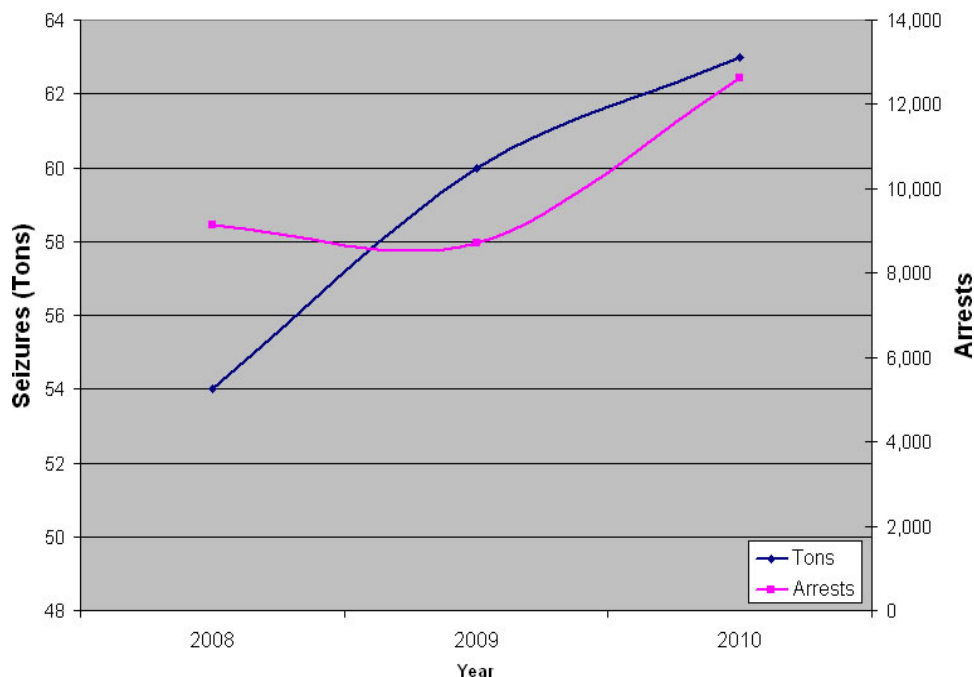




VENEZUELA CONTINUES ADVANCING IN FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS *Seizures, Arrests Continue Increasing*

- Throughout 2010 Venezuela continued making gains in the fight against illegal drugs.
- In 2010, Venezuelan security agencies seized **63 tons** of illegal drugs. This follows a trend of increasing seizures relative to years prior. In 2009, 60 tons of drugs were seized, an 11 percent increase from the year prior.
- **From January 1-February 25, 2011, 7.7 tons** of drugs were seized in Venezuela.
- In 2010, **12,627 people** were arrested on drug charges, **17 drug kingpins** wanted by Interpol were captured.
- Just between January and September 2010, **five kingpins were detained and deported** to the U.S. These efforts were recognized by the U.S. Embassy in Caracas in July.

Drug Seizures and Arrests in Venezuela, 2008-2010



- Since Venezuela is not a producer of illegal drugs but rather a transit country, the government has taken significant steps to clamp down on trafficking routes. Throughout 2008 and 2009, Venezuela completed the installation of **10 Chinese-made radar stations** to intercept drug planes. The investment in the radars totaled \$260 million.
- In January 2010, two U.S. planes used for drug trafficking were seized by Venezuelan authorities. In February, authorities seized **28 more planes** used for the trafficking of drugs. During the first months of 2009, 25 planes were seized.
- In July 2010, 1,800 officials of all the branches of the Venezuelan Armed Forces participated in Operation Sierra, during which they inspected 25,000 km² along the shared border between Colombia and Venezuela. Starting and finishing with the border town of Río de Oro, it was confirmed that for the **fifth consecutive year no illegal cocaine cultivations existed** on Venezuela's side of the shared border.
- Since August 2010, **relations between Colombia and Venezuela have been dramatically strengthened**, and a working group composed of officials from both countries was created to tackle the challenge of fighting drug production and trafficking.
- **Venezuela has 59 agreements with 38 different countries**, including Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, the United Kingdom, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Portugal. It also cooperates with other regional partners and takes part in the OAS's Inter-American Commission for the Control of Drug Abuse (CICAD).

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