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Enforcement and Removal

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Nicaragua becomes the latest partner in ICE's eTD system



Representatives of ICE and the government of Nicaragua recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) which establishes the Nicaraguan government as a participating partner in ICE/ERO's electronic Travel Document (eTD) system.

The MOU was signed earlier this week in Nicaragua by Marlen Piñeiro, Assistant Director of ERO, and Luis Cañas, Vice Minister of the Interior for Nicaragua.

Determining citizenship and obtaining travel documents for detained individuals is often a cumbersome process which slows the deportation of foreign nationals held in ICE/ERO custody. The eTD system streamlines the process with participating countries by electronically providing biographic and biometric information used to determine citizenship and/or nationality for individuals. The system also allows consular officials to review and edit electronic travel documents, which can be signed using a signature pad. Documents can be printed locally by ICE/ERO personnel at detention facilities or field offices.

“Enhancing cooperation with our foreign partners to streamline and improve the removal process is a key part of enforcing our immigration laws and protecting our homeland,” said Assistant Director Piñeiro. “Today, we appreciate the government of Nicaragua’s willingness to sign the eTD MOU, which will result in an effective removal process, and Nicaragua meeting its international obligation to accept the return of their nationals ordered removed from the U.S.”

Foreign governments participating in the eTD system are asked to confirm the citizenship of aliens suspected to be their nationals through interviews and the review of records and documents. They are also expected to issue travel documents in a timely manner and accept the physical return of their nationals.

Vice Minister Cañas expressed to those in attendance that entering into the agreement with ICE demonstrated his government's commitment to facilitate the safe and orderly return of Nicaraguan nationals returning from United States.

Nicaragua is just one of the first countries who have become partners in the eTD system. As part of that partnership, ICE provides training for authorized foreign partners, maintains logs of usage and conducts regular audits to ensure the security and integrity of the system. The eTD is currently available in English and Spanish, with Mandarin Chinese currently being added.

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