

OUR VOICE

The administration of Enrique Peña Nieto has just celebrated its first 100 days, with a provocative balance sheet framed in what has been dubbed the Pact for Mexico, signed by the country's three main political forces, the Institutional Revolutionary Party, the National Action Party, and the Party of the Democratic Revolution. With the aim of analyzing, debating, and reaching consensus to reformulate five key spheres of political endeavor (economic growth, employment, and productivity; security and justice; civil liberties and social rights; transparency, accountability, and the fight against corruption; and the strengthening of democratic governability), the mere idea of breaking the perverse 15-year cycle of divided governments has irrupted onto the national scene as an encouraging sign.

In accordance with this, in the sphere of foreign policy, the Ministry of Foreign Relations has issued the call for the 24th Meeting of Mexican Ambassadors and Consuls and the "Mexico: Globally Responsible Actor" Public Consultation to create synergies for a new era in Mexican diplomacy, centered on the values of peace, inclusion, prosperity, responsibility, and quality education. The country has an enormous need to roll back the negative image created by violence and organized crime, seeking new ways to articulate the imperatives of domestic development with those demanded of us to link up to the rest of the world. If we take into account that, today, Mexico has only 75 embassies and about 68 consulates—in contrast with Brazil, with 128 and 168, respectively—the era that our foreign policy is now entering will not only bring enormous challenges, but the need for more funding and highly trained human resources.

This background about the sphere of Mexican political negotiations is complemented in this issue by inviting our readers to review Eduardo Pérez Haro's ideas about the country's economic growth and its unbreakable link to public policy.

The fundamental relationship our nation has with the United States is one of the crosscutting themes in this issue. Brandishing her exceptional narrative ability, Ambassador Roberta Lajous offers us a panoramic view of the history of Mexico's international relations. With our homeland marked by its geographical proximity to the world's hegemonic power and its well-known interventionist vocation, Lajous underlines the yearnings and domestic political vicissitudes Mexico faced to obtain recognition from other countries as a sovereign nation throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

While it is true that the coincidence of President Obama's re-election and Mexico's President Peña Nieto taking office has sparked certain expectations about a more ambitious turn in bilateral relations, the important issues continue to be linked to economic integration (with particular emphasis on the energy sector), security, and migration. In this issue, CISAN researcher Raúl Benítez Manaut contributes his thinking about the results of the Mérida Plan, warning that its weak points include, among others, both the context of corruption in Mexico and free arms sales in the United States.

Inter-American Dialogue states that more than the economic integration of our two nations, demographics is what distinguishes us from all others in the world. Just as an example, let us consider that 25 percent of the foreigners residing in the United States are Mexican, as are 60 percent of its undocumented migrants. Researcher Camelia Tigau's article deals precisely with the emigration of talented professionals from our country and Canada to the United States, sketching a critique of the U.S. immigration red-tape labyrinth whose quota system renders it exclusionary.

Based on testimony from different sources, specialist Jill Anderson tells us about the urgent dilemma Mexico finds itself in because of the growing number of young migrants deported by the United States, whose common denominator is having spent time in jail before arriving in Mexico City. Their being taken advantage of by their international call center employers and the absence of a Mexican government policy to deal with their needs increase their vulnerability.

This issue of *Voices of Mexico* also deals superbly with Mexico's relations with Canada, through Leonardo Curzio's splendid, provocative interview with Canada's Governor General David Johnston, who, among other things, states that North America can already be considered a community.

This issue's "Special Section" includes eight articles that take a comprehensive look at the effects of climate change from different conceptual points of view. They review the rhetoric, the influence of the media, the financial challenges for developing and implementing new technologies to counteract its effects, public policies, and science. They show that each of the authors, headed by specialists Edit Antal and Simone Lucatello, have taken on the dual task of combining knowledge with conviction.

We want to express our particular thanks for the contributions written by three celebrated members of our country's intelligentsia to pay well-deserved tribute to the great writer Carlos Fuentes: Elena Poniatowska, Hernán Lara Zavala, and Ignacio Solares. Fuentes was a universal Mexican who distinguished himself for his literary gift, his work as a diplomat, and his open commitment to criticizing those practices he never agreed with: authoritarianism, corruption, injustice, and human rights violations.

To conclude, we think that this first year of the new administration will be decisive for calibrating the character, determination, and perhaps some of the early results of the reforms promised by the Mexican first executive in the spheres of education, employment, telecommunications, and energy. It will also be decisive for President Obama to show signs of his skill in fostering immigration reform, resolving the problem of the fiscal deficit, and containing the hostility of his country's ultra-conservatives. About what the two presidents might undertake together, it is better not to speculate.

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