

# OUR VOICE

If human existence can only be understood as a function of the concepts of time and space, the explicit intention of this issue of *Voices of Mexico* has been to bring together different articles that can relate events or situations whose transcendence have made the difference for *the Mexican time of 2010*.

A thoughtful review of what we were able to do shows us above all what we were incapable of achieving, but it also puts into perspective reasonable goals for the cycle we are now going through.

In this sense, for those of us who had the privilege of witnessing or even participating in the commemorations of the National Autonomous University of Mexico's 100 years celebrations held throughout 2010, they represented the opportunity to recognize and ratify our institution's laudable educational mission, framed by its undeniable public character and its commitment to the promotion of social justice.

This issue's most notable section is therefore dedicated to honoring the contributions the university has made to the nation. The UNAM has not limited itself to just being a place to educate new generations of young Mexicans and foreigners, but has also conceived of itself as a meeting place for the free, pluralist debate of ideas, for the edification of new knowledge, the promotion of culture, and the preservation of the patrimony of our history and identity.

Including the special contribution of Dr. José Narro Robles, the rector of our university, not only makes us proud and motivates those of us working in the CISAN, but also is an exceptional opportunity for our English-speaking readers to understand more profoundly the purpose of and challenges to our institution, both of which stem from the need to combat the ominous violence and inequality plaguing our country. The sensitivity displayed by Dr. Narro in his speech masterfully transmits the aspirations the people of Mexico have placed in the UNAM, but also the importance of self-criticism for avoiding complacency and fostering our academic project.

This special section would not be complete without mentioning the origins of the institution and the visionary minds that set its course. Also, we find here other examples of the diversity that characterizes it as an inclusive institution that supports science, the humanities, and social activity equally, and even border studies, in which multiculturalism, gender, or cinematography undoubtedly make it exceptional.

In addition to this section are a range of contributions by qualified writers pointing to important problems on Mexico's domestic scene or on the international stage. Examples are the topics dealt with by Ricardo Becerra, Rubén García Clarck, and

Camelia Tigau, taking into consideration that they can be contextualized as part of the hotly debated climate of growing violence in the country as a multi-faceted phenomenon.

In other words, everything from the fragility of the protection of human rights to the worrying drain of scientific, intellectual, and artistic talents from our country due to the lack of opportunities, fear, or lack of confidence in the face of adversity, invites us to rethink our political and parliamentary practices, taking into account that the different political forces in the federal Congress have not yet been able to articulate coherent —much less expeditious— responses or strategies capable of gaining the confidence of Mexican society at large.

This implies, then, the need for profound reflection about our own political culture's limitations, about its characteristics and vulnerabilities; this is the ineluctable commitment for the construction of a better future for all Mexicans. Only through checks and balances, transparency, and effective accountability linked to policies committed to the common good will we be able to consolidate our young democracy in Mexico.

To conclude, I would invite our readers to examine the interesting comparisons offered in the section dedicated to the UN Security Council and its reform. It will allow them to see the different interests behind the participation of countries like Mexico itself, Brazil, or China in this important international body. This issue's special section, coordinated by Dr. María Cristina Rosas, deals with this topic.

As a corollary, to update us on the maze that is North America, the outstanding pens of Leonardo Curzio and Manuel Chavez, both assiduous contributors to *Voices of Mexico*, incorporate the provocative tone into this issue. The former debates the challenges that China's new protagonism poses for Mexico and our bilateral relations with the Asian giant: rivalry, cooperation, complementarity? The latter offers us first-hand data reaffirming that the results of last November's U.S. congressional elections will have immediate effects on relations with Mexico.

In this beginning of 2011, we could not leave aside our thanks to our subscribers, contributors, and readers, wishing all of them the very best.

*Silvia Núñez García*  
**CISAN Director**