

Remarks by the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Luis Videgaray Caso, on Mexico's foreign policy position

Transcript

Foreign Secretary Luis Videgaray Caso: Good morning everyone. With permission from the President of the United Mexican States, Enrique Peña Nieto, I welcome you to the Los Pinos official residence to hear a foreign policy statement from the President.

I would like to greet the presidents of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, the Senators and Deputies, and thank the labor leaders, the leaders of the private sector, the opinion leaders and each and every one of you, thank you for being here this morning.

2016 will be remembered as a year of profound political change in the world, as a year of breaking paradigms, a year in which a significant portion of citizens, of the electorate from developed countries—particularly in Europe and the United States—raised their voices to create a paradigm shift; dissatisfied citizens demanded that local interests be given priority over cosmopolitan concerns, an electorate that demanded nationalist public policies above those that promote the goals of globalization.

This is a profound change that will, to a large extent, change the public policies that prevail in the developed world and the way in which we interact among nations.

This change first became evident last July when the voters in the United Kingdom unexpectedly decided to leave the European Union in the so-called Brexit vote.

Then, in November, in the United States, the American voters, also unexpectedly, chose a President through a majority in the Electoral College who promotes an agenda of change based on the national interest and economic nationalism.

Facing this reality, Mexico is forced to act exercising its sovereignty based on our national interest. Therefore, we Mexicans must have a clear diagnosis, a roadmap and specific objectives for dialogue and negotiation.

And it is also necessary for everyone, starting with ourselves, to make our strengths and Mexico's importance in the world more clear.

In North America, Mexico is an essential partner for the United States' economy and society. It is important to mention that trade between Mexico and the United States exceeds \$1.4 billion dollars a day; which makes more than 500 billion dollars a year. And if we look at it by state, Mexico's importance is clear and palpable in the states that define the political outcomes in our neighboring nation,

For example, in California, trade with Mexico provides 566,000 jobs through the \$26.8 billion dollars of exports from California to Mexico.

Texas, our main trading partner in the United States, exported \$92.5 billion dollars of Texan merchandise to Mexico in 2014, which means that more than 380,000 jobs in that state alone depend on Texan exports having access to the Mexican market.

But this is not limited to the states of California and Texas. In the states that were crucial to the political outcome of November 2016, exports to Mexico played a key role. For example, in Indiana more than 200,000 jobs depend on exports to Mexico, and in Pennsylvania, with exports of almost 5 billion dollars to Mexico, more than 200,000 jobs depend on access to our market.

In Wisconsin, an emblematic state because of its key role in last year's election result, more than 96,300 jobs depend on having access to the Mexican market.

Regarding investment, we cannot forget that while the United States is the source of most of the foreign investment we have received in recent years, Mexico is also a very

important source of investment to the United States. Today, cumulative investments by Mexican companies in the United States represent more than 18 billion dollars.

Regarding migration, Mexico plays an increasingly important and changing role because of the transformation in migration flows. Here, it is worth noting that in 2009, it was estimated that more than 380,000 undocumented Mexicans entered the United States. In 2014, that number decreased to 80,000, while non-Mexicans, that is, people of other nationalities that cross Mexico trying to reach the United States, had increased significantly. In 2013, it was estimated that about 215,000 citizens of other countries crossed Mexico to reach the United States, while by November 2016, this number exceeded more than 500,000 people. That is, in just 3 years, the number of foreign migrants crossing Mexico to get to the United States had more than doubled.

This is a fundamental change in the nature of the migration phenomenon, which implies that today, the United States and Mexico share a problem and share an interest in solving together this complex dynamic of population flows.

Mr. President, in the next days, according to your instructions, we will begin talks with the new administration of the United States. We will do so with confidence in the importance that Mexico has for that nation, and we will do so with the certainty that—in unity and with clear goals—we will achieve good results.

Mr. President, we await your instructions.

Thank you.