

## Option 3: Embrace the Future

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At long last, Mexico is in a position to realize its potential. Since the early 1980s, Mexico has undergone a painful yet necessary transformation. We have exposed Mexican industries to invigorating international competition. A spotlight has been turned on the corruption and abuse within our political system. In short, we have prodded Mexico into the democratic, free-market world.

Mexico must not retreat from the country's march of progress. We cannot expect to reap the benefits of NAFTA if we do not fully embrace free-trade principles. We must reform the parts of our economy that lag behind, controlled by inefficient and corrupt state-owned companies. This will expand exports and generate millions of new jobs. By further limiting the role of government in the economy, we can attract new foreign investment and continue the modernization of Mexican industry. Although change will not be immediate, the benefits of economic growth will soon trickle down to our poorest people, leading to real improvements in the standard of living. The things that push people to turn to the drug trade—poverty, desperation, lack of opportunity—will vanish and the power of the drug cartels will be eroded. This is the only way we can end the stranglehold of the drug trade on our society for good.

We must continue to work with the United States to open the border and allow more Mexicans to work in the United States. Without the fully free movement of people as well goods across the border, Mexico will always be at a disadvantage to our richer neighbor. Let us not lose sight of the opportunities before us. NAFTA has linked our country to the richest market in the world. We must continue to march forward into our brighter future.

### Option 3 is based on the following beliefs

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- The only path to economic development is through the acceptance of the free-market economic system and participation in the global marketplace.

- Economic growth through NAFTA will eventually translate into an improvement in living standards for all Mexicans.

- Mexico's long-term interests lie in linking our country with the United States and other wealthy nations.

## What policies should we pursue?

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- Mexico should further reform the economy according to free-market principles. Special privileges and outdated regulations should be eliminated and state-run companies, including the oil and electricity industries, should be sold to private investors.

- Mexico should give tax breaks to foreign investors to encourage them to open factories in Mexico and create jobs.

- Mexico should help farmers by ensuring they are able to buy and sell land, and encouraging them to grow crops for export.

- Mexico should pressure the U.S. government to reform its immigration policies and allow for the freer movement of Mexicans across the border.

- Mexico should hold down government spending by rooting out waste and corruption in existing programs.

- Mexico should work with the U.S. government to curb illegal smuggling of drugs and weapons over the border.

## Arguments for

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1. Accepting the economic principles and legal standards of free trade will help Mexico to attract foreign investment.

2. Selling off the remaining state-owned companies will increase efficiency by forcing these companies to compete in the marketplace.

3. By closely cooperating with the United States, Mexico can curb illegal smuggling across the border, improve conditions for its workers in the United States, and expand its access to one of the richest markets in the world.

## Arguments against

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1. Continuing the rapid pace of economic change will widen the income gap within Mexico, and lead to increased poverty and discontent.

2. Tying Mexico's trade and finances even closer to the United States will make our country more vulnerable than ever to the whims of the international market.

3. Opening Mexico up to unrestrained foreign investment will allow outsiders to snatch up our country's most prized industries, such as oil and transportation.

4. The crime fueled by the drug trade is too pressing to be solved by an "eventual" increase in the standard of living.