



Press Release

June 30, 2009

Contacts:

(ICE) Leticia Zamarripa: (915) 726-8210

(ATF) John Hageman: (609) 743-2987

ATF, ICE update partnership agreement to maximize investigative efforts

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) updated a memorandum of understanding (MOU) today that clearly establishes how the two agencies will work together on investigations of international firearms trafficking and possession of firearms by illegal aliens.

ATF and ICE routinely conduct joint investigations. This agreement clarifies the notification process each agency is expected to follow while investigating the international trafficking of firearms, ammunition, explosives, weapons and munitions. Both agencies are committed to working together to reduce firearms-related violence along the U.S. border.

“This partnership reflects our ongoing commitment to working together to protect the American people along our borders and throughout the country,” said Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano. “Through enhanced information sharing, we will be able to utilize the full range of the federal government’s capabilities to disrupt firearms trafficking while strengthening efforts to combat organized crime.”

“The significant challenges we face from the Mexican cartels require a coordinated and coherent response across all levels of government, both domestically and internationally,” said Deputy Attorney General David W. Ogden. “We know that when we work together, we can have a substantial impact. With the signing of this agreement, the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security prove our joint commitment to combating firearms trafficking.”

The critical nature of these investigations and enforcement has been highlighted in recent years with the escalated gun violence between rival drug trafficking organizations (DTO) in Mexico, and DTO violence against officials from the government of Mexico, which have claimed several thousand lives in that country.

“It is essential that we do all we can to stop gun trafficking that fuels violence by criminal organizations, especially along the Southwest Border,” said Department of Homeland Security Assistant Secretary for ICE John Morton. “This new agreement will guide the use of our collective authorities to dismantle criminal enterprises and to interdict the flow of firearms in to Mexico.”

“ATF’s strategic plan addresses violent crime and firearms trafficking across the nation,” said ATF Acting Director Kenneth Melson. “This MOU allows ATF and ICE to better serve America by maximizing their law enforcement efforts and expertise to keep our citizens safe and secure.”

The MOU will optimize the resources and minimize the duplication of efforts by each agency. This agreement establishes a framework for both agencies to conduct investigations and share

intelligence. The MOU was signed by both agency heads at the ATF-sponsored Violent Crime and Firearms Trafficking Summit in Albuquerque, N.M.

ATF is the federal law enforcement agency responsible for enforcing federal firearms and explosives laws, and has the sole authority to regulate and inspect those two industries. ICE is the federal agency responsible for the enforcement of import, export and immigration laws. By working jointly to exercise these unique law enforcement authorities, the two agencies are well-equipped to investigate gun law violations as they pertain to international firearms trafficking.

#

Fact Sheet: [Memorandum of Understanding between U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement \(ICE\) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives \(ATF\)](#)

- Remarks:**
- [Prepared Remarks of David Ogden, Deputy Attorney General, at the Violent Crime and Firearms Trafficking Summit, Albuquerque, NM, June 30, 2009](#)
 - [Prepared Remarks of Lanny A. Breuer, Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, at the Violent Crime and Firearms Trafficking Summit, Albuquerque, NM, June 30, 2009](#)
 - [Prepared Remarks of H. Marshall Jarrett, Director of the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, at the Violent Crime and Firearms Trafficking Summit, Albuquerque, NM, June 30, 2009](#)
 - [Prepared Remarks of Kenneth E. Melson, Acting Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, at the Violent Crime and Firearms Trafficking Summit, Albuquerque, NM, June 30, 2009](#)

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) is the federal law enforcement agency charged with enforcing the two major laws enacted by Congress to directly respond to firearms-related violence. ATF also regulates the firearms and explosives industries to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibility for a number of key homeland security priorities.