

# OUR VOICE

Mexico's current foreign policy vision attempts to focus on promoting the country's development, recognizing that, in the world context, all government institutions in charge of administering and executing the diversity of actions aimed at that end must directly or indirectly benefit from the diplomatic efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Relations itself.

While this orientation is praiseworthy, the country's economic reality makes it impossible to be optimistic. By last August, GDP growth had fallen to 0.74 percent, while, in May, the figures were only at 0.4 percent, according to National Statistics and Geography Institute (INEGI) data.

The predictions are negative. So, the analysts underline that our economy's mediocre performance is due to its heavy dependence on the United States. This means that redesigning strategies to balance this model by diversifying Mexico's trade is urgent, in addition to taking different unavoidable actions like fiscal reform.

This issue of the magazine has a marked component of articles dealing with key facets of the Mexico-U.S. relationship, or that analyze U.S. domestic political issues with an impact on Mexico. Thus, we begin with a magnificent interview with Ambassador Anthony Wayne by researcher Leonardo Curzio, which underlines the importance of Obama's recent visit with his Mexican counterpart aimed at strengthening the high-level dialogue based on the recognition of the increasing interaction between both nations.

Throughout the conversation Wayne, an experienced career diplomat with previous postings in places as different as Argentina, Afghanistan, and the European Union, once again shows a particular political sensibility for linking the critical issues of the bilateral agenda (security, migration, energy) to those new topics that, like education, aim to set relations with Mexico on a more comprehensive course.

In the range of topics that we present for our readers' consideration are two articles by colleagues from abroad who speak to the recurring violence Mexico continues to experience. One of them, from a singular perspective, refers to a musical documentary to talk about the perverse circle of despair and inequality permeating Ciudad Juárez. Describing the aesthetic of horror, Alice Driver puts at center stage marginalized youth whose reality transcends any territory, since they appear as actors in a drama in which reality and fiction overlap. Brazilian professor Júlio da Silveira embraces the cause of undocumented Central American migrants, who have disappeared or suffered all kinds of mistreatment at the hands of organized crime in their journey through Mexico. He emphasizes the alliance among non-governmental organizations, the Church and local communities to make the collective, transnational struggle visible in its efforts to denounce and combat this social cancer.

We dedicate pages in this issue to design in Mexico, given its cultural stamp in the contemporary world and the importance its professionals have taken on in pursuit of harmonizing creativity, aesthetics, and the functional, not only in the use of new environment-friendly

materials, but also as a means for responding to new consumer and user needs. In a world where the visual reigns supreme, we open up three small windows to show how the wealth of our identity permeates the design of fashions that are now competing internationally, to narrate the inventiveness of our industrial designers, and to include our talented Mexican graphic designers, whose origins cannot exclude the legacy of great artists like Diego Rivera himself.

*Voices of Mexico* takes pride in being a magazine with a universal vocation. On that basis, it has been a sounding board for paying homage posthumously to members of the UNAM academic community who have distinguished themselves for their dedication and commitment. This is the case of philologist and poet Rubén Bonifaz Nuño. A man passionate about the study of and reflection about the Greek and Latin classics, he will continue nourishing the new generations of young people through his humanist teachings, many of which have been captured in the quintessential sublime art: poetry.

Let us turn now to several topics in this issue that deal with the international or regional situation. A discussion of the future of the European Union, framed in an economic crisis to which its members do not seem to have a consensual way out invites us to read the detailed analysis of German professor Kurt Schelker. Profoundly knowledgeable about the challenges facing this ambitious, unprecedented project of unity, he discusses its dimensions and the capacity to internally harmonize the diversity of national interests, underlining the fact that experience and trust are key axes for deepening what he considers the next step: political union.

The North American region reiterates to us the fact that economic integration continues apace. For the case of Mexico, Gabriela Sánchez and Simone Lucatello write about the need to expand the mechanisms to foster scientific-technological development. This is a fundamental factor for decreasing asymmetries with the United States and Canada, but also for consolidating the country's participation globally, determined by knowledge and competitiveness. In addition, greater entrepreneurship on the part of larger numbers of the members of the Mexican or Latino communities in the United States produces eloquent data, as pointed out by authors Enrique Pino and Diego Manzano.

To conclude, we invite our readers to follow the coming 2014 elections in the United States by paying particular attention to this issue's "Special Section," dedicated to reflections on the context of Obama's second term. We also urge them not to lose sight of the political events that will give form to the 2015 Canadian elections, dealt with in this issue by expert Oliver Santín.

We wish to thank our subscribers for their continuing interest in this publishing effort. To them and to our occasional readers, we extend our recognition for their solidarity with the many "*Voices of Mexico*."

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