



STATEMENTS & RELEASES

United States and Colombian Officials Set Bilateral Agenda to Reduce Cocaine Supply

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*Office of National Drug
Control Policy*

Today, the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and the United States Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) led a counternarcotics dialogue with the Government of Colombia to set forth a bilateral, whole-of-government joint action plan to reduce the high levels of coca cultivation and cocaine production by 50 percent by the end of 2023.

The dialogue focused on increasing coca eradication and cocaine interdiction, improving security and economic opportunities in the rural areas most afflicted by narcotics trafficking, and targeting narcotics-related money laundering and illicit finances. A focus of the discussion was expanding the results of Colombia's integrated

coca eradication program by ensuring full use of all available tools, including manual eradication, alternative development, and a Colombian-led aerial eradication component, supported by rural development and rural security programs.

“When President Duque took office in 2018, he was faced with record levels of coca cultivation and cocaine production. With the support of the United States and our close collaboration during his 18 months in office, his policies have resulted in a stabilization of both,” ONDCP Director Jim Carroll said.

During the meeting, INL Assistant Secretary Kirsten Madison stated, “Colombia is our strongest counternarcotics partner, and U.S. counternarcotics assistance to Colombia is one of our most effective investments. These efforts have already demonstrated results as coca cultivation and cocaine production levels finally stabilized in 2018 and 2019 for the first time since 2012. At the same time, they show we still have a lot of work ahead of us to meet our joint goal to cut coca cultivation and cocaine production in half by the end of 2023.”

Today, ONDCP also released the 2019 Colombia coca cultivation and cocaine production estimate. According to the estimate, coca cultivation in Colombia remained stable at 212,000 hectares in 2019, from 208,000 hectares in 2018, while potential pure cocaine production increased slightly by 8 percent to 951 metric tons in 2019, from 879 metric tons in 2018.

Where Colombian eradication activities were concentrated, coca cultivation substantially decreased, validating President Duque’s efforts. The Colombian government increased manual eradication by 57.7 percent compared to the same timeframe last year. Colombian security forces have shown great bravery, sacrifice, and commitment. In 2019, ten Colombians lost their lives and more than 50 were

seriously wounded during manual eradication operations. Additionally, in 2019, Colombian police and military forces seized or assisted in the seizure of more than 492 metric tons of cocaine and coca base, the most in Colombian history.

“President Trump is focused on continuing to reduce the number of Americans dying of overdoses, and a key part of that mission is working with our international partners to curb the supply of deadly drugs. This upcoming year will be critical, and we look forward to seeing ramped up efforts, including aerial eradication, make a difference in reducing the coca cultivation and production of cocaine, which will eventually save the lives of the American people,” Director Carroll said.

According to the 2018 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) – the most recent year for which data is available – 1.949 million people use cocaine in the United States, a 42 percent increase from the 1.369 million cocaine users in 2011. The rate of drug overdose deaths involving cocaine more than tripled (from 1.4 to 4.5 deaths per 100,000 people) from 2012 through 2018, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In Fiscal Year 2019, the aggregate interdiction efforts of the United States and partner nations resulted in the seizure or disruption of more than 280 metric tons of the cocaine that would otherwise have been destined for the United States.

In an October 2019 event at the White House, [ONDCP recognized](#) members of Colombia’s military and law enforcement who have been severely wounded in the fight against drug trafficking and terrorism.