

has done a poor job of communicating its plans, failing to articulate a long-term vision for defeating the powerful fuel theft cartels. # He added one of the reasons for the gasoline shortage is probably because some gas stations had previously been buying stolen fuel on the black market, which has been mostly blocked under the current crackdown. # Mexico will have to decide whether to shift gasoline distribution away from its vulnerable pipelines more permanently, perhaps by purchasing a new fleet of fuel trucks. On Tuesday, L?pez Obrador appeared to suggest the pipelines would indeed remain closed for some time. # " It would be easy to open the pipelines and say that the situation is normalized but it would be to knowingly maintain the theft, to tolerate the theft, and that we will not do, " he said at a news conference. " We will resist all the pressures. " # The other major question regarding L?pez Obrador's crackdown on fuel theft is how criminal groups will respond. Pemex estimates \$7.4 billion in fuel has been stolen since 2016, and cartels are unlikely to accept such a massive loss in revenue without responding. In recent years, some of the country's most dangerous drug cartels have become increasingly involved in fuel theft. # " We need to worry about the safety of the president, " Salazar said. " This is a business with a lot of interests, and they aren't going to take this crackdown lightly. "