

*Conclusions from the:*  
**Third Binational Roundtable on Mexico-U.S. Migration:  
The New Bilateralism  
Mexico-U.S. Advocates Network**

June 11-12, 2001  
Mexico, D.F. Mexico

## INTRODUCTION

Over the past three years, the Mexico-U.S. Advocates Network has convened an annual Roundtable among Mexican and U.S. advocates to discuss their shared concerns relating to U.S.-Mexico migration policy and its effect on the lives of people and communities on both sides of the border. These annual meetings and interim exchange visits have created a community of activists who understand that Mexico-to-U.S. migration is a complex, binational phenomenon, and that the human rights and welfare of those involved can only be addressed by binational approaches. Thus, the participants in the Mexico-U.S. Advocates Network were encouraged when in February 2001, U.S. and Mexican Presidents George W. Bush and Vicente Fox met and announced the formation of a cabinet-level Mexico-U.S. Binational Commission to address the issue from a bilateral perspective. The challenge that faces both Mexican and U.S. immigrants' rights advocates is how to impact the bilateral discussions between the Executives as well as the legislative process that must follow any joint Presidential proclamation in September.

On June 11-12, 2001, the Mexico-U.S. Advocates Network convened a meeting of thirty advocates and academics from both countries in Mexico City. They were briefed at the beginning of their meeting by officials of the U.S. State Department and Mexican Foreign Ministry who informed them that the bilateral negotiations will proceed with working groups on border issues, temporary worker programs, and regularization/legalization during the summer of 2001, with the announcement of some sort of agreement when Presidents Fox and Bush meet in Washington, D.C. on September 5, 2001. While both governments readily agreed to brief the Network Roundtable, and the discussion with officials was frank and open, the Network noted that the Binational Commission has no mechanism for public information or participation. The Mexico-U.S. Advocates Network intends to promote a binational civil society role in this historic discussion either within or parallel to the bilateral government talks. The June meeting marked the first step in that process.

After listening to the government briefings, Roundtable participants (list attached) spent the next day and a half sharing information about the political situation in each country, the factors affecting current migration trends, policy options under discussion in both capitals, and the state of organizing and advocacy aimed at the mobilization of concerned constituencies and at impacting the legislative process. The policy paper developed by the recent Carnegie Endowment-*Instituto Tecnológico Autónoma de México* study group proved a useful starting point for discussions. Meeting in national sessions and then in a binational discussion, the advocates developed a set of priorities for advocacy in each country and for joint efforts as follows:

## CONCLUSIONS

In their national meetings both U.S. and Mexican participants developed a framework to use in the discussion of Mexico-U.S. migration.

### Conclusions: U.S. Advocates

#### U.S. Principles

The U.S. participants developed the following set of principles to function as a framework for advocacy and organizing activities.

**Goal:** The goal of advocacy over the short term is to influence the negotiations between Presidents George W. Bush and Vicente Fox.

**Premise 1:** The premise under which our advocacy proceeds is that current migration-related policies are a failure.

**Premise 2:** The bilateral negotiations should not be conducted in secret and should provide mechanisms for input from concerned sectors of society, the general public, and Congress.

#### **The Four Pillars:**

1. Legalize Mexico-U.S. migration through
  - Legalization/permanent residence for immigrants in the United States
  - Legalization of future flows through mechanisms such as temporary worker-to-permanent resident visa programs, adjusting quotas for family immigration to meet demand, and other options
2. Strengthen labor rights and social protections, by including health care benefits and effective labor law enforcement
3. Develop new strategies for immigration law enforcement by:
  - Including accountability, human rights protection, and alternatives to current border enforcement
  - Replacing the current employer sanctions regime with enforcement targeted at illegal recruitment and exploitation
4. Develop new economic development strategies that
  - Are determined by the affected communities and are sustainable over the long term,
  - Include Border regions
  - Include finance and infrastructure support from governments and international financial institutions

### **Advocacy Strategies in the United States over the Short-Term (June to September, 2001):**

1. Support for a signature campaign on a letter to both presidents from Mexican immigrants living in the United States, coordinated by a national committee of Mexican immigrants/immigrants' rights organizations
2. Educate and pressure Congress and the Administration through meetings, briefings, hearings, letters, etc.
3. Develop specific messages consistent with the four pillars which allow flexibility for distinct advocacy strategies
4. Develop a media strategy
5. Reach out to other networks and potential allies

### **Binational Work:**

1. Determine how to have U.S. strategy reinforce Mexico strategy and vice-versa
2. Maintain communication and coordinate strategies and tactics when possible

### **Conclusions: Mexican Advocates**

### **Mexican Principles**

#### **Major Pillars:**

1. Border control issues — especially deaths at border
2. Legislation:
  - Guestworker program
  - Legalizations/amnesty for undocumented in United States
3. Development strategies in Mexico

#### **Short-Term Strategy:**

1. Consolidate a forum to define action regarding the Senate, Congress, and State legislatures
2. Consolidate binational coordination by
  - Organizing immigrants' rights groups from United States come to speak to Mexican Congress and groups from Mexico go to speak to the U.S. Congress
  - Developing a communication strategy which includes putting out a Spanish-language bulletin in Mexico regarding U.S. Congressional initiatives that could affect Mexicans, (requires help from U.S. groups)

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PARTICIPANT LIST

U.S. Participants

- Kevin Appleby, Migration and Refugee Services/ U.S. Catholic
- Jeanne Butterfield, American Immigration Lawyers Association
- Oscar Chacon, Independent Advocacy Consultant
- Arnolde Garcia, National Network of Immigrant and Refugee Rights
- Maricela Garcia, Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
- Susan Gzesh, Mexico-U.S. Advocates Network
- Maria Jimenez, AFSC-ILEMP
- Geralyn Luty, United Food & Commercial Workers
- Clarissa Martinez, National Council of La Raza
- Mary Meg McCarthy, Midwest Immigrant and Human Rights Center
- Raquel Rubio Goldsmith, Arizona Border Rights Coalition
- Angelica Salas, Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA)
- Anne Seymour, Mexico-US Advocates Network
- Frank Sharry, National Immigration Forum
- Annie Wilson, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

Mexican Participants

- Miguel Alvarez, SERAPAZ
- Ana Elsa Avilés, Centro de Solidaridad Internacional – AFL-CIO en México
- Arlina Barrala, Comisión Episcopal para la Movilidad Humana
- Rodolfo Casillas, Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO)
- Rodolfo García Zamora, Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas
- Jeff Hermanson, Centro de Solidaridad Internacional – AFL-CIO en México
- Liliane Loya, Sin Fronteras, I.A.P.
- Gustavo López Castro, El Colegio de Michoacán
- Miguel Pickard, Consejería en Proyectos
- Mario Alberto Rivera Contreras, Movimiento Ciudadano por la Democracia (MCD)
- Arturo Solís, Centro de Estudios Fronterizos y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos
- Orila María Travessini, Caritas Arquidiócesis de México, I.A.P.
- Fabienne Venet, Sin Fronteras
- Blanca Villaseñor, Albergue del Desierto / Centro de Apoyo al Trabajador Migrante

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**AGENDA**

**Monday, June 11, 2001**

9:00 - 10:00 Introduction & welcome: review of principles developed at prior Binational Roundtables, Susan Gzesh

Long term, medium term, and short term challenges: a vision of the future, Frank Sharry and Fabienne Venet

10:00 - 11:30 Presentations by representatives of the Mexican and U.S. governments on the status of bilateral discussions on migration – questions and answers

*Mexico:* Gustavo Mohar, Director General for Migration Policy and Consular Affairs, Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores

*U.S.A.:* Christian Kennedy, Minister and Councilor for Political Affairs, U.S. Embassy, Mexico

11:30 - 12:00 Coffee break

12:00 - 2:00 Regularization, legalization, amnesty, and temporary workers – an overview of the U.S. situation, Maricela Garcia, Oscar Chacon, and Jeanne Butterfield

2:00 - 3:00 Local development, remittances, temporary worker programs, and government responsibility for Mexican nationals in the U.S., Rodolfo Garcia Zamora

3:00 - 4:30 Lunch

4:30 - 6:00 National meetings – Mexican and U.S. participants meet separately

**Tuesday, June 12, 2001**

8:00 - 10:00 National meetings continue

10:00 - 11:30 Report back from national meetings: recommendations for parallel or binational advocacy projects, including overview of campaign in Mexican communities in the U.S., Maria Jimenez

11:30 - 12:00 Coffee break

12:00 - 1:30 Conclusions and review of proposals for actions between June and September

1:30 - 2:00 Evaluation and direction for Mexico-U.S. Advocates future projects

2:00 Adjourn

**Wednesday, June 13, 2001**

10:00 - 12:00 U.S. delegates (Susan Gzesh, Clarissa Martinez, Mary Meg McCarthy, Ramon Ramirez) meet with the Commission on Population, Borders, and Migration of the Camara de Diputados, with participating members from the Commissions on Foreign Affairs and Labor, organized by Diputada Maria del Rosario Tapia, chaired by Diputada Irma Pineyro