

#700M plan announced in border drug war

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- The White House Tuesday announced it would provide \$700 million to strengthen border security against Mexican drug cartels.

The administration said it would increase security funding and border patrol deployments. Funds will help Mexico buy five helicopters for its army and air force, and new surveillance aircraft for its navy. It will double the number of border security teams and will place increased numbers of federal agents and other resources at the border.

Funding is also provided for improved communications technology for Mexican law enforcement and immigration officials, and for beefing up efforts against spillover into the United States.

Obama's concern over accelerating violence in Mexico and the effect it has in the United States spurs increased intelligence sharing to curtail the flow of money and weapons into Mexico. Obama's action enhances the Meridia initiative, a three-year, \$1.4 billion program to assist Mexico's war against drug cartels.

The plan, developed by the Justice and Homeland Security departments, was set to be unveiled at the White House by Homeland Secretary Janet Napolitano. The announcement comes in advance of a scheduled trip by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano to Mexico.

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