Negative: Honduras Security Aid - good

By Katherine Baker

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NEGATIVE: Honduras Security Aid - GOOD

NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY / REVERSE PLAN ADVOCACY

Support for the Honduran military has risks, but the deteriorating situation justifies it

Michael Shifter 2012. (M.A. sociology, Georgetown Univ.; President of the Inter-American Dialogue; Adjunct Professor of Latin American Studies at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service; directed the Ford Foundation's governance and human rights program in the Andean region and Southern Cone) 8 May 2012 NEW YORK TIMES, “Military Aid Is Unattractive, but Unavoidable” <https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2012/05/08/should-us-troops-fight-the-war-on-drugs/military-aid-is-unattractive-but-unavoidable>

Policy options are not good, but in today’s Honduras a government of any stripe would turn to the military to fight drug violence. There are considerable risks associated with building up militaries in countries like Honduras, with precarious governance and a history of rights abuses. But such risks have to be weighed against the risks of the current, deteriorating situation, which has taken a tremendous human toll and poses a serious threat to the rule of law.

MINOR REPAIR – Enforce existing law

**We don’t need to adopt the resolution or pass any new legislation to solve, we can simply enforce existing law.**

Link: The Leahy Law. Under the Leahy Law, the U.S. Government is not allowed to fund foreign military units who commit human rights violations with impunity

Dr. Mark Weisbrot 2013 (Co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research in D.C. He’s also the president of Just Foreign Policy; Ph.D. in economics from Univ of Michigan) 30 Mar 2013, “Will Congress act to stop US support for Honduras' death squad regime?” <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/mar/30/congress-us-support-honduras-death-squad-regime>

Now, the Obama administration is coming under fire for its role in arming and funding murderous Honduran police, in violation of US law. Under the Leahy Law, named after Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy, the US government is not allowed to fund foreign military units who have commit gross human rights violations with impunity. The director general of Honduras' national police force, Juan Carlos Bonilla, has been investigated in connection with death squad killings; and members of the US Congress have been complaining about it since Bonilla was appointed last May. Thanks to some excellent investigative reporting by the Associated Press in the last couple of weeks – showing that all police units are, in fact, under Bonilla's command – it has become clear that the US is illegally funding the Honduran police.

Solvency: Leahy Law solves if we just follow it. The U.S. government isn’t arming human rights violators

Amnesty International and Nate Smith 2013 (**Amnesty—**Global movement of more than 7 million people who take injustice personally. They’re campaigning for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all. This post was written in collaboration with Nate **Smith—**part of the Amnesty International USA (AIUSA) Military, Security and Police (MSP) Coordination group) 9 July 2013, “Deconstructing The Leahy Law: Fact vs Fiction,” <https://www.amnestyusa.org/deconstructing-the-leahy-law-fact-vs-fiction/>

The Leahy Law is a powerful yet often-overlooked tool to help prevent the U.S. government from directly arming human rights violators in the ranks of foreign security forces and to help the U.S. avoid complicity in the commission of human rights violations.

Foreign governments comply with Leahy Law

Lisa Haugaard 2015 (Executive director of the Latin America Working Group Education Fund, which is a grantee of the Open Society Foundations) 22 May 2015, “The Law That Helps the U.S. Stop Heinous Crimes by Foreign Militaries,” <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/law-helps-us-stop-heinous-crimes-foreign-militaries>

An increasingly well-known U.S. human rights law barring American military assistance to foreign security forces that commit crimes like murder, kidnapping, rape, and torture has played an important role in encouraging Central and South American countries to crack down on these crimes. The Leahy Law, named after Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vermont) and approved by Congress in the late 1990s, isn’t designed just to penalize a country. It provides an incentive to foreign military and police to clean up dirty units and seek justice for victims of heinous crimes. If the recipient government takes “effective steps to bring the responsible members of the security forces unit to justice,” the U.S. government can resume assistance to that unit. If no justice occurs, aid to that unit cannot resume. Foreign governments are apt to comply with the Leahy Law because the United States is the world’s most sought-after military trainer and arms supplier.

The Leahy Law works

Amnesty International and Nate Smith 2013 (**Amnesty—**Global movement of more than 7 million people who take injustice personally. They’re campaigning for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all. This post was written in collaboration with Nate **Smith—**part of the Amnesty International USA (AIUSA) Military, Security and Police (MSP) Coordination group) 9 July 2013, “Deconstructing The Leahy Law: Fact vs Fiction,” <https://www.amnestyusa.org/deconstructing-the-leahy-law-fact-vs-fiction/>

**Fact: The Leahy Law has had an impact.** The Leahy Law has saved lives since its passage and it provides an incentive to countries whose security forces’ possess poor human rights records to clean up their act. U.S. policymakers should be looking for ways to make this law and others like it stronger, and in doing so, strengthen the United States’ security and standing abroad. **The truth is, there is no human rights panacea** – it’s an ongoing struggle, waged by those who believe in basic rights protections for everyone. The Leahy Law is one critical tool in that struggle. Its effectiveness is measured in human rights violations prevented – for those to outweigh the U.S. military’s professed inconveniences, the voices of those who fight for human right must be heard.

INHERENCY

Aid restrictions already imposed: Must make progress in Human Rights to get all the money

Roque Planas, 2016. (National Reporter, HuffPost.) “U.S. Aid To Honduras In Doubt After Killings Of Activists.” Updated Sep 23, 2016. Original on the 11of August. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/honduran-aid-activist-killings\_us\_57acf39fe4b007c36e4dec10

Last year’s U.S. economic aid package, often referred to as the Alliance for Prosperity, for the Central American countries of Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, was sold as a way to curb a flood of migration from those countries by making them more livable. The three nations, known collectively as the Northern Triangle, are among the world’s most violent, [bogged down by the legacy of civil wars, U.S. military intervention and out-of-control gang violence](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/18/refugee-crisis-border_n_5596125.html). A large chunk of that money will go to civil society groups. Funds intended for the three governments carry restrictions. The State Department must certify that the governments have made progress on human rights, corruption and other criteria before receiving half of that money.

Congress put human rights conditions on 20% of US military & police aid to Honduras for 2012

Alex Main 2012. (Senior Associate for International Policy, Center for Economic & Policy Research; focuses on U.S. foreign policy in Latin America and the Caribbean; frequently interviewed by media in the U.S. and Latin American and his analyses on U.S. policy in the Americas have been published in a variety of domestic and international media outlets ; Prior to CEPR, spent more than six years in Latin America working as an international relations analyst; degree in history and political science from the Sorbonne University in Paris) 3 Jan 2012 “US Congress Conditions Aid for Honduran Military and Police “ HONDURAS WEEKLY http://www.hondurasweekly.com/us-congress-conditions-aid-for-honduran-military-and-police-201201034672/

In response to widespread concern in both the United States House of Representatives and Senate over human rights abuses involving the Honduran police and military, the US Congress has placed new conditions on a portion of US police and military aid to Honduras. The legislative language that establishes these new conditions can be found in the Department of State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs Appropriation Act within the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2012, which was passed by Congress on December 16. It now requires that, before allocating 20 percent of the funds allocated for Honduras, the State Department must investigate and report back to the Committee on Appropriations whether the Honduran military "is implementing policies to protect freedom of expression and association, and due process of law," whether it is prosecuting "military and police personnel who are credibly alleged to have violated human rights,” and whether the Honduran police and military "are cooperating with civilian authorities in such cases."

Counternarcotic aid money decreasing; spent on non-lethal items

Roque Planas, 2016. (National Reporter, HuffPost.) “U.S. Aid To Honduras In Doubt After Killings Of Activists.” Updated Sep 23, 2016. Original on the 11of August. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/honduran-aid-activist-killings\_us\_57acf39fe4b007c36e4dec10

In 2015, the U.S. sent $18 million to Honduran security forces in counter-narcotics funding, according to a May report by the Congressional Research Service. By next year, that figure will have dwindled by a third to $12 million. A spokeswoman from the Department of Defense declined to explain the reasons for the drop, but wrote in an email that the counter-narcotics support consisted of “non-lethal equipment, infrastructure and training.” The State Department vets military and police units that receive support, the spokeswoman said.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. US aid is promoting human rights and democracy

Police refused curfew over election dispute, could be attributed to US aid

David Adams, 2017. (Senior Editor, Univision News. Univision is an American Spanish-language broadcast television network that is owned by Univision Communications.) “Was U.S.-training as factor in Honduran police taking a pro-democracy stand?” 6 DEC 2017. https://www.univision.com/univision-news/latin-america/was-us-training-as-factor-in-honduran-police-taking-a-pro-democracy-stand

The brief refusal of Honduran police to enforce a curfew in the wake of violence over disputed presidential elections stunned observers this week and was celebrated as a rare sign of democratic restraint in a country notorious for police brutality. It also sparked debate as to whether the police action could partly be attributed to a multi-million dollar U.S. government program to train Honduran police to better combat drug and gang-fueled violence that has stained the country with one of the world’s highest murder rates, as well as provoking a massive wave of migration to the U.S.-Mexico border.

Share of US aid went to police who allowed protesters to continue

David Adams, 2017. (Senior Editor, Univision News. Univision is an American Spanish-language broadcast television network that is owned by Univision Communications.) “Was U.S.-training as factor in Honduran police taking a pro-democracy stand?” 6 DEC 2017. https://www.univision.com/univision-news/latin-america/was-us-training-as-factor-in-honduran-police-taking-a-pro-democracy-stand

Last year alone, the U.S. Congress approved $200 million in funding for Honduras in 2016, mostly for justice and law enforcement training, violence prevention and counternarcotics. A share of that went to training of elite police units who were at the forefront of this week's police rebellion. “We want peace, and we will not follow government orders – we’re tired of this,” a police spokesman told reporters outside the national police headquarters on Monday night. “We aren’t with a political ideology. We can’t keep confronting people, and we don’t want to repress and violate the rights of the Honduran people,” he added. Crowds of anti-government protesters greeted the announcement with cheers. Extraordinary scenes were broadcast on TV of people singing - and even praying - with police.

US training motivates Honduran police to uphold human rights

David Adams, 2017. (Senior Editor, Univision News. Univision is an American Spanish-language broadcast television network that is owned by Univision Communications.) “Was U.S.-training as factor in Honduran police taking a pro-democracy stand?” 6 DEC 2017. https://www.univision.com/univision-news/latin-america/was-us-training-as-factor-in-honduran-police-taking-a-pro-democracy-stand

"We have done a lot of training to bring these units up to speed in their capacity and human rights," said Frank Mora, director of the Latin American and Caribbean Center at Florida International University (FIU) and a former deputy assistant secretary at the Pentagon in Obama's first administration 2009-2013. "I like to think that all the training had an effect. they seem to be acting in defense of the people." The training included human rights, crime scene management, community policing, and police combat training, he said. While it was funded through the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), training was carried out by Colombia's crack police anti-narcotics commandos, known as the 'Junglas'.

Example: TIGRES (US-trained Honduran quick reaction force) is known for exercising restraint.

David Adams, 2017. (Senior Editor, Univision News. Univision is an American Spanish-language broadcast television network that is owned by Univision Communications.) “Was U.S.-training as factor in Honduran police taking a pro-democracy stand?” 6 DEC 2017. https://www.univision.com/univision-news/latin-america/was-us-training-as-factor-in-honduran-police-taking-a-pro-democracy-stand

"All U.S. training programs for the Honduran National Police incorporate respect for civilians and human rights as essential functions of the police," the spokesperson added. "We believe this training has led to an improved response by the national police in the current situation." U.S. officials cite the example of one U.S.-supported elite police unit, the TIGRES, a Quick Reaction Force. "The TIGRES are known for exercising restraint when conducting high-stress operations, a product of U.S.-sponsored training," the spokesperson said. They also receive first aid training and act as first responders at protests.

1. US Aid is working against violence and crime

USAID crime and violence prevention programs working – “blessing” in the community

Jillian Slutzker, 2017. (Writes for Creative Associates International. CAI provides on-the-ground development services and forges partnerships to deliver sustainable solutions to global challenges. Its experts focus on building inclusive educational systems, transitioning communities from conflict to peace, developing sustainable economic growth, engaging youth, promoting transparent elections and more.) “IN HONDURAS, VIOLENCE PREVENTION BELONGS TO EVERYONE” March 21, 2017. https://www.creativeassociatesinternational.com/feature-story/honduras-violence-prevention-belongs-everyone/

The Outreach Center is part of a youth-focused crime and violence prevention program called Alianza Joven Honduras-USAID (Youth Alliance Honduras-USAID) that has helped to galvanize communities across the country, as well as the government and private companies to join efforts to prevent violence and expand opportunities for young Hondurans. The five-year project, which began in 2012, is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and implemented by Creative Associates International. For residents like Benjarano in at-risk communities, the project has mobilized critical resources and energy to make their neighborhoods safer. It has placed violence prevention at the top of everyone’s agenda—including families, officials and companies—from the local to national level. “The arrival of the Outreach Center was a door of opportunities that is like water when you put out the fire,” says Benjarano. “The arrival of the Outreach Center has not only been a door of opportunity, it has been a blessing in our community because it incorporated and strengthened actions that we had already started.”

USAID changes neighborhoods and reduces violence

Jillian Slutzker, 2017. (Writes for Creative Associates International. Creative Associates International provides on-the-ground development services and forges partnerships to deliver sustainable solutions to global challenges. Its experts focus on building inclusive educational systems, transitioning communities from conflict to peace, developing sustainable economic growth, engaging youth, promoting transparent elections and more.) “IN HONDURAS, VIOLENCE PREVENTION BELONGS TO EVERYONE” March 21, 2017. https://www.creativeassociatesinternational.com/feature-story/honduras-violence-prevention-belongs-everyone/

From the boisterous group drum circle and dancing outside the 15th of September neighborhood Outreach Center you would never know that residents in this very community were once shuttered inside—hiding from the gang violence that plagued their neighborhood. “There was common robbery, there were gangs, drug sales. There were a lot of things that were not healthy for our kids,” says Teresa Benjarano, head of the community’s Board, known as the Patronato in Spanish. The scene today is dramatically different. Children and adolescents flock to their neighborhood Outreach Center to play music and board games, practice English skills, take part in dance clubs and learn about healthy ways of resolving conflict. The Outreach Center is part of a youth-focused crime and violence prevention program called Alianza Joven Honduras-USAID (Youth Alliance Honduras-USAID) that has helped to galvanize communities across the country, as well as the government and private companies to join efforts to prevent violence and expand opportunities for young Hondurans.

SOLVENCY

1. Historical experience shows plan won’t work. Cutting aid earlier opened the door to narcotics trafficking

David Agren 2012. “Honduras suffocating in grip of drug violence and poverty,” USA TODAY, March 6, 2012, http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/story/2012-03-06/honduras-drugs-poverty/53389722/1

“The U.N. International Narcotics Control Board said last month that Honduras, Costa Rica and Nicaragua had become major transit countries for traffickers smuggling cocaine and marijuana to North America. Mexican drug cartels, under pressure from police, shifted bases to Central America, resulting in increased levels of violence, kidnapping, bribery, torture and homicide, said the agency's annual report for 2011. Central America is home to about 900 "maras," or streets gangs, which have 70,000 members. When he won the presidency, Lobo promoted reconciliation with Zelaya, who was allowed to return to Honduras last year, but the cutoff of aid and contact had a lasting effect. "The lack of external credibility and isolation and the lack of money flowing in made poverty increase," said Father Germán Calix, Honduras director for Caritas, the Vatican's charitable arm. "It was a void for new money from narcotics trafficking to circulate in the country."”

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. Problems in Honduras are subsiding

Status Quo policies are reducing problems in Honduras

Ambassador James Nealon and Dr Kurt Alan Ver Beek 2018. (Nealon – was US Ambassador to Honduras 2014-2017. Ver Beek – PhD, sociology professor at Calvin College, has lived in Honduras since 1988) How U.S. Aid Is Contributing to Anti-Corruption Efforts in Honduras

In our April article we made the case that, with the help of international and especially U.S. assistance and a vibrant civil society, things are slowly getting better in Honduras. The murder rate has been more than halved; progress has been made on addressing impunity and corruption; and drug traffickers continue to be arrested and extradited to the United States. But, we warned, an unholy alliance of corrupt politicians and criminal elements were fighting back against reform, seeking to take Honduras backwards into lawlessness and dysfunction. In short, the empire was striking back. Since then, through sustained effort by Honduran leaders and their civil society and international partners, some of these threats to progress have been beaten back.

US aid programs are successfully reducing violence and pressure on youth to emigrate out of Honduras

Sonia Nazario 2016. (Pulitzer prize winning journalist) NEW YORK TIMES 11 Aug 2016 https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/14/opinion/sunday/how-the-most-dangerous-place-on-earth-got-a-little-bit-safer.html

Three years ago, Honduras had the highest homicide rate in the world. The city of San Pedro Sula had the highest homicide rate in the country. And the Rivera Hernández neighborhood, where 194 people were killed or hacked to death in 2013, had the highest homicide rate in the city. Tens of thousands of young Hondurans traveled to the United States to plead for asylum from the drug gangs’ violence. This summer I returned to Rivera Hernández to find a remarkable reduction in violence, much of it thanks to programs funded by the United States that have helped community leaders tackle crime. By treating violence as if it were a communicable disease and changing the environment in which it propagates, the United States has not only helped to make these places safer, but has also reduced the strain on our own country. Two years ago, some 18,000 unaccompanied Honduran children showed up on the United States border. Now community leaders say the number of youngsters heading north from this neighborhood has been cut by more than half. Honduras has dropped from first place to third among Central American countries sending unaccompanied children to the United States illegally.

1. Even if police are corrupt, aid cuts not justified

Cutting off aid to police also eliminates successful violence prevention programs

Sonia Nazario 2016. (Pulitzer prize winning journalist) NEW YORK TIMES 11 Aug 2016 https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/14/opinion/sunday/how-the-most-dangerous-place-on-earth-got-a-little-bit-safer.html

And yet cutting off funds for the police also cuts off support for the violence prevention programs they organized, including everything from painting peace murals over graffitied walls with local kids to medical brigades and anti-gang programs in schools. Community leaders say the United States must find a better way to punish bad cops without withholding programs that help children.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Fueling US drug crisis

Link: Drug trafficking into the US, and the Honduran government isn’t strong enough to fight it

Ana Quintana, 2014. (Research Associate for Latin America in the Douglas and Sarah Allison Center for Foreign and National Security Policy, Heritage Foundation.) “U.S. Foreign Assistance to Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador” July 8, 2014. https://www.heritage.org/global-politics/report/us-foreign-assistance-mexico-guatemala-honduras-and-el-salvador

It cannot be denied that Mexico and Central America’s Northern Triangle countries—Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador—are all facing chronic citizen and economic insecurity crises. Rampant corruption and weak state institutions have made it virtually impossible to combat threats posed by violent transnational gangs and organized criminal groups. Coupled with the issue of endemic corruption, the regional debt crises and weak state institutions plague the region. Honduras has the world’s highest homicide rates, averaging 91 per 100,000 citizens. El Salvador is fourth in the world with an average of 41 per 100,000, and Guatemala is fifth at 40 per 100,000. (In comparison, the U.S. average is five per 100,000.) Located along a critical trafficking route, the isthmus is particularly vulnerable to illicit smuggling. Honduras alone is a layover spot for upwards of 79 percent of northward-bound drug flights.

Link: Major transshipment point for illicit narcotics

Peter J. Meyer, 2014. (Analyst in Latin American Affairs. Report for Congressional Research Service) “Honduras: Background and U.S. Relations” May 30, 2014. https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34027.pdf

Over the past decade, Honduras has become a major transshipment point for illicit narcotics. According to the State Department, approximately 86% of the cocaine trafficked to the United States in the first half of 2013 first transited through the Mexico/Central America corridor. While some is trafficked through the air to remote areas that lack state presence, such as the Mosquitia region along Honduras’s northeastern coast, the vast majority is reportedly trafficked via maritime routes. After making initial landfall in Honduras, cocaine continues on toward the United States on subsequent flights or via sea or overland routes.

Link: US security aid limits drug-related violence in Honduras and reduces drugs getting into the U.S.

Megan Burtis 2018. (journalist) [How the US Benefits from Foreign Aid to Honduras](https://borgenproject.org/u-s-benefits-from-foreign-aid-to-honduras/), March 2018 https://borgenproject.org/u-s-benefits-from-foreign-aid-to-honduras/

The United States has previously given aid to Honduras so that the country can combat drug trafficking and the consequences the activity brings. The U.S. Department of Commerce dedicated $1.5 million in 2017 for a customs and border management program in Honduras. Providing aid for this purpose can not only limit [drug-related violence](https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/1922.htm) but it will limit some of the transport of drugs into the United States

Brink: Defense cuts undermine US drug interdiction capabilities

Ana Quintana, 2014. (Research Associate for Latin America in the Douglas and Sarah Allison Center for Foreign and National Security Policy, The Heritage Foundation.) “U.S. Foreign Assistance to Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador” July 8, 2014. https://www.heritage.org/global-politics/report/us-foreign-assistance-mexico-guatemala-honduras-and-el-salvador

Recognize that defense cuts have adversely affected the U.S.’s drug interdiction capabilities. Defense budget cuts are reducing the U.S.’s ability to intercept maritime trafficking, and as a result, profits continue to fuel Mexican cartels and Central American gangs. Current asset shortfalls left the U.S. unable to prevent 25 percent of suspected maritime drug smuggling in fiscal year (FY) 2013.

Impact: Death, disease and emotional harm

US Dept of Justice, National Drug Intelligence Center 2010. *National Drug Threat Assessment 2010* https://www.justice.gov/archive/ndic/pubs38/38661/drugImpact.htm

The consequences of illicit drug use are widespread, causing permanent physical and emotional damage to users and negatively impacting their families, coworkers, and many others with whom they have contact. Drug use negatively impacts a user's health, often leading to sickness and disease. In many cases, users die prematurely from drug overdoses or other drug-associated illnesses (see [text box](https://www.justice.gov/archive/ndic/pubs38/38661/drugImpact.htm#textbox1)). Some users are parents, whose deaths leave their children in the care of relatives or in foster care.

1. Illegal Immigration

Link: Honduras is our largest source of illegal immigrants and we should be increasing security cooperation to deal with it

Ana Quintana, 2014. (Research Associate for Latin America in the Douglas and Sarah Allison Center for Foreign and National Security Policy, Heritage Foundation.) “U.S. Foreign Assistance to Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador” July 8, 2014. https://www.heritage.org/global-politics/report/us-foreign-assistance-mexico-guatemala-honduras-and-el-salvador

Increase security cooperation with Honduras. As the home of the world’s highest murder rate, Honduras is also the largest source of unlawful immigrants. Yet U.S. restrictions on security assistance have been in place since FY 2012.

Link: Security increasingly playing role in illegal immigration into US

Peter J. Meyer, 2014. (Analyst in Latin American Affairs. Report for Congressional Research Service) “Honduras: Background and U.S. Relations” May 30, 2014. https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34027.pdf

Migration issues are central to the U.S.-Honduran relationship as an estimated 1 million Hondurans reside in the United States—some 600,000 of whom are believed to be undocumented. Migration from Honduras to the United States is primarily driven by high levels of poverty and unemployment, though the security situation in Honduras has increasingly played a role as well. Given the persistence of these conditions in Honduras, polling indicates that over 36% of Hondurans who still live in their home country would like to emigrate. Honduras has joined with other Central American nations to lobby the U.S. Congress in favor of comprehensive immigration reform, and President Hernández has reportedly stated that the United States has “a moral obligation” to approve such legislation.

Brink: Immigration correlates with US-backed violence prevention

Sonia Nazario, 2017. (journalist; won a Pulitzer Prize for "Enrique's Journey," which is now a bestselling book.) “How to secure the border. Spoiler alert: A wall won't do it” APR 23, 2017. http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-nazario-what-works-to-end-illegal-immigration-20170423-story.html

Outreach centers were set up where kids could find mentors, vocational training and help getting jobs, effectively cutting off the lifeblood of gangs: new recruits. Another program, modeled on L.A.'s Gang Reduction and Youth Development program, known as GYRD, used nine risk factors to identify children likely to join gangs. After a year of family counseling, they were 77% less likely than their peers to commit crimes or abuse alcohol or drugs. The U.S. also went after killers. In 96% of Honduran homicide cases, no one is ever convicted. Witnesses know that if they testify, they're dead. The U.S. helped fund the Assn. for a More Just Society, which investigates killings in Rivera Hernández and six other violent neighborhoods. They coax witnesses to testify, anonymously, cloaked in a black burqa. Now prosecutors are getting guilty verdicts in more than half of the homicides in these neighborhoods. In two years, killings in Rivera Hernández plummeted 62%. These efforts are riddled with problems, and Rivera Hernández is still crazy violent. But the data are compelling: In 2014, before these pilot violence-prevention programs took hold, 18,000 Honduran kids showed up at our border. In 2016, that number was almost cut in half. Meanwhile, the flow of immigrants from El Salvador and Guatemala — which have implemented violence-prevention programs much less aggressively — keeps increasing.

Impact: Saves money.

Violence prevention costs way less than the billions spent on undocumented immigrants

Sonia Nazario, 2017. (Pulitzer Prize winning journalist) “How to secure the border. Spoiler alert: A wall won't do it” APR 23, 2017. http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-nazario-what-works-to-end-illegal-immigration-20170423-story.html

The United States has every reason and every right to protect its borders, but building a wall and militarizing it is a foolish waste of money. We must do something better. We must offer compassion for vulnerable children running from harm and work to reduce unlawful migration to keep more children and families safe in their home countries. Honduran violence-prevention programs cost the U.S. about $100 million a year. That's pocket change compared with the cost of the wall or the billions we spend dealing with migrants and refugees when they arrive at our doorstep.

Impact: Billions of dollars saved. Each illegal immigrant costs taxpayers over $8000

Matt O'Brien and Spencer Raley, 2017. (Matt: Director of Research for Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR). Spencer: conducts research, and writes content for FAIR’s publications and website.) “The Fiscal Burden of Illegal Immigration on United States Taxpayers” September 27, 2017. https://www.fairus.org/issue/publications-resources/fiscal-burden-illegal-immigration-united-states-taxpayers

At the federal, state, and local levels, taxpayers shell out approximately $134.9 billion to cover the costs incurred by the presence of more than 12.5 million illegal aliens, and about 4.2 million citizen children of illegal aliens. That amounts to a tax burden of approximately $8,075 per illegal alien family member and a total of $115,894,597,664. The total cost of illegal immigration to U.S. taxpayers is both staggering and crippling. In 2013, FAIR estimated the total cost to be approximately $113 billion. So, in under four years, the cost has risen nearly $3 billion. This is a disturbing and unsustainable trend.

1. Medical Care

Link: U.S. military building health clinics and schools in Honduras

Ambassador Lisa Kubiske 2012. (US Ambassador to Honduras), April 16, 2012, “Remarks by Ambassador Lisa Kubiske for Beyond the Horizons 2012 Launch Ceremony,” <http://honduras.usembassy.gov/sp-041612-eng.html>

“In addition to the medical services provided, U.S. military construction and engineering experts are working together with their counterparts in the Honduran military to construct health clinics and schools, and renovate other facilities in select communities. These joint efforts during this year's Beyond the Horizon exercise will result in the construction of two new school buildings with sanitation facilities, and the renovation of a third school site, to better serve the needs of Honduran youth. In addition, new two health clinics being constructed to replace damaged or outdated facilities will improve medical services and increase access to care for local communities.”

Brink: Rural communities have difficulty accessing health care

CDC, updated 2017. (Center for Disease Control and Prevention.) “Healthcare Access and Conditions in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador” updated: January 25, 2017. https://www.cdc.gov/immigrantrefugeehealth/profiles/central-american/healthcare-diet/index.html

Access to basic healthcare in Central America largely depends on socioeconomic status and environment (urban or rural). El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras have worked to improve access and quality of care, particularly in rural settings. Despite improvements to health services and systems, rural populations still have difficulty accessing basic health services. In Guatemala, it is estimated that basic health and nutrition services meet only 54% of the needs of the rural population. Similarly, in Honduras, 88.3% of the total population receives care from the Ministry of Health. However, the majority of health services are located in the most developed cities, not easily accessible for rural and indigenous populations.

Link & Impact: Lost medical care for 14,000-18,000 Hondurans, and resulting economic losses

Ambassador Lisa Kubiske 2012. (US Ambassador to Honduras), April 16, 2012, “Remarks by Ambassador Lisa Kubiske for Beyond the Horizons 2012 Launch Ceremony,” http://honduras.usembassy.gov/sp-041612-eng.html

“On average, U.S. military medical personnel treat 14,000 to 18,000 Honduran patients per year, and have been doing so for the past 23 years! These health services have a direct and lasting impact on the lives of Hondurans all over the country —from Tegucigalpa to Cortés to Gracias a Dios. Health impacts every single aspect of a person's life. On a personal level, better health means less lost income and fewer days off school, leading to more resources for families. Society-wide, better health translates directly to more productive economies. According to a United Nations study, a one percentage point increase in the adult survival rate can increase labor productivity by as much as 2.8%.”

1. Disaster assistance

Link: US military base helps with disaster relief

BUREAU OF WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS, 2017. (Part of the US Department of State.) “U.S. Relations With Honduras” February 27, 2017. https://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/1922.htm

The United States Armed Forces maintain a small presence at a Honduran military base. U.S. forces conduct and provide logistical support for a variety of bilateral and multilateral exercises--medical, engineering, counternarcotics, and disaster relief--for the benefit of the Honduran people and their Central American neighbors. Through the Central America Regional Security Initiative, the United States supports the Government of Honduras by assisting law enforcement entities in disrupting criminal networks; building investigative, prosecutorial, and judicial capacity; and implementing violence prevention programs for vulnerable communities.

Link: US Base at Soto Cano provides regional support for natural disasters

Impact: 6,981 patients were treated in 2010

General Douglas M. Fraser 2011. (Commander of the United States Southern Command), March 30, 2011, “Posture Statement of General Douglas M. Fraser, United States Air Force Commander, United States Southern Command Before the 112th Congress House Armed Services Committee,” http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File\_id=fcc6b631-6b51-4bdb-b0a0-6b97ea36cb58

“Joint Task Force Bravo (JTF-B) at Soto Cano Air Base in Honduras provides regional support for responding to natural disasters and supporting counter drug operations with our partners in Central America and the Caribbean. In 2010, JTF-B medical personnel conducted four Medical Capability Projects in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, treating 6,981 patients and also supported relief efforts in Haiti and in Guatemala after the eruption of the Pacava volcano and the landfall of Tropical Storm Agatha.”

Disaster aid can buy love

Charles Kenney 2011. (senior fellow at the Center for Global Development, a Schwartz fellow at the New America Foundation, and author, most recently, of Getting Better: Why Global Development Is Succeeding and How We Can Improve the World Even More. "The Optimist," his column for ForeignPolicy.com, runs weekly.) “A Friend in Need: Can Disaster Assistance Aid Actually Win Hearts and Minds?,” Foreign Policy, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/31/a\_friend\_in\_need?page=0,1

“But there is evidence of an exception to the rule that money can't buy love, and it involves disaster assistance. Four years after a 2005 earthquake in northern Pakistan, economists Tahir Andrabi of Pomona College and Jishnu Das of the World Bank surveyed attitudes towards foreigners in the region. They found trust in foreigners was significantly higher in areas where humanitarian aid had been concentrated than in other areas -- dropping off by six percentage points for each 10 kilometers of distance from the fault line. Why might recipients react differently and more positively to disaster relief assistance than they do to other forms of aid? In part it is surely related to the simple gratitude felt by people who have just lost much of what they had in a flood or earthquake. But it is also more plausible that such aid is given without a broader political motive.”

Link: Helping foreign governments confront natural disasters helps fight Anti-Americanism and radical ideologies

Carlota García Encina 2010. (PhD student at the at the Universidad Autónoma and research assistant at the Elcano Royal Institute) May 13, 2010, “Haiti: the U.S. and Military Aid in Times of Natural Disaster,” <http://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_eng/Content?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_in/zonas_in/defense+security/ari57-2010> [Brackets added]

‘For years now, natural disasters have been part of the range of threats the US has to address. And this is part of official US military strategy, although it must be noted that the aid process that follows a catastrophe is an inter-agency effort. Military aid in cases of natural disasters now appears for the first time in the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) of 2006, which stresses its growing importance for the American military. That review also stated that it was in the US’s national security interest to back up governments that are at a clear disadvantage in confronting earthquakes, hurricanes or other phenomena of this kind, through cooperation and joint exercises. A year after the QDR 2006 came out, Gates and Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, elevated disaster relief efforts into the category of the six main capabilities described in the Navy’s strategy for 2007 (*A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower*). That document reformulated the Navy’s strategic goals for the first time since 1982. [Former Secretary of Defense Robert] Gates said these efforts, besides being an effective tool for fighting against anti-Americanism and radical ideologies, were part of an idea he began to use and develop: smart power, which was a combination of soft power and hard power. ‘I am here to strengthen our capabilities using soft power and integrating it in the best way possible with hard power’, he said in 2007. The idea of smart power was later taken up by Obama himself and his Secretary of State. It is a concept that is leading the US to try to reinforce its civil capabilities as a critical part of foreign policy and national security strategy. It is also leading US military forces to carry out more and more operations like the one it is conducting in Haiti.”

Impact: Better attractiveness means we get more cooperation, which improves our ability to deal with new foreign policy challenges

Prof. Joseph Nye 2004. (Professor of International Relations, Dean of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard; also served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, ) Soft Power and American Foreign Policy, POLITICAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY, Vol 119 No. 2, Nov 2004 http://www.pols.boun.edu.tr/uploads%5Cfiles%5C1104.pdf

Finally, as the RAND Corporation’s John Arquila and David Ronfeldt argue, power in an information age will come not only from strong defenses but also from strong sharing. A traditional realpolitik mind-set makes it difficult to share with others. But in an information age, such sharing not only enhances the ability of others to cooperate with us but also increases their inclination to do so. As we share intelligence and capabilities with others, we develop common outlooks and approaches that improve our ability to deal with the new challenges. Power flows from that attraction. Dismissing the importance of attraction as merely ephemeral popularity ignores key insights from new theories of leadership as well as the new realities of the information age. We cannot afford that.

1. Gang violence and death

Link: World’s highest murder homicide rate

Ana Quintana, 2014. (Research Associate for Latin America in the Douglas and Sarah Allison Center for Foreign and National Security Policy, Heritage Foundation.) “U.S. Foreign Assistance to Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador” July 8, 2014. https://www.heritage.org/global-politics/report/us-foreign-assistance-mexico-guatemala-honduras-and-el-salvador

It cannot be denied that Mexico and Central America’s Northern Triangle countries—Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador—are all facing chronic citizen and economic insecurity crises. Rampant corruption and weak state institutions have made it virtually impossible to combat threats posed by violent transnational gangs and organized criminal groups. Coupled with the issue of endemic corruption, the regional debt crises and weak state institutions plague the region. Honduras has the world’s highest homicide rates, averaging 91 per 100,000 citizens. El Salvador is fourth in the world with an average of 41 per 100,000, and Guatemala is fifth at 40 per 100,000. (In comparison, the U.S. average is five per 100,000.) Located along a critical trafficking route, the isthmus is particularly vulnerable to illicit smuggling. Honduras alone is a layover spot for upwards of 79 percent of northward-bound drug flights.

Link: US program CARSI provides security aid, task forces, investigations, community outreach centers, and more

Peter J. Meyer, 2014. (Analyst in Latin American Affairs. Report for Congressional Research Service) “Honduras: Background and U.S. Relations” May 30, 2014. https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34027.pdf

The Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) is a regional program that provides Central American nations with equipment, training, and technical assistance to address security challenges. As noted above, CARSI funding is appropriated for all of Central America and then allocated to individual nations or regional programs. Honduras received $13.6 million through CARSI in FY2010, nearly $21 million in FY2011, and $34.1 million in FY2012.97 Honduras also may have received some additional funding that was allocated to regional programs. It is currently unclear how much FY2013, FY2014, and FY2015 CARSI funding has been allocated to Honduras. Congress appropriated $145.6 million for CARSI in FY2013 and an estimated $161.5 million for CARSI in FY2014. The Obama Administration has requested $130 million for CARSI in FY2015. CARSI funding supports a wide variety of activities in Honduras. Some U.S. agencies are using the funds to establish and support specially vetted units and task forces. Equipment and training are provided to Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) vetted units and a U.S.-Honduran joint Financial Crimes Task Force in support of complex investigations into drug trafficking, money laundering, and arms and bulk cash smuggling. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) leads a Transnational Anti-Gang unit designed to interrupt criminal gang activity. A Special Victims Task Force—consisting of vetted members of the Honduran police, the Public Ministry, and U.S. advisors—is looking into high profile violent crime cases, such as the persecution of journalists and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community. Other CARSI-funded efforts to strengthen Honduran institutions include support for a joint Criminal Investigative School, and border and prison management reforms. CARSI funds are also being utilized to support civil society and municipal government violence prevention programs. At least 40 community outreach centers have been established to provide vocational training, employment resources, and other opportunities for at-risk youth.

Impact: Children in gangs, alcohol, and drugs

Current efforts reversing these trends

Sonia Nazario, 2017. (Pulitzer prize winning journalist) “How to secure the border. Spoiler alert: A wall won't do it” APR 23, 2017. http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-nazario-what-works-to-end-illegal-immigration-20170423-story.html

Outreach centers were set up where kids could find mentors, vocational training and help getting jobs, effectively cutting off the lifeblood of gangs: new recruits. Another program, modeled on L.A.'s Gang Reduction and Youth Development program, known as GYRD, used nine risk factors to identify children likely to join gangs. After a year of family counseling, they were 77% less likely than their peers to commit crimes or abuse alcohol or drugs.

Impact: Murder goes unpunished and increases

Sonia Nazario, 2017. (Sonia Nazario won a Pulitzer Prize for "Enrique's Journey," about which is now a bestselling book.) “How to secure the border. Spoiler alert: A wall won't do it” APR 23, 2017. http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-nazario-what-works-to-end-illegal-immigration-20170423-story.html

The U.S. also went after killers. In 96% of Honduran homicide cases, no one is ever convicted. Witnesses know that if they testify, they're dead. The U.S. helped fund the Assn. for a More Just Society, which investigates killings in Rivera Hernández and six other violent neighborhoods. They coax witnesses to testify, anonymously, cloaked in a black burqa. Now prosecutors are getting guilty verdicts in more than half of the homicides in these neighborhoods. In two years, killings in Rivera Hernández plummeted 62%.