



EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee

JOINT DECLARATION
19th Meeting of the
EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee
7-9 July 2015
Strasbourg, France

The delegations of the European Parliament and the Congress of the United Mexican States to the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee (the JPC), led by its Co-Chairs, Teresa Jiménez Becerril MEP and Senator Rabindranath Salazar, in accordance with the JPC Rules of Procedure and following the conclusion of the work of the 19th meeting in Strasbourg, have agreed the following:

Joint Declaration

1. The Mexican and European delegations welcome the holding of the 19th meeting of the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) and its outcome, and are encouraged by the continuing excellent relations between the two parties and the strength of their joint work. The European delegation restates its desire to review the JPC Rules of Procedure with the competent bodies of the European Parliament (the Mexican delegation has already made a similar statement) with a view to institutionalising the holding of two meetings each year, as has been done since the creation 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. Both delegations note that 2015 sees the 55th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral relations between Mexico and the European Union and the 15th anniversary of the entry into force of the Association Agreement and Free Trade Agreement, hereinafter referred to as the Global Agreement. They also emphasise that the relationship was further developed by establishing a Strategic Partnership and by the Joint Executive Plan which fleshes out that Partnership.

2a. The parties call for the normative framework of the Treaty to be strengthened and for certain areas to be updated, such as rules of origin, trade facilitation, technical sectoral rules and regulations and the rules applicable in relation to intellectual property and the trade in services, with the aim of increasing reciprocal trade and investment flows.

3. The JPC recognises the bi-regional efforts being made to overcome the challenges of today's world, such as the economic crisis, unemployment, public insecurity, terrorism, organised crime, people trafficking, illegal arms trafficking, money laundering, energy and food insecurity and climate change, among other issues, and that as far as possible both parties will strengthen their bilateral and multilateral cooperation to this end.

4. The members of the JPC reaffirm their commitment to democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, peaceful settlement of disputes, cooperation in encouraging the development of low-income countries, solidarity and social justice. These values are shared by Mexico and the European Union and they underpin relations between the two parties.

5. The delegations welcome the success of the 2nd EU-CELAC Summit, held in Brussels on 10 and 11 June 2015, and of the 7th EU-Mexico Summit, also held in Brussels on 12 June 2015.

Political and Economic Situation in the European Union and Mexico and modernisation of the Global Agreement

6. The European delegation greets the newly elected members of the Chamber of Deputies of the United Mexican States. It also expresses its congratulations on the electoral process which took place on 7 June 2015 in an atmosphere of peace and democratic normality.

7. The Joint Parliamentary Committee hopes that Greece and the EU will find a (just and equitable) solution regarding Greek debt repayments. It also hopes that the European institutions will reach agreement on analysing and resolving the causes that are leading to

the mass flow of immigrants, and on giving due consideration and treatment to the cases of people seeking asylum for reasons of political or religious persecution or other types of persecution, and refugees fleeing conflict.

8. The Joint Parliamentary Committee is pleased that after a number of years of economic and financial crisis we can now hope to see a stabilisation of the economies of EU Member States, consolidation of public finances, preservation of the internal market and integrity of the euro zone, thanks to the work of the European institutions and of national governments. The JPC hopes that Europe will continue along the road of economic recovery through measures designed to create jobs and stimulate growth, and that the continent will become an even more attractive destination for foreign investment. The European delegation expresses its desire for consolidation of the structural reforms embarked on by the Mexican Government in order to foster better conditions for foreign investment and achieve greater economic prosperity to be distributed fairly across the whole society.

9. Both delegations emphasise the importance of continuing to strengthen relations between Mexico and the European Union, potentially through the process of updating the three pillars of the Global Agreement, namely political dialogue, cooperation and trade, and also by incorporating the Joint Executive Plan. They support the work undertaken by the Working Group responsible for preparing the Joint Vision Report and welcome the agreement that has been reached on the level of ambition and scope of the new updated agreement. They also stress that the future agreement must strengthen the democratic clause that binds both parties.

10. They emphasise that it is important to ensure the effective involvement of the JPC, and its Co-Chairs in particular, in the process of reflecting on and negotiating the modernisation of the Global Agreement, to encourage joint debate and reflection by the legislatures of both parties and to streamline the flow of information between Members of Parliament and the executive authorities of both Mexico and the European Union.

11. They note the need to increase and diversify bilateral trade and productive investment and to ensure that these are not concentrated in a few countries in Europe, a few Mexican states and a limited number of sectors and goods. A dynamic international environment requires a more integrated and consolidated bilateral framework, with instruments to intensify and expand economic and trade relations between the two partners and more interaction over priority areas. They hope that following the agreement over the Joint Vision Report, the necessary preparatory work will be taken forward to enable negotiations on the modernisation of the Agreement to be launched in late 2015 or early 2016.

12. Both delegations believe that a modernised trade pillar must seek to promote trade on the basis of the ATF (the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation), greater exchange of information and best practice, clear rules of origin, increased access to markets for goods, services and investment (including public procurement at all levels of government), high levels of protection for investment and intellectual property rights (including geographical indications), greater economic integration, strengthened competitiveness, removing, reducing and preventing unnecessary non-tariff measures and barriers, improved dialogue, transparency, regulatory cooperation and convergence, including harmonisation of sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures (to protect human life, animal welfare and plant health in both parties' territories), while also promoting and extending trade (through standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures), best administrative practice in order to increase uniformity in standards, to address competition and merger rules applicable to all undertakings and, lastly, to help to promote sustainable development by including strong trade provisions and implementing international conventions on employment (ILO) and on the environment. A specific mechanism is needed to monitor implementation, which should take into account the existing joint bodies. It should be based on dialogue, cooperation and transparency, involve all of civil society from both sides and include specific dispute resolution mechanisms.

13. The delegations welcome the fact that the EU and Mexico are continuing to examine new areas of cooperation, particularly in science, technology and innovation, which have a positive impact on fields such as energy, information and communication technology, the environment, climate change and food security, among others. They note that sectoral dialogue is particularly helpful in this regard.

EU-Mexico Cooperation on Social Cohesion

14. Both delegations believe that eradicating poverty and reducing inequality to help the poorest remains a fundamental objective. Consequently there is a continuing need for public policies that have the combined aims of achieving economic growth, social inclusion and equitable support for the poorest.

15. The JPC is pleased at the excellent results that have been achieved on social cohesion under the bilateral cooperation programme (2007-2013) and hopes that this important issue will be addressed in one of the future sectoral dialogues under the bilateral relationship.

16. The JPC emphasises that sustainable economic development requires investment and growth policies with greater social, labour and environmental focus, as well as investment in infrastructure, education, new technology, research and development. It therefore encourages players from both parties to become involved in transparent and monitored public-private partnership projects and to pool their experience and skills on specific projects to improve productivity and quality of life for European and Mexican citizens.

17. Both delegations believe that it is essential to achieve social integration for underprivileged young people, as well as women and indigenous peoples, because their exclusion from society is one of the main causes of violence and their institutional alienation weakens democracy. Cooperation on social cohesion must be strengthened and the necessary resources must be made available to support these most vulnerable groups.

18. The JPC recognises that education and training must be the main priority in order to achieve social cohesion and must be guaranteed for all population groups.

19. Both delegations support the efforts of their governments to achieve environmentally sustainable and efficient economies which promote green jobs as a source of growth.

20. The JPC believes that initiatives to promote good governance in tax matters are essential in order to achieve tax revenues that can be used in distributive and equitable social policies.

Current state of bi-regional EU-LAC relations

21. Both delegations welcome the outcome of the 2nd EU-CELAC Summit, held in Brussels on 10 and 11 June 2015, which brought together the Heads of State and/or of Government of 61 European and Latin American countries. These summits continue to be a priority area in the gradual building of a Bi-Regional Strategic Partnership between the two sides of the Atlantic.

22. The JPC believes that in today's globalised world, which is characterised by a high degree of connectivity reflected in a wide range of different inter-regional networks, other summits involving other high-level participants from Europe and Latin America have a key part to play in underpinning the EU-LAC Strategic Partnership launched at the Rio Summit in 1999. These include the 8th ordinary plenary session of EuroLat, the parliamentary arm

of the Strategic Partnership, the Business and Trade Union Summits, the Academic Summit and the Civil Society Summit.

23. Both delegations welcome the 7th EU-Mexico Summit, which took place in Brussels on 12 June 2015. That meeting has produced some particularly important outcomes, such as the adoption of the Joint Vision Report, which constitutes a preliminary stage for the start of negotiations leading to the modernisation of the EU-Mexico Global Agreement, which has been in place for 15 years. The summit also resulted in closer dialogue between Europe and Mexico on the following areas of common interest: climate change, the sustainable development agenda beyond 2015, migration, security and peacekeeping operations, and the fight against drug trafficking and organised crime.

23a. The JPC points out that, for both parties, migration policy and its implementation must be based on full respect for the human rights of all migrants, without criminalising people who find themselves in this situation. Informed management of migratory flows is also necessary, in compliance with the principle of shared responsibility.

24. The JPC delegations welcome the continuing operation of the EU-CELAC Academic Summit, which took place for the second time in Brussels on 10 and 11 June 2015. They particularly welcome its inclusive approach and the positive contributions which the Summit makes to relations between the two regions, as demonstrated by the declarations issued by both sessions.

25. The delegations underline the importance of continued support for the efforts by the EU-LAC Foundation to strengthen links between the various players from the worlds of business, academia and civil society from the EU and CELAC.

Climate Change/Renewable Energies

26. The JPC reaffirms its commitment to combating climate change from a parliamentary perspective and expresses its readiness to support the measures and actions taken by the respective Executives to tackle this phenomenon, which represents a threat to all living beings.

27. It stresses the strategic importance of COP 21, to be held in Paris in December 2015, in concluding a global agreement to tackle climate change. Consequently, both delegations believe that this agreement must be ambitious (in view of the threats identified by science),

its content must be clear, and it must be legally binding on all parties, while imposing fair and realistic obligations on each individual party.

28. They highlight the new opportunities for economic growth offered by the development of a sustainable economy thanks to the boost to innovation provided by new energy-efficient industrial technologies, the circular economy and the generation of energy from alternative sources. These advances also help to reduce energy poverty in the least developed areas and to ensure lower global energy prices.

29. They would like to see not only the various national governments but also local and regional authorities, local communities and the various civil society organisations being involved in the global strategy against climate change in relation to the different sensibilities and cultures of each country and region.

30. They recognise the important part played by conservation of forest resources, soil and land in the global fight against climate change, and they highlight deforestation, forest degradation, destruction of soil and desertification as serious threats, stressing that the corresponding ecosystems must be preserved and enhanced through specific programmes and mechanisms.

31. They call on the various governments to honour their financial pledges to the fight against climate change, particularly the Green Climate Fund, which amounts to USD 100 billion. This finance may come from public or private sources or various forms of mixed funding, thus providing for flexibility in contributions and management of outcomes.

32. Both parties express concern at the risks posed by climate change from a public health perspective. Air pollution leads to an increase in respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses. Other types of pollution have an impact on cancer and neurological diseases. All types of pollution are particularly serious for children and elderly people and place a significant additional burden on health systems, with adverse effects for public finances and private businesses. In the medium term these issues will also have strategic consequences, such as population displacements and difficulties in growing basic foodstuffs.

33. They note that Mexico and the European Union are making efforts to combat climate change. Mexico has reduced its greenhouse gases by 4.5 % since 2010, while the European Union managed to reduce its emissions by 1.8 % in 2013 compared with 2012, achieving its lowest level since 1990.

34. They urge Mexico and the European Union to achieve their projected reductions of 30 % and 21 % respectively by 2020, and for Mexico to seek to reduce its emissions by 50 % and the European Union by 80 % by 2050.

35. They would like to see the continuing development of other policies to combat climate change, such as energy efficiency, energy saving, development of renewable energy sources, efficient use of resources, innovation and investment.

EU-Mexico Cooperation on higher education

36. The delegations recognise that cooperation on higher education must be a priority for relations between the EU and Mexico, in that it helps to build more cohesive societies that are better able to deal with current and future challenges. They urge the European and Mexican authorities to achieve closer dialogue in this area and to explore possible routes for bilateral cooperation under the relevant instruments that are available.

37. In particular, the delegations propose that political dialogue should address issues such as the internationalisation of higher education institutions and the strengthening of mobility schemes for students, academics and researchers in order to encourage the exchange of good practice between the EU and Mexico and to develop joint study and research programmes. These initiatives must be accompanied by sufficient resources from both parties to achieve their objectives in a timely manner.

38. The JPC once again calls on the EU and Mexico to examine the feasibility of concluding a sectoral agreement on higher education to broaden and deepen opportunities for cooperation between the two parties, as noted in the Joint Declaration from our tenth meeting. The Global Agreement provides the basis for an agreement of this kind.

39. Both delegations are aware of the important contribution made by mobility and migration to the economy and the social development of our societies. We must continue working to promote the internationalisation of higher education and tools to enable transparency and comparability in order to encourage academic mobility and cooperation between Mexico and the EU.

39a. Both parties also wish to design better mobility schemes for students, academics and researchers and to continue to promote exchanges of students and teachers, while also giving consideration to plans for a specific Master's degree, to be introduced on both sides of the Atlantic, aimed at acquiring deeper knowledge of the realities of the situation in Europe, Mexico, Latin America and the Caribbean.

40. Both parties agree on the organisation of the High-Level Dialogue on Higher Education in Mexico in September 2015 and the High-Level Dialogue on Security and Justice in December 2015. They welcome the aim of opening new dialogues on regional development policies, employment and social issues.

Civil society involvement within the framework of the Strategic Partnership

41. The adoption of the Joint Executive Plan for the Strategic Partnership in 2010 has enabled various high-level dialogues to take place between the EU and Mexico. In particular, the High-Level Dialogue on Human Rights has been accompanied by the involvement of civil society from both regions through a seminar process. The JPC welcomes the organisation of consecutive seminars and asks the European and Mexican authorities to continue their support for this initiative. The JPC notes that, for the EU, effective engagement with civil society is a cornerstone of any successful human rights policy.

41a. The JPC reiterates the importance it attaches to scrupulous respect for human rights and takes the view that there can be absolutely no place for impunity in either the EU or the United Mexican States.

42. The delegations also underline the importance of civil society involvement within the context of the Forum for Dialogue between civil society and EU and Mexican institutions, which was recognised as an institution in the Joint Executive Plan for the Strategic Partnership. They therefore regret that the sixth meeting of the Forum, which was due to be held in 2014, has not yet taken place and they hope that it can still be held in 2015.

43. The delegations to the JPC reiterate their support for a permanent body for civil society involvement to be established between the European Economic and Social Council and the appropriate Mexican body. They ask the authorities of both regions, and the participants, to take the necessary steps to establish this body.

44. The members of the JPC call for civil society involvement in the EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership.

45. They note that the Global Agreement is over 15 years old and still needs to pay more attention to new experiences and innovative mechanisms channelling civil society involvement, with a particular focus on the active direct involvement of new generations

and local communities, and on provisions to boost fair and sustainable development. Both delegations believe that the modernisation of the EU-Mexico Global Agreement, on which negotiations should begin shortly, provides an important opportunity to strengthen civil society involvement.

46. They stress that the text of the modernisation of the Global Agreement could include the creation of a body representing civil society organisations from both parties in order to monitor the Agreement. The JPC requests that this body should comprise representatives from the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) on the European side and an equal number of civil society representatives on the Mexican side. In this regard, the updated Agreement should provide for discussion between the body representing civil society and the other joint bodies, such as the Joint Council.

47. The delegations acknowledge that Economic and Social Committees provide a tool for communication between governments and their civil society, and they call for the establishment of a Mexican Economic and Social Committee to perform this role.

Future meetings of the JPC and strengthening of inter-institutional relations between the Mexican Congress and the European Parliament.

48. The delegations of the Mexican Congress and the European Parliament welcome the results achieved at this nineteenth meeting of the Mexico-EU JPC. They state the need for the JPC to continue to be the vehicle for dialogue, monitoring and supervision of relations between both partners. They reaffirm their request for permanent interaction with the Joint Council, for the Council and the Joint Committee to act on the JPC's agreements and for the JPC to be invited to state its position in the context of discussions on the updating of the Agreement.

49. The delegations of the Mexican Congress and the European Parliament invite their respective competent administrative and political bodies to develop and implement a Memorandum of Understanding and Institutional Cooperation which includes forms and models of political, administrative and technical cooperation, a joint research and exchange programme, and programmes of visits on issues of mutual interest and/or programmes designed to strengthen relations between the EU and Mexico and between the Mexican Congress and the European Parliament.

50. The delegations agree to hold their next meeting in Mexico, preferably during the first half of 2016.

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Committee

European Parliament delegation

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EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary
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Delegation of the Honourable Congress
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