

Brussels, 12 June 2015

FACTSHEET

EU-Mexico Relations and VII EU- Mexico Summit

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EU-Mexico relations are rich and positive. Mexico is one of the most like-minded of the EU's ten Strategic Partners, cooperating closely on a wide range of international issues including climate change and environment, trade policy, post-2015 development agenda and human rights.

EU-Mexico relations and the modernisation of the Global Agreement

EU-Mexico relations have evolved positively since the entry into force of the EU-Mexico Global Agreement in 2000: a series of institutionalised meetings deepened the bilateral dialogue and cooperation, while bilateral trade nearly tripled and total EU investment stock rose to USD 145 billion. The 2009 Strategic Partnership was instrumental in expanding the relationship to new areas of cooperation by introducing new dialogue areas (multilateral issues, security and justice, macroeconomics, human rights).

The key issue in the bilateral institutional relationship is the modernisation of the Global Agreement (with three pillars: Political Dialogue, Trade, Cooperation). Then Presidents Van Rompuy, Barroso, and President Peña Nieto committed, at the EU-CELAC Summit in Santiago de Chile (January 2013) to explore the possibilities for an upgrade of the Agreement. A Joint Vision Report has been prepared to set out the scope for the upgrading exercise.

Additionally, the European Parliament and Mexican legislators have developed over the years a very good cooperation through the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC), which meets twice a year, alternatively in the EU and in Mexico.

Growing trade and investment

Since the entry into force of the trade pillar of the Global Agreement, EU-Mexico trade has nearly tripled (to USD 65 billion in 2014), representing 8% of Mexico's total foreign trade (the US alone accounts for 64%). There are some trade issues related to products subjected to sanitary- and phytosanitary measures, which the EU hopes will be overcome rapidly. Accumulated EU investment in Mexico amounts to over USD 145 billion, or nearly 40% of all foreign direct investment in Mexico.

Since the entry into force of the Global Agreement, trade and investment in the world has radically changed and both the EU and Mexico have negotiated state-of-the-art Agreements with other trading partners. A modernised trade part of the Global Agreement would build upon existing benchmarks in order to provide more opportunities for bilateral trade and investment.

Intensified political cooperation

The EU and Mexico are strategic partners with a broad convergence of views on many issues on the global/multilateral agenda, e.g. climate change, post-2015 sustainable development agenda, human rights. Cooperation in the UN context is usually close and fruitful.

A formal Political Dialogue at Political Directors' level was launched in January 2014. The next Dialogue is expected in the second half of 2015 in Mexico City. Furthermore, the Ministerial Meeting on 21 April 2015 and today's Summit advance political dialogue on topical issues.

The EU is working to further strengthen the political cooperation and coordination with Mexico at all levels. This could include the exploration of complementarities and areas of cooperation on issues related to the Common Security and Defence Policy, in view of Mexico's resumed contributions to UN peace-keeping operations. The envisaged modernisation of the EU-Mexico Global Agreement will be an opportunity to reaffirm this ambition.

Broad sectoral cooperation

Regular high-level sectoral dialogues exist in the areas of human rights, macroeconomic issues, climate change, the environment, science and technology, higher education and culture.

During the Ministerial Meeting held on 21 April 2015 in Brussels, the EU and Mexico identified new themes for possible future cooperation areas, such as energy, regional policy, employment and social affairs. This is a testimony of the dynamism of developing bilateral relations between the EU and Mexico.

The Summit is expected to endorse the launching of two new sectoral dialogues, on regional policy as well as on employment and social affairs.

The EU and Mexico cooperate on the control of drug precursors under an agreement signed in the 1990s. The third meeting of the EU-Mexico Joint Follow-up Group was held in May 2015 in Mexico City and reiterated the importance of regional cooperation with other Latin American countries and in the EU-CELAC context.

Cooperation in a changed environment

The EU has stopped its bilateral development assistance to medium-income countries such as Mexico. However, some programmes financed from the 2007-2013 multiannual financial framework are still ongoing, implemented mainly with Mexican authorities, such as the "EU-Mexico Social Cohesion Laboratory", covering a wide range of strategic policy issues and the PROCEI-programme fostering the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Since March 2014 the EU has a new instrument that helps promote the interests of the EU and Mexico and enhance our strategic engagement in areas of common interest: the Partnership Instrument (PI), based on a new logic of engagement as an equal partner. The PI will support the external dimension of EU internal policies ranging from competitiveness and migration to research and innovation, the external projection of the Europe 2020 Strategy, and will address major global challenges such as energy security, climate change and environmental protection. It will promote market access and business opportunities, as well as specific aspects of the EU's economic diplomacy. The instrument also covers public diplomacy (including cultural diplomacy) and outreach activities.

In Mexico, the PI will support specific actions in key areas of our common political agenda. The first projects focus on the promotion of low carbon technologies, climate diplomacy, biodiversity, protection of the environment and sustainable urban development. The PI will also

support policy dialogues, to exchange information and good practices and facilitate reaching common positions in different policy areas.

Mexico remains eligible for substantive thematic cooperation development programs.

Thematic cooperation mainly strengthens Mexican non-state actors (NSA) and supports their involvement in public policy processes and institutional practices. Two local calls for proposals – financed by the non-state actors' programme and the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights – are launched annually by the EU Delegation to Mexico.

Mexico remains also eligible for the 2014-2020 Latin America regional cooperation programmes under the EU's Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI). Mexico is participating in the regional programmes ALFA, EUrosociAL, EUROCLIMA, RALCEA and WATERCLIMA. Mexico is the country with the highest number of projects under the Latin America Investment Fund (LAIF) for a total amount of EUR 24 million.

The Commission just launched a EUR 15 million Regional Facility for International Cooperation and Partnership, a new way of cooperation based on a partnership between equals. The Facility will finance initiatives in areas of common interest for the EU and its Latin American and Caribbean partner countries and joint cooperation to the benefit of other countries in the region. It is expected that Mexico plays a significant role in the Facility.

Two projects were approved under the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation and have been successfully implemented: (i) Nuclear Safety Cooperation with the Regulatory Authorities of Mexico (CNSNS); (ii) Cooperation in the development of a policy and strategy for the management of spent nuclear fuel (including provisions for its safe interim storage) and radioactive waste in Mexico.

Research and Innovation

EU-Mexico cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation falls within the framework of the 2004 Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation. This strategic framework agreement is the basis on which Mexican researchers participate in the EU's Horizon 2020 research framework programme.

Horizon 2020 is fully "open to the world" and gives the possibility to all Mexican research entities to exploit this strategic framework through concrete participation. Mexico is the first international partner country to create a complementary funding mechanism to support the participation of their researchers in Horizon 2020.

The momentum and visibility of EU-Mexico research cooperation was increased during the 7th EU-Mexico Science and Technology Joint Steering Committee meeting held in Mexico in October 2014. It was agreed, inter alia, to step up cooperation in renewable energies (in particular geothermal research) and to conclude an implementing arrangement with the European Research Council (ERC). With EU encouragement, Mexico also agreed to join the EU-led global initiative Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness (GloPID-R) – a network of funders in the field of combatting new and re-emerging epidemics.

People-to-people exchanges

In the area of cooperation in higher education, Erasmus Mundus and its successor, Erasmus +, promote mobility of students and academics between European and non-European higher

education institutions. Jean Monnet chairs – chairs in European affairs in third countries' universities supported by the EU – promote knowledge of and studies on European integration in Mexico.

Additionally, since 2010, the EU Delegation in Mexico has set up an informal academic collaboration network with Mexican public and private universities offering European studies and with those academics who teach EU related subjects. This network has been steadily growing thanks to the cooperation between academics from different universities throughout the country.

Following the EU-Mexico Joint Declaration on Culture signed in 2009 and the 2013-2014 Preparatory Action on Culture in EU External Relations (which covered Mexico), a number of cultural diplomacy activities should be launched under the Partnership Instrument's public diplomacy initiative for Central America to foster mutual understanding and reinforce people-to-people contacts from 2016 on (tbc). Furthermore the Creative Europe programme offers some limited opportunities to carry out cultural cooperation projects with third countries (including Mexico).

Chronology of Relations between Mexico and the European Union

- 2013** Decision taken to explore the possibility of updating the Global Agreement
- 2010** Fifty years of diplomatic relations between Mexico and the EU
Adoption of the Strategic Partnership's Joint Executive Plan
Tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Global Agreement
- 2000** Entry into force of the Global Agreement
- 1997** Signature of the Economic Partnership, Political Coordination and Cooperation Agreement (Global Agreement) between the EU and Mexico
- 1991** Signature of the Third Generation Framework Cooperation Agreement, European Community-Mexico, which came into force on 12 November 1991
- 1989** Inauguration of the Delegation in Mexico, in presence of then Commissioner for North-South relations in the European Commission, Mr. Abel Matutes
- 1988** Signature of Agreement for the establishment of a Delegation of the Commission of the European Communities in Mexico
- 1975** Signature of the first Framework Cooperation Agreement
- 1960** Formalisation of diplomatic relations between Mexico and the European Community