First, I will talk about the previous security relationships between Mexico and the United States and Canada. The security agenda was dominated by bipolar confrontation with a nuclear destruction threat. It was an unstable and unpredictable confrontation (1940-80). The main focus of our agenda was communism. We received U.S. support to create intelligence services, the background of today's Civilian Intelligence Services. The military cooperation was really poor. We don’t have any kind of trilateral security agenda among the United States, Canada, and Mexico—only bilateral efforts, mainly with the United States and none at all with Canada.

After the end of the Cold War, the question between the directors of intelligence was who is the enemy? The new enemy was drug trafficking, narcotics trafficking. That has caused a counter-narcotics bilateral agenda between the United States and Mexico for over 20 years and a case-by-case relationship with Canada (1980-2000). Then we had a crisis because a DEA agent was assassinated in my country, resulting in a unilateral certification process in the U.S. to evaluate Mexican efforts regarding drugs, and U.S. sponsorship of counter-drug intelligence services in the Mexican Army and the Attorney General's office (1990-95). There was an increase of money laundering and arms trafficking. Then we came up with NAFTA—with no consideration of security or migration – plus the public rising of Zapatistas-EZLN in Mexico, and the rebellion of other insurgent violent groups in Mexico (1993-2000). All this has made for a difficult relationship. There were too many agencies working in the United States, as Judge Webster told us before. It was easier between Canada and Mexico. There were fewer agencies working on these topics.

The common denominator in the relationship between the United States and Mexico was distrust. There were no trilateral or regional meetings with Central American countries to deal with a regional agenda, and no meetings with security or intelligence agencies, nothing with other countries to try to discover some common strategies against drug production or narco-terrorism. Bilateral agendas started to incorporate terrorism, organized crime, and the proliferation of mass destruction weapons in 1998-2000.

Over the last few years, the magnitude of Mexican migration and its complex effects on the economic and social life of Mexico and the United States made the migration phenomenon increasingly important for the national agendas of both countries and a priority issue for the bilateral agenda. After September 11, security and counterterrorism were the only issues in the bilateral-trilateral agenda, with unilateral U.S. decisions about border security.

What is our current situation? We don’t have a defined regional security policy for the trilateral region. We don’t know as a region what we want in the UN, in the Security Council, in the Organization of American States, regarding a trade agreement with Central America or international peace operations. The main goals in the trilateral relationship and in the bilateral ones are unclear. We don't know what we want in the long term.
As a region, we don't share risk analysis findings between our intelligence or security services. Yet more agents, soldiers, technology, and fences won’t stop the flow of drugs, immigrants, firearms, or money. In fiscal year 2004, 94% of the 1.1 million illegal persons arrested in the U.S. were Mexicans. Why should we suppose these facts will change unilaterally? We have the wrong political positions about collaboration, and periodic misunderstanding between countries inhibits close cooperation.

There is a mistaken attitude in the United States about Mexican immigrants. The debate going on now in the U.S. Congress concerning possible immigration reform offers an opportunity for Mexicans and for the bilateral handling of this problem. It also encourages us to analyze the consequences that this process can have for our country and its immigration policy. We haven't yet analyzed what Mexico's immigration policy should be. Mexico expects to create 400,000 jobs this year, not necessarily to stop the immigration to the North.

What has improved? We have new federal security institutions in the United States (Department of Homeland Security) and Mexico (Secretaria de Seguridad Publica) and broader collaboration between our intelligence services. They are collaborating more and better than in the past. As for collaboration between the armed forces, it isn't discussed in Mexico. I don’t think the Mexican military wants to collaborate more than they are doing today.

Also for the better, there are more forums like this one on border security, immigration, and North American integration—themes that, like NAFTA, were running on automatic pilot. We have recognized and included other themes on the agenda for security and stability such as natural disasters, disease, poverty, and energy self-sufficiency.

What kind of proposal can we make about borders? How far can the three countries go in adopting common practices and security protocols? We agree that safeguarding against the possibility of a terrorist attack occurring in or originating from the region is a highest regional security priority.

We have to define a concept for regional sovereignty, redefine each national concept and the strategies and tactics to confront it. We don’t, in Mexico, even have this discussion about the newer terms of sovereignty and regional security. Potential terrorist targets might include food sources, water supplies, infrastructure critical to government, and economic activity, so we have to look at those kinds of facilities, mainly those that serve both countries, and find operational procedures to prevent, detect, and also to react.

If terrorism is the main concern of the region, let’s define it. Let’s harmonize legislation. Let’s create terrorist mapping, exchange all the information we need to know, and have training and cooperation in intelligence gathering and also in analytic models. We have to discuss the scenario of a potential terrorist act in one of the three countries with its origin in another country of the region. What is going to be the mitigation response for that kind of scenario?

I think that through the international community, we can best meet this challenge by clearly defining the threats and formulating a coherent set of multilateral—not national or international—and multinational tools for response based on balancing the need for security with a concern for human and political rights. The political costs will be reduced, and the result will be at least as good as can be achieved through unilateral or bilateral cooperation.

We can explore trilaterally the supervision and observance of multilateral regulations:

- The International Atomic Energy Agency can review our nuclear facilities and security upgrades.
- The International Civil Aviation Organization, located here in Montreal, Canada, has to create an airline security strategy and conduct inspections of airport security.
• The International Maritime Organization can improve maritime security through inspections of our ports.
• The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons tracks global movements of certain chemicals; we have to harmonize legislation and supervise the monitoring of legitimate production and transfers.
• The Universal Postal Union can eliminate transmission of dangerous materials by mail.

This approach—a multinational approach that defines groups, timetables, and rules of supervision—can develop more effective measures than bilateral or trilateral ones. In the inter-American field, we can use a multilateral institution, the Inter-American Committee against Terrorism of the Organization of American States, to make progress in border control, early warning, improved identification, travel documents, and customs measures.

I’ve seen how the Mexican-U.S. agenda was narcotized. Let’s try not to "terrorize" the bilateral agenda or the trilateral agenda. Canada and the United States, in the absence of structural reforms in Mexico, have to think about how to support us in the development and construction of infrastructure and social programs as the best investment for the regional security.

Sealing common borders is not an option against terrorism, organized crime, or immigrants. It’s a reflection of unilateral decisions. In the United States, they have new initiatives in immigration and border security, but they have not included Mexican opinion in designing these initiatives. Also, we think that Mexican strengthening of security along the border with Central America is a key improvement in regional security.

U.S. initiatives to upgrade border security don’t include investment to the Mexican side to achieve the goals of the security agreements. It is desirable to create a budget fund, bilateral or trilateral, for this purpose and to define joint policies, plans, actions, and responsibilities. There should also be a planning and supervising entity with the participation of legislative and local authorities dealing with security at the border. The U.S. security perimeter mentioned in some of the initiatives hasn’t been discussed in Mexico. I do not think we share the belief that it will stop the flow of immigrants to the north. I think it’s a policy that we haven’t defined yet in my country, and, of course, we don’t have the institutional framework to do so.

A major problem for Mexico is if the U.S. Congress wanted to negotiate an immigration agreement that included military cooperation or energy discussions, we don’t have the answers and will not have them in the near future. We can start to work on public safety at the common border with the participation of local, state, and federal authorities. To avoid any kind of obstacles, don’t include joint operations or armed law enforcement agents working on the Mexican side of the border.

The drug problem has been approached in the bilateral arena only as a crime topic. We have to look back to the importance of regional and also bilateral responses in education, health programs, social development, and agricultural programs. Another risk to the region is organized crime, but on a bilateral basis, 90% of the agenda is drug trafficking. We have to actualize this agenda with other topics such as money laundering, firearms traffic, cyber crime, intellectual property protection, etc.

Recently Prime Minister Martin announced that his government had prepared a series of gun control initiatives aimed at curbing a wave of violence in Toronto. The measures could include suing U.S. weapons manufacturers. The United States has to recognize that 50 percent of the gun crimes in Canada involve weapons from the United States, 85 percent in the case of Mexico. We have to work bilaterally in addressing this particular security issue. Current efforts haven’t brought us expected results.
Concerning immigration standards, recently a group of Mexicans—from the executive branch, congress and many academic experts in migratory issues and representatives of civil society organizations—conducted studies that seek to build a national migration policy founded upon shared diagnoses and platforms. It is necessary to update the present migration policy of the Mexican State, as well as its legal and normative framework, with a timeline of 15 or 20 years. It is necessary to impel economic and social development that, among other positive effects, will encourage people to stay in Mexico.

With international cooperation, Mexico must strengthen its war against criminal organizations that specialize in human smuggling and in the use of false documents. We must also strengthen the legal and normative framework for the apprehension and prosecution of human smuggling, especially of women and children, and the protection of the victims of these crimes.

Mexico’s immigration policy must be adjusted taking into account the activities of our neighbor countries in order to safeguard the border and to facilitate the legal, safe, and orderly flow of people under the principles of shared responsibility and respect for human rights.

Acknowledging the sovereign right of each country to regulate the entrance of foreigners and the conditions of their stay, it is indispensable to find a solution to the undocumented populations that live in the United States and contribute to the development of the country, so that people can be fully incorporated into their actual communities with the same rights and duties.

I support the proposal of a far-reaching guest worker scheme, which should be one of the parts of a larger process that includes attention to the undocumented Mexicans who live in the United States. We don’t see that in any of the foreign agency studies in the United States. In order for this workers’ program to be viable, Mexico should participate in its design, management, supervision and operation under the principle of shared responsibility.

Finally, talking about proposals, only permanent institutions can help the three countries, so let’s think about trilateral institutions to follow up exchanges and compromises about integration. We can think about a trilateral secretariat for this agenda, like the one recently created for Iberoamerica. Also, a trilateral permanent commission for security and a bilateral permanent commission for migration are necessary. The United States has been running on automatic pilot for almost ten years. I really don’t remember any multilateral meetings of heads of intelligence services in the past. I don’t think the security heads of the three countries have met on a reliable basis.

I also endorse the creation of permanent mechanisms for executive and legislative branches exchanges with the participation of academic and civil society representatives that will facilitate the development and fulfillment of a common security and migration agenda. The creation of a Mexican entity to administer the borders is desirable. Maybe the creation of a domestic intelligence service in the United States is also possible. Thank you very much. Muchas gracias.

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