



EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee

JOINT DECLARATION

20th Meeting of the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee

9-11 February 2016

Mexico City and San Miguel de
Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico

The delegations of the European Parliament and the Congress of the Union of United Mexican States to the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee (the 'JPC'), led by its Co-Chairs, Senator Rabindranath Salazar and Teresa Jiménez Becerril MEP, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the JPC and following the conclusion of the 20th Meeting held in Mexico City and San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, have agreed the following:

Joint Declaration

1. The Mexican and European delegations welcome the convening and outcome of the 20th Meeting of the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee (the JPC), and emphasise the commitment of both parties to continue working together to strengthen their bilateral relationship. The EU delegation reiterates its desire to review the Rules of Procedure of the JPC (the Mexican delegation has already made a similar statement) with the aim of formally establishing a schedule of two annual meetings, as has been done since the formation of the JPC, so as to strengthen the mechanism for dialogue, contribute effectively to the implementation of existing agreements and achieve the objectives of the Strategic Partnership.

2. The CPM expresses its willingness to work together, within the scope of its powers, to tackle the challenges and issues facing the world today, such as the economic crisis and recession, unemployment, social cohesion, terrorism, migration, the humanitarian refugee

crisis, the promotion and protection of human rights, organised crime, climate change and the strengthening of institutions, and states that it is confident that Mexico and the EU will step up their cooperation in multinational forums to that end.

3. The Mexican and European legislators acknowledge the rise and development of Mexico as an emerging economy and the importance of the EU as one of the world's major economic and financial powers, and believe that this should be reflected in its cooperation and action in an overall sense, particularly in fields such as energy, support for small and medium-sized enterprises, health, education, technology, innovation, the Digital Agenda and culture.

4. They underline their agreement to work together on the process of modernising the Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement with the aim of fostering the Agreement's potential, and ask that negotiations begin as soon as possible.

5. Specifically, they ask that the negotiators of the future Partnership Agreement include a clause establishing the JPC as the institution responsible for the parliamentary oversight and implementation of the Agreement and providing for its powers as a control and consultation body to be reinforced to that end.

6. The members of the JPC assert their commitment to democracy, the rule of law, respect for and promotion of human rights, gender equality, women's empowerment, social justice, non-discrimination, freedom and the Sustainable Development Goals. These values are shared by Mexico and the European Union and underpin relations between the two parties.

7. The delegations welcome the various sectoral dialogues and high-level meetings held in 2015, reflecting the high degree of institutionalisation in the bilateral relations between Mexico and the EU. They included: The 7th EU-Mexico Summit (Brussels, 12 June) and five sectoral dialogues [a) 5th Dialogue on Human Rights (Mexico City, 14 April), b) 5th Dialogue on Climate Change (Mexico City, 22 April), c) 6th Dialogue on the Environment (Mexico City, 23 April), d) 22nd Dialogue on Higher Education (Mexico City, 24 and 25 September) and e) 2nd High-Level Political Dialogue (Mexico City, 9 November).

8. The JPC welcomes the results of the EU-Mexico Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (PROCEI), which benefited 17 Mexican states, in sectors including agro-industry, traditional manufacturing, footwear, textile and metalworking.

Political and economic situation in the European Union and Mexico

9. The European delegation welcomes the Mexican MPs attending a JPC meeting for the first time since their election in June 2015 and reaffirms its desire to work with them on issues of relevance to our relationship.

10. Both delegations stress that the international and regional political situation calls for progress to be made in initiatives to promote better governance incorporating a broader scope of stakeholders, in areas such as the prevention of and fight against terrorism, respect for and promotion of human rights, freedom of expression, the fight against organised crime and climate change.

11. They commend the various recent elections and referenda held in Latin America and Europe which renew a commitment to democracy, electoral and political rights, alternation, progress towards equality as a normal part of a functioning democracy and the renewal of governmental authority.

12. They highlight the fact that the European Union has established itself as Mexico's third-largest global trading partner in the last 15 years, and its second-largest export market. The 251 % increase in trade between the two parties between 1999 and 2014 and the EU's 8.1 % share of Mexico's worldwide trade are proof of this. They also point out that, until 2013, the EU was Mexico's second-largest trading partner before being displaced by other markets, a situation which, it is to be hoped, will be rectified by the new agreement.

13. They note that EU countries accounted for 37.5 % of total investment in Mexico between 1999 and September 2015, demonstrating the commitment of both sides to strengthen their economic relationship, especially with regard to the sectors targeted by this investment (which included manufacturing, financial services, aerospace and electricity generation, transmission and distribution).

14. They call for productive investment to be favoured over the simple purchase and merger of existing companies, and for investments that help create new, good quality jobs.

15. They emphasise the need to combat tax fraud, avoidance and evasion, which are common practices among transnational corporations according to the OECD and the G20; to this end, they ask that the Agreement include adequate measures to monitor and penalise tax evasion practices, such as country-by-country reporting.

16. The JPC calls for sustainable economic development that generates gainful employment, reduces inequality and promotes the protection of the environment.

17. The parties sincerely hope that the current instability of the financial markets, exchange rates and oil prices will be rectified and reaffirm their commitment to global economic governance that works towards this goal.

18. They welcome the progress of political reform in Mexico, which has achieved tangible outcomes, such as Mexico City's new political and administrative status. This shows clearly that the political participation and freedoms of the Mexican people, and not just federalism, have been reinforced.

Modernisation of the bilateral legal framework

19. They note that the European Commission has already submitted a proposal for a mandate to the Council of the European Union which would allow the EU to begin negotiations shortly with Mexico on the modernisation of the Global Agreement. To this end, they urge the EU Member States to approve the mandate as soon as possible, and to keep the JPC informed of the progress of the negotiations.

20. They trust that the modernisation of the legal framework will be an opportunity to optimise the relationship's regulatory instruments under the new treaties signed or being negotiated by Mexico (Pacific Alliance, Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)) and the EU (Korea, Central America, Colombia, Peru, Canada and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership with the US (TTIP)), while complying with the SDGs.

21. They urge the Mexican government and the EU authorities to take into account, in their negotiations, the importance of diversifying relations and bilateral trade and ensuring that the latter does not remain concentrated in a handful of EU countries and Mexican federal states, or in a small number of products and sectors. In this context, they call on the respective EU and Mexican authorities to take action to reverse the 3.7 % fall in bilateral trade recorded between January and November 2015.

22. They invite the Mexican government and the EU authorities to ensure that, in their negotiations on the modernisation of the bilateral legal framework, parliamentary diplomacy is recognised as the cornerstone of relations between Mexico and the EU. To that extent, the role of the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee in the bilateral relationship must be strengthened.

23. The Mexican and European delegations invite the respective authorities, during the negotiations for the modernisation of the Global Agreement, to incorporate new topics into the institutional framework of the bilateral relationship, such as: international migration; illicit drugs and transnational organised crime; justice and the fight against corruption; health; energy security; energy (including renewables); enterprise and industry (including small and medium-sized enterprises); economic growth and competitiveness; transport; disaster management; employment and social affairs; the Digital Agenda; research and innovation; social cohesion and international development cooperation policy. They also ask that extensive content relating to sustainable development be included, equipped with binding mechanisms and provisions for the structured consultation of civil society.

24. With regard to the trade element of the new Agreement, they recommend that provisions be included on market access, trade regulations and, in particular, regulatory cooperation, in line with the Agreements between the EU and Canada (CETA) and the EU and the United States (TTIP, currently being negotiated), given that both of those countries,

like Mexico, are NAFTA signatories.

25. The political aspect of the new Agreement must reinforce the mechanisms and instruments for cooperation and political dialogue, in particular within international forums and organisations; it must also contain ambitious provisions and monitoring mechanisms for human rights and in defence of the partners' shared values.

26. The JPC urges the European Commission and the Mexican government to hold, as soon as possible, a sectoral dialogue on security and justice in order to strengthen their cooperation in the fight against organised crime and terrorism.

Situation with regard to human rights in Mexico and the EU

27. As the members of the JPC, the Mexican and EU parliaments reiterate their commitment to promote and protect human rights, and assert their desire to work, within their respective mandates, to achieve this goal and to establish the highest international standards in this area.

28. They support the efforts of the Mexican government and the EU authorities to combat and eradicate attacks on human rights in both regions, such as xenophobia, hate speech, discrimination based on social status, gender, sexual orientation, religious or ethnic affiliation, racism and violence against women.

29. They recognise the progress Mexico has made on migration by tackling the issue from the perspective of human rights and taking into account the four key aspects, namely the origin, destination, transit and return of migrants.

30. They fervently hope that the human rights of migrants and refugees arriving in Europe from other countries and continents will be respected and defended. The issues of migration and asylum must be addressed taking full account of human rights.

31. They believe that only a joint European response based on the principles of solidarity and responsibility, and on human rights standards enshrined in regional and international legal instruments, can remedy the current migration and refugee crisis. It is also necessary to identify those people who need international protection.

32. They are aware of the human rights challenges posed by the current situation, both in Mexico and the EU.

33. The parties will continue to work rigorously in their respective parliamentary fora and assemblies to promote the protection and assertion of human rights together with action and legislation in defence of human rights at national, regional and global level.

34. Both parliaments will seek to ensure, within the scope of their responsibilities and competences, that human rights are effectively respected and asserted for all, especially in cases being heard by the courts so that they may be resolved in accordance with the law.

35. They reaffirm their solidarity with victims of human rights violations, and repeat their call for justice to prevail in all such cases.

36. The parties accept the new extent to which human rights are recognised both in Mexico, since the 2011 Constitutional reform, and the EU, since the Lisbon Treaty, which made the Charter of Fundamental Rights legally binding.

Human security and the fight against international terrorism. Opportunities for cooperation between Mexico and the EU.

37. The members of the JPC agree that human security, at both national and regional level, is one of the priorities of the bilateral agenda, since our societies are now, more than ever, faced with pernicious phenomena such as rising inequality, transnational organised crime, terrorism, drug, arms and people trafficking, and natural disasters caused by climate change.

38. They emphasise that human security underscores the universality and interdependence of a set of freedoms that are fundamental to human life, peace and sustainable development. This means that people are entitled to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and fear, to enjoy equal opportunities and develop their human potential to the full.

39. They express a willingness to act, within the scope of their capacities and expertise, to help address the common threats to international peace and security with a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach.

40. They stress the importance of having better early warning systems, stronger monitoring mechanisms and more adequate strategies for adapting to the needs of our societies, and of empowering them so that they reduce the risks and produce immediate and tangible responses to the dangers to human security.

41. They believe that policies and measures relating to human security must address the root causes of a given threat, determine the structural or behavioural changes that are necessary to help mitigate the effects and, where possible, prevent current and future threats. They point out that easy access to firearms is one of the main factors behind the high level of violence, and call on the EU and Mexico regulate the sale of arms and

penalise any infringements.

42. One of these threats is terrorism, which arouses fear and distrust in our societies, restricts our freedoms and undermines democracy and coexistence.

43. They acknowledge that our societies have been put to the test by the changing threat of terrorism; consequently, we need to formulate new political, legal and administrative tools, in accordance with international law and human rights standards.

44. The Mexican Congress condemns in the strongest possible terms the terrorist attacks in Paris on 13 November 2015 and the subsequent attacks in other countries. Furthermore, it fervently hopes that those responsible for planning and carrying out the attacks will be brought to justice. The Mexican Congress extends its sincerest condolences and solidarity to the families and victims of the attacks.

45. The members of the JPC believe that its cooperation should be enhanced so as to prevent and fight international terrorism and combat organised crime comprehensively and effectively, focusing in particular on multilateral efforts to counteract the spread of violent extremism and terrorist funding.

46. They recognise that cooperation and information-sharing are fundamental tools to confront the terrorist threat and its various manifestations, and that the scourge of terrorism should be dealt with through an exhaustive approach that also aims to drastically cut its sources of funding.

47. They reiterate that the fight against terrorism must comply with international law, particularly that relating to human rights, humanitarian issues and refugees, and respect the basic principles of democracy and the rule of law.

48. Both delegations express their commitment to continue working together in international parliamentary forums and assemblies to strengthen measures to fight terrorism, including the drafting of national legislation that targets the underlying causes and consequences of terrorism.

Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals

49. The JPC reaffirms its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and expresses its political will to help implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as reported in the Declaration of the 18th Meeting of this Committee.

50. It recalls that the SDGs expand the scope of ambition of the MDGs, owing to their

universal nature and the fact that they go beyond addressing the symptoms of poverty to combat inequality and its structural causes through a comprehensive approach that takes into account environmental considerations, economic growth, peace and security.

51. It emphasises that parliamentary bodies play a decisive role in the implementation of SDGs, particularly as regards assessing the updating the institutional frameworks and approving the resources needed to bring the new global development framework into force. It also calls for broad leadership on the part of governments and the active involvement of all relevant sectors, such as academia, ONGs and the private sector, in the implementation of the new development agenda.

52. The members of the JPC agree that further information campaigns are required to increase awareness and understanding, not only of public strategies and policies for the implementation of the SDGs, but the goals themselves.

53. They recognise that corruption is one of the largest barriers to development; consequently, transparency and accountability on the part of both public authorities and private corporations must be included as cross-cutting lines of action in all public policy-making so as to deliver on the SDGs.

54. They call on the public and private sectors to mobilise resources with the aim of helping to achieve the SDGs, improving social well-being, fostering economic growth and environmental protection and stimulating investment for innovation and technological development.

55. They feel it appropriate to recognise the advances made in achieving the MDGs and the need to step up efforts to create more inclusive strategies that specifically address the goals affecting groups deemed to be vulnerable, such as children, immigrants, indigenous groups, people with disabilities and older people.

56. The JPC renews its call for the Global Partnership for Development to be revitalised, with the aim of pooling international efforts involving all stakeholders in order to mobilise resources, strengthen capacities, transfer technology, ensure international cooperation and provide Official Development Assistance (ODA), so as to implement the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda.

Climate change: analysis of the results of the COP 21 (December 2015, Paris)

57. The members of the JPC maintain that climate change, whose worldwide effects - for example on migration, world peace and food security - are increasingly obvious, remains a priority issue on national, regional and international agendas. They repeat their calls, stated in previous Joint Declarations issued by this Committee, for this issue to be addressed seriously and urgently.

58. They applaud the work accomplished during the negotiations at the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Paris in December 2015, which upheld, as one of its key objectives, a limitation on the increase in the global average temperature to below 2°C, the aim being to ensure that it is further limited to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, while enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change.

59. They emphasise that, in March 2015, Mexico became the first developing country to submit its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution 2020-2030 to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), along with a commitment to unconditionally reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 22 % and black carbon emissions by 51 %, in accordance with the guidelines and priorities of the country's General Law on Climate Change.

60. They sincerely hope that the Paris Agreement will come into force in 2020, call for its provisions to be implemented ahead of schedule, and welcome the fact that this instrument represents a multilateral effort linked to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

61. They invite the countries concerned to ensure the availability of all resources needed at national level to implement international agreements on climate change and development cooperation, by improving legislative action and strengthening dialogue with all relevant sectors. They maintain that the major economies must show political leadership and honour their commitments in this area.

62. They join calls for all countries and stakeholders involved to guarantee sustainable development that withstands climate change, promoting international cooperation and supporting policies that reduce vulnerability and improve countries' ability to adapt to the effects of climate change.

63. The JPC applauds the EU's efforts to reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs) by at least 40 % by 2030 compared with 1990 levels, and the commitment to produce at least 30 % of total energy consumption from renewable sources.

64. It recognises that various EU policies, such as those relating to trade, scientific research, innovation and technological cooperation, economic and development cooperation, disaster risk reduction and the environment, are focused on reinforcing its international policy on climate change.

65. It draws attention to the vulnerability of populations to extreme natural events caused by climate change and other natural disasters, and emphasises that this calls for solid legal

frameworks that support investment to build resilience.

66. It underlines the importance of transparency and accountability in meeting emission reduction targets and the commitments undertaken in climate change negotiations.

67. It welcomes the approval of the first projects to be funded by the Green Climate Fund, confirmed at the 11th GCF Board Meeting held in Livingstone, Zambia in November 2015.

68. The delegations from the European Parliament and the Mexican Congress welcome the discussions at this 20th Meeting of the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee. They underline the Committee's important role as a place for discussion and debate on bilateral issues of common interest. They renew their request to establish ongoing interaction with the Joint Council and to participate closely in the work of this Council and the Joint Committee.

69. Both delegations agree to hold the next meeting in Europe, in the second half of 2016.

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