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with a proposal for a European Parliament recommendation to the Council on
an EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership
(2008/2289(INI))

Committee on Foreign Affairs

Rapporteur: José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra

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PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL

on an EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership (2008/2289(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal for a recommendation to the Council, submitted by José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra on behalf of the PPE-DE Group, on an EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership (B6-0437/2008),
- having regard to the Commission communication to the Council and the European Parliament 'Towards an EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership' (COM(2008)0447),
- having regard to its resolution of 11 October 2007 on the murder of women (femicide) in Mexico and Central America and the role of the European Union in fighting the phenomenon¹,
- having regard to the Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement between the European Community and its Member States, of the one part, and the United Mexican States, of the other²,
- having regard to the declarations of the five summits of heads of state of government of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union (EU-LAC), held to date in Rio de Janeiro (28 and 29 June 1999), Madrid (17 and 18 May 2002), Guadalajara (28 and 29 May 2004), Vienna (12 and 13 May 2006) and Lima (16 and 17 May 2008),
- having regard to the joint communiqué of the Fourth Mexico-EU summit held in Lima, dated 17 May 2008,
- having regard to the joint communiqué of the Eighth meeting of the EU-Mexico Joint Committee, held in Mexico City on 13 and 14 October 2008,
- having regard to the joint declaration of the meeting of the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) held in Mexico City on 28 and 29 October 2008,
- having regard to the conclusions of the meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council of 13 October 2008,
- having regard to the message from EUROLAT to the Fifth EU-LAC Summit dated 1 May 2008,

¹ OJ C 227 E, 4.9.2008, p. 140.

² OJ L 276, 28.10.2000, p. 45.

- having regard to its resolution of 24 April 2008 on the Fifth EU-LAC Summit held in Lima¹,
 - having regard to the San Salvador Declaration adopted at the 17th Iberoamerican Summit of Heads of State and Government, held on 29 and 31 October 2008,
 - having regard to its resolution of 23 January 2006 on the human rights and democracy clause in European Union agreements²,
 - having regard to Rules 114(3) and 83(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the opinion of the Committee on International Trade (A6-0028/2009),
- A. whereas Mexico and the EU share a set of fundamental values, common principles and historical and cultural links,
 - B. whereas respect for democratic principles and human rights, as enshrined in the democracy clause, are an essential element of both the Strategic Partnership and the Global Agreement, and must be respected by both parties,
 - C. whereas Mexico is increasingly consolidating its political weight on the international stage, as is confirmed at world level by its recent nomination as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council (for 2009-2010), and at regional level by its presidency of the Pro-Tempore Secretariat of the Rio Group (for 2008-2010),
 - D. whereas it is important that the EU recognises Mexico's contribution to the multilateral system, given that multilateralism is one of the basic principles which both parties, Mexico and the EU, have undertaken to promote in the international sphere,
 - E. whereas Mexico has embarked on a scheme of structural reforms in strategic sectors and has become the world's tenth-largest economy, a member of the G-20 and of the G-5 (Brazil, China, India, South Africa and Mexico), and, furthermore, the only Latin American member of the OECD,
 - F. whereas Mexico has a population of over 100 m, with a marked preponderance of youth given that 45% of Mexicans are aged under 20, and occupies an important geostrategic position as a bridge both between North and South America and between the Caribbean and the Pacific,
 - G. whereas the EU-Mexico Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement (the 'Global Agreement') signed on 8 December 1997 has three pillars: political dialogue; the gradual creation of a free-trade area; and cooperation; whereas, in addition, since the agreement came into force in 2000 relations between the two sides have been marked by deepening and consolidation, both politically and in the trade and cooperation fields,

¹ Texts adopted, P6_TA(2008)0177.

² OJ C290 E, 29.11.2006, p. 107.

- H. whereas at the Lima Summit (May 2008) the EU and Mexico underlined the positive development in trade and investment flows under the Association Agreement,
- I. whereas, both bilaterally and in the framework of the Global Agreement, the EU and Mexico have strengthened their contacts at all levels and as regards all institutions, notably in the parliamentary field and in the context of the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee and the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly,
- J. whereas the proposal for a Strategic Partnership comes at a time of international financial and economic crisis, and there is a risk of this crisis affecting the economic and social balance of the bilateral relationship,
- K. whereas the deepening of EU-Mexico relations can help enhance the consensus between the EU and its Latin American partners on regional and global issues, facilitating the joint promotion of their shared interests and values in international and regional forums,
- L. whereas the Strategic Partnership needs to be conceived as marking a qualitative leap in EU-Mexico relations, at two different levels: multilaterally, in terms of mutual coordination on issues of world importance; and bilaterally, via the development of their relations and of particular initiatives;
- M. whereas the processes of political and economic integration, the increasing spread of economic globalisation and the importance of the debate on democracy, human rights and the environment, inter alia, have changed the priorities in the agenda of both regions,
- N. whereas Mexico's strategic situation and its network of trade agreements mean that this country is of great strategic importance for European exports, the EU being its second source of foreign investment,
- O. whereas the Mexico-EU Free Trade Area (FTA) plays an important role in the EU's bilateral relations since its scope is very comprehensive (covering goods, services, procurement, competition, intellectual property rights, investment and related payments),
- P. whereas Mexican emigration to the EU, inter alia, is one of the most important and sensitive issues for Mexico, given the high number of Mexican immigrants, many of them highly skilled, in the Union,
- 1. Makes the following recommendations to the Council:
 - (a) hopes that the Strategic Partnership will mark a qualitative leap in EU-Mexico relations, both multilaterally in terms of issues of world importance and in strengthening the development of bilateral relations;
 - (b) favours institutionalising annual EU-Mexico summits within the framework of the Strategic Partnership, as is already the case for those with the US, Russia, China and Brazil;

- (c) trusts that the Strategic Partnership will give a new impetus to the EU-Mexico Global Agreement in its various aspects - political (including human rights), security, anti-drugs trafficking, environmental, cooperation (technical and cultural) and socio-economic;
- (d) wishes the trade chapter to be based on like-for-like treatment, solidarity, dialogue and respect for the specific characteristics of Mexico and the EU;
- (e) reiterates its support for the Mexican Government and President Calderón in their vital work of cleaning up certain institutions of the state; believes this campaign is essential in order to stop corruption and ensure that society is not left unprotected;
- (f) believes that it falls within the sphere of its activities to fight femicide in both regions, on a basis of dialogue, cooperation and the exchange of best practices;
- (g) trusts that the Strategic Partnership will lead to closer coordination of positions on crisis situations and issues of world importance, on the basis of shared interests and concerns;
- (h) wishes to see clear guidelines on how best to ensure close cooperation with a view to promoting effective multilateralism and reinforcing the UN's capacities for preserving and consolidating peace and ensuring respect for human rights, while also tackling, in the framework of international law, common threats to peace and security such as trafficking in drugs and arms, organised crime, terrorism and human trafficking, in line with the Lima Declaration;
- (i) urges that the Strategic Partnership be seen as an opportunity to debate how to confer greater operability on the human rights and democracy clause and evaluate compliance with it, including development of its positive dimension and recalling that these are essential values, in all the agreements and for both parties;
- (j) expresses, in this connection, its support for the Mexican government in its contributions to the work of the UN and in its fight against drug trafficking, international terrorism and organised crime, especially in view of the increasing numbers of victims of drug trafficking and consumption;
- (k) trusts that the privileged mechanisms of political dialogue arising from the EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership will result in a real impetus for relations with and between the various regional integration processes, for the safeguarding of the values and interests of the Strategic Partnership itself, and for the strengthening of multilateralism in the area of international relations;
- (l) suggests that the Mexico-EU Civil Society Forum be officially recognised and that its recommendations be taken into account wherever possible;

- (m) stresses the role of the Strategic Partnership as an instrument that should help reinforce cooperation between the parties in international forums, such as the World Bank, the IMF, the OECD, the G-20 and the G8+G5, with a view to seeking solutions to the world financial crisis and launching a joint response aimed at restoring confidence in the financial institutions, in line with the San Salvador Declaration;
- (n) underlines the need, especially in the context of the world financial crisis, to promote the development of SMEs, given their vital role in the strengthening of the economic and social fabric and creating worthwhile employment;
- (o) stresses the importance of all bilateral agreements concluded between the EU and Mexico, especially the Global Agreement, which includes an FTA, and the Strategic Partnership;
- (p) highlights the positive effects that the application of the Global Agreement has had for both parties, with an increase in bilateral trade of more than 100% being recorded;
- (q) underlines that the EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership will give fresh impetus to the bilateral relationship and will favour the expansion and improvement of cooperation programmes such as the Integral Support Programme for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (PIAPYME), whose results will benefit both parties; calls, in this context, for an information campaign to be conducted to publicise all the programmes from which both parties will benefit within the framework of this deepening of their relations; point out that the Strategic Partnership will serve to further consolidate coordination between the two parties in the main multilateral forums and institutions;
- (r) recommends that Mexico should become a permanent member of the new financial and economic international architecture of the G-20, given that, within this context, the bilateral strategic partnership with the EU will become even more relevant;
- (s) emphasises the need to establish common ground in order to devise an ambitious strategy for fighting climate change, with a view to the UN Conference on Climate Change to be held in 2009 in Copenhagen and the achievement of a global agreement;
- (t) urges more coherent efforts to promote scientific and technological transfer, with a view to boosting real cooperation in fighting climate change and improving environmental protection;
- (u) wishes to see further progress in developing a comprehensive and structured dialogue on immigration, both legal and illegal, as well as on the links between migration and development, in line with the experiences of both Mexico and the EU on these subjects and with the Lima Declaration;
- (v) call on the Joint Council, on the basis of the future developments clause provided for by Article 43 of the Global Agreement, to consider the timeliness of establishing, inter alia, an agreement on an immigration policy between the two parties, in particular as regards Mode 4 procedures;

- (w) calls for the reaffirmation of the MDG commitments and for renewed awareness of the need for close cooperation in the areas of social cohesion, gender equality, climate change, sustainable development, the fight against international terrorism, drug trafficking and organised crime, food security, and the fight against poverty;
 - (x) believes there must be a regular flow of information from the EU institutions and the Mexican government to the EP, EUROLAT and the EU-Mexico Joint Parliamentary Committee on the state of play regarding the Strategic Partnership and on the monitoring of the actions taken under it;
2. Instructs its President to forward this recommendation to the Council and, for information, to the Commission, the Governments and Parliaments of the EU Member States, and the Mexican Congress.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Introduction

EU-Mexico relations are grounded in solid foundations. Both parties share historical and cultural links and a set of common fundamental values and principles based on respect for democratic values, the rule of law and human rights.

Mexico and the EU have maintained relations of cooperation since the 1970s, and as early as 1997 signed a partnership agreement conferring a forward-looking institutionalised framework on relations. This partnership agreement (usually referred to as the 'Global Agreement') has three pillars: economic partnership, political coordination and cooperation.

The success of the Global Agreement since it came into force in October 2000, and the development of ever-closer ties at all levels in recent years, now point to the need for a qualitative leap in the form of a Strategic Partnership between Mexico and the EU.

Mexico in the global context

With a population of over 100 m and 45% of its inhabitants aged under 20, Mexico is one of Latin America's demographic heavyweights.

Mexico's geographical location gives it a geostrategic role as a bridge both between North and South America and between the Caribbean and the Pacific. This geostrategic factor is reinforced by Mexico's more than 40 trade agreements concluded with different countries or regions. These include, notably, NAFTA (with the US and Canada), agreements with Japan and Australia, and the wide-ranging partnership agreement with the EU. Mexico has become a leading economy at world level, and the EU has in recent years become Mexico's second partner after the US.

Mexico is, like the EU, fully committed to the UN system as the framework best able to ensure peace and security in the world. This commitment is manifested in Mexico's nomination, for the fourth time in its history, as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2009-2010, as also in its various contributions to the work of the UN, including:

- peaceful conflict and crisis resolution;
- the fight against apartheid;
- promoting disarmament, notably in the Treaty of Tlatelolco;
- adoption of the Charter on the Economic Rights and Duties of States;
- support for the UN General Assembly's Special Session on drugs, highlighting the shared responsibility of the international community;
- the preparation and promotion of an international convention on protecting the rights of migrant workers and their relatives;
- the International Conference on Development Funding;
- the Convention on the Rights of the Disabled.

In addition, Mexico's financial contribution to the UN's general budget accounts for more than half of the total contribution of Latin America, making Mexico the world's tenth-biggest contributor¹.

Mexico, as a member of a number of international and regional bodies, plays a leading role in the political and economic spheres. It is a very active UN member and an integral member of the main Latin America political dialogue forums, including the Rio Group, whose Pro-Tempore Presidency it currently occupies (for 2008-2010). As the world's tenth-biggest economy, Mexico is a member of the G-20, the G-8+G-5, the WTO and the IMF. It is also the only Latin American OECD member.

On the environment, Mexico has signed the main international conventions, such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol and the Bali Action Plan. It shares the EU's belief that climate change needs to be tackled on a basis of shared but differentiated responsibility.

From Global Agreement to Strategic Partnership

Mexico and the EU have maintained cooperation relations since the 1970s, as embodied in the signing of the Framework Cooperation Agreement between Mexico and what was then the EEC. These relations were institutionalised and expanded with the Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement (the 'Global Agreement'), signed on 8 December 1997 and in force since 1 October 2000. This agreement consists of three pillars for bilateral cooperation:

1. economic partnership (creation of a free trade area in goods and services);
2. political coordination (institutionalisation of the political dialogue);
3. cooperation (concentrating on priority areas for Mexico's development and securing maximum advantage from the Global Agreement).

Thanks to the Global Agreement, the EU and Mexico have increased trade with each other and come closer politically. The political dialogue has been strengthened at all levels. There have been numerous high-level visits in both directions, including the visit of the Mexican President, Felipe Calderón Hinojosa, to the EU institutions and European capitals in 2007 and the meeting of the Mexican foreign minister, Patricia Espinosa, and the EU Commissioner for External Relations and Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner. Other visits of leading EU figures to Mexico include those of: the High Representative for the CFSP and Secretary-General of the Council, Javier Solana; the Commissioner for Trade, Peter Mandelson; the Commissioner for Research and Science, Janez Potočnik; the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equality, Vladimir Spidla; and the Commission President, José Manuel Barroso. The regular contacts between parliamentarians via the EU-Mexico JPC and EUROLAT have been immensely fruitful and have served to develop the political dialogue at parliamentary level.

¹ National Development Plan - official site of the Presidency, Mexico 2008.

In this connection, stress has been laid on the desirability of creating a more far-reaching political framework to boost the political dialogue, by means of an effective instrument enabling the coordination of positions, at world level and also in the various multilateral forums and international bodies. The proposed Strategic Partnership will thus be articulated at two levels: coordination between the EU and Mexico at multilateral level; and the further development of bilateral links.

Multilaterally, the aim is to instil habits of consultation and coordination, reflecting the common interests of both sides and enabling the adoption of positions on concrete issues of global reach. The main areas of coordination will be in the political, security, environmental and socio-economic fields.

Bilaterally, the Strategic Partnership should give a new impetus to bilateral relations, in the context of the political dialogue as well as in other aspects, thus reinforcing the links already in place under the Global Agreement.

Conclusions

Mexico's leading position in Latin American and international forums, as well as its participation in the most important multilateral forums and world bodies, offer excellent opportunities for the further development of EU-Mexico relations, especially in terms of coordinating positions and presenting joint initiatives at international level.

The proposed Strategic Partnership represents a key step forward and will be vital for the consolidation of the existing relations with Mexico and developing coordination on issues of world importance. It is here explicitly proposed that the new partnership should institutionalise the annual EU-Mexico summits along lines similar to those already existing for the summits with the US, China, Russia and Brazil. This would need to be done in such a way as not to undermine the dialogue mechanisms already in place under the Global Agreement. The parliamentary dialogue via the EU-Mexico JPC and EUROLAT is a crucial additional means of developing relations between the two parties.

The present recommendation to the Council sets out the main aspects and subject areas for which closer coordination and cooperation are needed, while also calling for clear guidelines on the best means of cooperating closely to encourage an effective multilateralism and deal with shared threats and new challenges.

Only thus will the new Strategic Partnership make it possible to bridge the existing gaps and harmonise our respective positions on issues of world importance, thus reinforcing bilateral relations between the EU and Mexico.

15.9.2008

PROPOSAL FOR A RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL (B6-0437/2008)

tabled pursuant to Rule 114(1) of the Rules of Procedure

by José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on an EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission communication to the Council and the European Parliament 'Towards an EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership' (COM(2008)0447),
 - having regard to the Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement between the European Community and its Member States, of the one part, and the United Mexican States, of the other¹,
 - having regard to the declaration of the Fifth Latin America and the Caribbean - European Union summit (EU-LAC), held in Lima (Peru) on 16 and 17 May 2008,
 - having regard to the joint communiqué of the Fourth Mexico-EU summit held in Lima, dated 17 May 2008,
 - having regard to the message from EUROLAT to the Fifth EU-LAC Summit,
 - having regard to its resolution of 24 April 2008 on the Fifth EU-LAC Summit held in Lima²,
 - having regard to Rule 114(1) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the EU-Mexico Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement (the 'Global Agreement'), signed in 1997 and in force since 2000, has three pillars: political dialogue; the gradual creation of a free-trade area; and cooperation; whereas, since the agreement came into force in 2000 relations between the two sides have been marked by deepening and consolidation, both politically and in the trade and cooperation fields,
- B. whereas since 2004 the EU and Mexican institutions have intensified their high-level contacts, both bilaterally and in the framework of the Global Agreement,

¹ OJ L 276, 28.10.2000, p. 45.

² Texts adopted, P6_TA(2008)0177.

- C. whereas the deepening of EU-Mexico relations can help enhance the consensus between the EU and its Latin American partners on regional and global issues,
- D. whereas the Strategic Partnership implies the reinforcement of EU-Mexico relations at two different levels: multilaterally, in terms of mutual coordination on issues of world importance; and bilaterally, via the development of their relations and of particular initiatives,
- E. whereas strategic partnerships of this nature must also contribute to improving the levels of wellbeing of both the European and the Latin American partners with the goal of achieving more integrated and cohesive societies where the rule of law and respect for the values and principles of democracy and human rights prevail in a climate of solidarity and equality, in line with the Lima decisions,
1. Makes the following recommendations to the Council:
- a) the EU-Mexico Biregional Strategic Partnership should be conceived following the biregional approach and global vision concerning EU-LAC relations which forms the basis of the Biregional Strategic Partnership agreed in the framework of the EU-LAC summits;
 - b) the privileged mechanisms of political dialogue arising from the EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership should result in a real impetus for relations with and between the various regional integration processes, for the safeguarding of the values and interests of the Strategic Partnership itself, and for the strengthening of multilateralism in the area of international relations;
 - c) the EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership should bring genuine value added to the existing EU-Mexico partnership agreement (the Global Agreement), as well as to bilateral relations;
 - d) the Strategic Partnership should facilitate bridging the gaps now existing in terms of coordination between the partners in the international forums and bodies, going beyond simply drawing up a common agenda and including the coordination of positions on issues of world importance, on the basis of shared interests and concerns;
 - e) it should include clear guidelines on how best to ensure close cooperation with a view to promoting effective multilateralism and reinforcing the UN's capacities for preserving and consolidating peace, while also tackling, in the framework of international law, common threats to peace and security such as trafficking in drugs and arms, organised crime, terrorism and the mafias which profit from illegal immigration, in line with the Lima Declaration;
 - f) there should be a full and regular flow of information from the EU institutions and the Mexican government to the EP and EUROLAT on the state of play regarding the Strategic Partnership and on the monitoring of the actions taken under it;

2. Instructs its President to forward this recommendation to the Council and, for information, to the Commission and to the Governments and Parliaments of the EU Member States.

8.1.2009

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on an EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership
(2008/2289(INI))

Rapporteur: Erika Mann

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on International Trade calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas Mexico participated in the G-20 summit on financial markets and the world economy which took place in Washington D.C. on 15 November 2008,
- B. whereas Mexico has embarked on a scheme of structural reforms in strategic sectors and has become the world's tenth economic power,
- C. whereas Mexico's strategic situation and its network of trade agreements mean that this country is of great strategic importance for European exports, the European Union being its second source of foreign investment,
- D. whereas the EU and Mexico are linked by a system of bilateral agreements, covering the whole of the political, economical and trade relationship, and whereas the basis of the relationship is the Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement (the "Global Agreement"),
- E. whereas the Mexico-EU Free Trade Area ("FTA") plays an important role in the EU's bilateral relations since its coverage is very comprehensive (goods, services, procurement, competition, intellectual property rights, investment and related payments),
- F. whereas Mexican emigration to the European Union, inter alia, is one of the most important and most sensitive issues for Mexico, given the high number of Mexican immigrants in the European Union many of them highly skilled,

Makes the following recommendations to the Council:

- (a) stress the importance of all bilateral agreements concluded between the EU and Mexico, mainly the Global Agreement, which includes an FTA, and its Strategic Partnership;
- (b) highlight the positive effects that the application of the Global Agreement has had for both parties, with an increase in bilateral trade of more than 100% being recorded;
- (c) underline that the EU-Mexico Strategic Partnership will give fresh impetus to the bilateral relationship and will favour the expansion and improvement of cooperation programmes, such as the Integral Support Programme for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (PIAPYME), the results of which will benefit both parties; call, in this context, for an information campaign to be conducted to publicise all the programmes from which both parties will benefit within the framework of this deepening of their relations; point out that this strategic partnership will serve to further consolidate coordination between the two parties in the main multilateral forums and institutions;
- (d) recommend that Mexico should become a standing member of the new financial and economic international architecture of the G-20 given that, within this context, the bilateral strategic partnership with the EU will become even more relevant;
- (e) call on the Joint Council, on the basis of the future developments clause, under Article 43 of the Global Agreement, to consider the timeliness of establishing, *inter alia*, an agreement on an immigration policy between the two parties, in particular as regards Mode 4 procedures.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

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| Date adopted | 8.1.2009 |
| Result of final vote | +: 23 -: 1 0: 0 |
| Members present for the final vote | Carlos Carnero González, Daniel Caspary, Christofer Fjellner, Glyn Ford, Jacky Hélin, Caroline Lucas, Marusya Ivanova Lyubcheva, Erika Mann, David Martin, Vural Öger, Georgios Papastamkos, Tokia Saïfi, Peter Šťastný, Robert Sturdy, Daniel Varela Suanzes-Carpegna, Iuliu Winkler, Corien Wortmann-Kool |
| Substitute(s) present for the final vote | Jean-Pierre Audy, Ole Christensen, Pia Elda Locatelli, Eugenijus Maldeikis, Jan Tadeusz Masiel, Javier Moreno Sánchez, Zbigniew Zaleski |