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New York, September 28, 2024

Message from the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Alicia Bárcena Ibarra, at the General Debate of the 79th regular session of the United Nations General Assembly

Mr. President,

Distinguished delegates:

I bring you warm greeting from our President, Andrés Manuel López Obrador.

I am honored to return to this General Assembly, which was my home for many years, to address you now as Mexico's representative.

We stand at the cusp of a new era. The neoliberal hegemony has demonstrated its glaring failure by promoting an extractivist development model that socializes losses, privatizes profits, impoverishes people and devastates our planet.

Arms races and wars have resurged in international geopolitics; environmental devastation is advancing; frustration and discontent are manifesting as extremism, in proposals that deny rights and reject democratic values; the institutions of the international system are losing their legitimacy.

Secretary-General António Guterres referred to these issues in his remarks, describing them as “a purgatory of polarity” and instability—symptoms of civilizational crises, of transitional phases where the old has not died and the new has not yet been born.

The parallels between our times and the interwar period of the last century are increasingly evident. They are also deeply concerning, because we know the outcome of that era: terrible years in which the world's production became a conveyor belt for war, and humanity was reduced to just another input.

However, history also teaches us that in this crisis, with courage and determination, we can alter the destructive course. During the interwar period of the last century, Mexico's foreign policy wrote an exceptional chapter, exemplifying the humanism, solidarity and respect for international law that defines us.

Mexico took on the task of defending the value of the League of Nations, justice, self-determination, integrity, interdependence and independence, as well as the equality of its members.

Under these banners, we strongly condemned the arms race, the invasions of Manchuria, Austria, Ethiopia, and the rise of fascism in Europe. After World War II, Mexico led the declaration of Latin America and the Caribbean as a nuclear-weapon-free zone.



Today, as then, Mexico is committed to building emancipatory alternatives. Our nation guides its present under the banner of Mexican Humanism, a product of our millennial history and the compass of our national transformation project: the construction of a just, egalitarian and fraternal society. We strive for a moral economy that guarantees an equitable income distribution and respect for the environment.

This represents a revolution of consciousness that has, during President López Obrador's administration, reversed the degradation and precariousness of our population's living conditions: over 9.5 million Mexicans have escaped poverty in five years and the Gini coefficient has reached its historic low.

Wages have increased by 135%, shattering those inflationary myths touted as absolute truths by those who seek to maintain the *status quo*.

We've eliminated tax privileges, bolstering public coffers and curbing corruption, tax evasion, and avoidance.

All these achievements have occurred in a context of stability that cemented Mexico's position as an investment destination.

Unprecedented actions were taken at the constitutional level to recognize the rights of indigenous peoples, guarantee equality and political participation for women, and enshrine a legacy of social conquests in our Magna Carta to safeguard them for future generations.

This commitment is also reflected in our foreign policy. As a country of migrants, no stage of the migration cycle is foreign to us. Drawing on our experience, we launched the Mexican Model of Human Mobility, a comprehensive approach to managing migration by addressing its structural causes and fostering regional collaboration.

The model rests on four pillars: first, empowering Mexican communities abroad and advocating for their full regularization in the United States; second, strengthening and expanding development cooperation in communities of origin and return; third, addressing the political factors and economic sanctions that hinder development and create irregular migration; and fourth, creating safe, orderly pathways for labor mobility.

Let our words be heard far and wide: migration is not a problem, it's a phenomenon; it's not a crime, and migrants are not criminals. The real issues are the factors that drive people from their homes, the dangers they face when legal pathways for mobility are absent, and the practices that criminalize them.

From this podium, we rightfully acknowledge the contribution of 37 million Mexicans living in the United States. These capable and honest workers contribute around 324 billion dollars annually to the U.S. Gross Domestic Product and are indispensable to the economies of both countries.





We've succeeded in shifting the narrative and conversation with the United States to focus on root causes. We've convened leaders from countries of origin in the region at Palenque, forging strategic agreements that have achieved a 66% decrease in encounters at the U.S.-Mexico border.

And we state unequivocally: development and stability will not be the norm in the international system unless we guarantee the rights and inclusion of women.

As the first country in the Global South to adopt a feminist foreign policy, we hosted the Third Ministerial Conference on Feminist Foreign Policy. The Conference's declaration recognized a series of commitments that were reflected in the Pact for the Future.

Yet, this week, only nine women—just nine heads of state and government—took this rostrum out of 133 countries. The world cannot move forward if half its population is excluded. Never again will decisions be made about us without us, because the future will be feminist or it will not be at all.

Climate change, as Nicholas Stern pointed out, is the greatest market failure of all time and our greatest global challenge. The only way to mitigate it is through collective and synchronized actions. These efforts need financing and the fulfillment of shared but differentiated responsibilities by countries of the North.

We reaffirm our commitment to the Paris Agreement; the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework ; and the activation of synergies between the three Rio agreements, the Rio Trio.

We propose measuring and restoring ecosystem integrity as providers of goods and services essential for economic and social well-being and climate stability.

We have participated in the advisory processes of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the International Court of Justice regarding State responsibility for climate change.

We will continue to work for the ratification of the Agreement on the Conservation of Marine Diversity in International Waters and maintain the moratorium on deep-sea mining.

Friends, the global security landscape is undergoing a profound transformation. We are alarmed by the growing and diverse threats to international peace and security, in particular, violations of the United Nations Charter's purposes and principles, and the escalating risks of nuclear war- the gravest threat humanity has ever faced.

In light of these scenarios, we defend territorial integrity in all geographical contexts, including in Ukraine and Palestine. We advocate for a political solution and negotiations that include both Russia and Ukraine.



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In this regard, we applaud Brazil and China's initiative to form a peace group in New York. The war has dragged on far too long and affects us all. Everyone loses except the mercenaries of death and those arms companies profiting from the pain and loss of millions of children and entire families.

Given this worrying reality, we must redouble our efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons. Their devastating effects, which know no bounds in time or space, make them contrary to international law and a threat to humanity's survival.

Firearms are also a source of violence and insecurity around the world. Mexico suffers from the influx of over half a million illegal weapons into its territory each year.

The gun industry must be held accountable for its negligence. Mexico has taken this matter to court, convinced that the gun industry is a key player in both the proliferation and solution of this issue.

Mexico is acutely aware that the illegal flow of arms is inextricably linked to the illegal drug trade and organized crime, particularly along our northern border.

Friends:

Humanity is fracturing in Gaza as the international community stands idle. Over 70% of this war's victims are children and women; more than 85% of civilians have been forced from their homes; the majority of the population lacks access to food, water and electricity.

For this reason, Mexico requested to intervene in South Africa's case before the International Court of Justice regarding the application of the International Convention against Genocide.

Together with Chile, we referred the Palestinian situation to the International Criminal Court and submitted a friend-of-the-court brief to highlight the court's jurisdiction. We reject the false dilemma between the futile violence of terrorism and the disproportionate punishment by governments hiding behind double standards.

To realize the two-state solution, it is essential to abide by United Nations resolutions and the International Court of Justice's opinion on practices in occupied Palestinian territory.

The institutions and rules upholding our international system are the last barrier against barbarism. Therefore, we strongly condemn the current Ecuadorian government's flagrant violations of the most basic rules of international coexistence and the principles of the UN Charter. The illegal and violent assault to our Embassy in Quito on the night of April 5, the aggression against our diplomats, and the unlawful abduction of a person granted political asylum by Mexico—who remains imprisoned and seriously ill—are unacceptable.



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We reiterate our appreciation for the international community's widespread condemnation of this act. We must neither forget or normalize it.

Friends:

We know this: the United Nations Security Council urgently needs reform. Mexico proposes the complete elimination of the veto power and, until that is achieved, at least its limitation in cases of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Latin America and the Caribbean, our natural region, is one of our priorities, because progress in any of our countries is progress for all.

In defense of dialogue, stability and democracy, we propose peaceful dispute resolution. We have served as guarantors in the peace process between the Colombian government and the National Liberation Army, having already hosted two rounds of negotiations. We have also facilitated dialogues between the Venezuelan government, the Unitary Democratic Platform and the United States.

Adhering to the principles of solidarity, self-determination and the well-being of peoples, we will continue to support Haiti in rebuilding its stability and security.

We reiterate our condemnation of the six-decade-long economic blockade imposed on Cuba, which violates international law, and we call for Cuba's immediate removal from the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism.

Mexico, honoring its historic tradition of asylum, has offered political asylum to those whose lives, integrity and freedom are threatened. We have granted sanctuary to tens of thousands of asylum seekers and provided complementary protection, opening our doors to those in need.

Friends:

On October 1st, we will inaugurate the administration of the first female president in 200 years, Dr. Claudia Sheinbaum.

Under her leadership, the Humanist Government will deepen efforts to combat poverty and inequality, emphasizing wellbeing, shared prosperity -because women's equality has arrived- protection of our natural heritage, and respect for the environment. And as she has said, she isn't arriving alone, we are all arriving together.

Our foreign policy will continue to embody our highest values, drawing strength from our roots and our struggles. We offer hope in the face of fear, solidarity in the face of hatred, and the return of humanism in the face of devastation.



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Ours is a world that presents a landscape that desolates the soul. The citizens of our nations find little nourishment for optimism; screens daily show us scenes of brutal cruelty and the almost mechanical arithmetic tallying of death tolls.

Many look here, to the United Nations, legitimately hoping that within these halls, the intelligence and sensitivity of the world's leaders will bring to life the promise of our purpose, that dialogue and diplomacy will succeed in halting the failure of reason.

And they are justly frustrated to see that, instead of fraternity, instead of collective defense of human dignity, instead of the application of equitable norms and international law, factional and shameful geopolitical interests and double standards prevail.

Without the slightest shame, the naked empire of force persists—another way of describing the obscene concentration of power in the hands of a privileged few who benefit from the *status quo*, for whom the present is profitable, and the pain, misery and bloodshed of so many are mere externalities not reflected in their balance sheets.

The nations of the world built this house, the United Nations, to forge a different path. Today, we reaffirm that despite all its shortcomings, it is this civilizing work that deserves our commitment and sensible alternatives.

These are the foundations that the human family managed to lay after the abyss of two world wars, the tool that should avert the risk to our survival in the face of the fire of violence and the shame of inequality.

Today it appears powerless, helpless in the face of barbarism's fury, handcuffed by the evidence that its mission is thwarted with each new casualty report.

We must sow seeds of hope, transform governance and architecture because, almost eight decades later, the world, its challenges, and its physiognomy are no longer recognizable in a mirror that stubbornly insists on reflecting 1945.

We need to restore faith in multilateralism and its institutions, in agreement and cooperation, in the conviction that despite our rich diversity of colors and geographies, we are brothers and sisters of the same community, of the same planet, sharing a common destiny.

This is what the Pact for the Future calls us to do: to renew our commitment to each other, to overcome fear and mistrust, and to reclaim the legitimacy of this organization of which we are all part.

On this path towards building a just world, you will always find in Mexico a loyal companion, a committed partner, a fraternal ally.



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We must seize today to shape tomorrow. As José Emilio Pacheco said about another transformative era, 1968: A world is unraveling; a world is being born. Darkness surrounds us, but light flickers. There is no hope," he said, "but there is life and everything is ours."

And on this journey, I would also like to invoke the words of Eduardo Galeano: "What if we begin to exercise the never-proclaimed right to dream? What if we indulge in a moment of wild imagination in this millennium? Let us fix our gaze beyond infamy to envision another possible world: one where justice and liberty, Siamese twins condemned to live apart, come together again, back to back. A world where we will be compatriots and contemporaries of all those who have the will for beauty and the will for justice, wherever they were born, whenever they have lived, regardless of the borders of map or time."

Thank you.

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