# Paraphrased Case

**American Heritage FC is proud to negate in order to stop super trafficking, stabilize central America, and benefit the economy.**

## Our first Argument regards Cartels

According to Water 12, past governmental trafficking initiatives have just led to the rapid growth of the Mexican cartel. After the United States focused on efforts to dismantle Colombian cartels, drug manufacturers turned to Mexico, which at the time had practically no surveillance. This resulted in the rise of profitable drug trafficking that lined the pockets of the cartels. Lopez 17 finds that by further enforcing surveillance and infrastructure, it will only lead to more advanced measures of avoidance. The risk of capture for drug traffickers pushes them to become smarter in how they smuggle drugs. For example, in the 1970s, cartels shipped cocaine through fishing boats, but once the US caught them, the organizations adapted to using cigarette boats and narco-submarines. This results in a cycle where drug traffickers become more efficient in response to drug war policies, which ends up artificially selecting and breeding super traffickers. This year, Golden details how an increase in profit for the cartels lead to an increase in corruption. Under President Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador, organized crime flourished, after 2 million dollars was delivered to his campaign. This is detrimental as corruption kills. OSJI 18 highlights how Mexico reached an all-time high of 25,000 homicides a year, torture remains a norm in the both the federal and state level, and atrocity crimes have flourished all due to the corruption of public officials.

## Our Second Argument is Remittances

According to Mann from last year, just Latin America and the Caribbean have reached an all-time record of $155 BILLION in remittances, accounting to over 12 percent of their GDP. Over 90 percent of this number comes from the US. This year, Freeman explains how Trump already tried tougher measures to deter Latin migrants but that decreased LEGAL migration by 63 percent! This drop in legal and illegal migration from the southern border will kill remittances. In fact, Martinez from last year explains how Central America is already on the verge of collapse, with long-term economic impacts from COVID-19, deaths from malnutrition doubling, and consumers not having the money to even pay for bare necessities. Additionally, economic development that happens through things like remittances is by far the most important factor in predicting conflict in developing countries, as illustrated by Kim 10. Finally, Kim continues emphasizing that conflict traps small countries in an endless cycle of more conflict that can kill millions of people. It destroys human capital and the ability of the government to perform its functions, leading to an anarchy that’s almost impossible to stop. Thus, we must do everything we can to uphold the economies of Central America or create a snowball effect inducing violence that kills millions.

## Our Second Argument is Cooperation

The [US Department of State](https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-mexico), just last year stated that US-Mexico relations are thriving now. The nations have expanded cooperation to address the root cause of migration, and are helping asylum seekers, displaced people, and vulnerable migrants.  However, a unilateral enforcement of the aff, completely reverses all the bilateral progress that has been made. [Colorado State University 23](https://libarts.source.colostate.edu/border-war-csu-policy-expert-says-doj-case-against-texas-is-clear-thanks-to-historic-treaty/) finds that Mexico does not want to be viewed as a subservient to US policy. The aff is a direct insult that portrays the US as encroaching on Mexican sovereignty.  Additionally, [O’Neil 24](https://archive.ph/212kR#selection-1239.0-1239.12) details that we should be doubling down on migration instead of suppressing it. A unilateral policy would be a mistake, leaving Mexico’s government at a breaking point; incapable of supporting the millions of migrants who would wind up remaining in the country. Without US-Mexico cooperation important issues cannot be solved. [Meltzer et al. 23](https://www.brookings.edu/articles/usmca-at-3-reflecting-on-impact-and-charting-the-future/) highlights how a strong US-Mexico relationship is crucial for addressing climate change and competing with China for global power. Trade between the countries has resulted in 1.5 trillion dollars worth of trade annually, and supports nearly 9.5 million jobs.

# Carded

## Contention 1 is Acceleration of Illegal businesses

**U: Past governmental trafficking initiatives have led to the rapid growth of the Mexican cartel**

**Water 12 – Brown University, 2012, “Inside Mexico’s Drug Wars” [https://library.brown.edu/create/modernlatinamerica/chapters/chapter-3-mexico/moments-in-mexican-history/inside-mexicos-drug-wars/#:~:text=The%20infamous%20Medellin%20and%20Cali,drug%20trafficking%20in%20the%20region.] Accessed 9/5/2024 SHIN**

**Drug cartels have existed in Mexico for many years, but they did not become the powerful, violent organizations prevalent today until the 1990s. During that decade, the United States government focused the majority of its drug enforcement efforts on dismantling Colombian cartels through such programs as Plan Colombia. The U.S. policy in Colombia did produce some measurable results. The infamous Medellin and Cali cartels were toppled, but the victory was short-lived as Colombian drug manufacturers turned to new and safer transit routes through Mexico where enforcement policy was practically non-existent. Thus began the rise of organized and profitable drug trafficking in the region. Throughout the nineties, three major cartels emerged in Mexico: Gulf, Sinaloa, and Juarez. The rapid increase in the quantity of drugs (mainly marijuana and cocaine) transported through Mexico resulted in huge profits for these cartels. For example, it is estimated that the Sinaloa Cartel generates revenues of approximately $USD 3 billion each year.[1] Money transformed the cartels from loosely associated groups of traffickers to fully-fledged criminal organizations with operations beyond narcotics. Cartels began to hire private armies of enforcers to protect their market shares through any means necessary, becoming increasingly violent as the decade progressed and competition became more fierce. More recently, Mexican cartels have also begun to develop relationships with American street gangs and traffickers so as to ensure a steady distribution of their product throughout the United States. The dominance of the three big cartels began to be challenged in the 2000s by powerful emerging group: los Zetas. Having begun as a private army for the Gulf Cartel, the Zetas decided later on to enter the drug business for themselves. The change from enforcement to trafficking did not alter their methods, which continue to be based on the use of extreme violence. Above all, it was the Zetas who transformed the Mexican drug trade from simply buying and selling drugs for a profit to include kidnapping, torture, human trafficking, and gruesome murder.**

**L: By further enforcing surveillance and infrastructure, it will only lead to more advanced measure of avoidance**

**Lopez 17 – Vox, January 30,2017, “How the war on drugs has made drug traffickers more ruthless and efficient’ [https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/1/30/14346766/drug-war-failure-evolution] Accessed 9/5/2024 SHIN**

**At the same time, the drug war and risk of capture for drug traffickers do have an insidious effect: It pushes drug trafficking groups to become smarter in how they smuggle drugs. So say a drug trafficking organization ships cocaine or pot through fishing boats, as many typically did in the 1970s and ’80s, but gets caught by the US government. Eventually the government begins doing random checks on all of these boats to make sure none of them have drugs. But because drugs are still massively profitable and in demand, the organizations that didn’t get caught aren’t just going to give up. They’re instead going to find other ways to smuggle drugs — like cigarette boats and narco-submarines, which drug traffickers make a lot more use of today. The drug traffickers, then, became more efficient in response to drug war policies. “You get this filtering effect decade after decade where you end up artificially selecting or breeding super-traffickers,” Tree said. This effect also applies to the kinds of drugs that traffickers trade in. So at first the current opioid epidemic — the deadliest drug crisis in US history — led traffickers to push heroin as a cheaper, more accessible alternative to opioid painkillers, which were increasingly blocked off to recreational users by government-restricted prescriptions. But over time, drug traffickers have begun to trade more and more in an even more potent (and deadlier) opioid: fentanyl. For traffickers, it made financial sense: Since fentanyl is more potent but is also fairly cheap to produce, traffickers can promise a high at a lower dose, which means they have to smuggle less of the product (making it easier to conceal), for a similar or even greater profit. Concerns about getting caught only made traffickers much more efficient in the drug they trade in, even if it led to trafficking a more dangerous substance. These types of unintended consequences are why Tree says we should totally rethink the drug war.**

**IL: Continuation of profit, enables corruption**

**Golden 24 – ProPublica, July 19, 2024, “Drug Traffickers Said They Backed an Early Campaign of Mexico’s President. But U.S. Agents Were Done Investigating.” [https://www.propublica.org/article/mexico-drug-traffickers-dea-investigation-amlo-campaign] accessed 9/5/2024 SHIN**

**When the Justice Department shut down a secret inquiry into allegations that drug traffickers had funded the first presidential campaign of Mexico’s leader, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, officials in Washington closed the case forcefully. Over the years that followed that 2011 decision, U.S. law enforcement agencies continued to hear similar reports, including accounts from at least four high-level Mexican traffickers who said their gangs helped to fund López Obrador’s political machine in return for promises of government protection, documents and interviews show. But U.S. investigators did not pursue those claims, in part because they saw little support in Washington for a corruption case against an important Mexican political leader, current and former officials said. “We took our best shot, and they didn’t want to do the case,” one former investigator for the Drug Enforcement Administration said of the 18-month inquiry into López Obrador’s 2006 campaign. “That was it; nobody had any appetite to push it forward.” López Obrador lost that first presidential race and a second in 2012 before winning election in 2018. A sharp critic of his predecessors’ U.S.-backed “war” on the traffickers, he promised to use social programs — “hugs, not bullets” — to dissuade young Mexicans from joining the mafias. But his presidency has seen organized crime flourish as never before. The president has denied that his 2006 campaign took money from the traffickers. He blamed recent reports about the DEA inquiry by ProPublica and other news organizations on a conspiracy to weaken his political party ahead of national elections last month. Yet concerns about possible mafia ties to at least one member of his 2006 campaign staff have also emerged within his own government. The candidate of López Obrador’s party, Claudia Sheinbaum, won the presidential race by a landslide. Although violence was a central issue in the vote, she has signaled that she will follow similar policies in dealing with organized crime. As ProPublica reported this year, the DEA investigation began in April 2010, after a trafficker-turned-informant gave agents a detailed account of the negotiation and delivery of some $2 million to López Obrador’s 2006 campaign. It ended when the Justice Department rejected a DEA-proposed sting operation inside Mexico aimed at the future president’s political team. After Justice officials closed down the inquiry, several high-profile drug traffickers who were captured in Mexico and extradited to the United States offered investigators further information about the mafias’ dealings with López Obrador’s political operation. But, according to previously undisclosed government documents and interviews with more than a dozen current and former U.S. officials, nearly all of that information was filed away or ignored. Although details of the case were closely held, a larger circle of U.S. law enforcement agents was aware that an investigation into López Obrador’s campaign had been aborted in part because of the perceived risks to the U.S.-Mexico relationship. In other cases, investigators said, they were simply more focused on what information they could extract from the traffickers about their mafia associates and the movement of their drugs. Because of the sensitivity of the case, the officials would only discuss it only on the condition of anonymity. The American-born trafficker who was said to have donated the $2 million to López Obrador’s campaign, Edgar Valdez Villareal, known as “La Barbie,” was captured by the Mexican authorities in 2010, just as the DEA probe was gaining momentum. But by the time he and two of his lieutenants were extradited, the case was over.**

**I: Corruption kills**

**OSJI 2018 – Open Society Justice Initiative, 2018, “CORRUPTION THAT KILLS’’, [https://www.justiceinitiative.org/uploads/5071ab37-003f-46b1-9e1f-700bbdae34a3/corruption-that-1kills-en-20180502.pdf] Accessed 9/5/2024 SHIN**

**IN 2016, THE OPEN SOCIETY JUSTICE INITIATIVE, together with five Mexican human rights organizations, published Undeniable Atrocities, which found a reasonable basis to believe that Mexican federal forces and members of the Zetas cartel have perpetrated crimes against humanity. The report also examined why there has been such little accountability for these crimes, and concluded that political obstruction at multiple levels was the primary impediment. Almost three years later, the situation in Mexico has deteriorated even further. In 2017, Mexico experienced its deadliest year in two decades, with homicides exceeding 25,000 (surpassing 2011’s previous all-time high). Attacks on journalists and human rights defenders have increased sharply across the country in that same time period, while more than half of Mexico’s disappeared were reported missing in the past six years alone. Meanwhile, torture remains a routine and “generalized” practice by Mexican public officials at both the state and federal level, a finding reaffirmed by the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture in early 2017, following his previous visit in 2015. For all of the crimes that have been committed in Mexico, criminal accountability remains virtually absent. Indeed, impunity has been a deliberate part of the Mexican government’s policy: atrocity crimes have flourished, in part, because of the failure to effectively investigate and prosecute the perpetrators, especially when the perpetrators are thought to be public officials.**

## Contention 2 is Remittances

**The US is the hot spot to support Latin Americans abroad**

**Mann, 23,** Richard Mann, 12-19-2023, "Central America's High Dependency on Remittances," Rio Times, https://www.riotimesonline.com/nicaragua-leads-in-remittance-dependency/, accessed 7-1-2024//EC

**In 2023, Latin America and the Caribbean anticipate a significant increase in remittances, reaching an all-time high of $155**.908 **billion.** This marks a 9.5% rise from the previous year. The region’s dependency on these funds varies, highlighting economic disparities. Central American countries expect remittances to form 12.7% of their GDP in 2023. South America, in contrast, projects a modest 0.7%. This data comes from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Focusing on major economies, Mexico shows a notable reliance. Remittances there will constitute 3.9% of its GDP. Colombia’s remittances contribute 3% to its GDP, compared to just 0.2% for Brazil and Argentina, and 0.1% for Chile. Central America’s High Dependency on Remittances. (Photo Internet reproduction) Nicaragua stands out in the region. It is projected to be the most reliant on remittances, expecting them to account for 29.7% of its GDP. The study excludes Cuba and Venezuela due to data limitations. Other countries also show varied impacts of remittances on their GDPs. Honduras, El Salvador, and Jamaica have significant percentages, whereas countries like Uruguay, Panama, and Costa Rica have minimal reliance. **The United States is a key remittance source for many Latin American nations**. Mexico receives most of its remittances from the U.S., and **Central American countries** also **get a large portion from the U.S., with some exceeding 90%.**

**Central America is on the brink of collapse**

**Garita and Martinez, 23**, Mauricio Garita and Sergio Martínez, 2-6-2023, "Central America’s Economic Recovery from COVID-19," Georgetown Journal of International Affairs, https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2023/02/06/central-americas-economic-recovery-from-covid-19/, accessed 7-1-2024//EC

**Central America has experienced a variety of severe economic impacts from COVID-19**, beyond the virus’ direct impact on the population’s health. In Guatemala, for instance, **deaths from acute malnutrition doubled** in 2021 as **consumers struggled to pay for necessities due to** the pandemic’s **economic fallout**. **Food insecurity has also been linked to migration** in the Northern Triangle of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador, where recent surveys indicated 32 percent of migrants said that they did not have enough money to cover food expenses. While poverty and violence have long driven Central Americans away from their home countries, the pandemic has only exacerbated this trend. According to a 2021 joint report published by the World Food Programme, Migration Policy Institute, and Civic Data Design Lab, the percentage of people living in Central America who considered migrating internationally increased from 8 percent in 2019 to 43 percent in 2021. Even before the onset of the pandemic, **30 million people already live**d **in poverty in Central America**, a fact which has only made the region more vulnerable to economic downturns.

**Having a stable economy is key to preventing violence**

**Kim and Conceição, 10,** Namsuk Kim and Pedro Conceição, Spring 2010, "THE ECONOMIC CRISIS, VIOLENT CONFLICT, AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT" International Journal of Peace Studies, https://www3.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol15\_1/KimConceicao15n1.pdf, accessed 7-1-2024//EC

From Low Human Development to Conflict While there are a number of factors that could cause conflict, empirical studies find that **poor economic performance is associated with higher incidence of conflict.** Being a poor country is correlated with most forms of violence (UNDP, 2008a). **Growth rates are also strongly associated with risks of conflict in developing countries**. If the growth rate in developing countries is increased by 1 percentage point from the mean, the risk of conflict decreases by 0.6 percentage points to 4.0 percent (Collier et al., 2009). Kang and Meernik (2005) show that the growth rate in conflict countries in the five years prior to conflict, including cases of conflict recurrence, was on average 0.5 percent compared to 2 percent in the countries that remained peaceful.  
Since 1990, more than 3 **million people have died** in armed conflicts in developing countries (Marshall, 2005). The total war deaths are far more than the battle deaths.

**The results of violence are disastrous**

**Kim and Conceição, 10 continued,** Namsuk Kim and Pedro Conceição, Spring 2010, "THE ECONOMIC CRISIS, VIOLENT CONFLICT, AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT" International Journal of Peace Studies, https://www3.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol15\_1/KimConceicao15n1.pdf, accessed 7-1-2024//EC

**Conflict destroys accumulated physical and human capital, forces replacement of labor, and deteriorates institutional capacity**. A country experiencing conflict cannot secure long term returns for investments in both physical and human capital, resulting in low investment in health and education. All of these factors lead to low levels of human development. A country with low levels of human development has more difficulty in improving institutions, and in increasing productivity and potential growth. In turn, **lower growth rates heighten the risk of conflict, potentially trapping a country in the loop**.

## Contention 2 is Cooperation

**US-Mexico relations are thriving now - The US Government in 2023 finds that** [United States Department of State, 9-13-2023, "U.S. Relations With Mexico," <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-mexico> // accessed 9/19/24 AARON

In 2022, **the U**nited **S**tates **and Mexico celebrated 200 years of diplomatic relations**. By virtue of shared geography, history, and deep cultural and people-to-people ties, **Mexico remains one of the United States’** closest and **most valued partners**. The countries share a 2,000-mile border with 47 active land ports of entry. This bilateral relationship directly impacts the lives and livelihoods of millions of Americans, whether the issue is trade and economic development, education exchange, citizen security, drug control, migration, human trafficking, entrepreneurship, innovation, environmental protection, climate change, or public health. The broad scope of relations between the United States and Mexico extends beyond diplomatic and official relations. It encompasses extensive commercial, cultural, and educational exchange. Hundreds of thousands of people cross the border legally each day. In addition, an estimated 1.6 million U.S. citizens live in Mexico, and Mexico is the top foreign destination for U.S. travelers. Bilateral Economic Issues and the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement Mexico became the top U.S. trading partner in early 2023, with bilateral trade totaling $263 billion in the first four months of the year and accounting for more than 15 percent of total U.S. trade. In 2022, U.S. goods and services trade with Mexico reached $863 billion, making Mexico our second-largest trading partner. According to the Department of Commerce, U.S. exports of goods and services to Mexico totaled $362.5 billion in 2022, which accounted for 13 percent of total U.S. exports and 43 percent of Mexican imports. U.S. exports supported an estimated 1.1 million jobs in 2019 (latest data available). In 2022, Mexico remained the second-largest source of foreign crude oil to the United States as well as the top destination for U.S. petroleum product exports and U.S. natural gas. Other top U.S. exports to Mexico include machinery, electrical machinery, vehicles, mineral fuels, and plastics. The stock of foreign direct investment by U.S. companies in Mexico stood at $130.3 billion in 2022 while Mexican stock investment in the United States was over $33.8 billion in 2022, according to the Department of Commerce. The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) entered into force on July 1, 2020, replacing NAFTA as the free trade agreement for North America. The USMCA supports mutually beneficial trade leading to freer markets, fairer trade, and robust economic growth in North America. The agreement generates job opportunities, improves worker protections, prevents forced labor, increases agricultural trade, produces new investments in vital manufacturing industries, protects intellectual property rights, creates similar environmental standards across **the** three **countries**, and updates digital trade protections. The USMCA requires a formal review of the agreement at least every six years. These periodic reviews are designed to ensure that the terms of the agreement remain beneficial for all parties and to identify emerging issues for potential revisions. The agreement is set to terminate on July 1, 2036, but can be extended for an additional 16 years by all three countries after each review. Also, USMCA includes a Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM) to handle plant-level labor disputes related to denial of rights. As of July 2023, twelve cases had been filed using the RRM. Mexico, a strong promoter of trade liberalization, maintains thirteen trade agreements with 50 countries plus 32 investment promotion agreements, and nine limited economic agreements, including pacts with Japan, the European Union, and many Latin American partners. On September 12, 2022, senior government officials from the United States and Mexico met in Mexico City to convene the U.S.-Mexico High-Level Economic Dialogue (HLED). The next HLED meeting will be held in Washington, D.C. in September 2023. The dialogue focuses on building back together to improve the regional business environment and strengthen supply chain resilience, promoting sustainable economic and social development in southern Mexico and Central America, securing the tools for future prosperity by supporting regulatory compatibility in the information, communication, telecom, and infrastructure sectors, supporting micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) development and equipping our workforces with the skills to succeed in the modern global economy. The Department of Commerce, the Department of State, and the U.S. Trade Representative co-chair the annual cabinet-level dialogue. Periodic updates related to the HLED are published at www.trade.gov/hled where stakeholders may submit input. The United States and Mexico **maintain deep ties in science and technology cooperation**, with collaborative research on **health**, meteorology, hydrology, earth sciences, and energy technology facilitated by the 1972 Agreement on Scientific and Technical Cooperation. U.S. science agencies such as NOAA, NSF, NIST, NIH, USGS, NASA, and DOE contribute to a solid body of bilateral scientific research. In 2021, Mexico joined 21 other countries in signing the Artemis Accords with NASA, outlining the principles and rules to enhance governance of the responsible exploration of outer space. Migration The United States works with Mexico to address the root causes of irregular migration and to implement humane migration management policiesthat prioritize control and security for our respective borders; respect for the human rights of migrants; and on Migration (RCM), an eleven-member consultative mechanism to coordinate regional migration policies. RCM member countries commit to addressing issues of international migration in a multilateral context that respects orderly movements and human rights. Mexico also participates in the Comprehensive Regional Protection and Solutions Framework, known by its Spanish acronym MIRPS — a regional application of the Global Compact for Refugees wherein countries collaborate to prevent and respond to forced displacement within their borders and regionally. The United States supports MIRPS efforts as a member and incoming chair of its parallel donor Support Platform and with humanitarian funding contributions through international organizations.The United States **and**Mexico **have expanded cooperation to address the root causes of migration and manage our** shared **border in a** humane and **orderly way. The U.S. government supports** international organization and NGO **partners to respond to the needs of asylum seekers, refugees, internally displaced persons, and vulnerable migrants in Mexico**. With USG funds, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) assisted the Mexican Commission for Refugee Assistance (COMAR) **to increase its asylum case registration and processing capacity by 400 percent since 2018**. The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) builds the capacity of Mexico’s border and migration officials to humanely manage migration and to coordinate with Mexican and U.S. law enforcement to secure borders. INL programming also increases the capacity of Mexican security and justice sector institutions to identify, investigate, and prosecute human smuggling and trafficking. Between 2021 and 2023, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Mexican Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AMEXCID) have worked closely with state governments in southern Mexico to link Micro, Small, and Medium Sized Enterprises with markets and investors and have trained farmers on conservation techniques and access to markets and finance, benefiting more than 40,000 people to date. In June 2021, USAID and AMEXCID signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen development cooperation in northern Central America. This MOU supports U.S. and Mexican efforts to exchange knowledge, experiences, assets, and resources to address the root causes of irregular migration in northern Central America. In December 2021, the United States and Mexico announced Sembrando Oportunidades, a bilateral framework with goals, projects, and indicators to carry out this cooperation to address the root causes of migration from Central America. Through Sembrando Oportunidades, USAID and AMEXCID coordinate every day and have jointly reached nearly 2,000 farmers and youth in Honduras and El Salvador with interventions that provide them with greater economic opportunity. Based on the Sembrando Oportunidades model, Canada has now joined AMEXCID and USAID to coordinate foreign assistance to northern Central America to address the root causes of migration in northern Central America.

**Unilateral enforcement of the aff plan decks bilateral cooperation.**

**Colorado State University**, 17 Aug, 20**23** “Border war: CSU policy expert says DOJ case against Texas is clear thanks to historic treaty” <https://libarts.source.colostate.edu/border-war-csu-policy-expert-says-doj-case-against-texas-is-clear-thanks-to-historic-treaty/> // accessed 9/12/24 by AARON

If they were convinced that it wouldn’t cause a problem, then they would go to Mexico and have their engineers look at it to see if they agree or disagree. It’s through that type of careful, back and forth process, using good technical standards, that you come to an agreement. That just wasn’t done here. rio grande border texas mexico political science What kind of impact could this have on current and future U.S./Mexico relations? Mexico’s foreign minister, Alicia Bárcena, and its ambassador, Esteban Moctezuma Barragán, have already both issued formal complaints. It has the potential to have serious implications because this issue involves a particularly important aspect of Mexico’s sovereignty — its sovereignty vis a vis the United States. **That’s a very historic and painful history as the U.S. absorbed nearly half of Mexico in 1848**. So, **Mexico doesn’t like to be viewed as subservient to U.S. policy**. They want to be treated independently with respect and dignity, as they deserve to be. So, **proceeding unilaterally** like this and ignoring Mexico entirely **is an insult,** and an indignity. **It violates the kind of relationship that** the U.S. and Mexico **want[s] to have**. It also has the potential of blowing up into a big political issue. Mexico’s going into a presidential campaign next year, as is the U.S. Could this be politicized? Yes, because **it looks like the U.S. is encroaching on Mexican sovereignty. If Canada were encroaching on U.S. sovereignty, you can be sure that some U.S. presidential candidate would make a campaign focus out of it.** It could be a significant issue if the Biden administration doesn’t hasten to work this out. I’m sure that they’re trying to work with Mexico behind the scenes and now the Justice Department is suing the state of Texas, which is the logical next step. Does Texas have an argument here? Is there any “wiggle room” that you can see where they might be able to make a case? The state of Texas doesn’t have a leg to stand on. This is a pretty cut and dried case because there’s nothing that I’ve seen, either in U.S. domestic law or in treaty law, that allows for this kind of unilateral decision. Mexico also has the recourse of taking this to an international tribunal if it wants to. The U.S. State Department has worked extremely hard and very successfully over the years to keep these things out of international courts and resolve them amicably. I think that’s something the U.S. can be proud of, and I think that’s what the Biden administration is going to try and do again here. Your latest book, “Border Water” looks at the politics of U.S.-Mexico transboundary water management from 1945 to 2015. Have you seen other cases like this before? rio grande border texas mexico book Stephen Mumme’s book, “Border Water: The Politics of U.S.-Mexico Transboundary Water Management, 1945–2015″ Interestingly, there haven’t been many. **This is a uniquely insulated area of U.S. and Mexico public policy in which there has been a high level of cooperation**. There are real differences there. There are issues. There are frustrations involving the boundary and water rights, and the drought is complicating matters. But we’ve managed this relationship very successfully, something that both countries should be proud of. Around 2007-08 when the Bush administration began building more barriers along the border, it did have the authority in U.S. domestic law to override a lot of state, local and federal laws to get this work done. That was a real opportunity to move forward with barrier building along the border. When they began to do it, there were a lot of angry reactions by Texas property owners who had their property condemned in order to build these barriers. The barrier project ended up using different types of structures in various places — steel bollard-style steel fences in some places, Normandy-style vehicle barriers in other places. And in some places, it was more controversial than in others. What was the reaction from Mexico? **Mexico began to worry about where barriers were being built along the river as potentialimpediments**, and it raised that issue with the United States, and the U.S. raised it with Homeland Security and the U.S. section of the IBWC. There was a lot of discussion and, while I don’t know for sure, I’m guessing there was some modification of plans because at the end of the day, Mexico did not issue a formal protest. This was all worked out very quietly behind the scenes, although there were a lot of local landowners protesting and pointing fingers at the IBWC saying that they should be doing more to protect the U.S. But it was dealt with in this quiet, evenhanded way. A lot of that wall building did go forward, presumptively with the tacit forbearance of the International Boundary and Water Commission. Then in 2018, 2019, a private group associated with Steve Bannon and some people here in Colorado created the nongovernmental organization: We Build the Wall. They decided that if the federal government wasn’t going to act fast enough to build these barriers, they were going to work with private property owners, raise the money, and build the wall themselves. They built some in El Paso that were ham handedly done and were criticized by the IBWC because it prevented them from monitoring the river in places. Did it impact the river in other ways? Further down along the river near Roma, Texas, they built bollard-style fences right on the edge of the river. That was a problem and Mexico protested. The U.S. section of the IBWC sued Fisher Sand & Gravel, which was the engineering firm contracted to build the walls. Fisher eventually agreed to cease and desist, and the suit was settled out of court, with Fisher agreeing to correct the errors and absorb all the costs for any damages incurred. While that lawsuit was resolved out of court, it showed that the U.S. section of the IBWC was obviously paying attention and that it would use the courts to go after interests that were not proceeding in the proper way with barrier construction along the river. And during that case they did invoke the 1970 Boundary Treaty. The federal attorney down in Brownsville also saw the case as a slam dunk. So, why then are we seeing a similar issue again? I think the problem here is that we have a system for managing the boundary and managing our water. It works and it works well, but from time to time, **things are going to get political.** The issue here right now in Texas isn’t about the boundary or about water management. It’s about immigration. **This is simply an attempt to unilaterally** move ahead of U.S. immigration authorities **to deal with a specific perceived problem. Mexico is rightly concerned** about the razor wire because while it’s hard to say how much of an impediment that would be to the river — although it is a barrier that needs to be studied and authorized — nevertheless, it’s also inhumane. It means a lot of desperate people who are trying to reach the United States to claim asylum, to claim the opportunity for a better life, are simply going to get

lacerated. Men, women and children. There must be better deterrents. I really want to stress tha**t we need Mexico as a partner to deal with these kinds of issues and by far it has been willing to lend a hand. We must find more cooperative ways of handling a lot of these issues that arise along the international boundary because when we do, everything works better.**

**US-Mexico cooperation is key to solve numerous issues.**

**Meltzer et al 23** - Joshua P. Meltzer, Earl Anthony Wayne, and Diego Marroquin Bitar, “USMCA at 3: Reflecting on impacts and charting the future,” [<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/usmca-at-3-reflecting-on-impact-and-charting-the-future/>] Accessed 01/26/23 Zayn // recut AARON

The last three years show significant progress in expanding trade, investment, and jobs, as well as ensuring USMCA delivers outcomes that are good for workers and broader group of society across North America. Trade and investment have expanded across the region, and cooperation among officials, industry, and civil society has strengthened and deepened. The USMCA dispute resolution mechanisms have been utilized, which demonstrates an investment by all governments in the rules. Furthermore, the success of the labor chapter rapid response mechanism has underscored how this new type of trade agreement can lead to material impacts on working conditions. More broadly, **USMCA has provided** the policy certainty and baseline for North America as **a key platform for** building complete supply chains in areas such as electric vehicles (EVs) and semiconductors, **addressing climate change** and developing clean energy, and expanding access to critical minerals, to mention a few. In short, **USMCA has underpinned** the **economic relationship and is increasingly a key element of broader geostrategic competition with China.** At the same time, there are real challenges that must be addressed if North America is to maximize the opportunities that USMCA presents. This includes compliance by all governments with their USMCA commitments, including USMCA dispute settlement findings. There are also areas where deeper cooperation will be needed to achieve the broader goals of more secure and resilient supply chains in expanding manufacturing in North America. This includes in areas such as regulatory alignment, digital trade and data flows, worker training, and expanding opportunities for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), to name a few. In 2022, the total value of **trade within North America exceeded $1.5 trillion,** equivalent to nearly $3 million per minute and the result of double-digit growth in trade over the past two years. This impressive growth in trade over the past two years has made Mexico and Canada the top trading partners of the United States, with trade volumes 44% higher than U.S. goods trade with China. Combined, the three countries now account for almost a third of global GDP, **and** intra-regional goods trade alone **supports 9.5 million jobs across North America** (Brookings USMCA Tracker).

**Extra link card: Unilateral enforcement of infrastructure on the border decks cooperation.**

SHANNON K. **O’NEIL** is an author and Senior Fellow for Latin America Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, May 27th 20**24** “A Reset for America and Mexico?” <https://archive.ph/212kR#selection-1239.0-1239.12> // accessed 9/19/24 AARON

As mayor of Mexico City from 2018 to 2023, Sheinbaum took a different tack. She focused on enforcement, hiring thousands of new police officers to patrol the capital, installing tens of thousands of cameras, and expanding police training and raising salaries to improve skills and performance. She granted more police the power to investigate crimes and to work with prosecutors to build stronger cases against criminals, and she created neighborhood watch programs to involve communities in crime prevention and public safety. And her city government was, albeit quietly, more open to working with the U.S. government and the DEA. Galvez, too, has promised to go after criminal groups and expressed openness to working with the United States, calling for an as-yet-to-be-defined North American security agreement. She is less keen on the military taking the lead, as troops are not trained in domestic law enforcement or legally able to investigate crimes. Instead, she has promised to prioritize civilian policing, a measure that would both improve public safety and strengthen the rule of law. THE MIGRATION CONUNDRUM **Migration will continue to loom large in the bilateral relationship**. In both 2022 and 2023, U.S. authorities had over two million encounters with migrants crossing the southern border, breaking the previous record highs from around two decades ago. And where once most migrants hailed from Mexico and Central America, more than half of those stopped at the border today come from countries much farther afield, such as China, Colombia, Ecuador, India, Turkey, and Venezuela—the knock-on effect of mounting global crises, such as climate change, as well as economic instability, political repression, and violence. **The Biden administration has maintained Trump’s policies, forcing Mexico to take back tens of thousands of migrants of many nationalities,** where they must either wait for asylum proceedings or are consigned to permanent deportation. **At Washington’s behest, Mexico has broken up migrant caravans, pulled people off trains, set up checkpoints, and bused people back down south toward the border with Guatemala.** In the presidential campaign, neither Mexican candidate has delved into exactly how they would cooperate with the United States on this issue or address the challenges of integrating hundreds of thousands of people stranded on the Mexican side of the border. If either lets the status quo persist, the border could well become even more chaotic and deadly. DEMOCRACY NOW The fate of Mexico’s democratic institutions will affect the United States in the years to come, as their further corrosion will likely slow economic growth, increase insecurity, and spur migration. Mexico’s democracy remains young; the country’s official transition to democracy only took place in 2000, after decades of single-party rule under the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). But it is fragile and made weaker by AMLO’s actions. He has eroded or done away with many of the painstakingly built checks and balances over his five years in office. Throughout his tenure, AMLO has vilified and cut funding to the independent electoral agency and the freedom of information institute in an effort to personalize and expand his presidential powers. He has replaced experts and civil servants with loyalists in once-independent regulatory agencies, independent watchdogs, and the Supreme Court. He routinely attacks journalists and civil society leaders in his daily press conferences, brooking no criticism for his government or his policies. It is unclear whether Sheinbaum will follow AMLO’s lead on the use of presidential power. Although she may be more technocratically inclined, and could reinstall some experts in relevant governmental roles, she, too, supports limiting the independence of government watchdogs and courts. Gálvez, on the other hand, has promised to reinstate experts in regulatory agencies and oversight committees and maintain the independence of judges. She has also discussed bringing back the National Anticorruption System, an agency designed to go after public graft, as it was effectively shuttered under AMLO. A RELATIONSHIP BUILT TO LAST Of course, the status of U.S.-Mexican relations also depends on the outcome of the United States’s own elections. A Biden administration is more likely to lean into green transition, human rights advocacy, and a broader security agenda. A second-term Trump administration, however, is likely to care little for renewables, less for private investment guarantees, or for the niceties of human rights and democracy, **doubling down instead on suppressing migration**—red meat for the Republican Party’s base. Trump is also likely to bring back the public threats in dialogue with Mexico’s leader. **In the short term**, this **may be more effective** than Biden’s quieter, more conciliatory approach and may lead Mexico to acquiesce when challenged on matters such as migration. **But the singular focus on the southern border, and unilateral policy rather than cooperation, would be a mistake; Mexico’s economic, social, and political health are also of major importance to the United States.** Regardless of which administration ends up in the White House, several key policies will serve U.S. interests with its southern neighbor. For starters, Washington should work to shore up the USMCA. The Biden administration has formally disputed

Mexico’s restrictions on genetically modified corn imports, which affect U.S. farmers, but hesitated to officially do much on energy—the largest companies involved have managed to reach resolutions without Washington’s intervention, and the issue is very politically sensitive. This serves neither economy well, favoring powerful companies while still subjecting small and medium-sized enterprises to unfair treatment on the part of the Mexican government, discouraging future investment. More aggressive enforcement of USMCA regulations, along with a commitment to sustaining the accord well into the future, is vital to spur investment in Mexico—in ways that will ultimately benefit the U.S. economy as well. Mexico’s next president will not have the domestic political leeway AMLO enjoys. Migration will remain a central subject in the bilateral relationship, as people keep coming; and both Biden’s and Trump’s failures to stem the flow of migrants signal that it is time for a major policy change. **Mexico is likely at its breaking point, with the government incapable of halting the hundreds of thousands of people heading** north each month **of supporting the millions who wind up remaining in the country** Confidential conversations remain helpful when addressing difficult issues. But public disagreements are useful, too, setting guardrails on issues that matter to Washington, including the unequal treatment of companies, unfulfilled climate change pledges, corruption, and state-sponsored political persecution south of the border. And for the many Mexicans pushing for more openness, transparency, and accountability from their own government, the United States should publicly reaffirm that it takes its own commitment to democratic values seriously. Little change in the bilateral relationship will happen between now and the resolution of both countries’ elections as domestic politics reign. But as the two new presidential terms begin, both neighbors should work together to better address the host of inescapable and shared challenges they face