Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center

HSTC Intelligence Note

Tenancingo Bulletin #3:
Linguistic Note - *Trata* vice *Tráfico*

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(CONTEXT STATEMENT: The information in this report was provided by the Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center (HSTC) in collaboration with the participating agencies of the HSTC. The HSTC is an interagency fusion center and information clearinghouse, composed of representatives from various governmental agencies, and focused on matters of human smuggling, human trafficking, and the facilitation of terrorist travel. The HSTC provides the U.S. Government with a mechanism to achieve greater integration and overall effectiveness in its efforts to eliminate these activities. The HSTC is unique among U.S. organizations and centers in that it concentrates on illicit worldwide travel and provides guidance to U.S. Government policymakers.)

Scope Note: *This is the third in a series of bulletins at the unclassified level based solely on open source reporting intended to inform federal, state, and local law enforcement about the Tlaxcala, Mexico-based sex trafficking network with ties to the U.S.*

(U) Linguistic Note - *Trata* vice *Tráfico*

(U) Similar-looking foreign language words can be deceiving; such is the case with the Spanish *trata* and *tráfico*. While *trata* exploits an individual, *tráfico* facilitates illegal migration. Victims of *tráfico* are not necessarily subjects of *trata*, so *tráfico* does not correspond to the English 'trafficking,' but is, instead, a false cognate.[1]

(U) The *tráfico de migrantes* refers to the English 'people smuggling,' a crime against nations in which the individual moved across borders is willing. On the other hand, the *trata de personas* violates an individual's rights forcing to work, sometimes prostituting against her will, and is the Spanish that corresponds to the English 'trafficking.' The victim of *trata* is often kidnapped, coerced, threatened, abused or otherwise placed in a vulnerable situation, according to the International Organization for Migration.

Figure 1 (U) Operational Spanish: Trata and Tráfico

(U) Human **trafficking** = ***Trata*** *de personas*	(U) Human **Smuggling** = ***Tráfico*** *de personas*

(U) As such, a smuggler (*tratante*) is not always a trafficker (*traficante*). *Trata de personas* will take advantage of an individual while *tráfico de migrantes* facilitates the

illegal entry of an individual across borders.[2] ***The two concepts are as frequently conflated in Spanish as they are in English, in part due to frequent links between the two crimes, but U.S. law enforcement will know to distinguish in both languages.***

Contact Information:

Please direct any information, questions, or comments concerning this report or the information herein to the Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center at 202-312-9746 or HSTC@state.gov.

[1] (U) United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, http://www.acur.org/index?id_pag=2038, accessed 19 October 2010.
[2] (U) *La Prensa*, "Quien trata, maltrata," 28 September 2010, http://www.prensalibre.com/opinion/Trata-maltrata_0_341965830.html, accessed 5 October 2010.