

U.S. Agrees to Cancel Tariffs after Striking Deal with Mexico

On June 8, 2019, the U.S. Department of State issued a statement outlining the agreement between Mexico and the United States. In the agreement, Mexico agreed to increase enforcement by deploying its National Guard with priority to the Southern Border and to attempt to "dismantle human smuggling and trafficking organizations," including identifying and shutting down traffickers' "illicit financial and transportation networks." For their part, the U.S. cancelled its proposed tariffs and will increase its use of Migrant Protection Protocols (MPPs), forcing many asylum-seekers to wait for adjudication in Mexico. The U.S. has agreed to help Mexico give these immigrants a swift adjudication to verify that they have a true reason to seek asylum (U.S.-Mexico, 2019). Although Mexico agreed to these two actions, Mexico refused to commit to the "third safe country" proposal, which would have required asylum-seekers to apply to Mexico for asylum instead of passing through Mexico and applying to the U.S. (Ahmed, 2019).

Furthermore, the two countries plan to continue with the Comprehensive Development Plan in their effort to treat the cause of illegal immigration from Central America by helping Central America develop into prosperous and secure countries (U.S.-Mexico, 2019). Jeh Johnson, former Homeland Security Secretary, believes the Comprehensive Development Plan will help alleviate the immigration problem long term, claiming that without treating the cause of illegal immigration, the U.S. will experience only temporary relief, as they did when Mexico employed similar tactics in 2014 (Nakamura, Wagner, & Miroff, 2019). Likewise, in his border speech at Tijuana, Mexican President Obrador agreed that "the most effective response...to the phenomenon of migration is to combat the lack of opportunities...employment... and poverty so that migration is optional" (Ahmed, 2019). By employing immediate action through the MPPs and Mexico's National Guard as well as long-term action through the Comprehensive Development Plan, both

countries hope to reduce illegal immigration numbers significantly. They will continue to discuss the effectiveness of both plans and adjust as necessary (U.S.-Mexico, 2019).

Meanwhile, although Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. still need to ratify the USMCA, discussions should progress more smoothly after the cancelled tariffs. Jesus Seade, Mexican Deputy Foreign Minister for North America, said that he believes the USMCA discussions are "stronger than ever" (Angulo, 2019).

Sources:

Ahmed, A. (2019, June 8). Mexico sets domestic priorities aside to meet terms of U.S. trade deal.

New York Times. Retrieved from

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/08/world/americas/mexico-tariffs-migration.html>

Angulo, S. (2019, June 8). U.S.-Mexico migration deal boosts USMCA approval drive-Mexico

official. *New York Times*. Retrieved from

<https://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2019/06/08/business/08reuters-usa-trade-mexico-seade.html?login=email&auth=login-email>

Nakamura, D., Wagner, J., & Miroff, N. (2019, June 7). Trump announces migration deal with

Mexico, averting threatened tariffs. *Washington Post*. Retrieved from

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-could-decide-over-the-weekend-to-hold-off-on-tariffs-white-house-official-says/2019/06/07/6adb7d86-892d-11e9-98c1-e945ae5db8fb_story.html?utm_term=.1f1f67a23925

U.S.-Mexico Joint Declaration. (2019, June 7). U.S. Department of State. Retrieved from

https://www.state.gov/u-s-mexico-joint-declaration/#.XPsRhN_2nRA.twitter

Kylie Barber, Intern, Global Trade Expertise