

## Option 2: Restore Order and Stability

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Mexico is a country in crisis. After decades of steady advancement, our country's era of stability and development has been sidetracked. In its place, we have crime, corruption, and disorder. Mexican society is unraveling. Mexico's rapid economic transformation has pushed thousands into poverty. Our weak central government can no longer meet the needs of our people, much less stem the spiralling drug violence that forces millions to live in fear.

Mexico must take strong measures to restore order and turn back the forces of disintegration. Rather than blindly following the principles of free trade, we must follow a course that fits Mexico. The unrestrained capitalism of the United States cannot be transplanted to Mexican soil. The modernization of Mexico's economy is important, but millions of Mexican workers cannot be thrown into the streets in the name of free trade. We must work to protect our economy from the twists and turns of global markets. We must renegotiate our free trade agreements and institute more protections for Mexican industry. We must not allow powerful countries like the United States dictate our country's economic policies. Instead, we must work to build our economy so that the United States is forced to treat us as an equal partner.

The government must take a larger role in running the economy and again earn the confidence of the Mexican people. We must focus on improving local institutions and strengthening local businesses so that, in future, Mexico is better able to compete on the international market. We must stamp out corruption among local officials and break the stranglehold that the drug trade has over our northern communities. Only a strong central government can reverse the tide and ensure that Mexico's future benefits the Mexican people.

### Option 2 is based on the following beliefs

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- Mexico needs a strong central government to stamp out corruption and end crime.

- The economic system of the United States is not suitable for Mexico.

- NAFTA has done more harm than good and pushed many people into poverty.

## What policies should we pursue?

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- The government should reestablish state ownership over key industries, such as energy, communications, and transportation.
- Mexico should protect important industries from unfair foreign competition by raising tariffs.
- Mexico should insist that NAFTA be renegotiated to protect vulnerable sectors of the Mexican economy.
- Mexico should join with other developing countries to form a united front in trade negotiations with wealthy countries.

## Arguments for

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1. Restoring the authority of the central government will strengthen the state's ability to combat the rise of crime and drug trafficking.
2. Ending corruption and crime will make Mexico much more attractive to foreign investors.
3. Sheltering the Mexican economy from the full force of foreign competition will allow local companies to take root and grow.

- Mexico should lead a campaign to stamp out corruption in local government, especially corruption that is tied to the drug trade.
- Mexico should crack down on drug traffickers and concentrate on lowering the crime rate.
- Mexico should invest in strengthening important public institutions, such as schools and the university system.

## Arguments against

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1. Retreating from Mexico's commitment to free trade and free markets will lead foreign investors to withdraw their money from our country, which could trigger an economic collapse.
2. Free trade is set up to benefit the rich over the poor. Unless the central government completely rejects NAFTA and other free trade agreements, millions of Mexicans will continue to suffer.
3. Strengthening the power of the central government will only deepen the mismanagement that has crippled Mexican society.
4. Unless we significantly curtail our relationship with the United States, the drug trade and drug-related violence will continue to flourish.