



# TV UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

U.N. IN ACTION

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Programme No. 909  
Length: 3'08"

## UN HELPS TO REDUCE SMALL ARMS ON THE STREETS OF HONDURAS

### VIDEO

PRISON WALL (12")

MARCIO SANCHEZ ON CAMERA  
(8")

BAKERY (18")

### AUDIO

#### NARRATION

Behind the walls of this prison in the Central American Republic of Honduras are some of the country's most feared criminals. Among them is this former gang leader serving 18 years for murder.

#### SANCHEZ: (In Spanish)

"My name is Marcio Sanchez. I was a member of the criminal gang MS for thirteen years, since I was nine and a half years old."

#### NARRATION

Now Marcio is heading for a career outside crime. He's learning to be a baker. It's part of a UN-sponsored programme to teach former gang members skills they can use when they return to their communities – putting behind them once and for all 'maras' or gangs.

MARCIO SANCHEZ ON CAMERA  
(8")

SANCHEZ: (In Spanish)

"I didn't know what a 'mara' was. I got more and more involved in such businesses, until I ended up becoming a criminal."

HANDS ON WEAPON (21")

NARRATION

Marcio's murder weapon was one of the estimated 500,000 guns that flood the illegal weapons markets in Honduras. Guns are easy to find and cheap to buy after the peace treaties ended the civil wars in the neighbouring countries of Central America. An AK-47 can be bought for as little as 20 US dollars.

GUN RACKS WITH WEAPONS  
(27")

At the police station in Casa Mata, citizens surrender their weapons. The United Nations is supporting local authorities in their effort to collect, register and eliminate some of these illegal guns.

JEFFREY AVINA, UN COUNTRY  
COORDINATOR, WORKING AT  
DESK

Part of a worldwide effort to reduce illegal weapons, this UN-supported project is bearing fruit in Honduras. There are also some unexpected benefits, says UN coordinator, Jeffrey Avina.

JEFFREY AVINA ON CAMERA  
(10")

AVINA:

"It is important also because it provides a precedent, and it has been so in Honduras, such that others, who are holding guns, because they consider them necessary for their own protection, are also beginning to give up guns."

POLICE PATROL (14”)

NARRATION

The El Reparto neighbourhood of Honduras’ capital Tegucigalpa has long suffered from gang violence. With a plentiful supply of cheap weapons available, heavily armed gangs made the area extremely dangerous.

POLICEMAN TALKS TO BUS DRIVER (15”)

Local storeowners and bus drivers were particularly vulnerable to robbery and assault. But the small arms amnesty programme has helped get weapons out of the hands of gang members. This has made the area safer, says police officer, Daniel Lopez.

DANIEL LOPEZ ON CAMERA (14”)

LOPEZ: (In Spanish)

“The programme has helped to reduce crime by 80%. It sets deadlines by which everybody had to hand in their gun.”

PRISONERS WELDING (20”)

NARRATION

Training in marketable job skills will help these former gang members when they return to the outside world. A second chance is what many of them need to function in society, without resorting to crime. And with fewer weapons on the streets, Honduras has a better chance of becoming a safer place for all its citizens.

UN LOGO (10")

This report was prepared by Richard Sydenham  
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