

A Message From Mexico About Migration.



Migration is an increasingly important issue for both the U.S. and its second-largest trading partner, Mexico – two friendly nations with common challenges and opportunities.

Based on a joint initiative of the Executive Branch and the Senate of Mexico, a working group of migration experts – government officials, Mexican lawmakers, members of academia and representatives of civic organizations – came together to discuss migration policy.

This unprecedented effort resulted in the document entitled “Mexico and the Migration Phenomenon,” which was adopted as a Concurrent Resolution on February 16th, 2006, by both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies of Mexico’s Federal Congress.

This historic position sets forth important guiding principles, recommendations and commitments to update Mexico’s migration policy, on topics such as undocumented migration, border and regional security, fighting human smuggling and trafficking, international cooperation based upon shared responsibility and improving economic and social opportunities in Mexico.

Today, we respectfully offer you, our friends and neighbors in the United States, some of these thoughts as your leaders’ debate immigration policy.

An electronic version of the complete document can be viewed at www.sre.gob.mx
For more information, e-mail: migration@sre.gob.mx

PRINCIPLES

The migration phenomenon should be fully understood by the Mexican State, society and government, because it demands actions and commitments that respond to prevailing conditions.

- The migration phenomenon has international implications that demand Mexican and international commitments, especially with neighboring regions and countries, which, in the spirit of international cooperation, should be guided by the principle of *shared responsibility*.
- Mexico’s migration policy acknowledges that as long as a large number of Mexicans do not find in their own country an economic and social environment that facilitates their full development

and well being, and that encourages people to stay in the country, conditions for emigrating abroad will exist.

- Mexico must develop and enforce its migration laws and policy with full respect for the human rights of migrants and their relatives, without regard to their nationality and migration status, respecting refugee and asylum rights, in accordance with applicable international instruments.
- Increased linkage between migration, borders and security on an international level, is a reality present in the relationship with our neighboring countries. Hence, it is necessary to consider those three elements when drawing up migration policies.

• Mexico is committed to fighting all forms of human smuggling and related criminal activities, to protecting the integrity and safety of people, and to deepening the appropriate cooperation with the governments of neighboring countries.

• Migration processes in Mexico are regionally articulated, in particular with Central America, and therefore the Mexican migration policy should deepen its regional approach.

RECOMMENDATIONS & COMMITMENTS

Based on the new regional and international realities regarding immigration, transmigration and emigration, it is necessary to evaluate and update the present migration policy of the Mexican State, and its legal and normative framework, with a timeline of fifteen to twenty years.

- It is necessary to create economic and social development that, among other positive effects, will encourage people to stay in Mexico.
- If a guest country offers a sufficient number of appropriate visas to cover the largest possible number of workers and their families, who currently cross the border without documents because of the impossibility of obtaining them, Mexico should be responsible for guaranteeing that each person who decides to leave does so following legal channels.

Based on international cooperation, Mexico must strengthen the fight against criminal organizations specialized in migrant smuggling and in the use of false documents, and strengthen laws for the prevention and prosecution of human trafficking, especially women and children, and the protection of victims of that crime.

- Promote the return and adequate reincorporation of migrants and their families to Mexico territories.
- Mexico’s migration policy must be adjusted taking into account the characteristics of our neighboring countries to safeguard the border and to facilitate the legal, safe and orderly flow of people, under the principles of *shared responsibility* and respect for human rights.
- Mexico’s north and south borders must be secured and fortified, with an emphasis on the development of the border regions.

• Reinforce cooperation with the United States and Canada through the Security and Prosperity Partnership for North America, and with groups like the Regional Conference on Migration and the *Cumbre Iberoamericana*.

- Review and, if necessary, adjustment of the judicial and institutional framework, in order to adequately respond to the present and the foreseeable conditions of the migration phenomenon; this will require the creation of a specialized inter-institutional program of collaboration.
- Create permanent programs for the Executive and Legislative Branches, with the participation of academic and civil society representatives, that allow the development and fulfillment of Mexico’s migration agenda.

ELEMENTS RELATED TO A POSSIBLE IMMIGRATION REFORM IN THE UNITED STATES

Mexico does not promote undocumented migration and is eager to participate in finding solutions that will help us face the migration phenomenon. Accordingly, the group decided to express thoughts on possible immigration reform in the United States:

Acknowledging the sovereign right of each country to regulate the entrance of foreigners and the conditions of their stay, it is important to find a solution for the undocumented population that lives in the United States and contributes to the development of the country, so that people are fully incorporated into their actual communities, with the same rights and duties.

- Support the proposal of a safe, orderly guest worker program, which should be one part of a larger program to address the issue of undocumented Mexicans living in the United States.
- For a guest worker program to be viable, Mexico should participate in its design, management, supervision and evaluation, under the principle of *shared responsibility*.

• A guest worker program designed to process the legal temporary flow of workers will allow Mexico and the United States to better combat criminal organizations specialized in the smuggling of migrants and the use of false documents, and to combat the violence and the insecurity along our shared border.

- A guest worker program would help Mexico encourage migrants to abide by the proper rules and to adopt measures to reduce undocumented migration. Mexico should conclude current studies to know what tactics will help with the implementation of a guest workers program, regarding the proper management of migrants, the establishment of supporting certification, and the supervision and evaluation of its development.
- Mexico acknowledges that a crucial aspect for the success of a temporary workers program refers to the capacity to guarantee the circular flow of the participants, and the development of incentives that encourage migrants to return to

our country. Mexico could significantly enhance its tax-preferred housing programs, so that migrants can construct a house in their home communities in Mexico while they work in the United States.

- Other programs should be developed to establish a bilateral medical insurance system to cover migrants and their relatives, and adjustments should be made to pension benefit programs, which will allow Mexicans working in the United States to collect their pension benefits in Mexico.
- Mexico could enhance the programs of its Labor and Social Development Ministries, to establish social and working conditions that encourages and eases the return and reincorporation of Mexicans into their home communities in Mexico.