



EU-Mexico Joint Committee

Joint Communiqué (Final)

SEVENTH MEETING OF THE EU-MEXICO JOINT COMMITTEE
Brussels, 26-27 November 2007

The seventh meeting of the Joint Committee established under the EU-Mexico Economic Partnership, Political Cooperation and Cooperation Agreement (Global Agreement) was held in Brussels on 26 and 27 November 2007.

The European Union Delegation was headed by Mr. Joao Aguiar Machado, Deputy Director-General for External Relations at the European Commission, while the Mexican Delegation was headed by H.E. Sandra Fuentes Berain, Ambassador and Chief of Mission of Mexico to the European Union.

The political dialogue section was chaired for the Presidency of the Council of European Union by Mr. Jorge Cabral, Deputy Director General at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Portugal and by H.E. Sandra Fuentes Berain, Ambassador and Chief of Mission of Mexico to the European Union.

The Parties reviewed the activities carried out in the seventh year of the Global Agreement, which fell into three areas: political dialogue, cooperation and trade.

During the political dialogue session, Mexico and the European Union discussed ways of strengthening bilateral and bi-regional political cooperation mechanisms and of stepping up coordination on international issues in a pragmatic and result-oriented manner.

Mexico and the EU will intensify their cooperation at the United Nations and in multilateral fora to contribute to a strong, effective and efficient United Nations Organisation and to a comprehensive UN reform. They will notably cooperate towards strengthening the role of the newly established UN Human Rights Council and the Peace Building Commission. They made a positive assessment of the first year of reforms, but there is still some way to go to live up to the high expectations.

At the particular request of Mexico, they also pursued their dialogue on addressing all aspects of migration. Mexico and the EU exchanged views on migration and recognized the usefulness of comprehensive discussions that may contribute to face the challenges of this phenomenon.

They held an exchange of views on aspects of particular interest in both regions, notably the integration Processes in Latin America, and the EU Reform Treaty and its possible implications for EU external policy and for relations with Latin America and Mexico.

Both Parties will actively pursue their well-established close cooperation in EU – LAC Relations and in making the V EU-LAC Summit in Lima a success.

In the field of bilateral cooperation, both Parties noted the progress made on the projects currently being implemented in the fields of human rights, justice, social development, economic cooperation, science and technology. They noted that, despite the delay in starting the projects, some of them have already reached an advanced stage of implementation. Lessons learned during the implementation of ongoing projects and programmes could provide useful precedents to be taken into account during the implementation of the 2007-2013 cooperation.

The Mexican side informed the EU side about the legislative proposal currently being discussed in the Mexican Congress about the creation of a Mexican Cooperation Agency. The EU and Mexico concurred that such an Agency will contribute to create the institutional and legal grounds to support the implementation of the cooperation programmes.

The Parties reiterated their intention of launching an EU-Mexico policy dialogue in the area of social cohesion in 2008 and, in particular, among other things, on the subject of social security reforms and on the role of employment in enhancing social cohesion. The Parties reviewed the related operational issues.

The Parties mentioned the importance of developing an effective social dialogue, respecting the autonomy of social partners as a crucial basis for linking employment and social cohesion policies.

The Parties announced that a visit by the Commissioner of Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities to Mexico is expected in the first half of 2008.

As regards education and culture, the Parties discussed ongoing and future cooperation issues. The Parties declared their intention to enhance bilateral cooperation by making use of existing instruments and by mobilizing the resources allocated to the sector in the context of the 2007-2013 programming cycle.

The Parties exchanged views about the best possible options to be considered for increasing visibility and substance of the EU-Mexico exchanges in the areas of education and culture.

The Parties also discussed the possibility of launching a sectoral policy dialogue in the fields of education, culture and youth. In this context, they have agreed to exchange information in order to identify specific areas of common interest on which this dialogue could concentrate. A joint declaration is expected to this end.

The parties stated that the existing EU-Mexico Agreement on Science & Technology is an effective tool to further expand their cooperation in the field of research.

The Parties expressed their satisfaction regarding the ongoing EU-Mexico Science & Technology cooperation, and noted that new opportunities and synergies had been created under the 7th EU Framework Programme for Research & Technological Development 2007-2013 (FP7).

The Parties agreed to reinforce and expand the EU-Mexico bilateral science and technology cooperation. They agreed to hold the next meeting of the Joint EC-Mexico Committee on Science and Technology in Brussels on 21st January 2008.

Mexico highlighted the importance of a visit to Mexico by the EU Commissioner for Science and Research, in order to participate in the Meeting of Ministers of Science and Research.

As regards economic cooperation, the Parties passed in review present operational issues and expressed satisfaction for recent progress in the implementation and financial management of the Integral Support Programme to Small and Medium Enterprises (SME), and of the Project to Facilitate the Mexico-EU Free Trade Agreement.

Concerning Human Rights, the Parties stated that human rights stay at the core of the shared fundamental values and they will receive adequate attention also in the context of the activities aimed at enhancing social cohesion. The Parties reviewed recent developments and discussed present and programmed activities in the field aimed at human rights promotion and protection.

The Parties agreed to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in the field of Human Rights, and recognized the progress achieved in the implementation of ongoing projects of cooperation in the field of social development, administration of justice, and human rights.

The Mexican delegation presented the progress made to date by the project of the EU-Mexico Human Rights Programme, aiming at incorporating international norms and standards in Mexican policies, including the reform of the legal system and women's access to a life free of violence.

The Parties welcomed the adoption of the initiatives of the European Union on "a death penalty moratorium".

The Parties discussed implementation issues related to the put-into-motion of the Policy dialogue on environment and climate change, whose first meeting will take place on January 2008. The Dialogue will deal with the following areas of mutual interest: international environmental governance; sustainable management of natural resources, including biodiversity and biosafety; conservation and sustainable management of forests; coastal and marine environment; climate change; sustainable transport, among others.

Likewise, a Working Group on Climate Change would be established in order to deal with the following areas: international climate change negotiations; policy instruments; exchange of experiences with regard to environmental policies; cooperation in science and research; studies on vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, among others.

The Parties stated their intention of pursuing technical consultations on civil aviation with a view to make progress towards bringing the present legal framework covering relations with Mexico in this field in line with Community law. Both sides stated their intentions to start negotiations for a EU-Mexico Horizontal Civil Aviation Agreement.

The EU and Mexico underlined the necessity to collaborate closer in on-going multilateral WTO Doha Development Agenda (DDA) talks, given the position both parties hold in their respective regions. The parties emphasized that supporting the ambitious timetable and close cooperation on key issues (NAMA, agriculture and services) will

increase the chances of success for the DDA conclusion. The EU also underlined the importance of including Geographical Indications in the DDA package.

In their discussion on trade related issues, the two parties welcomed the achievements of the EU-Mexico Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and discussed the overall economic situation in their respective regions.

The positive developments in their bilateral trade relations are demonstrated by increased trade flows. Since 1999, the year preceding the FTA implementation, bilateral trade has grown by around 130%, reaching more than 42bn USD (33bn EUR) in 2006. In addition, bilateral investment flows also show positive trend.

The two Delegations welcomed the largely positive results reached at the respective meetings of the special committees set up under the EU-Mexico FTA, particularly in the areas of customs, technical standards, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, government procurement and intellectual property. Regarding some out-standing issues, the parties instructed their respective experts to expedite and push forward work on a number of specific cases identified in the special committee meetings.

The parties agreed that the work on the review clauses of the EU-Mexico FTA on agriculture, services and investment should be accelerated. Further liberalization in these areas, as already agreed in the FTA, will be necessary to increase bilateral trade and investment flows and to improve competitiveness of both economies. The Parties acknowledged with satisfaction the adoption of Mexico-EU Joint Council Decision on the establishment of a framework for the negotiation of mutual recognition agreements.

The Delegations also reviewed a number of topics on the bilateral trade agenda. They assessed the final steps for the adaptation of the Mexico-EU FTA following the accession of Bulgaria and Rumania to the EU.

The two parties discussed the up-coming visit of the EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson to Mexico. This visit should strengthen bilateral ties and allow for further progress on bilateral issues.

The Joint Committee acknowledged the importance of pursuing dialogue with civil society. The Parties announced their intention of convening a third EU-Mexico Civil Society Dialogue Forum to be held in Brussels during 2008.

The next meeting of the Joint Committee will be held in the second half of 2008 in Mexico City.