

Mexico's political assets

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With regard to the state of which I am the Governor, I would like to point out that Guerrero has chipped in to form the consensus that President Salinas de Gortari has been seeking in order to negotiate a Trilateral Treaty. The state of Guerrero looks to the agreement with the United States and Canada as a means to raise employment, bring down the migration of surplus labor, industrialize, expand tourism, create new conditions for foreign investment and marketing, progress toward more balanced regional development, and develop an export-oriented economy.

To contribute modestly to this seminar from a political angle -appropriate, since I am a

*Governor of the state of Guerrero.

Governor- I would like to comment on Mexico's political assets as it enters into a North American Free Trade Agreement.

1. Mexico is the only continental Latin American country to have undergone a genuinely popular, social revolution. This popular origin legitimizes Mexico's present-day institutions and assures that sweeping change will not disrupt the historical process begun with the revolution; it assures that, in spite of economic and political reforms, Mexico will maintain its political stability.
2. Mexico is practically the only Latin American state where presidents and members of congress have succeeded each other constitutionally. Since

1920, no revolution or *coup d'état* has been successful; and since 1929 there has been no attempt to stage one.

3. Since 1936 the armed forces have not taken part in politics.
4. The FTA is of international consequence, and it is gratifying to note that Mexico's foreign policy record can hardly be equalled: it has always respected the fundamental principles of international law, and never, throughout its 170 years as an independent state, has it waged a war of aggression. This makes it clear that Mexico is a respectable and reliable member of the international community and lives up to its juridical and political commitments.
5. Unlike many other countries introducing democratic processes, Mexico has succeeded in articulating its regional diversity and its multi-ethnic character. And all of this without secession or conflict based on national, religious, or regional differences.
6. Mexicans have shown a lively pluralism in their society; unlike many developed countries, Mexico has no room for racism, segregation or xenophobia. Several million Mexicans not of caucasian origin bear witness to this.
7. Except for minor and insignificant periods, Mexico has been able to harmonize the sometimes opposing interests of government, business, and labor in a society undergoing progressive differentiation. We haven't achieved the stability of the Japanese system, but the Mexican model has been functional -to say the least.
8. One of the basic conditioning factors of the economy is the



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reliability of the political system; a reliability that rests on the political system's capacity to function day to day, and with ever-increasing efficiency run a democratic state based on the principles of law, the guaranteed participation of its citizens, and defense of their human rights. I am speaking of a system with the capacity to change in order to assure its permanence. With amazing speed, and with the lowest political costs imaginable—particularly in comparison with the experiences of other countries—the Mexican political system has shown its ability to reform itself. In these last few years it has created an environment—although still an insufficiently large one—for political pluralism and a greater respect for human rights. The State has been reformed and the market freed, all without having jeopardized the stability of the

nation or provoking violence. Mexico's reliability also rests on the fact that it has a dynamic political class—including both those in power and the opposition—who guarantee its governability through change and vertical mobility.

9. Its sound cultural identity, national integration, and a strong feeling of what it is to be a Mexican has enabled our country to safeguard its sovereignty and understand its role in relation to our powerful northern neighbor, the United States of America. For a free trade agreement with the United States and Canada, our greatest national asset is Mexico's political intelligence—the intelligence of its leaders and the society, a truly collective virtue—and our ability to live together constructively. These qualities have always made themselves obvious. I shall mention only two facts. One is that we attract over 5 million U.S. and

Canadian tourists each year without calamity, a practical example of our ability to live together. The second has been the skill of the northern border states to make their economic and commercial ties with the southern part of the United States into a dynamo for their respective economies. This intense contact has not eroded the sound and well proved Mexican-ness of our citizens in the North. These two experiences reveal that there is mutual confidence, without which an association for liberalizing trade would have neither viability nor foundation.

10. Mexico is reliable because it is predictable. Mexicans have a well founded national project encoded in their Constitution whose aims are crystal clear and have not been changed in decades. Nor will they change. The aims of the Mexican nation are: national sovereignty, social justice, democracy, development, and governability 🇲🇽