Taiwan and recognises China, in a major diplomatic coup for Beijing. China is a major user of the Panama Canal.

Ambassador Sharon Day



Sharon Day was sworn in as U.S. Ambassador to Costa Rica on September 25. She serves as Ambassador after having worked for more than 20 years for the Republican Party at the local, state, and national level, and most recently in leadership roles as Co-Chair of the Republican National Committee (RNC) and RNC Secretary. Earlier in her career, she built several businesses in the insurance and marketing industries, creating jobs for hundreds of individuals and families.

Drawing from her private-sector experience, Ambassador Day worked in the political arena to promote and strengthen small businesses and the free market system. She also championed women's rights as a Commissioner on the Florida Commission on the Status of Women.

Ambassador Day was born and raised in Texas and has called Ft. Lauderdale, Florida home for the last 25 years. She has two sons and five grandchildren who are a great source of pride.



United States Department of State

U.S.-COSTA RICA RELATIONS

The United States established diplomatic relations with Costa Rica in 1851, following its independence from Spain and the later dissolution of a federation of Central American states. The United States and Costa Rica have a history of close and friendly relations based on mutual respect for democratic freedoms, free trade, and other shared values. Costa Rica's own history and record on the environment, human rights, and advocacy for the peaceful settlement of disputes give it a weight in world affairs far beyond its size, and Costa Rica and the United States often share similar positions (votes) in international fora. The United States and Costa Rica enjoy robust bilateral law enforcement and security cooperation, and have signed a maritime cooperation agreement that facilitates narcotics seizures, illegal migrant rescues, illegal fishing seizures, and search-and-rescue missions.

The United States and Costa Rica share a strong commitment to working to promote climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as preserving Costa Rica's important and rich biological diversity. The U.S. and Costa Rican governments, the Central Bank of Costa Rica, and The Nature Conservancy have concluded agreements that provide funding for the conservation, restoration, and protection of tropical forests.

It is estimated that approximately 120,000 private American citizens, including many retirees, reside in the country and more than a million American citizens visit Costa Rica annually.

U.S. Assistance to Costa Rica

The **U.S. Strategy for Central America** (Strategy) guides U.S. diplomatic efforts and foreign assistance in the region. The Strategy is a bipartisan, multi-year U.S. government plan covering all seven Central American countries (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama). The Strategy aims to secure U.S. borders and protect American citizens by addressing the security, governance, and economic drivers of illegal immigration and transnational crime, while increasing opportunities for U.S. and other businesses. The Strategy focuses on three overarching lines of action: 1) promoting prosperity, 2) enhancing security, and 3) improving governance. The United States is working hand-in-hand with a wide range of Costa Rican government agencies and non-governmental organizations to secure Costa Rica's borders, professionalize its police, strengthen its judicial sector, improve its corrections system, and empower at-risk youth. Peace Corps volunteers work in economic development, education, and youth empowerment programs, and U. S. Embassy programs promote entrepreneurship, economic inclusion, renewable energy, and energy efficiency.

Bilateral Economic Relations

The United States and Costa Rica are parties to the U.S.-Central America-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), which aims to facilitate trade and investment and further regional integration by eliminating tariffs, opening markets, reducing barriers to services, and promoting transparency. CAFTA-DR contains a chapter on investment similar to a bilateral investment treaty with the United States.

The United States is Costa Rica's largest trading partner, accounting for about 40 percent of Costa Rica's exports, imports, tourism, and foreign direct investment. U.S. exports to Costa Rica include automotive parts and supplies, renewable energy, franchises, hotel and restaurant equipment, healthcare products, and construction equipment. U.S. imports from Costa Rica include medical devices, pineapples, bananas, and coffee.

Costa Rica's Membership in International Organizations

Costa Rica and the United States belong to a number of the same international organizations, including the United Nations, Organization of American States, International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and World Trade Organization.

Bilateral Representation

Principal U.S. embassy officials are listed in the Department's Key Officers List.

Costa Rica maintains an **embassy** in the United States at 2114 S Street NW, Washington, DC 20008 (tel. 202-480-2200).



CENTRAL AMERICA :: COSTA RICA

Introduction :: COSTA RICA

Background:

Although explored by the Spanish early in the 16th century, initial attempts at colonizing Costa Rica proved unsuccessful due to a combination of factors, including disease from mosquito-infested swamps, brutal heat, resistance by natives, and pirate raids. It was not until 1563 that a permanent settlement of Cartago was established in the cooler, fertile central highlands. The area remained a colony for some two and a half centuries. In 1821, Costa Rica became one of several Central American provinces that jointly declared their independence from Spain. Two years later it joined the United Provinces of Central America, but this federation disintegrated in 1838, at which time Costa Rica proclaimed its sovereignty and independence. Since the late 19th century, only two brief periods of violence have marred the country's democratic development. On 1 December 1948, Costa Rica dissolved its armed forces. Although it still maintains a large agricultural sector, Costa Rica has expanded its economy to include strong technology and tourism industries. The standard of living is relatively high. Land ownership is widespread.

Geography :: COSTA RICA

Location:

Central America, bordering both the Caribbean Sea and the North Pacific Ocean, between Nicaragua and Panama

Geographic coordinates:

10 00 N, 84 00 W

Map references:

Central America and the Caribbean

Area:

total: 51,100 sq km

land: 51,060 sq km

water: 40 sq km

note: includes Isla del Coco

country comparison to the world: 130

Area - comparative:

slightly smaller than West Virginia

Area comparison map:



Land boundaries:

total: 661 km

border countries (2): Nicaragua 313 km, Panama 348 km

Coastline:

1,290 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 12 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

continental shelf: 200 nm

Climate:

tropical and subtropical; dry season (December to April); rainy season (May to November); cooler in highlands

Terrain:

coastal plains separated by rugged mountains including over 100 volcanic cones, of which several are major active volcanoes

Elevation:

mean elevation: 746 m

lowest point: Pacific Ocean 0 m

highest point: Cerro Chirripo 3,819 m

Natural resources:

hydropower

Land use:

agricultural land: 37.1% (2011 est.)

arable land: 4.9% (2011 est.) / permanent crops: 6.7% (2011 est.) / permanent pasture: 25.5% (2011 est.)

forest: 51.5% (2011 est.)

other: 11.4% (2011 est.)

Irrigated land:

1,015 sq km (2012)

Population distribution:

roughly half of the nation's population resides in urban areas; the capital of San Jose is the largest city and home to approximately one-fifth of the population

Natural hazards:

occasional earthquakes, hurricanes along Atlantic coast; frequent flooding of lowlands at onset of rainy season and landslides; active volcanoes

volcanism: Arenal (1,670 m), which erupted in 2010, is the most active volcano in Costa Rica; a 1968 eruption destroyed the town of Tabacon; Irazu (3,432 m), situated just east of San Jose, has the potential to spew ash over the capital city as it did between 1963 and 1965; other historically active volcanoes include Miravalles, Poas, Rincon de la Vieja, and Turrialba

Environment - current issues:

deforestation and land use change, largely a result of the clearing of land for cattle ranching and agriculture; soil erosion; coastal marine pollution; fisheries protection; solid waste management; air pollution

Environment - international agreements:

party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Dumping, Ozone Layer Protection, Wetlands, Whaling

signed, but not ratified: Marine Life Conservation

Geography - note:

four volcanoes, two of them active, rise near the capital of San Jose in the center of the country; one of the volcanoes, Irazu, erupted destructively in 1963-65

People and Society :: COSTA RICA

Population:

4,987,142 (July 2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 123

Nationality:

noun: Costa Rican(s)

adjective: Costa Rican

Ethnic groups:

white or mestizo 83.6%, mulatto 6.7%, indigenous 2.4%, black of African descent 1.1%, other 1.1%, none 2.9%, unspecified 2.2% (2011 est.)

Languages:

Spanish (official), English

Religions:

Roman Catholic 71.8%, Evangelical and Pentecostal 12.3%, other Protestant 2.6%, Jehovah's Witness 0.5%, other 2.4%, none 10.4% (2016 est.)

Demographic profile:

Costa Rica's political stability, high standard of living, and well-developed social benefits system set it apart from its Central American neighbors. Through the government's sustained social spending - almost 20% of GDP annually - Costa Rica has made tremendous progress toward achieving its goal of providing universal access to education, healthcare, clean water, sanitation, and electricity. Since the 1970s, expansion of these services has led to a rapid decline in infant mortality, an increase in life expectancy at birth, and a sharp decrease in the birth rate. The average number of children born per women has fallen from about 7 in the 1960s to 3.5 in the early 1980s to below replacement level today. Costa Rica's poverty rate is lower than in most Latin American countries, but it has stalled at around 20% for almost two decades.

Costa Rica is a popular regional immigration destination because of its job opportunities and social programs. Almost 9% of the population is foreign-born, with Nicaraguans comprising nearly three-quarters of the foreign population. Many Nicaraguans who perform unskilled seasonal labor enter Costa Rica illegally or overstay their visas, which continues to be a source of tension. Less than 3% of Costa Rica's population lives abroad. The overwhelming majority of expatriates have settled in the United States after completing a university degree or in order to work in a highly skilled field.

Age structure:

0-14 years: 22.43% (male 572,172 /female 546,464)

15-24 years: 15.94% (male 405,515 /female 389,433)

25-54 years: 44.04% (male 1,105,944 /female 1,090,434)

55-64 years: 9.48% (male 229,928 /female 242,696)

65 years and over: 8.11% (male 186,531 /female 218,025) (2018 est.)

population pyramid:



Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 45.4 (2015 est.)

youth dependency ratio: 32.4 (2015 est.)

elderly dependency ratio: 12.9 (2015 est.)

potential support ratio: 7.7 (2015 est.)

Median age:

total: 31.7 years

male: 31.2 years

female: 32.2 years (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 109

Population growth rate:

1.13% (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 95

Birth rate:

15.3 births/1,000 population (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 121

Death rate:

4.8 deaths/1,000 population (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 200

Net migration rate:

0.8 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 65

Population distribution:

roughly half of the nation's population resides in urban areas; the capital of San Jose is the largest city and home to approximately one-fifth of the population

Urbanization:

urban population: 79.3% of total population (2018)

rate of urbanization: 1.5% annual rate of change (2015-20 est.)

Major urban areas - population:

1.358 million SAN JOSE (capital) (2018)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 1.05 male(s)/female

0-14 years: 1.05 male(s)/female

15-24 years: 1.04 male(s)/female

25-54 years: 1.01 male(s)/female

55-64 years: 0.95 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 0.86 male(s)/female

total population: 1.01 male(s)/female (2018 est.)

Maternal mortality rate:

25 deaths/100,000 live births (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 122

Infant mortality rate:

total: 7.8 deaths/1,000 live births

male: 8.6 deaths/1,000 live births

female: 7.1 deaths/1,000 live births (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 153

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 78.9 years

male: 76.2 years

female: 81.7 years (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 55

Total fertility rate:

1.89 children born/woman (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 135

Contraceptive prevalence rate:

77.8% (2015)

Health expenditures:

9.3% of GDP (2014)

country comparison to the world: 33

Physicians density:

1.15 physicians/1,000 population (2013)

Hospital bed density:

1.1 beds/1,000 population (2014)

Drinking water source:

improved:

urban: 99.6% of population

rural: 91.9% of population

total: 97.8% of population

unimproved:

urban: 0.4% of population

rural: 8.1% of population

total: 2.2% of population (2015 est.)

Sanitation facility access:

improved:

urban: 95.2% of population (2015 est.)

rural: 92.3% of population (2015 est.)

total: 94.5% of population (2015 est.)

unimproved:

urban: 4.8% of population (2015 est.)

rural: 7.7% of population (2015 est.)

total: 5.5% of population (2015 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

0.4% (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 70

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:

13,000 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 93

HIV/AIDS - deaths:

<200 (2017 est.)

Major infectious diseases:

degree of risk: intermediate (2016)

food or waterborne diseases: bacterial diarrhea (2016)

vectorborne diseases: dengue fever (2016)

note: active local transmission of Zika virus by Aedes species mosquitoes has been identified in this country (as of August 2016); it poses an important risk (a large number of cases possible) among US citizens if bitten by an infective mosquito; other less common ways to get Zika are through sex, via blood transfusion, or during pregnancy, in which the pregnant woman passes Zika virus to her fetus

Obesity - adult prevalence rate:

25.7% (2016)

country comparison to the world: 48

Children under the age of 5 years underweight:

Education expenditures:

7.4% of GDP (2017)

country comparison to the world: 11

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write (2015 est.)

total population: 97.8%

male: 97.7%

female: 97.8% (2015 est.)

School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):

total: 15 years

male: 15 years

female: 16 years (2016)

Unemployment, youth ages 15-24:

total: 20.6%

male: 17.6%

female: 25.9% (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 65

Government :: COSTA RICA

Country name:

conventional long form: Republic of Costa Rica

conventional short form: Costa Rica

local long form: Republica de Costa Rica

local short form: Costa Rica

etymology: the name means "rich coast" in Spanish and was first applied in the early colonial period of the 16th century

Government type:

presidential republic

Capital:

name: San Jose

geographic coordinates: 9 56 N, 84 05 W

time difference: UTC-6 (1 hour behind Washington, DC, during Standard Time)

etymology: named in honor of Saint Joseph

Administrative divisions:

7 provinces (provincias, singular - provincia); Alajuela, Cartago, Guanacaste, Heredia, Limon, Puntarenas, San Jose

Independence:

15 September 1821 (from Spain)

National holiday:

Independence Day, 15 September (1821)

Constitution:

history: many previous; latest effective 8 November 1949

amendments: proposals require the signatures of at least 10 Legislative Assembly members or by petition of at least 5% of qualified voters; consideration of proposals requires two-thirds majority approval in each of 3 readings by the Assembly, followed by preparation of the proposal as a legislative bill and its approval by simple majority of the Assembly; passage requires at least two-thirds majority vote of the Assembly membership; a referendum is required only if approved by at least two-thirds of the Assembly; amended many times, last in 2015 (2018)

Legal system:

civil law system based on Spanish civil code; judicial review of legislative acts in the Supreme Court

International law organization participation:

accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction; accepts ICCT jurisdiction

Citizenship:

citizenship by birth: yes

citizenship by descent only: yes

dual citizenship recognized: yes

residency requirement for naturalization: 7 years

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal and compulsory

Executive branch:

chief of state: President Carlos ALVARADO Quesada (since 8 May 2018); First Vice President Epsy CAMPBELL Barr (since 8 May 2018); Second Vice President Marvin RODRIGUEZ Cordero (since 8 May 2018); note - the president is both chief of state and head of government

head of government: President Carlos ALVARADO Quesada (since 8 May 2018); First Vice President Epsy CAMPBELL Barr (since 8 May 2018); Second Vice President Marvin RODRIGUEZ Cordero (since 8 May 2018)

cabinet: Cabinet selected by the president

elections/appointments: president and vice presidents directly elected on the same ballot by modified majority popular vote (40% threshold) for a 4-year term (eligible for non-consecutive terms); election last held on 4 February 2018 with a runoff on 1 April 2018 (next to be held in February 2022)

election results: Carlos ALVARADO Quesada elected president in second round; percent of vote in first round - Fabricio ALVARADO Munoz (PRN) 25%; Carlos ALVARADO Quesada (PAC) 21.6%; Antonio ALVAREZ (PLN) 18.6%; Rodolfo PIZA (PUSC) 16%; Juan Diego CASTRO (PIN) 9.5%; Rodolfo HERNANDEZ (PRS) 4.9%, other 4.4%; percent of vote in second round - Carlos ALVARADO Quesada (PAC) 60.7%; Fabricio ALVARADO Munoz (PRN) 39.3%

Legislative branch:

description: unicameral Legislative Assembly or Asamblea Legislativa (57 seats; members directly elected in multi-seat constituencies - corresponding to the country's 7 provinces - by closed list proportional representation vote; members serve 4-year terms)

elections: last held on 4 February 2018 (next to be held in February 2022)

election results: percent of vote by party - PLN 19.5%, PRN 18.2%, PAC 16.3%, PUSC 14.6%, PIN 7.7%, PRS 4.2%, PFA 4%, ADC 2.5%, ML 2.3%, PASE 2.3%, PNG 2.2%, other 6.2%; seats by party - PLN 17, PRN 14, PAC 10, PUSC 9, PIN 4, PRS 2, PFA 1; composition - men 31, women 26, percent of women 45.6%

Judicial branch:

highest courts: Supreme Court of Justice (consists of 22 judges organized into 3 cassation chambers each with 5 judges and the Constitutional Chamber with 7 judges)

judge selection and term of office: Supreme Court of Justice judges elected by the National Assembly for 8-year terms with renewal decided by the National Assembly

subordinate courts: appellate courts; trial courts; first instance and justice of the peace courts; Superior Electoral Tribunal

Political parties and leaders:

Accessibility Without Exclusion or PASE [Oscar Andres LOPEZ Arias]
Broad Front (Frente Amplio) or PFA [Ana Patricia MORA Castellanos]
Christian Democratic Alliance or ADC [Mario REDONDO Poveda]
Citizen Action Party or PAC [Marta Eugenia SOLANO Arias]
Costa Rican Renewal Party or PRC [Justo OROZCO Alvarez]
Libertarian Movement Party or ML [Victor Danilo CUBERO Corrales]
National Integration Party or PIN [Walter MUNOZ Cespedes]
National Liberation Party or PLN [Jorge Julio PATTONI Saenz]
National Restoration Party or PRN [Carlos Luis AVENDANO Calvo]
New Generation or PNG [Sergio MENA]
Patriotic Alliance [Jorge ARAYA Westover]
Social Christian Republican Party or PRS [Dragos DOLANESCU Valenciano]
Social Christian Unity Party or PUSC [Pedro MUNOZ Fonseca]

International organization participation:

BCIE, CACM, CD, CELAC, FAO, G-77, IADB, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC (national committees), ICt, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRC, ILO, IMF, IMO, IMSO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO, ITSO, ITU, ITUC (NGOs), LAES, LAIA (observer), MIGA, NAM (observer), OAS, OIF (observer), OPANAL, OPCW, Pacific Alliance (observer), PCA, SICA, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, Union Latina, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WFTU (NGOs), WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador Fernando LLORCA Castro (since 17 September 2018)

chancery: 2114 S Street NW, Washington, DC 20008

telephone: [1] (202) 480-2200

FAX: [1] (202) 265-4795

consulate(s) general: Atlanta, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Washington DC

consulate(s): Saint Paul (MN), San Juan (Puerto Rico), Tucson (AZ)

Diplomatic representation from the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador Sharon DAY (since 5 October 2017)

embassy: Calle 98 Via 104, Pavas, San Jose

mailing address: APO AA 34020

telephone: [506] 2519-2000

FAX: [506] 2519-2305

Flag description:

five horizontal bands of blue (top), white, red (double width), white, and blue, with the coat of arms in a white elliptical disk placed toward the hoist side of the red band; Costa Rica retained the earlier blue-white-blue flag of Central America until 1848 when, in response to revolutionary activity in Europe, it was decided to incorporate the French colors into the national flag and a central red stripe was added; today the blue color is said to stand for the sky, opportunity, and perseverance, white denotes peace, happiness, and wisdom, while red represents the blood shed for freedom, as well as the generosity and vibrancy of the people

note: somewhat resembles the flag of North Korea; similar to the flag of Thailand but with the blue and red colors reversed

National symbol(s):

yiguirro (clay-colored robin); national colors: blue, white, red

National anthem:

name: "Himno Nacional de Costa Rica" (National Anthem of Costa Rica)

lyrics/music: Jose Maria ZELEDON Brenes/Manuel Maria GUTIERREZ

note: adopted 1949; the anthem's music was originally written for an 1853 welcome ceremony for diplomatic missions from the US and UK; the lyrics were added in 1903

0:00 / 1:50

Economy :: COSTA RICA

Economy - overview:

Since 2010, Costa Rica has enjoyed strong and stable economic growth - 3.8% in 2017. Exports of bananas, coffee, sugar, and beef are the backbone of its commodity exports. Various industrial and processed agricultural products have broadened exports in recent years, as have high value-added goods, including medical devices. Costa Rica's impressive biodiversity also makes it a key destination for ecotourism.

Foreign investors remain attracted by the country's political stability and relatively high education levels, as well as the incentives offered in the free-trade zones; Costa Rica has attracted one of the highest levels of foreign direct investment per capita in Latin America. The US-Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), which became effective for Costa Rica in 2009, helped increase foreign direct investment in key sectors of the economy, including insurance and telecommunication. However, poor infrastructure, high energy costs, a complex bureaucracy, weak investor protection, and uncertainty of contract enforcement impede greater investment.

Costa Rica's economy also faces challenges due to a rising fiscal deficit, rising public debt, and relatively low levels of domestic revenue. Poverty has remained around 20-25% for nearly 20 years, and the government's strong social safety net has eroded due to increased constraints on its expenditures. Costa Rica's credit rating was downgraded from stable to negative in 2015 and again in 2017, upping pressure on lending rates - which could hurt small business, on the budget deficit - which could hurt infrastructure development, and on the rate of return on investment - which could soften foreign direct investment (FDI). Unlike the rest of Central America, Costa Rica is not highly dependent on remittances - which represented just 1 % of GDP in 2016, but instead relies on FDI - which accounted for 5.1% of GDP.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$83.94 billion (2017 est.)

\$81.27 billion (2016 est.)

\$77.96 billion (2015 est.)

note: data are in 2017 dollars

country comparison to the world: 93

GDP (official exchange rate):

\$58.27 billion (2017 est.)

GDP - real growth rate:

3.3% (2017 est.)

4.2% (2016 est.)

3.6% (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 104

GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$16,900 (2017 est.)

\$16,600 (2016 est.)

\$16,100 (2015 est.)

note: data are in 2017 dollars

country comparison to the world: 104

Gross national saving:

15.1% of GDP (2017 est.)

16.1% of GDP (2016 est.)

15% of GDP (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 135

GDP - composition, by end use:

household consumption: 64.2% (2017 est.)

government consumption: 17.3% (2017 est.)

investment in fixed capital: 17.1% (2017 est.)

investment in inventories: 1% (2017 est.)

exports of goods and services: 33.3% (2017 est.)

imports of goods and services: -32.9% (2017 est.)

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

agriculture: 5.5% (2017 est.)

industry: 20.6% (2017 est.)

services: 73.9% (2017 est.)

Agriculture - products:

bananas, pineapples, coffee, melons, ornamental plants, sugar, corn, rice, beans, potatoes; beef, poultry, dairy; timber

Industries:

medical equipment, food processing, textiles and clothing, construction materials, fertilizer, plastic products

Industrial production growth rate:

1.3% (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 147

Labor force:

2.229 million (2017 est.)

note: official estimate; excludes Nicaraguans living in Costa Rica

country comparison to the world: 121

Labor force - by occupation:

agriculture: 14%

industry: 22%

services: 64% (2006 est.)

Unemployment rate:

8.1% (2017 est.)

9.5% (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 117

Population below poverty line:

21.7% (2014 est.)

Household income or consumption by percentage share:

lowest 10%: 1.5%

highest 10%: 36.9% (2014 est.)

Distribution of family income - Gini index:

48.5 (2014)

49.2 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 22

Budget:

revenues: 8.357 billion (2017 est.)

expenditures: 11.92 billion (2017 est.)

Taxes and other revenues:

14.3% (of GDP) (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 200

Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):

-6.1% (of GDP) (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 185

Public debt:

48.9% of GDP (2017 est.)

44.9% of GDP (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 105

Fiscal year:

calendar year

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

1.6% (2017 est.)

0% (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 89

Central bank discount rate:

3.5% (31 December 2016 est.)

21.5% (31 December 2010)

country comparison to the world: 102

Commercial bank prime lending rate:

11.37% (31 December 2017 est.)

11.64% (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 71

Stock of narrow money:

\$5.356 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$5.63 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 100

Stock of broad money:

\$5.356 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$5.63 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 103

Stock of domestic credit:

\$41.04 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$38.21 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 69

Market value of publicly traded shares:

\$2.015 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

\$1.443 billion (31 December 2011 est.)

\$1.445 billion (31 December 2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 99

Current account balance:

-\$1.692 billion (2017 est.)

-\$1.326 billion (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 160

Exports:

\$10.81 billion (2017 est.)

\$10.15 billion (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 91

Exports - partners:

US 40.9%, Belgium 6.3%, Panama 5.6%, Netherlands 5.6%, Nicaragua 5.1%, Guatemala 5% (2017)

Exports - commodities:

bananas, pineapples, coffee, melons, ornamental plants, sugar; beef; seafood; electronic components, medical equipment

Imports:

\$15.15 billion (2017 est.)

\$14.53 billion (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 90

Imports - commodities:

raw materials, consumer goods, capital equipment, petroleum, construction materials

Imports - partners:

US 38.1%, China 13.1%, Mexico 7.3% (2017)

Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:

\$7.15 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$7.574 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 86

Debt - external:

\$26.83 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$24.3 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 86

Stock of direct foreign investment - at home:

\$33.92 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$31.84 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 68

Stock of direct foreign investment - abroad:

\$4.007 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$3.781 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 78

Exchange rates:

Costa Rican colones (CRC) per US dollar -

573.5 (2017 est.)

544.74 (2016 est.)

544.74 (2015 est.)

534.57 (2014 est.)

538.32 (2013 est.)

Energy :: COSTA RICA**Electricity access:**

population without electricity: 24,362 (2013)

electrification - total population: 99.5% (2013)

electrification - urban areas: 99.9% (2013)

electrification - rural areas: 98.3% (2013)

Electricity - production:

10.79 billion kWh (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 100

Electricity - consumption:

9.812 billion kWh (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 98

Electricity - exports:

643 million kWh (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 64

Electricity - imports:

807 million kWh (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 72

Electricity - installed generating capacity:

3.584 million kW (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 94

Electricity - from fossil fuels:

18% of total installed capacity (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 196

Electricity - from nuclear fuels:

0% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 72

Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:

64% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 25

Electricity - from other renewable sources:

18% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 48

Crude oil - production:

0 bbl/day (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 123

Crude oil - exports:

0 bbl/day (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 109

Crude oil - imports:

0 bbl/day (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 115

Crude oil - proved reserves:

0 bbl (1 January 2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 120

Refined petroleum products - production:

0 bbl/day (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 134

Refined petroleum products - consumption:

53,000 bbl/day (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 100

Refined petroleum products - exports:

0 bbl/day (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 147

Refined petroleum products - imports:

51,320 bbl/day (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 80

Natural gas - production:

0 cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 120

Natural gas - consumption:

0 cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 136

Natural gas - exports:

0 cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 88

Natural gas - imports:

0 cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 111

Natural gas - proved reserves:

0 cu m (1 January 2014 est.)

country comparison to the world: 125

Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:

7.653 million Mt (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 120

Communications :: COSTA RICA

Telephones - fixed lines:

total subscriptions: 843,148 (2017 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 17 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 79

Telephones - mobile cellular:

total subscriptions: 8,840,342 (2017 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 179 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 88

Telephone system:

general assessment: good domestic telephone service in terms of breadth of coverage; in recent years growth has been achieved from liberalisation of the telecom sector and has seen substantial expansion in all sectors; Costa Rica's broadband market is the most advanced in Central America, with the highest broadband penetration for this sub-region; broadband penetration does lag behind many South American countries; with the implementation of number portability there is greater opportunity for increased competition in the future

domestic: point-to-point and point-to-multi-point microwave, fiber-optic, and coaxial cable link rural areas; Internet service is available; 17 per 100 fixed-line, 179 per 100 mobile-cellular

international: country code - 506; landing points for the Americas Region Caribbean Ring System (ARCOS-1), MAYA-1, and the Pan American Crossing submarine cables that provide links to South and Central America, parts of the Caribbean, and the US; connected to Central American Microwave System; satellite earth stations - 2 Intelsat (Atlantic Ocean)

Broadcast media:

multiple privately owned TV stations and 1 publicly owned TV station; cable network services are widely available; more than 100 privately owned radio stations and a public radio network (2017)

Internet country code:

.cr

Internet users:

total: 3,217,277 (July 2016 est.)

percent of population: 66% (July 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 94

Broadband - fixed subscriptions:

total: 744,059 (2017 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 15 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 74

Transportation :: COSTA RICA

National air transport system:

number of registered air carriers: 1 (2015)

inventory of registered aircraft operated by air carriers: 39 (2015)

annual passenger traffic on registered air carriers: 1,617,075 (2015)

annual freight traffic on registered air carriers: 9,284,160 mt-km (2015)

Civil aircraft registration country code prefix:

TI (2016)

Airports:

161 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 35

Airports - with paved runways:

total: 47 (2017)

2,438 to 3,047 m: 2 (2017)

1,524 to 2,437 m: 2 (2017)

914 to 1,523 m: 27 (2017)

under 914 m: 16 (2017)

Airports - with unpaved runways:

total: 114 (2013)

914 to 1,523 m: 18 (2013)

under 914 m: 96 (2013)

Pipelines:

662 km refined products (2013)

Railways:

total: 278 km (2014)

narrow gauge: 278 km 1.067-m gauge (2014)

note: the entire rail network fell into disrepair and out of use at the end of the 20th century; since 2005, certain sections of rail have been rehabilitated

country comparison to the world: 123

Roadways:

Waterways:

730 km (seasonally navigable by small craft) (2011)

country comparison to the world: 74

Merchant marine:

total: 11

by type: general cargo 2, other 9 (2018)

country comparison to the world: 148

Ports and terminals:

major seaport(s): Atlantic Ocean (Caribbean) - Puerto Limon

Pacific Ocean - Caldera

Military and Security :: COSTA RICA

Military branches:

no regular military forces; Ministry of Public Security, Government, and Police (2011)

Transnational Issues :: COSTA RICA

Disputes - international:

Costa Rica and Nicaragua regularly file border dispute cases over the delimitations of the San Juan River and the northern tip of Calero Island to the International Court of Justice (ICJ); in 2009, the ICJ ruled that Costa Rican vessels carrying out police activities could not use the river, but official Costa Rican vessels providing essential services to riverside inhabitants and Costa Rican tourists could travel freely on the river; in 2011, the ICJ provisionally ruled that both countries must remove personnel from the disputed area; in 2013, the ICJ rejected Nicaragua's 2012 suit to halt Costa Rica's construction of a highway paralleling the river on the grounds of irreparable environmental damage; in 2013, the ICJ, regarding the disputed territory, ordered that Nicaragua should refrain from dredging or canal construction and refill and repair damage caused by trenches connecting the river to the Caribbean and upheld its 2010 ruling that Nicaragua must remove all personnel; in early 2014, Costa Rica brought Nicaragua to the ICJ over offshore oil concessions in the disputed region

Refugees and internally displaced persons:

refugees (country of origin): 10,041 (Venezuela) (economic and political crisis; includes Venezuelans who have claimed asylum or have received alternative legal stay) (2018)

stateless persons: 71 (2017)

Trafficking in persons:

current situation: Costa Rica is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to sex trafficking and forced labor; Costa Rican women and children, as well as those from Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and other Latin American countries, are sex trafficked in Costa Rica; child sex tourism is a particular problem with offenders coming from the US and Europe; men and children from Central America, including indigenous Panamanians, and Asia are exploited in agriculture, construction, fishing, and commerce; Nicaraguans transit Costa Rica to reach Panama, where some are subjected to forced labor or sex trafficking

tier rating: Tier 2 Watch List – Costa Rica does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so; anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts declined in 2014, with fewer prosecutions and no convictions and no actions taken against complicit government personnel; some officials conflated trafficking with smuggling, and authorities reported the diversion of funds to combat smuggling hindered anti-trafficking efforts; the government identified more victims than the previous year but did not make progress in ensuring that victims received adequate protective services; specialized services were limited and mostly provided by NGOs without government support, even from a dedicated fund for anti-trafficking efforts; victims services were virtually non-existent outside of the capital (2015)

Illicit drugs:

transshipment country for cocaine and heroin from South America; illicit production of cannabis in remote areas; domestic cocaine consumption, particularly crack cocaine, is rising; significant consumption of amphetamines; seizures of smuggled cash in Costa Rica and at the main border crossing to enter Costa Rica from Nicaragua have risen in recent years

Costa Rica country profile



Bordered by Nicaragua to the north and Panama to the south, the tiny republic of Costa Rica has coastlines on the Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea.

One of the most prosperous and politically stable countries in the region, Costa Rica is the only Central American state without a permanent standing army, after it was abolished in 1948.

It also enjoys one of the highest standards of living in the region, although a significant percentage of Costa Ricans - or Ticos - continue to live below the poverty line.

Known for its beaches, mountain ranges, volcanoes and varied wildlife, Costa Rica's rich biodiversity makes it a popular destination for eco-tourists. Traditionally a producer of agricultural goods such as coffee and bananas, its economy has diversified and tourism now ranks as the country's number one earner.

- Read more **country profiles** - Profiles by **BBC Monitoring**

FACTS

Republic of Costa Rica

Capital: San Jose

- **Population** 4.8 million
- **Area** 51,100 sq km (19,730 sq miles)
- **Major languages** Spanish (official), English
- **Major religion** Christianity
- **Life expectancy** 77 years (men), 82 years (women)
- **Currency** Costa Rican colon
UN, World Bank

Getty Images

LEADER

President: Carlos Alvarado



The centre-left candidate Carlos Alvarado won the March 2018 presidential election by a surprisingly wide margin over his evangelical pastor rival, Fabricio Alvarado.

Carlos Alvarado, who served as minister of labour and social security minister in the outgoing administration of President Guillermo Solís, called on other parties to join him in a government of national unity.

MEDIA



Costa Rica has a lively press and broadcasting scene. It also has the best record of respecting freedom of expression in Latin America, says Reporters Without Borders.

There were more than 4 million internet users, comprising around 86% of the population, by 2017.

- [Read full media profile](#)

TIMELINE

Key dates in Costa Rica's history:



Costa Rica has several active volcanoes

1502 - Christopher Columbus sights Costa Rica. Spanish colonization begins in 1522. By 1563, Spain has established the colonial capital of Cartago.

1821 - Costa Rica declares independence from Spain and joins the Mexican empire.

1823 - Costa Rica becomes a province of the Central American Federation along with El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

1838 - Costa Rica becomes a fully independent country after the disintegration of the United Provinces of Central America.

1849-59 - Juan Rafael Mora leads the fight against William Walker, an American who with an army of mercenaries, tries but fails to take control of the region.

1948 - Former president Rafael Angel Calderon loses the election by a slim margin and refuses to accept newly-elected president Otilio Ulate. A bloody 44-day civil war ensues and a temporary government led by socialist landowner Jose Figueres emerges.

1948-49 - A new constitution is adopted, which includes the dissolution of Costa Rica's armed forces.

1955 - Border skirmishes with Nicaragua are resolved through mediation by the Organization of American States (OAS).

1987 - President Oscar Arias Sanchez wins the Nobel Peace Prize for his role in ending civil wars in El Salvador and Nicaragua. He wins a second term in 2006.

2010 - Laura Chinchilla becomes Costa Rica's first female president.

- **Read full timeline**



Eco-tourism is important for Costa Rica's economy



Costa Rica profile - Timeline

A chronology of key events:

1502 - Christopher Columbus visits the area, naming it Costa Rica, (Rich Coast), but disease and resistance by the local population delay the establishment of a permanent settlement for nearly 60 years.

1540 onwards - Costa Rica is part of the vice-royalty of New Spain.

1561 - Spain's Juan de Cavallon leads the first successful colonisers into Costa Rica.

1808 - Coffee is introduced into Costa Rica from Cuba and becomes the principal crop.

1821 - Central America gains independence from Spain. A dispute ensues over whether Costa Rica should join an independent Mexico or a confederation of Central American states.

1823 - Costa Rica joins the United Provinces of Central America, which also embraces El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

1824-25 - Province of Guanacaste secedes from Nicaragua and becomes part of Costa Rica.

Independence

1838 - Costa Rica becomes fully independent.

1849-59 - Under the leadership of Juan Rafael Mora, Costa Rica takes the lead in organising Central American resistance against William Walker, the US adventurer who took over Nicaragua in 1855.

1859 - Mora ousted in a bloodless coup.

1870-82 - Under the leadership of Tomas Guardia Costa Rica encourages intensive foreign investment in railways.

1874 - US businessman Minor Cooper Keith introduces banana cultivation and starts the United Fruit Company.

1917 - Frederico Tinoco ousts the elected president, Alfredo Gonzalez, but is himself deposed two years later.

Socialism and civil war

1940-44 - President Rafael Angel Calderon Guradia, founder of the United Christian Socialist Party (PUSC), introduces liberal reforms, including recognition of workers' rights and minimum wages.

1948 - Six-week civil war over a disputed presidential election result.

1949 - New constitution gives women and people of African descent the right to vote; armed forces abolished and replaced by civil guard; Jose Figueres Ferrer, co-founder of National Liberation Party (PLN), elected president and begins ambitious socialist programme, including introducing a social security system and nationalising banks.

1958-73 - Costa Rica governed by mainly conservative administrations.

1963-64 - Irazu volcano erupts, causing serious damage to agriculture.

1968 - Arenal volcano erupts, causing many casualties.

1974 - Daniel Oduber (PLN) elected president and pursues socialist policies.

Conservatism and economic deterioration

1978 - Rodrigo Carazo, a conservative, elected president amid a sharp deterioration in the economy.

1982 - Luis Alberto Monge (PLN) elected president and introduces harsh austerity programme. Meanwhile, Costa Rica comes under pressure from the US to weigh in against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua.

1985 - US-trained anti-guerrilla force begins operating following clashes with Sandinista troops.

1986 - Oscar Arias Sanchez (PLN) elected president on a neutral platform.

1987 - Leaders of Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras sign peace plan devised by Oscar Arias Sanchez, who in turn wins the Nobel Peace Prize for the plan.

1990 - Rafael Calderon, of the centrist PUSC, elected president.

1994 - Jose Maria Figueres Olsen (PLN) elected president.

1998 - Miguel Angel Rodriguez (PUSC) elected president.

2000 - President Rodriguez and his Nicaraguan counterpart resolve long-standing dispute over navigation along San Juan river, which serves as their border.

2002 April - Abel Pacheco of the ruling Social Christian Unity Party wins a comfortable 58% of the vote in the second round of presidential elections.

2003 May - Energy and telecommunications workers strike over President Pacheco's privatisation plans; teachers strike over problems in paying their salaries. Strikes prompt three ministers to resign.

2004 July - Three Chilean diplomats are killed by a security guard at their embassy in San Jose.

Corruption

2004 October - Mounting concern over corruption as three former presidents - Jose Maria Figueres, Miguel Angel Rodriguez and Rafael Angel Calderon - are investigated over contractor payments.

2005 January - National emergency declared as days of heavy rain lead to serious flooding along the Caribbean coast.

2006 February-March - Presidential election ends in a neck-and-neck race between Oscar Arias and Otton Solis. Mr Solis concedes defeat after a manual count and legal challenges.

2006 October - Two-day public workers strike is held in protest at proposed free trade deal with the US.

2007 May - Government says Costa Rica on course to become first voluntarily "carbon neutral" country.

2007 June - Costa Rica switches diplomatic allegiance from Taiwan to China in a bid to attract Chinese investment.

2007 October - National referendum narrowly decides in favour of ratifying the Central American Free Trade Agreement (Cafta).

2008 November - Chinese President Hu Jintao makes highest-level visit by a Chinese official since Costa Rica ended diplomatic relations with Taiwan in 2007.

2009 March - President Arias says Costa Rica to re-establish ties with Cuba, 48 years after they broken off in 1961.

2009 October - Former president Rafael Angel Calderon is sentenced to five years in jail after being convicted of corruption.

First woman president

2010 February - Costa Rica elects first woman president, Laura Chinchilla, who takes office in May.

2011 March - UN International Court of Justice orders Nicaragua and Costa Rica to keep troops back from a disputed river border.

2012 September - A powerful earthquake kills two people in the Nicoya peninsula west of San Jose, coinciding with the eruption of the San Cristobal volcano in neighbouring Nicaragua.

2013 May - Costa Rica-based Liberty Reserve, considered to be the world's biggest online currency exchange, is shut down after its founder is arrested on suspicion of money-laundering.

2014 April - Luis Guillermo Solis wins presidential election.

2014 August - The government says it will investigate undercover US programmes to destabilise Cuba allegedly operated from Costa Rica and using its citizens.

2015 March - The last of nearly 8,000 Cuban migrants stranded for nearly four months in Costa Rica, after Nicaragua refused them passage through its territory to reach the United States, leave for El Salvador as part of a pilot programme agreed by Central American countries to allow them safe passage to the US.

2015 December - Costa Rica wins a long-standing territorial row with Nicaragua after the International Court of Justice (ICJ) rules it has sovereignty over a small patch of wetlands known as Isla Portillo on the San Juan river.

2018 May - Carlos Alvarado becomes president after winning election.

Chargé d' Affaires Eric Khant



Eric Khant assumed duties as Chargé d' Affaires to U.S. Embassy Kingston, upon Ambassador Luis G. Moreno's departure on June 30, 2017. He served as Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy since August 2, 2016. Prior to Kingston, Eric Khant served as Management Counselor at the U.S. Embassies in Madrid, Spain; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and Santiago, Chile and as Supervisory Regional Human Resources Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand.

His other overseas assignments include Morocco, Russia, Cambodia, and France. Eric Khant also served in Washington as an Assignments Officer for the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs. Eric Khant is a resident of Florida

and married to Halima Khant. He holds a bachelor's degree in Management and a Master's Degree in National Security Strategy.



United States Department of State

U.S.-JAMAICA RELATIONS

The United States established diplomatic relations with Jamaica in 1962 following its independence from the United Kingdom. The United States and Jamaica maintain strong and productive relations, based on trust and mutual interest. This close friendship is built on a foundation of people-to-people ties and a vibrant Jamaican-American community. The United States and Jamaica foster prosperity and stability for both countries within the **Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI)**.

Bilateral Economic Relations

The United States is Jamaica's most important trading partner. An important destination for U.S. investment, Jamaica has generally been a supportive partner in efforts – bilaterally, regionally, and globally – to liberalize trade. Under the Caribbean Basin Trade Partner Act and other trade measures, over 80% of Jamaican exports enter the U.S. market duty free. The United States provides over \$100 million in support through the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) for expanding and diversifying energy sources available on the island. The two countries have an investment treaty and a double taxation agreement. More than 80 U.S. firms have offices in the country and hundreds of other U.S. firms sell their products through local distributors. Over a million American tourists visit Jamaica each year, and hundreds of thousands of Jamaicans visit the United States. The large Jamaican-American community sends billions of dollars in remittances to Jamaica annually.

U.S. Assistance to Jamaica

The United States provides key assistance to Jamaica to help counter violent crime and transnational criminal activity. The partnership focuses on reducing corruption; increasing

transparency and good governance; fostering Jamaican participation in regional security efforts; strengthening basic education; and increasing adaptation to climate change.

Regional HIV/AIDS and security programs complement U.S. assistance.

Jamaica's Membership in International Organizations

Jamaica and the United States belong to a number of the same international organizations, including the United Nations (UN), Organization of American States (OAS), Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank (WB), and World Trade Organization (WTO).

Bilateral Representation

Principal U.S. embassy officials are listed in the Department's Key Officers List.

Jamaica maintains an **embassy** in the United States at 1520 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20036 (tel. 202-452-0660).



CENTRAL AMERICA :: JAMAICA

Introduction :: JAMAICA

Background:

The island - discovered by Christopher COLUMBUS in 1494 - was settled by the Spanish early in the 16th century. The native Taino, who had inhabited Jamaica for centuries, were gradually exterminated and replaced by African slaves. England seized the island in 1655 and established a plantation economy based on sugar, cocoa, and coffee. The abolition of slavery in 1834 freed a quarter million slaves, many of whom became small farmers. Jamaica gradually increased its independence from Britain. In 1958 it joined other British Caribbean colonies in forming the Federation of the West Indies. Jamaica withdrew from the Federation in 1961 and gained full independence in 1962. Deteriorating economic conditions during the 1970s led to recurrent violence as rival gangs affiliated with the major political parties evolved into powerful organized crime networks involved in international drug smuggling and money laundering. Violent crime, drug trafficking, and poverty pose significant challenges to the government today. Nonetheless, many rural and resort areas remain relatively safe and contribute substantially to the economy.

Women's World Cup One-Pager:

Geography :: JAMAICA

Location:

Caribbean, island in the Caribbean Sea, south of Cuba

Geographic coordinates:

18 15 N, 77 30 W

Map references:

Central America and the Caribbean

Area:

total: 10,991 sq km

land: 10,831 sq km

water: 160 sq km

country comparison to the world: 167

Area - comparative:

about half the size of New Jersey; slightly smaller than Connecticut

Area comparison map:

Land boundaries:

0 km

Coastline:

1,022 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 12 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

contiguous zone: 24 nm

continental shelf: 200 nm or to edge of the continental margin

measured from claimed archipelagic straight baselines

Climate:

tropical; hot, humid; temperate interior

Terrain:

mostly mountains, with narrow, discontinuous coastal plain

Elevation:

mean elevation: 18 m

lowest point: Caribbean Sea 0 m

highest point: Blue Mountain Peak 2,256 m

Natural resources:

bauxite, alumina, gypsum, limestone

Land use:

agricultural land: 41.4% (2011 est.)

arable land: 11.1% (2011 est.) / permanent crops: 9.2% (2011 est.) / permanent pasture: 21.1% (2011 est.)

forest: 31.1% (2011 est.)

other: 27.5% (2011 est.)

Irrigated land:

250 sq km (2012)

Population distribution:

population density is high throughout, but increases in and around Kingston, Montego Bay, and Port Esquivel

Natural hazards:

hurricanes (especially July to November)

Environment - current issues:

heavy rates of deforestation; coastal waters polluted by industrial waste, sewage, and oil spills; damage to coral reefs; air pollution in Kingston from vehicle emissions; land erosion

Environment - international agreements:

party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Dumping, Marine Life Conservation, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands

signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

Geography - note:

third largest island in the Caribbean (after Cuba and Hispaniola); strategic location between Cayman Trench and Jamaica Channel, the main sea lanes for the Panama Canal

People and Society :: JAMAICA

Population:

2,812,090 (July 2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 139

Nationality:

noun: Jamaican(s)

adjective: Jamaican

Ethnic groups:

black 92.1%, mixed 6.1%, East Indian 0.8%, other 0.4%, unspecified 0.7% (2011 est.)

Languages:

English, English patois

Religions:

Protestant 64.8% (includes Seventh Day Adventist 12.0%, Pentecostal 11.0%, Other Church of God 9.2%, New Testament Church of God 7.2%, Baptist 6.7%, Church of God in Jamaica 4.8%, Church of God of Prophecy 4.5%, Anglican 2.8%, United Church 2.1%, Methodist 1.6%, Revived 1.4%, Brethren 0.9%, and Moravian 0.7%), Roman Catholic 2.2%, Jehovah's Witness 1.9%, Rastafarian 1.1%, other 6.5%, none 21.3%, unspecified 2.3% (2011 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 26.01% (male 372,158 /female 359,388)

15-24 years: 18.36% (male 261,012 /female 255,223)

25-54 years: 38.03% (male 518,984 /female 550,412)

55-64 years: 8.89% (male 123,769 /female 126,350)

65 years and over: 8.71% (male 115,573 /female 129,221) (2018 est.)

population pyramid: 

Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 48.7 (2015 est.)

youth dependency ratio: 34.9 (2015 est.)

elderly dependency ratio: 13.8 (2015 est.)

potential support ratio: 7.2 (2015 est.)

Median age:

total: 28.6 years

male: 27.8 years

female: 29.3 years (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 133

Population growth rate:

-0.05% (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 201

Birth rate:

16.5 births/1,000 population (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 110

Death rate:

7.6 deaths/1,000 population (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 104

Net migration rate:

-9.4 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 216

Population distribution:

population density is high throughout, but increases in and around Kingston, Montego Bay, and Port Esquivel

Urbanization:

urban population: 55.7% of total population (2018)

rate of urbanization: 0.82% annual rate of change (2015-20 est.)

Major urban areas - population:

589,000 KINGSTON (capital) (2018)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 1.05 male(s)/female

0-14 years: 1.04 male(s)/female

15-24 years: 1.02 male(s)/female

25-54 years: 0.94 male(s)/female

55-64 years: 0.98 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 0.89 male(s)/female

total population: 0.98 male(s)/female (2018 est.)

Mother's mean age at first birth:

21.2 years (2008 est.)

note: median age at first birth among women 25-29

Maternal mortality rate:

89 deaths/100,000 live births (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 77

Infant mortality rate:

total: 12.4 deaths/1,000 live births

male: 13.9 deaths/1,000 live births

female: 10.8 deaths/1,000 live births (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 108

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 74.5 years

male: 72.7 years

female: 76.5 years (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 123

Total fertility rate:

2.09 children born/woman (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 102

Contraceptive prevalence rate:

72.5% (2008/09)

Health expenditures:

5.4% of GDP (2014)

country comparison to the world: 130

Physicians density:

1.32 physicians/1,000 population (2017)

Hospital bed density:

1.7 beds/1,000 population (2013)

Drinking water source:**improved:**

urban: 97.5% of population

rural: 89.4% of population

total: 93.8% of population

unimproved:

urban: 2.5% of population

rural: 10.6% of population

total: 6.2% of population (2015 est.)

Sanitation facility access:**improved:**

urban: 79.9% of population (2015 est.)

rural: 84.1% of population (2015 est.)

total: 81.8% of population (2015 est.)

unimproved:

urban: 20.1% of population (2015 est.)

rural: 15.9% of population (2015 est.)

total: 18.2% of population (2015 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

1.8% (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 28

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:

34,000 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 70

HIV/AIDS - deaths:

1,500 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 58

Major infectious diseases:

note: active local transmission of Zika virus by Aedes species mosquitoes has been identified in this country (as of August 2016); it poses an important risk (a large number of cases possible) among US citizens if bitten by an infective mosquito; other less common ways to get Zika are through sex, via blood transfusion, or during pregnancy, in which the pregnant woman passes Zika virus to her fetus

Obesity - adult prevalence rate:

24.7% (2016)

country comparison to the world: 55

Children under the age of 5 years underweight:

2.2% (2014)

country comparison to the world: 110

Education expenditures:

5.3% of GDP (2017)

country comparison to the world: 50

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over has ever attended school (2015 est.)

total population: 88.7%

male: 84%

female: 93.1% (2015 est.)

Unemployment, youth ages 15-24:

total: 24.1%

male: 20.1%

female: 29.2% (2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 53

Government :: JAMAICA

Country name:

conventional long form: none

conventional short form: Jamaica

etymology: from the native Taino word "haymaca" meaning "Land of Wood and Water" or possibly "Land of Springs"

Government type:

parliamentary democracy (Parliament) under a constitutional monarchy; a Commonwealth realm

Capital:

name: Kingston

geographic coordinates: 18 00 N, 76 48 W

time difference: UTC-5 (same time as Washington, DC, during Standard Time)

Administrative divisions:

14 parishes; Clarendon, Hanover, Kingston, Manchester, Portland, Saint Andrew, Saint Ann, Saint Catherine, Saint Elizabeth, Saint James, Saint Mary, Saint Thomas, Trelawny, Westmoreland

note: for local government purposes, Kingston and Saint Andrew were amalgamated in 1923 into the present single corporate body known as the Kingston and Saint Andrew Corporation

Independence:

6 August 1962 (from the UK)

National holiday:

Independence Day, 6 August (1962)

Constitution:

history: several previous (preindependence); latest drafted 1961-62, submitted to British Parliament 24 July 1962, entered into force 6 August 1962 (at independence)

amendments: proposed by Parliament; passage of amendments to "non-entrenched" constitutional sections such as lowering the voting age, requires majority vote by the Parliament membership; passage of amendments to "entrenched" sections such as fundamental rights and freedoms requires two-thirds majority vote of Parliament; passage of amendments to "specially entrenched" sections such as the dissolution of Parliament or the executive authority of the monarch requires two-thirds approval by Parliament and approval in a referendum; amended many times, last in 2017 (2018)

Legal system:

common law system based on the English model

International law organization participation:

has not submitted an ICJ jurisdiction declaration; non-party state to the ICt

Citizenship:

citizenship by birth: yes

citizenship by descent only: yes

dual citizenship recognized: yes

residency requirement for naturalization: 4 out of the previous 5 years

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

Executive branch:

chief of state: Queen ELIZABETH II (since 6 February 1952); represented by Governor General Sir Patrick L. ALLEN (since 26 February 2009)

head of government: Prime Minister Andrew HOLNESS (since 3 March 2016)

cabinet: Cabinet appointed by the governor general on the advice of the prime minister

elections/appointments: the monarchy is hereditary; governor general appointed by the monarch on the recommendation of the prime minister; following legislative elections, the leader of the majority party or majority coalition in the House of Representatives is appointed prime minister by the governor general

Legislative branch:

description: bicameral Parliament consists of:

Senate (21 seats; members appointed by the governor general on the recommendation of the prime minister and the opposition leader, 13 seats allocated to the ruling party, and 8 seats allocated to the opposition party; members serve 5-year terms or until Parliament is dissolved)

House of Representatives (63 seats; members directly elected in single-seat constituencies by simple majority vote to serve 5-year terms or until Parliament is dissolved)

elections: Senate - last full slate of appointments on 10 March 2016 (next no later than February 2021)

House of Representatives - last held on 25 February 2016; by-election for 5 seats held on 30 October 2017 (3 seats), 5 March 2018, and 4 April 2019 (next to be held no later than February 2021)

election results: Senate - percent by party - NA; seats by party - NA; composition - men 16, women 5, percent of women 23.8%

House of Representatives - percent of vote by party - JLP 50.1%, PNP 49.7%, other 0.2%; seats by party - JLP 32, PNP 31; note - as of June 2019, by-elections have changed House seats to JLP 34, PNP 29; composition - men 51, women 12, percent of women 19%; note - total Parliament percent of women 20%

Judicial branch:

highest courts: Court of Appeal (consists of president of the court and a minimum of 4 judges); Supreme Court (40 judges organized in specialized divisions); note - appeals beyond Jamaica's highest courts are referred to the Judicial

Committee of the Privy Council (in London) rather than to the Caribbean Court of Justice (the appellate court for member states of the Caribbean Community)

judge selection and term of office: chief justice of the Supreme Court and president of the Court of Appeal appointed by the governor-general on the advice of the prime minister; other judges of both courts appointed by the governor-general on the advice of the Judicial Service Commission; judges of both courts serve till age 70

subordinate courts: resident magistrate courts, district courts, and petty sessions courts

Political parties and leaders:

Jamaica Labor Party or JLP [Andrew Michael HOLNESS]
People's National Party or PNP [Dr. Peter David PHILLIPS]
National Democratic Movement or NDM [Peter TOWNSEND]

International organization participation:

ACP, AOSIS, C, Caricom, CDB, CELAC, FAO, G-15, G-77, IADB, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC (NGOs), ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, IHO, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, ISO, ITSO, ITU, LAES, MIGA, NAM, OAS, OPANAL, OPCW, Petrocaribe, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNITAR, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WFTU (NGOs), WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador Audrey Patrice MARKS (since 18 January 2017) (2017)

chancery: 1520 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20036

telephone: [1] (202) 452-0660

FAX: [1] (202) 452-0036

consulate(s) general: Miami, New York

consulate(s): Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Concord (MA), Houston, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Richmond (VA), San Francisco, Seattle (2017)

Diplomatic representation from the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant); Charge d'Affaires Eric KHANT (since 30 June 2017)

embassy: 142 Old Hope Road, Kingston 6

mailing address: P.O. Box 541, Kingston 5

telephone: [1] (876) 702-6000 (2018)

FAX: [1] (876) 702-6001 (2018)

Flag description:

diagonal yellow cross divides the flag into four triangles - green (top and bottom) and black (hoist side and fly side); green represents hope, vegetation, and agriculture, black reflects hardships overcome and to be faced, and yellow recalls golden sunshine and the island's natural resources

National symbol(s):

green-and-black streamertail (bird), Guaiacum officinale (Guaiacwood); national colors: green, yellow, black

National anthem:

name: Jamaica, Land We Love

lyrics/music: Hugh Braham SHERLOCK/Robert Charles LIGHTBOURNE

note: adopted 1962

0:00 / 1:24

Economy :: JAMAICA

Economy - overview:

The Jamaican economy is heavily dependent on services, which accounts for more than 70% of GDP. The country derives most of its foreign exchange from tourism, remittances, and bauxite/alumina. Earnings from remittances and tourism each account for 14% and 20% of GDP, while bauxite/alumina exports have declined to less than 5% of GDP.

Jamaica's economy has grown on average less than 1% a year for the last three decades and many impediments remain to growth: a bloated public sector which crowds out spending on important projects; high crime and corruption; red-tape; and a high debt-to-GDP ratio. Jamaica, however, has made steady progress in reducing its debt-to-GDP ratio from a high of almost 150% in 2012 to less than 110% in 2017, in close collaboration with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The current IMF Stand-By Agreement requires Jamaica to produce an annual primary surplus of 7%, in an attempt to reduce its debt burden below 60% by 2025.

Economic growth reached 1.6% in 2016, but declined to 0.9% in 2017 after intense rainfall, demonstrating the vulnerability of the economy to weather-related events. The HOLNESS administration therefore faces the difficult prospect of maintaining fiscal discipline to reduce the debt load while simultaneously implementing growth inducing policies and attacking a serious crime problem. High unemployment exacerbates the crime problem, including gang violence fueled by advanced fee fraud (lottery scamming) and the drug trade.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$26.06 billion (2017 est.)

\$25.89 billion (2016 est.)

\$25.51 billion (2015 est.)

note: data are in 2017 dollars

country comparison to the world: 140

GDP (official exchange rate):

\$14.77 billion (2017 est.)

GDP - real growth rate:

0.7% (2017 est.)

1.5% (2016 est.)

0.9% (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 189

GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$9,200 (2017 est.)

\$9,200 (2016 est.)

\$9,100 (2015 est.)

note: data are in 2017 dollars

country comparison to the world: 143

Gross national saving:

18.3% of GDP (2017 est.)

20.6% of GDP (2016 est.)

18% of GDP (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 109

GDP - composition, by end use:

household consumption: 81.9% (2017 est.)

government consumption: 13.7% (2017 est.)

investment in fixed capital: 21.3% (2017 est.)

investment in inventories: 0.1% (2017 est.)

exports of goods and services: 30.1% (2017 est.)

imports of goods and services: -47.1% (2017 est.)

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

agriculture: 7% (2017 est.)

industry: 21.1% (2017 est.)

services: 71.9% (2017 est.)

Agriculture - products:

sugar cane, bananas, coffee, citrus, yams, ackees, vegetables; poultry, goats, milk; shellfish

Industries:

agriculture, mining, manufacture, construction, financial and insurance services, tourism, telecommunications

Industrial production growth rate:

0.9% (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 162

Labor force:

1.348 million (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 135

Labor force - by occupation:

agriculture: 16.1%

industry: 16%

services: 67.9% (2017)

Unemployment rate:

12.2% (2017 est.)

12.8% (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 162

Population below poverty line:

17.1% (2016 est.)

Household income or consumption by percentage share:

lowest 10%: 2.6%

highest 10%: 29.3% (2015)

Distribution of family income - Gini index:

35 (2016)

38 (2015)

country comparison to the world: 97

Budget:

revenues: 4.382 billion (2017 est.)

expenditures: 4.314 billion (2017 est.)

Taxes and other revenues:

29.7% (of GDP) (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 81

Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):

0.5% (of GDP) (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 37

Public debt:

101% of GDP (2017 est.)

113.6% of GDP (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 16

Fiscal year:

1 April - 31 March

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

4.4% (2017 est.)

2.3% (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 166

Central bank discount rate:

3.25% (31 December 2017)

3% (31 December 2016)

country comparison to the world: 105

Commercial bank prime lending rate:

14.91% (31 December 2017 est.)

16.49% (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 41

Stock of narrow money:

\$3.55 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$3.427 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 115

Stock of broad money:

\$3.55 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$3.427 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 121

Stock of domestic credit:

\$7.326 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$7.382 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 118

Market value of publicly traded shares:

\$8.393 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$5.715 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

\$5.38 billion (31 December 2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 76

Current account balance:

-\$679 million (2017 est.)

-\$381 million (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 126

Exports:

\$1.296 billion (2017 est.)

\$1.195 billion (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 151

Exports - partners:

US 39.1%, Netherlands 12.3%, Canada 8.4% (2017)

Exports - commodities:

alumina, bauxite, chemicals, coffee, mineral fuels, waste and scrap metals, sugar, yams

Imports:

\$5.151 billion (2017 est.)

\$4.169 billion (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 126

Imports - commodities:

food and other consumer goods, industrial supplies, fuel, parts and accessories of capital goods, machinery and transport equipment, construction materials

Imports - partners:

US 40.6%, Colombia 6.8%, Japan 5.8%, China 5.8%, Trinidad and Tobago 4.7% (2017)

Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:

\$3.781 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$2.719 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 100

Debt - external:

\$14.94 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$10.24 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 103

Stock of direct foreign investment - at home:

\$15.03 billion (2016)

\$10.86 billion (2010)

country comparison to the world: 90

Stock of direct foreign investment - abroad:

\$604 million (2016)

\$176 million (2010)

country comparison to the world: 96

Exchange rates:

Jamaican dollars (JMD) per US dollar -

128.36 (2017 est.)

125.14 (2016 est.)

125.126 (2015 est.)

116.898 (2014 est.)

110.935 (2013 est.)

Energy :: JAMAICA**Electricity access:**

population without electricity: 200,000 (2013)

electrification - total population: 93% (2013)

electrification - urban areas: 98% (2013)

electrification - rural areas: 87% (2013)

Electricity - production:

4.007 billion kWh (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 128

Electricity - consumption:

2.847 billion kWh (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 137

Electricity - exports:

0 kWh (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 151

Electricity - imports:

0 kWh (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 162

Electricity - installed generating capacity:

1.078 million kW (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 126

Electricity - from fossil fuels:

83% of total installed capacity (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 76

Electricity - from nuclear fuels:

0% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 115

Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:

3% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 134

Electricity - from other renewable sources:

15% of total installed capacity (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 59

Crude oil - production:

0 bbl/day (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 152

Crude oil - exports:

0 bbl/day (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 142

Crude oil - imports:

24,360 bbl/day (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 61

Crude oil - proved reserves:

0 bbl (1 January 2018 est.)

country comparison to the world: 149

Refined petroleum products - production:

24,250 bbl/day (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 87

Refined petroleum products - consumption:

55,000 bbl/day (2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 99

Refined petroleum products - exports:

823 bbl/day (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 109

Refined petroleum products - imports:

30,580 bbl/day (2015 est.)

country comparison to the world: 100

Natural gas - production:

0 cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 149

Natural gas - consumption:

198.2 million cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 104

Natural gas - exports:

0 cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 127

Natural gas - imports:

198.2 million cu m (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 71

Natural gas - proved reserves:

0 cu m (1 January 2014 est.)

country comparison to the world: 150

Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:

8.9 million Mt (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 112

Communications :: **JAMAICA**

Telephones - fixed lines:

total subscriptions: 297,027 (2017 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 10 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 113

Telephones - mobile cellular:

total subscriptions: 3,091,222 (2017 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 103 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 140

Telephone system:

general assessment: fully automatic domestic telephone network; LTE networks providing coverage to 90% of the island population

domestic: the 1999 agreement to open the market for telecommunications services resulted in rapid growth in mobile-cellular telephone usage 103 per 100 subscriptions, while the number of fixed-lines 10 per 100 subscriptions has declined

international: country code - 1-876 and 1-658; the Fibralink submarine cable network provides enhanced delivery of business and broadband traffic and is linked to the Americas Region Caribbean Ring System (ARCOS-1) submarine cable in the Dominican Republic; the link to ARCOS-1 provides seamless connectivity to US, parts of the Caribbean, Central America, and South America; the ALBA-1 fiber-optic submarine cable links Jamaica, Cuba, and Venezuela; satellite earth stations - 2 Intelsat (Atlantic Ocean)

Broadcast media:

3 free-to-air TV stations, subscription cable services, and roughly 30 radio stations

Internet country code:

.jm

Internet users:

total: 1,336,653 (July 2016 est.)

percent of population: 45% (July 2016 est.)

country comparison to the world: 124

Broadband - fixed subscriptions:

total: 239,120 (2017 est.)

subscriptions per 100 inhabitants: 8 (2017 est.)

country comparison to the world: 103

Transportation :: **JAMAICA**

National air transport system:

number of registered air carriers: 2 (2015)

inventory of registered aircraft operated by air carriers: 5 (2015)

annual passenger traffic on registered air carriers: 92,836 (2015)

annual freight traffic on registered air carriers: 0 mt-km (2015)

Civil aircraft registration country code prefix:

6Y (2016)

Airports:

28 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 122

Airports - with paved runways:

total: 11 (2017)

2,438 to 3,047 m: 2 (2017)

914 to 1,523 m: 4 (2017)

under 914 m: 5 (2017)

Airports - with unpaved runways:

total: 17 (2013)

914 to 1,523 m: 1 (2013)

under 914 m: 16 (2013)

Roadways:

total: 22,121 km (includes 44 km of expressways) (2011)

paved: 16,148 km (2011)

unpaved: 5,973 km (2011)

country comparison to the world: 89

Merchant marine:

total: 43

by type: bulk carrier 1, container ship 8, general cargo 10, oil tanker 1, other 23 (2018)

country comparison to the world: 118

Ports and terminals:

major seaport(s): Discovery Bay (Port Rhoades), Kingston, Montego Bay, Port Antonio, Port Esquivel, Port Kaiser, Rocky Point

container port(s) (TEUs): Kingston (1,681,706) (2017)

Military and Security :: JAMAICA

Military expenditures:

0.9% of GDP (2017)

0.96% of GDP (2016)

0.87% of GDP (2015)

0.87% of GDP (2014)

0.9% of GDP (2013)

country comparison to the world: 122

Military branches:

Jamaica Defense Force: Ground Forces, Coast Guard, Air Wing (2018)

Military service age and obligation:

17 1/2 is the legal minimum age for voluntary military service; no conscription (2012)

Transnational Issues :: JAMAICA

Disputes - international:

none

Trafficking in persons:

current situation: Jamaica is a source and destination country for children and adults subjected to sex trafficking and forced labor; sex trafficking of children and adults occurs on the street, in night clubs, bars, massage parlors, and private homes; child sex tourism is a problem in resort areas; Jamaicans have been subjected to sexual exploitation or forced labor in the Caribbean, Canada, the US, and the UK, while foreigners have endured conditions of forced labor in Jamaica or aboard foreign-flagged fishing vessels operating in Jamaican waters; a high number of Jamaican children are reported missing

tier rating: Tier 2 Watch List – Jamaica does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so; in 2014, the government made significant efforts to raise public awareness of human trafficking, and named a national trafficking-in-persons rapporteur – the first in the region; authorities initiated more new trafficking investigations than in 2013 and concluded a trafficking case in the Supreme Court, but chronic delays impeded prosecutions and no offenders were convicted for the sixth consecutive year; more adult trafficking victims were identified than in previous years, but only one child victim was identified, which was exceptionally low relative to the number of vulnerable children (2015)

Illicit drugs:

transshipment point for cocaine from South America to North America and Europe; illicit cultivation and consumption of cannabis; government has an active manual cannabis eradication program; corruption is a major concern; substantial money-laundering activity; Colombian narcotics traffickers favor Jamaica for illicit financial transactions

Jamaica country profile



Known for its strong sense of self identity expressed through its music, food and rich cultural mix, Jamaica's influence extends far beyond its shores.

With luminaries such as the black nationalist Marcus Garvey and musician Bob Marley, Jamaicans are proud of their cultural and religious heritage.

Jamaicans have migrated in significant numbers to the United States, Canada and Britain and their music stars are known around the globe.

The island is the birthplace of Rastafarianism, a religious movement which has been adopted by groups around the world who venerate the former Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie. Once regarded as a revolutionary threat, Rastafarianism became a cultural force, reflected in art and music.

Since independence from Britain in 1962, power in Jamaica has alternated between the social-democratic People's National Party and the conservative Jamaica Labour Party.

Political stability, however, has not turned into social and economic harmony.

- Read **more country profiles** - Profiles by **BBC Monitoring**

FACTS

Jamaica

Capital: Kingston

- **Population** 2.9 million
- **Area** 10,991 sq km (4,243 sq miles)
- **Major languages** English (official), English patois

- **Major religion** Christianity
- **Life expectancy** 73 years (men), 78 years (women)
- **Currency** Jamaican dollar
UN, World Bank

Getty Images

LEADERS

Head of state: Queen Elizabeth II
Prime minister: Andrew Holness



Andrew Holness, a former education minister and leader of the Jamaican Labour Party, became prime minister in March 2016.

He governs with a slim one-seat majority after his then-opposition party beat the party of Portia Simpson Miller, Jamaica's first female head of government, in elections.

Among the challenges the government faces is a high rate of youth unemployment and dealing with the country's heavy debt.

MEDIA



Jamaica has a free press. Broadcast media are mainly commercial and carry diverse comment.

The country ranks highly in the World Press Freedom Index published by Reporters Without Borders.

- **Read full media profile**

TIMELINE

Some key dates in Jamaica's history:



Jamaica became a leading sugar exporter with the help of slave labour, abolished in the 1830s

1494 - Christopher Columbus sights Jamaica.

1509 - Jamaica occupied by the Spaniards. Much of the indigenous Arawak community dies off from exposure to European diseases; African slaves brought in to work on the sugar plantations.

1655 - Jamaica is captured by the British.

1865 - The British ruthlessly put down the Morant Bay rebellion, staged by freed slaves in response to acute hardship, and force the local legislature to surrender its powers; Jamaica becomes a crown colony.

1962 - Jamaica becomes independent within the British Commonwealth

2010 - Dozens are killed in operation to arrest drug lord Christopher "Dudus" Coke. He is extradited to the US, sentenced and jailed.

2012 - Prime Minister Portia Simpson-Miller says that 50 years after Jamaica gained its independence from Britain, it is time for the country to break with the British monarchy and become a republic.

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- **Read full timeline**



Jamaica is the birthplace of reggae music and Bob Marley was one of its greatest exponents