



EU-MEXICO JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

17th meeting of the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee

17 April 2014, Strasbourg, France

The delegations of the Congress of the United Mexican States and the European Parliament to the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee (hereinafter the JPC), winding up the proceedings at the 17th meeting, held in Strasbourg (France), have agreed on the following

JOINT DECLARATION

1. The Mexican and European delegations express their satisfaction at the holding and outcome of the 17th meeting of the EU-Mexico JPC, and the commitment to take these joint efforts further on the basis of twice-yearly meetings. They welcome the amending of the Rules of Procedure of the JPC, as approved by the Mexican Senate's Committee on Foreign Affairs – Europe, which aims to strengthen the commitment to hold two meetings a year alternately in Mexico and Europe. The JPC expresses its hope that the European Parliament will approve the amended version, which is subject to approval by the European Parliament authorities.
2. Both delegations also express their satisfaction at the regularity of the meetings of the standing committees and other bodies of the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (EuroLat), in particular the 7th EuroLat ordinary plenary session, which was held in Athens from 27 to 29 March 2014, given that these meetings are a sign of the solidity and strengthening of the relations between the two regions.
3. The Mexican delegation extends a cordial invitation to the next president of the European Parliament to visit Mexico at his or her earliest convenience.

POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SITUATION

4. The European delegation acknowledges the major efforts being made by the Mexican authorities to tackle organised crime and risks to public safety, as evidenced by the recent

arrests of several leaders of the largest drugs cartels, among other developments. Both delegations call on the relevant Mexican and EU authorities to conduct the high-level dialogue in the area of security and justice without further delay.

5. In addition, the European delegation welcomes the Mexican Government's continued efforts to tackle corruption. The many well-targeted measures taken to tackle the country's security problems, together with the implementation of the law on assistance to victims of crime, as well as the progress currently being made on other necessary initiatives, are clear evidence of the government's determination to improve the security situation.

6. The Mexican delegation congratulates the European Union on the progress made towards economic recovery, which is gradually taking shape and which should improve overall domestic demand, help restore and expand investment, and gradually eliminate the imbalances that built up during the previous decade. However, both delegations draw attention to the fact that competitiveness is still weak in some EU Member States, and that demand is still subdued and investment modest. They also underline the fact that sustainable economic development needs to be underpinned not only by measures to limit public spending, balanced budgets and investment and growth policies which pay greater attention to social issues, but also by sustainable large-scale investment in infrastructure, new technologies, innovation, research and development, and human capital. They stress, however, that a key aim of this investment should be to ensure that economic recovery brings improved living standards, with the aim being to encourage the creation of high-quality jobs and preserve the welfare state.

7. Both delegations also express their hope that the forthcoming European elections in May 2014 and the appointment of a new European Commission later in the year will give fresh impetus to European integration and to relations between Mexico and the EU. The Mexican delegation welcomes this democratic process in the EU.

UPDATE OF THE GLOBAL AGREEMENT AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

8. The JPC expresses its satisfaction at the holding of the first high-level political dialogue between the EU and Mexico on 27 January 2014, which strengthened the political dialogue and cooperation on numerous key global and regional issues. The JPC stresses that this represents a major boost to strategic relations between the two regions. It notes that the last (6th) EU-Mexico summit was held in Los Cabos (Mexico) on 17 June 2012 and expresses regret that the next summit has been postponed and will not take place as originally planned in Brussels in 2014.

9. The JPC reiterates the undertaking given by both sides to update the Economic Partnership, Political Consultation and Cooperation Agreement (the Global Agreement) between the EU and its Member States and Mexico, and believes that this will undoubtedly lead to closer relations between the two parties. The two delegations call on the negotiating

parties to make a genuine effort to advance the negotiations and to ensure that they are concluded as soon as possible.

10. The JPC notes with interest the meetings of the three joint EU-Mexico sub-working groups (on political dialogue, cooperation and trade) that were held in Mexico on 12 February 2014 to consider the three pillars of the Global Agreement, review their performance and identify the key elements to be updated. The JPC also supports the provisional timetable for the joint working group to draw up a Joint Vision Report by summer 2014.

11. The EU delegation welcomes the approval by the Mexican Senate's Committee on Foreign Affairs – Europe of the agreement under which the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and the Economy will be required to provide updates on the progress made and the outcome of the work of the thematic sub-working groups, and, at the appropriate time, on the negotiations concerning the revision of the Global Agreement, and, to that end, to set up suitable communication channels with the Mexican Senate and the Mexican delegation to this JPC.

A. Role of the JPC and reinforced parliamentary oversight

12. The JPC stresses the need to hold a meeting with those responsible for cooperation and negotiations on the revision of the Global Agreement, reiterates its commitment to participate actively in the process of updating the agreement, and underlines the key role to be played by the JPC in the negotiations and the need to ensure that stakeholders are systematically and continuously informed by the EU and Mexican authorities of the progress made and the outcome of the work of the joint working group and, where appropriate, of the negotiations on the revision and update of the Global Agreement. In this connection, it calls on the EU and Mexican authorities in accordance with the agreement to set up appropriate and efficient channels of communication and dialogue in order to ensure close follow-up of the activities of the joint working group and the recommendations made by the JPC.

13. In addition, the JPC reiterates the need for parliamentary meetings to address bilateral challenges and to ensure effective parliamentary oversight that allows better follow-up of JPC agreements so that they are taken into account both by the Joint Council and by the Joint Committee, thus also providing for continuous interaction with the monitoring and evaluation bodies of the bilateral relationship, as stated in the joint declarations issued at the 15th and 16th meetings of this JPC.

14. For the purpose of achieving this reinforced parliamentary oversight, both delegations reiterate their call for the institutional framework of the Global Agreement to make specific provision for the parliamentary dialogue, especially in relation to interaction with the Joint Council and the Joint Committee, as well as the dialogue between civil society and EU and Mexican governmental institutions. They also call for innovative ways of strengthening the role of the JPC in EU-Mexico relations to be explored. It therefore expresses its hope that the 6th civil society dialogue forum will be held in Mexico in 2014.

15. In this regard, the JPC awaits with interest the study requested at the 16th JPC meeting, which should examine the update of the Global Agreement and the role of the JPC in fulfilling the purpose of the agreement, and make recommendations with a view to updating the agreement and, in particular, strengthening the role of the JPC and its involvement in the update process.

16. The JPC reiterates that the negotiations between the EU and the United States concerning a Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) should be coherent and take due account of the agreements that both parties have concluded with most Latin American countries, in particular the EU-Mexico Association Agreement.

B. Political dialogue

17. In the context of efforts to modernise relations between Mexico and the EU, and specifically the political dialogue, the JPC recommends giving this relationship a strategic vision for the medium and long term, identifying the required institutional mechanisms, defining at what level and with what functions those mechanisms should operate, and avoiding the creation of rigid structures which prevent the parties from adapting to the conditions affecting them or to future internal or external changes.

18. The JPC supports the work of the sub-working group on political dialogue, which seeks to: identify the objectives of closer bilateral relations; continue consultations on the possible consolidation, in a single agreement, of the legal framework regulating the relationship between the parties; step up political dialogue on issues relating to international crisis management; revise the working methods of the Joint Committee with a view to increasing its effectiveness; analyse the strategic role of certain sectoral dialogues; consider greater participation in the dialogue by representatives of organised civil society, as reiterated by the JPC; address issues relating to the bi-regional dialogue between Latin America and the EU; and give priority to issues of special importance such as natural disaster prevention, climate change and human rights.

19. The JPC underlines the fact that safeguarding human rights and the rule of law must be key elements of the political dialogue between Mexico and the EU, along with issues such as security, justice and the environment. It also draws attention to the willingness of both parties to step up cooperation and increase their capacity for action in these areas.

20. In this connection, the JPC welcomes the legislative progress that has been made as regards human rights in Mexico in recent years, for example by means of the adoption of the law on the protection of human rights activists and journalists, the initiative to reform the Mexican code of military justice, in line with the resolution of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on limiting the jurisdiction of military tribunals in cases relating to civilians, and the law on assistance to victims of crime. Both delegations call for continued efforts to implement these provisions effectively and to tackle the issue of impunity. The JPC also calls on the Mexican Congress to implement the provisions needed to apply the ruling of the

aforementioned court as regards the 'cotton field' (Campo Algodonero) femicide cases and to provide compensation for the damages caused by these human rights violations.

21. The JPC welcomes the success of the 4th high-level bilateral dialogue on human rights between the EU and Mexico, following the 2nd seminar of civil society organisations, which was held in Brussels in March 2014. The JPC believes that these structured spaces for political dialogue involving civil society are important forums not only for the exchange of experience and best practice, but also for the implementation of joint actions. The JPC therefore calls for these dialogue spaces to continue.

22. The JPC decries the fact that the level of violence against women in the EU and Mexico is still extremely high despite the legislative efforts of recent years. The JPC therefore calls for efforts to be made to end gender violence, which is a problem on both sides of the Atlantic, and calls for closer cooperation in this regard, including through the establishment of mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the application of international agreements on the eradication of gender-based violence. In this connection, the JPC welcomes the adoption by EuroLat of an emergency resolution on 'Femicide in the European Union and Latin America', and calls on the Mexican Government and the EU Member States to ensure the effective implementation of laws against femicide.

23. The JPC applauds the EU and Mexico for the priority they have given in their dialogue to tackling racism and xenophobia, and for their commitment to continue their cooperation to tackle the discrimination faced by many immigrants.

C. Trade and economic relations

24. The JPC applauds the sub-working group on trade and investment for discussing a wide range of topics at its most recent meeting in Mexico in February 2014, such as access to agricultural markets, trade facilitation, health and plant health measures, technical barriers to trade, services and investment, investment and trade in the energy sector, intellectual property rights, public procurement, competition, trade, and development which is sustainable and focuses on improving the situation at local level. The JPC calls on both delegations in the sub-working group to keep it informed of any progress made with regard to the negotiations on the revision and update of the trade chapter of the Global Agreement.

25. The JPC welcomes the structural reforms adopted by the Mexican Congress following the Pact for Mexico, and expresses its hope that they will make the country even more attractive to foreign investors. The EU has drawn up a chapter on investment protection that it is including in its bilateral trade agreements with a view to establishing a framework for protection and legal certainty for EU investors in the countries in question. The chapter also provides for a mechanism for resolving disputes between investors and States. The JPC suggests that the EU and Mexico should discuss the possibility of and arrangements for including legal certainty and investment protection provisions in the Global Agreement. It

also expresses its hope that the updated agreement will also extend to sectors, regions and countries to which little attention has been paid to date.

D. International development cooperation

26. The JPC welcomes the fact that Mexico and the EU are working together to analyse the priority areas and arrangements for their future cooperation, which should be focused on tackling inequality and promoting sustainable development. In this regard, the JPC calls for continued efforts to promote cooperation in areas of shared interest included in the Global Agreement and in the Strategic Partnership action plan. In the same way, the JPC stresses the importance of the strategic dimension of renewed cooperation and of identifying points of agreement and shared interest as regards matters of international importance where working together could prove more effective.

27. The JPC welcomes the cooperation on science and technology in the context of the 7th EU framework programme on research, and calls for closer cooperation in key areas such as research on geothermal energy, information and communication technologies, the environment and climate change, energy and food security. The JPC also welcomes the commitment by the Mexican National Science and Technology Council (CONACYT) to provide funding for Mexican institutions and researchers involved in the calls for projects under Horizon 2020, which is evidence of Mexico's interest in maintaining its cooperation with the EU in the areas of science, technology and innovation.

28. The JPC welcomes both parties' adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty, and reiterates its commitment to prevent the illegal trade in and export of arms to high-risk areas, by monitoring the destination of any such shipments.

29. Both delegations agree to submit this declaration to the members of the EU-Mexico Joint Council and renew their call for the two Co-Chairs of the EU-Mexico JPC to attend meetings of this Council.

30. Both delegations agree to hold the next meeting of the JPC in Mexico in the second half of 2014. The Mexican Congress will await notification of the names of the new members of the European Parliament delegation to the JPC.

***Delegation of the European Parliament
EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary
Committee***

***Delegation of the Congress of the United
Mexican States
EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee***

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