

Remarks by
Attorney General Eric Holder at the International Criminal Investigative Training
Assistance Program (ICITAP)
Annual Management Conference
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Good morning. I appreciate this opportunity to open ICITAP's annual Management Conference, and to thank you personally for all that you do, not only for the Department of Justice, but for the citizens of the United States.

One of the most striking changes in the Department since I served over eight years ago as Deputy Attorney General is how much of our work is now global in scope. Several weeks ago, in my prepared testimony for a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, I discussed the increasing globalization of crime, and the need for the United States to extend its first line of defense abroad. I explained how the safety and future prosperity of our country, no less than that of foreign countries, depends on the strengthening of the rule of law overseas. And I discussed the central role of the Criminal Division—and in particular ICITAP—in advancing that important goal.

Over the last two decades, ICITAP, working with the State Department and other interagency partners, has been the catalyst for some of our most important successes in overseas rule of law development. Through your work, ICITAP has helped foster capable and strong international partnerships in the fight against transnational crime, corruption, and terrorism. In so doing, you have helped stem the tide of criminality before it reaches the United States. This is due in large measure to the expertise that ICITAP brings to bear. It is that invaluable resource that is sitting in this room.

Of equal importance, ICITAP has never lost sight of the critical role of human rights in building the rule of law. You have helped create overseas criminal justice institutions that respect the rights of all people and that follow democratic principles. ICITAP has strengthened mechanisms within host country institutions for upholding professional standards, integrity, ethics, and discipline. At the same time, by developing forensic evidence capabilities, you have helped countries move away from reliance on a “confession-based” approach to law enforcement. And ICITAP’s corrections development programs have helped build prison systems that are both secure and meet minimum standards for the humane custody of prisoners.

In doing all of this, you are part of the Justice Department’s extensive international mission, a mission that comprises both the *developmental activities* of ICITAP and other Justice components, and *the operational activities* of Justice’s law enforcement agencies and prosecutors. These two threads—development and operations—work together to establish effective law enforcement partnerships worldwide.

In this regard, I want in particular to commend ICITAP’s efforts to coordinate with, and draw upon, our Department of Justice law enforcement agencies. By involving federal agents as partners in ICITAP’s training and mentoring programs, we create invaluable opportunities for information exchange between U.S. law enforcement and host nation counterparts. I applaud ICITAP’s leadership in developing partnerships with your colleagues in the Justice Department and in the interagency community, and I encourage you to expand those productive relationships.

In conclusion, let me reaffirm what all of you know to be true—a commitment to the rule of law is one of our country’s greatest exports, and one of the Department of Justice’s key responsibilities. All of you here today are ambassadors for that fundamental principle. I am committed to ensuring that the Department of Justice will continue to pursue a leadership role in overseas rule of law development and assistance, and that ICITAP will continue as a primary player in that mission.

Again, I thank each and every one of you for what you do every day—and for your professionalism and dedication in support of the Department’s critical and growing international mission.