

## Drug Policy Director Cites Significant Progress in Disrupting Illegal Drug Trafficking

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The head of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), Gil Kerlikowske, said there has been significant progress in disrupting illegal drug trafficking.

He spoke in Tucson, Arizona, during a visit to inspect border security operations.

Kerlikowske said there has been an increase in communication with Mexican officials, according to Cronkite News Service. "We have, as we know, increased our drug seizures along the border significantly, the seizure of firearms going south and the seizure of money, which is critical for cutting off the head of the snake of the cartels," he said.

A statement by ONDCP noted between 2009 and 2012, the Department of Homeland Security seized 39 percent more drugs along the Southwest border compared with 2005 to 2008. ONDCP has funded 18 Drug-Free Communities within 100 miles of the border in Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas. These coalitions provide outreach services to young people to prevent drug use before it begins.

Kerlikowske told the news service there has been a decline in use of cocaine and methamphetamine in the United States, but law enforcement continues to be challenged by synthetic drug use. "Synthetic drugs, which can be produced anywhere, are a serious concern, but I think that the more education and prevention we do, that works the best," he said.