



XXIII BORDER GOVERNORS CONFERENCE

JULY 14-15, 2005
TORREON, COAHUILA

JOINT DECLARATION

PREAMBLE

The Governors of the states of Baja California, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon, Sonora and Tamaulipas of the United Mexican States, and the Governors of the states of Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas of the United States of America, meeting in the city of Torreon, Coahuila on July 14 and 15, 2005, having analyzed, in the framework of the XXIII Conference of the United States-Mexico Border Governors, the topics relating to Agriculture, Water, Science and Technology, Border Crossings, Economic Development, Education, Energy, Environment, Health, Border Security and Tourism; and

WHEREAS

The United States of America and the United Mexican States are two sovereign and independent nations, each with its own clear identity;

These sovereign nations share a border of nearly two thousand miles, as well as common values and a vision for the prosperity of the border region;

The United States-Mexico border region is one of the most dynamic regions of the world, where the border is not a line that divides our countries but a bond that unites us and invites us to work together for mutual benefit;

Current international conditions have magnified the strategic role of the border region and compelled us to cooperate more fully than ever with both federal governments to ensure greater security and efficiency on the border;

The border states recognize that the positive impact on the economy and global competitiveness of the region will be defined by the development of joint strategies to enhance competitiveness through the development of human capital and construction of scientific and technological capacity;



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The ten states comprising the United States-Mexico border region have collaborated through the institution of the Border Governors Conference for over two decades;

The border states, united as never before by common interests and open dialogue, are determined to seize this opportunity to achieve unprecedented bilateral cooperation;

The border states reaffirm their commitment to open economies and social advancement for the benefit of the inhabitants of the region;

The frequent work meetings held between the governments of the border states have made it possible to establish a mechanism for ongoing dialogue and consultation, as well as a close working relationship among the border Governors;

The relationship among the border Governors continues to generate cooperation between the states, for the prosperity and improvement of the quality of life for the inhabitants of the region;

We, the border Governors, endorse this Joint Declaration and hereby adopt the following topics of significant importance toward the development of the border region:

AGRICULTURE

- Develop and conduct a binational conference on animal and plant pests and disease and agroterrorism to promote biosecurity, the exchange of educational information and guidelines to allow sharing of best management practices.
- Develop acceptable food safety quality assurance measures to be used by producers and processors alike in both countries.
- Collaborate on a three-pronged approach to childhood nutrition, emphasizing nutritious diets, nutritional education and innovative methods of delivering nutritious foods to schools.



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WATER

- Establish a one-year work program among the ten border states, providing an opportunity to each state to express issues, identify and promote water related initiatives and the permanent exchange of data and information regarding surface and ground water along the border, emphasizing the extreme phenomena of drought and water excess, which also facilitates the interpretation and implementation of international agreements and treaties on the subject.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- Strengthen capacity-building for research, innovation and commercialization to support economic development within the region.
 - Utilize existing resources to promote building a strong base of professionals specialized for science and technology competitiveness promoting the creation of a technical consultative council focused on investigation and development of the border.
 - Encourage the establishment of a program that can benefit from the existing resources of each border state to facilitate collaborative research and transfer of technology.
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BORDER CROSSINGS

- Promote the expansions of the Free and Secure Trade (FAST) and the Secure Electronic Network for Traveler's Rapid Inspection (SENTRI) programs and extend the validity of the SENTRI cards for five years, similar to NEXUS, a U.S.-Canada program.
- Request that the U.S. Department of State limit the application of Executive Order 13337 to new border crossings and to projects at existing crossings that change the scope of the crossing. Request that the U.S. Department of State exempt all homeland security projects (e.g., FAST Lane and SENTRI Program) at existing border crossings from the requirement for a Presidential Permit. Also request that the U.S. Department of State initiate a formal inter-agency process to develop specific criteria and policies regarding the applicability and implementation of Executive Order 13337 and that it consult with border states during this process.
- Request the review of the federal mechanism authorization on new border crossings to increase its efficiency.
- That Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and border states commercial vehicle inspectors work together, as needed, to establish the best approach to conducting inspections at border crossings so as to minimize dual inspections and streamline the inspection process.
- Request the United States Government to provide alternative reasonable means of identification instead of only passports that will be required for land entry for U.S. citizens coming from the border area with Mexico.
- Request the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) coordinate its five year capital investment program (related to Mexico) with the United States-Mexico Border Master Plan initiative.



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Organize, coordinate and establish the first Binational Border Business Encounter, in order to link interstate products and services suppliers, promote strategic alliances and increase added value among small and medium border companies.
- Create and promote a catalogue that contains the requirements to initiate a business in the border region, in order to establish a confident regulatory framework for border enterprises.
- Strengthen the regional economic information system through the promotion and updating of the website by its members.

EDUCATION

- Strengthen the operation of the Education Border Committee as a promoting organization of continuous educational improvement and cultural, scientific and technical development of the border States.
 - Strengthen the teaching of the English language in public elementary schools in the Border States of Mexico, with the aid of resources from the Federal Mexican Government, and the border states of the United States of America work to enhance English language instruction for students with limited proficiency in English to the extent permitted by law in each respective State.
 - Send a communiqué to the Mexican federal government recognizing its effort which supports 50 per cent of the budget in the English program of the schools of the border states, and to request the integration of the respective commission in coordination with the Ministry of Hacienda to obtain the release of said resources.
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ENERGY

- Continue developing the State of Border Energy Report related to border energy facilities. Update the future energy requirements and establish a regulatory framework for energy projects in both sides of the border.
- Develop programs to improve the efficient use of energy, intensify the development of projects of renewable energy resources, and support schemes that allow an appropriate and timely exploration and exploitation of natural gas in Burgos basin.
- Protect the binational air basins while developing energy projects along the border, and develop and update a chart that shows the amount of electric energy and natural gas that crosses the border, in coordination with the environment work table on issues of mutual interest.

ENVIRONMENT

- Advance the production of Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel Fuel (ULSDF) for air quality and public health by encouraging the Mexican Congress to accelerate planned investments for modernization at Mexican Petroleum (PEMEX) refineries, thereby facilitating the introduction of this cleaner burning diesel fuel throughout the border region.
- Implement and promote comprehensive waste management programs throughout the US-Mexico border region, including a strategy for state-to-state and transboundary information exchange on waste management. Economic instruments, such as the creation of environmental funds or the introduction of a "Green Seal", will be considered as an aid to develop pollution prevention and environmental remediation programs.
- Request the Mexican Congress and Mexican Border State Congresses to promote legislation to have used vehicles –both legally imported vehicles and regularized vehicles– comply with Mexican federal and state emission standards as a prerequisite for registration.



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- Request that authorities of both countries assist in ensuring compliance of vehicle emission laws.

Wildlife

- To protect one of the most ecologically diverse regions in the world but most impacted by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) cross-border activities, endorse introduction and passage in the U.S. Congress of a bill titled Borderlands Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat Conservation to fund binational recovery projects of wildlife species in the shared ecosystems of the border, and also begin the coordination activities outlined in the bill.

HEALTH

- Request the U.S. federal government to: (1) provide continued dedicated funding to the U.S.-Mexico border region for public health emergency preparedness and response; (2) provide flexibility in the utilization of this funding according to identified risk-based needs, and the ability to use funds over multiple years; and (3) require binational, state-to-state collaboration in developing and implementing joint annual work plans for public health emergency preparedness and response.
- Request the Congress of the United States to enact legislation to allow for cross-border deployment of the U.S. Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) to enhance and complement the Mexico SNS.

BORDER SECURITY

- Formalize information and technological platforms exchange to establish actions and strategies against human traffic, stolen vehicles, drug traffic, terrorism and crime gangs as *Mara Salvatrucha*, *Barrio 18*, *Mafia Mexicana* and gangs, in the border region.



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- Offer reciprocal support for training border state police agencies and work to establish common standards for civil emergency reaction plans.
- Compile a proceedings manual to improve existing communication mechanisms among the work table members.
- Promote before the authorities of both countries the border region as a strategic zone of attention on matters related to security and, consequently request specific budget contributions to deal with this problem.

TOURISM

- Promote the integration of binational commissions for establishing tourism circuits that can operate among border states.
- Promote, in coordination with the border crossings work table, the reduction of border crossings time consumption.
- Encourage an improvement in tourist orientation through adequate tourist signage.
- Favor de expeditious process to obtain permits to promote and allow for better use of hunting tourism.
- Promote a respectful, just and cordial treatment of tourism providing better information in its transit and stay through our states.



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Addendum No. 1

BECC and NADBANK

Respectfully request the federal government of the United States to conclude the appointing process of the members of BECC and NADBAK Board of Directors. Exhort both governments to start operations of the Board as soon as possible.

Continue to insist on the annual assignation of non refundable resources by EPA to the BEIF program. Make flexible bank credit regulations and continue on with pending capital contributions. Extend the eligible programs to the new jurisdiction of 300 kilometers from the border, the whole new programs with resources from the Bank.

Insist on the communiqué of the Conference of 2004 to plan Bank's funding projects to cover broader issued besides environment.

Recognize the director of NADBANK, Mr. Raul Rodriguez Barocio.



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Addendum No. 2

Participation of Federal Representatives

The Border Governors agreed on request the federal governments of both countries to select a liaison for each work table of this Conference in order to participate as legitimate members, exempting the right to vote.

Addendum No. 3

Technical Secretariat

Provisionally, the creation of the Technical Secretariat is approved as a test pilot, expected to be evaluated in its functions and the actual work that Governors' agencies of each State have related to this matter.

Addendum No. 4

Mexican vice-president

The next Mexican vice-president is the Governor of Sonora, Eduardo Bours Castelo.



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Addendum No. 5

Forum of Universal Cultures

The Border Governors Conference Mexico-United States declares its support to the second edition of the Forum of Universal Cultures which will take place in Monterrey, Nuevo Leon on 2007. With no doubt, this important international event will be an open space for world society diversity to express and share freely its values and cultural and artistic patrimony, and in a very special way it will enrich the encounter among Latin culture with indigenous roots and Anglo culture, and its implications on issues related to migration, socioeconomics, culture and politics.



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Addendum No. 6

Joint Statement of Principles on Immigration and Border Security

We, the governors of the states that comprise the border between the United States of America and the United States of Mexico, jointly declare our commitment to work together to promote legal immigration. We support programs that facilitate the swift and lawful movement of people and goods. And we agree to evaluate legislative proposals, such as guest worker programs, that facilitate legal immigration in a way that mutually benefit both Mexico and the United States.

At the same time, violations of the laws of either country must not be tolerated. While border security is primarily the responsibility of the federal governments of Mexico and the United States, we, the border governors, recognize the importance of border security and the elimination of trafficking in persons.

We also recognize that provisions must be made to ensure respect for the human rights and safety of all immigrants, documented or undocumented. United States and Mexican border law enforcement agencies, both federal and state, must treat all immigrants with the respect and consistency to which they are entitled.

We look forward to the leadership of incoming Chair Governor Rick Perry of Texas and the Vice-chair Governor Eduardo Bours Castelo of Sonora, in addressing the critical issues of immigration and border security in the coming year.