

Luis Ernesto Derbez Bautista, *Mexico Faced with a Changing World Scenario*

In this article, the author suggests that the main challenge facing Mexico is deciding how it wants to relate to the rest of the world in the future. The answer to this question and the steps taken in this regard will determine how successfully the country develops as a nation in the 21st century. Based on this premise, he goes on to state that, today, we all recognize the fundamental importance of the constitutional principles of our foreign policy; consequently, we need to reflect on strategies and courses of action derived from these principles if we are to aspire to a better future. According to the author, it is in Mexico's national interest to become the leader of the region, but in order to achieve this, we must continue to promote a more active and more committed foreign policy. Finally, Foreign Minister Derbez goes into substantial depth on relevant aspects of the six strategic focal points of our foreign policy, singling out the achievements of this policy and underlining the challenges it faces.

Clyde V. Prestowitz, *The United States in a Changing World*

The author takes a closer look at how the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 have forced us to ask ourselves why the United States come under increasing criticism and why it has become the object of worldwide alienation. Prestowitz explains the turnaround in US foreign policy, particularly as regards security: the attacks evidenced the need for a preventive "first-strike" policy. The war on Iraq is the most concrete manifestation of this, its true justification

being a desire to show the world the power of the United States. The author then goes on to mention certain international treaties and how the United States seems to have its own set of rules when it comes to these. Then there is the complex connection between US cotton subsidies, indiscriminate energy consumption by Americans and the African child who can no longer survive on his cotton crops and is left with no option but to join the mujahedin, which, paradoxically, is financed by US oil purchases. The author asks himself whether Americans feel safer today than before and closes by posing the questions: What is national interest and how is this defined? What is the outlook as regards Mexico?

Néstor García Canclini, *Mexico in the New International Cultural Scenario*

This text focuses on the importance of international cooperation and exchange in the sphere of culture. In the author's view, diverse factors are contributing to the globalization of Mexico. Likewise, he asks himself how we can draw up policies at a time when culture is becoming globalized and industrialized by the breaking down of borders, in reference to which he speaks of mankind's "new cultural heritage". As regards the production, financing and spreading of culture, public and private initiatives and social movements should all complement each other, he says. The characteristics of this new international cultural scenario have compelled us to rethink the many and varied possessions that set our country apart, but in García Canclini's opinion, Mexico needs to come up with a more modern and more consistent approach if it is to act effectively under new market conditions and forge inter-cultural relations, which implies, among other aspects, taking a more professional attitude toward cultural efforts. The author proposes closer cooperation between academics, the Foreign Affairs Ministry (SRE) and Mexico's representatives abroad.

Ricardo Pérez Montfort, *Diversity, Inequality and Know-How. The Factor in Mexico's Foreign Relations*

In his essay on the cultural factor in Mexico's foreign relations, the author reflects on how the economic, political and intellectual development of the country is marked by diversity, inequality, a destructive streak and a hefty dose of know-how. Mexico's ingenuity and its ability to weather adversity have enabled it to emphasize its own uniqueness. This know-how, says the author, rather than *savoir-faire*, can be translated as "ingenuity," and is a central factor in the capillarity between the popular and the academic in Mexican culture. Diversity, originality and inequality have marked out the path toward a truly Mexican culture that, faced with the atavisms of a monolithic vision, has yet to be discovered. Mexico's multi-cultural society is what defines the country and defies all attempts at homogenization and unification. Here, the author proposes that Mexican culture must be viewed in the context of this diversity and capillarity; in the sphere of international relations, this could well mean leaving behind the quaint, picturesque Mexico of the past and thinking in terms of a more real, more complex country.

Paul A. Laudicina, *The Asian Challenge: Opportunities or Threats?*

In his evaluation of the economic rise of China and the challenges and opportunities this poses for the rest of the world —particularly North America and specifically Mexico—, the author points out that few nations have undergone such rapid and drastic change as China since the seventies. Today, China is the largest consumer market in the world and the main receptor of direct foreign investment (DFI). Nonetheless, China still has obstacles to overcome, such as an aging population and a pressing need for resources and investment in

infrastructure. Laudicina spells out the repercussions of China's economic success on Mexico, which has now been ousted from its place as the United States' second-most-important trading partner. However, Mexico does have certain advantages over its Asian competitor, namely the fact that it forms part of the world's most dynamic international market, which, in turn, stands to benefit from China's prosperity.

Rafael Fernández de Castro, *Three Years of Foreign Policy*

In this article, the author takes stock of the first three years of the foreign policy implemented by President Vicente Fox's administration, beginning with the period during which Jorge Castañeda served as Foreign Affairs Minister. During this time, Mexico developed an active foreign policy, particularly toward the United States, with whom concerted efforts were made to reach a comprehensive migratory agreement. Since Luis Ernesto Derbez has been in office, Mexico's foreign policy has become more reactive, priority issues with the United States now being NAFTA and economic integration, in addition to migration and the protection of Mexican's abroad. Asia is currently viewed as an objective of economic diversification, special relationships have been maintained with Chile, Brazil and Central America in Latin America and a migratory diversification initiative is being implemented in conjunction with European nations. The author also mentions the country's participation in the UN Security Council and the possibility of Mexico putting itself forward as a candidate once again. Finally, he says that he does not foresee any great progress as regards Mexico's positioning in the world arena. Fernández de Castro's advice is to hoist our sails and await more favorable winds.

Agustín Escobar Latapí, *Migration and Security in Mexico's Foreign Policy*

In a world plagued with migratory movements, governments and institutions, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations (UN), have attempted to reach agreements to deal with the problem. According to the author, countries that suffer waves of emigration and immigration have tried to surmount this challenge by implementing a series of solutions that range from improvised measures to specific agreements, for instance, the Temporary Agricultural Workers Program between Mexico and Canada. The migratory relationship between Mexico and the United States is the next issue addressed by the author, who gives us a rundown of the current situation and proposes paths that could be explored with a view to reaching a migratory agreement. Escobar Latapí then concludes that it would be advisable to opt for a bilateral, “concentrated” foreign policy with the United States, while continuing to work on the migration issue with international organizations and other continents.

Ricardo Monreal, *The Reality of Migrant Mexico: Opportunities and Challenges*

Here, the author gives us an overview of the migration issue in Mexico and highlights the diverse factors that have contributed to this phenomenon, providing us with information on what he calls “Migrant Mexico” and claiming that the migration phenomenon has escalated into an economic, social and political challenge for both Mexico and the United States. More specifically, he addresses the impact of migration on Mexico’s regions, states and municipalities, and mentions several proposals put forward by the National Governors Conference (Conago), which refer mainly to the regularization

of Mexican citizens living in the United States and the voting rights of Mexicans resident in foreign countries. Finally, he deals with the issue of security and migration, and the approach Mexico should take with regard to regional and continental security programs.

Pablo Salazar Mendiguchía, *Migration on the Southern Border, a Perspective from Chiapas*

The importance of Mexico's southern border —home to a heterogeneous body of human beings and a place of vast linguistic and cultural wealth— is discussed in this article. Thousands of refugees have poured into Mexican territory as a direct consequence of warfare in Central America. According to the author, since 2000, Chiapas has experienced a new reality as an international actor. The southern border has acquired special geopolitical relevance, due to its potential to forge commercial relationships and the enormous inflow of immigrants to the region, which serves as a bridge to the United States. Salazar Mendiguchía then goes on to explain Chiapas' strategic position and the political will of the state government to integrate the southern border into regional, national and international development plans. The migratory phenomenon, in all its aspects, both positive and negative, needs to be addressed jointly by the local and federal governments, and other countries in the zone. It is Mexico's task, he says, to come up with a political strategy for migration that, among other aspects, encourages respect for human rights and promotes development via cooperative agreements and projects.

Jorge Santibáñez Romellón, *Migration Problems on Mexico's Northern Border*

This article describes and analyzes the current situation of Mexicans who migrate to and from the United States. The various factors that have given rise to this situation are all interrelated, such as the disparate conditions migrants live in during their time in the United States; the quantitative dimensions of the migratory process, for which data and charts are provided; interaction with other migrants and with their native communities, where aspects such as the sending home of remittances are discussed; the vulnerability of immigrants and the risks to which they are exposed; the impact of migration on border communities, and the relationship between US migratory policy and national security. By way of a conclusion, the author says he believes this scenario will not change substantially over the next 15 years and that Mexico needs to draw up a State migratory policy.

Doris Meissner, *Reflections on the Migratory Reforms Proposed by the United States*

In this text, the author analyzes the political import of the migratory reform plan presented by President Bush on January 7, 2004. According to Meissner, the central issue at stake here is the fact that existing migration laws simply do not work, and she proceeds to single out the demands that must be met for a solution to this: safe borders; the plan should take into consideration the country's economic needs; US workers should have an advantage over foreign workers, and there should be incentives for such workers to return to their native countries. The author then mentions some specific points of the proposal, such as the creation of a temporary workers program, better monitoring to ensure the enforcement of labor laws, and heavy fines for offenders. In Meissner's view, these proposals

are tantamount to an extremely important political statement by the US government, but she believes it will take Congress two to three years to pass them. Given the timing of the announcement, she wonders whether this is not more a political maneuver than a well-intentioned effort to amend migratory laws. This, she says, will only come to light later on in the year.

Demetrios Papademetriou, *Migratory Reforms: Challenges and Opportunities for Mexico and the United States*

In this article, the author analyzes the speech delivered by President Bush on January 7, 2004, regarding migratory reforms. According to Papademetriou, this is an intentionally ambiguous migratory policy plan that, on the one hand, calls for stricter enforcement of the law and, on the other, promises to provide greater access for foreign workers to further the economic interests of the United States and its labor market. The plan, he says, marks progress in terms of the statu quo of immigrants, but at the end of the day, it is Congress that is responsible for passing legislation. For new migratory laws to be approved, these must have the backing of two parties. Even if the Bush administration truly intends to forge ahead with this project, it would be unrealistic to expect legislation to be passed before the end of 2006. Furthermore, the plan must have the support of civil society in the United States and its partners or counterparts in Mexico. The author believes that Mexico needs to lobby the US Congress and concludes by saying that it must prepare itself as best as possible, if this, or any other migratory reform plan, is to be of benefit to Mexicans.

Alberto Gómez Alcalá, *The Future of the Mexican Economy*

In this article, the author reflects on the positive effects the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has had on Mexico, the current situation of the Mexican economy and its outlook for the future. Mexico, he says, has witnessed a trade boom as a result of NAFTA, and now competes with the exporting success of the Chinese economy in the region. Gómez Alcalá underlines the progress achieved by both nations and the points where they differ, concluding that the idea Mexico has lost some of its markets to China needs to be qualified. He then presents case studies to illustrate his point. Mexico, he says, has taken certain steps to complement the advantages afforded by NAFTA, especially as regards the handling of its macro-economy and North American integration. Special attention is devoted to the issue of competitiveness, which the author ties in with the structural reforms the country is lacking. Finally, he analyzes Mexico's economic growth prospects for 2004, which have improved recently, due to the favorable response of international financial markets and an increase in exports to the United States.

Jesús Silva-Herzog Márquez, *Consolidating Democracy, Today's Political Task*

This article takes an in-depth look at Mexico's first steps on the path to democracy. According to the author, Mexicans have realized that democracy is a valuable and irreplaceable political system, albeit a complex one. In Silva Herzog Márquez' opinion, institutional reform has stagnated because neither political nor civil society have yet made the necessary transition to democracy and democratic institutions have yet to acquire the real worth they would have in a pluralist context. Furthermore, the rules that govern the Legislature are badly thought out, with the workings of Congress being too closely

tied in with the workings of the country's political parties, while the strength of the latter has not produced an efficient democratic system. Mexico, he says, needs politicians who exercise democracy responsibly. Silva Herzog Márquez also refers to a passive civil society, content to make demands but powerless to make decisions, and loath to assume its role as an arena for pluralism. His conclusion is that two elements are required for social cohesion —rules and policies— and that today's political task is the consolidation of Mexico's democracy.