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# US restores some aid to El Salvador Honduras



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That \$432 million, which comes from the 2017 budget, is being spent on health, education and poverty alleviation programs as well as anti-crime efforts that many believe help reduce migrant outflows from the impoverished Northern Triangle region. About \$370 million in money from the 2018 budget will not be spent and instead will be moved to other projects, the State Department said.

“Previously awarded grants and contracts will continue with current funding,” department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus said. She added that assistance “to help the Northern Triangle governments take actions that will protect the U.S. border and counter transnational organized crime will also continue.”

U.S. officials said the review looked at roughly 700 projects funded with fiscal 2017 money by the United States in the three countries and concluded that a significant number were too far advanced to end them.

Trump’s decision in March to cut all direct aid to El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala over the migration issue elicited harsh criticism from Congress where lawmakers from both parties said the assistance was key to helping improve conditions in the three countries that have contributed to the people leaving.

Lawmakers are also expected to object to the latest announcement, which comes as Trump has ratcheted up pressure on Mexico and its southern neighbors to drastically reduce the

numbers of migrants heading to the U.S.

Ortagus told reporters the administration was leaving the door open to future funding but would first have to see progress on migration.

“We will not provide new funds for programs in those countries until we are satisfied that the Northern Triangle governments are taking concrete actions to reduce the number of migrants coming to the U.S. border, she said. “This is consistent with the president’s direction and with the recognition that it is critical that there be sufficient political will in these countries to address the problem at its source.”



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