



On behalf of Minister Maria Angela Holguin and the delegation accompanying me, I appreciate the invitation of Ambassador William Brownfield to this meeting, conceived to guide our cooperation for the implementation of the Security Strategy of Central America. As is well known for all of us, transnational organized crime, the world drug problem, human trafficking and money laundering are scourges that threaten economic and social development of our countries.

Colombia knows that these problems cannot be addressed from a single perspective. Our country recognizes that the strengthening of justice systems and law enforcement agencies in particular, are critical success factors. That is why the Government of Colombia reiterated to the Central American countries its support in their fight against several security threats, through better cooperation frameworks derived from its own experience in civil security, during the Conference for the Central American Security Strategy Support, held last June in Guatemala.

In security issues in which Colombia has developed capabilities that are currently exported, financial and technical support from other countries was essential. Internally, we had to work on a better legislation against crime, on strengthening our institutions through the selection of qualified personnel and on a greater awareness of development opportunities losses because of crime. Externally, we multiplied the agreements that allowed us to reach the criminals and their money wherever they were.

Because we're still going through this process and still requiring cooperation resources to strengthen our capabilities, we know the



constraints that CA countries face when fighting these threats, specially the technical and financial ones. For this reason we promote different modalities of cooperation, including south- south and triangular, as they provide a set of tools that extend the impact of available resources and enhances their management.

For the Central American region, the Colombian security forces have launched a Cooperation Strategy, in response to the demands of various countries. The most important phase of the strategy is the common diagnosis. In this phase, we join efforts with the partner country in order to have a clear sense of the problems and the solutions that can be implemented.

We note with satisfaction the inclusion in this meeting of a session on enhancement of the State's presence and Law Enforcement capacity in areas affected by these security threats. When it comes to cooperation in any field, it is necessary to talk about an exit strategy, in which local populations and actors manage to build their own capacity to preserve a peaceful environment that ensures their development. To prevent the reappearance of sources of violence it is necessary to increase the local State presence in the shape of better social services, and in general, ensuring the full enjoyment of the populations' civil and political rights.

This meeting is a very good opportunity to organize the cooperation for the implementation of the Central American Security Strategy, taking into account their priorities and projects. Colombia firmly believes that in order for this Strategy to have results, it is necessary to

count on the recipients countries will and acceptance to receive such cooperation and respond with national reforms and programs that



build on good governance. We understand this initiative as part of the “shared responsibly principle” that we have defended in combating the world drug problem. Whatever we do in CA will help us in production and consumption reduction.

We remain respectful of the national sovereignty and decisions of the Central American nations. We are ready to support their national capacities in the fields that are requested of Colombia, taking into account our own capabilities. We are ready to support CA, with experience and respect. Our main focus is each and every Central American citizen contributing to their well-being.

I want to take this opportunity to underline the work done by the Colombian Armed Forces and Police. Colombia is today the result of their commitment and sacrifice to defend the rule of law and our democracy. We as Colombians feel proud and grateful.

I would like to present my delegation; Vice Minister for Policy and International Relations, Jorge Enrique Bedoya; General José Javier Pérez, Commander of the Joint Chief of Staff's, Deputy Admiral Ricardo Galvis Cobo of the Navy, General José Roberto Riaño, Deputy Director of the Colombian National Police, and Andrea Alban, Director of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Julián Ponton, Director of Special Projects of the Ministry of Defense.

Thanks

Thank you,