



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 6, 2021

His Excellency  
Andrés Manuel López Obrador  
President of the United Mexican States  
Mexico City

Dear Mr. President:

Please accept again my heartiest congratulations for your recent bicentennial celebration. There is no better time for us to transform our bilateral relationship as we partner on matters of vital importance, like migration, trade, development, security, and conservation. As we approach the 200th anniversary of relations between our two countries, we have an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to improving the lives of our people and setting a strategic course for the future.

Thank you for your September 7th letter outlining your approach to managing migration. We share a vision of an immigration system that humanely secures our respective borders, expands legal pathways for opportunity and protection in the United States, fairly and efficiently considers asylum claims, reduces irregular migration, and addresses the root causes of migration.

That is why upon taking office, I redirected resources from a needless border wall toward proven investments, like border technology and modernization of land ports of entry. We are working to improve border processing to better identify individuals who have legitimate claims for asylum and other forms of protection, while promptly removing those who do not. I have made clear to the U.S. Congress that it is also time for them to act by providing a path to citizenship and a fair and efficient legal immigration system.

We agree that the most effective and sustainable way to dissuade would-be migrants from fleeing their homes is to address the root causes of migration – the lack of economic opportunity, weak governance and corruption, and violence and insecurity. This is why I have ramped up our engagement with Central America and my Administration outlined a comprehensive approach that builds upon the lessons learned from my years leading this effort as Vice President of the United States. Central to that approach is our partnership with Mexico to ensuring regional migration is safe, orderly, and humane.

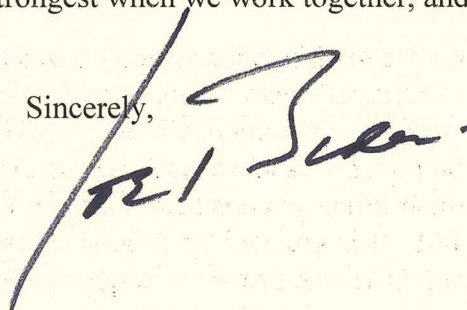
As Vice President Harris discussed with you, addressing the root causes of migration is a top priority for our Administration, which is why I asked her to lead a whole-of-government effort. In the past year, the United States has provided over \$600 million in foreign assistance to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. And I have asked the U.S. Congress for an additional \$861 million in my Fiscal Year 2022 budget for Central America. Through a range of programs, we are addressing economic insecurity, inequality, anti-corruption, security, and gender-based violence in Central America – challenges that drive people to make the difficult decision to leave.

I look forward to working with you to expand our collaboration, specifically by increasing investment in Southern Mexico and Northern Central America. I was pleased to see our development agencies already traveling together to El Salvador to identify new opportunities. I appreciate your government's funding and implementation of Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro and Sembrando Vida in northern Central America to provide employment and training for youth and sustainable income to poor rural families from high migration communities. The United States is also piloting conditional cash transfer programs in the region and we are interested in building on observations and lessons from one another's existing and pending programs in Central America, sharing best practices, and considering a potential joint pilot activity.

We both know that economic competitiveness is a cornerstone of these efforts. Your letter mentioned the need to elevate the conditions of our region's most vulnerable – a goal I deeply share. The re-launch of our U.S.-Mexico High-Level Economic Dialogue for the first time recognized the need to ensure that economic growth reaches those who would otherwise be left behind. And I am pleased to see a resumption of a robust and respectful partnership in the area of security, which is foundational to all that we hope to achieve together. I look forward to discussing with you how we can make more dynamic our North American platform.

Our past and present are intertwined, as is our future. I know that on this strong base of partnership we can approach this regional challenge in a way that stands strong with the hopes we each have for our countries. We are strongest when we work together, and I look forward to our joint efforts to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Biden", written over a diagonal line that serves as a separator between the text and the signature.