

# TAL SHIAR



# DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE REPORT

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## U.S. Support for the Counter Cartel Coalition Through Training, Mobilization and Assistance

Produced by the Tal Shiar Directorate of Intelligence (@Tal\_Shiar\_DI), March 11 2026

The U.S. has launched the Americas Counter Cartel Coalition (A3C), also known as the Shield of the Americas, uniting military leaders from 17 Western Hemisphere nations in a pledge to dismantle cartels designated as foreign terrorist organizations. This marks a decisive escalation from previous law-enforcement-focused approaches to a coordinated multinational military campaign modeled on the anti-ISIS coalition, directly addressing cartel control of territory, financing, and violence that fuels the flow of fentanyl and other drugs into the United States. While the initiative promises rapid disruption of cartel networks and enhanced regional security, its success depends on sustained partner buy-in and navigation of sovereignty tensions with non-participating states.

- The March 7, 2026 Presidential Proclamation explicitly directs that “The United States will train and mobilize partner nation militaries to achieve the most effective fighting force necessary to dismantle cartels” and commits the U.S. to using “any necessary resources and legally available authorities” together with the 17 partner nations.
- U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) serves as the operational hub, hosting the inaugural Americas Counter Cartel Conference (March 5) and signing a joint security declaration; SOUTHCOM Commander Gen. Francis Donovan emphasized working “by, with, and through” partners to counter narco-terrorism, building on ongoing Operations Southern Spear and Absolute Resolve.



- In the first demonstrated U.S. support action, American intelligence, surveillance, and logistical assistance enabled Ecuadorian forces to locate and strike a Comandos de la Frontera cartel training camp in Sucumbíos province (March 6–7), with SOUTHCOM confirming U.S. participation in “lethal kinetic action.

Nations within A3C

U.S	Argentina	Bahamas	Belize	Bolivia	Chile	Costa Rica
Dominican Republic	Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Guyana	Honduras	Jamaica
Panama	Paraguay	Peru	Trinidad and Tobago			

## Operational Commitments and Regional Challenges

The coalition’s operational blueprint centers on intelligence sharing, joint training, and lethal strikes to strip cartels of safe havens and revenue streams, yet notable exclusions (Mexico, Brazil, Colombia) may constrain reach into core cartel operating zones and risk localized escalation of violence.

- The proclamation directs the United States to “train and mobilize partner nation militaries to achieve the most effective fighting force” and to coordinate efforts that “deprive these organizations of any control of territory and access to financing.”
- Participating nations have already begun aligning through U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) mechanisms; the initiative builds on recent reductions in maritime drug trafficking and southern-border fentanyl seizures reported by coalition partners.
- Non-participation by Mexico has prompted public statements from Mexican leadership rejecting direct U.S. military intervention on sovereignty grounds, potentially limiting the coalition’s ability to target key production and transit corridors.



## Conclusion

U.S. support for the Americas Counter Cartel Coalition is operationalizing rapidly through mandated training, SOUTHCOM integration, intelligence/logistical assistance, and readiness for direct lethal action, as proven in Ecuador. This model leverages existing authorities and resources for near-term disruption of cartel networks, but long-term success will hinge on forthcoming detailed funding and equipment packages to sustain partner militaries. Continued monitoring of SOUTHCOM execution and coalition cohesion is recommended.



Tal Shiar was founded by Nadeem Iqbal, a national security expert who served over 16 years as an intelligence officer for the Department of Defense from 2006-2022. His career began as a counter-insurgency analyst on the Afghanistan-Pakistan Task Force (2006–2013), followed by 9 years as a military analyst in the Syria Branch (2013–2022). He deployed five times in support of combat operations (3× Afghanistan, 2× Iraq), including two rotations with

Special Operations Forces focused on counter-terrorism missions in the CENTCOM theater. Additional roles included rotations to CIA Headquarters as the military analyst for the DNI Middle East Task Force and served as the Syria Country Director for Office of Secretary of Defense Policy (OSDP). He was recognized with Joint Civilian Commendation/Achievement Medals, the NATO Medal(x3), the Secretary of Defense GWOT Medal, DoD Expeditionary Award and the OSD Excellence Award.