

## **Foreign Minister in Mexico Will Quit, Frustrated by the U.S.**

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**Byline:** By TIM WEINER

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### **Body**

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**Mexico's foreign minister**, Jorge G. Castaneda, **will** leave the government next week, **frustrated** over the stalemate in his country's relations with the **United States** since the attacks of Sept. 11 and the antiterrorism campaign born of them.

Mr. Castaneda has told close associates that he **will** return to the academic life he left when he joined the government of President Vicente Fox. His successor, officials said, **will** most likely be Luis Ernesto Derbez, **Mexico's** low-key finance **minister** and a former World Bank official, who has criticized the North American Free Trade Agreement's failure to benefit **Mexico's** poor.

Mr. Castaneda did not comment publicly on the resignation today.

Mr. Castaneda and Mr. Fox formed one of **Mexico's** unlikelier political unions. Mr. Castaneda is an intellectual who came out of the left wing, a political scientist by trade. Mr. Fox was a conservative provincial politician, a former Coca-Cola executive, when Mr. Castaneda joined his political crusade to topple 70 years of one-party rule in **Mexico**.

After his election in 2000, Mr. Fox and Mr. Castaneda sought "to create a new perception of **Mexico** in the world," said Jeffrey Davidow, the **United States** ambassador here from 1998 to 2002.

They said they wanted to make **Mexico** a more open society, less insular and inward. In particular, they tried to transform **Mexico's** relations with the **United States**, seeking new accords on immigration, trade and energy.

They thought they had a **willing** partner in President Bush, who made **Mexico** his first stop abroad as president and made Mr. Fox the guest at his first state dinner.

But those efforts all but halted after the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington in September 2001. Mr. Castaneda tried repeatedly to convince the Bush administration that a new arrangement on immigration, including legal status and documentation for millions of Mexicans in the **United States**, would enhance American national security. He got nowhere.

"We have to make the **U.S.-Mexico** relationship, the Fox-Bush relationship, a demonstrable success story," Mr. Castaneda said in an interview last year. "We need substance. And in order to have substance, given what both presidents and both governments have said from the beginning, we need a deal on immigration."

When it became apparent last fall that such a deal was not in the works, Mr. Castaneda began thinking about his departure.

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"Castaneda gave Mexico its first high-profile and ambitious foreign policy," said Rolando Cordera, a political analyst in Mexico City. "But after Sept. 11, because the United States decided that the world had to change, Mexico faced a hostile situation."

The son of a former foreign minister of Mexico, educated at Princeton University, Mr. Castaneda, 49, has taught at New York University and written a small shelf of books. Last year, he worked to win a seat for Mexico on the United Nations Security Council, where it played a major role in forging a unanimous resolution on weapons inspections in Iraq.

His resignation, which will be the first from Mr. Fox's cabinet, has been long sought by his many political opponents. In fact, few in Mexican politics have more enemies.

"He is an anomaly in Mexican politics," said the historian Carlos Monsivais. "He comes from the left. He speaks directly. And he does not worry about the personal consequences of his acts."

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