



Mexico and the Russian invasion of Ukraine:

Foreign Policy and Public Opinion

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1. Principles of Mexican foreign policy

In the past 100 years, in Mexico, there have been two doctrines that have strongly influenced and shaped Mexican foreign policy. These are the Carranza Doctrine (1918) and the Estrada Doctrine (1930), which, along with Article 89 of the Mexican Constitution, have defined the official position of the Mexican government regarding the war between Russia and Ukraine.

It was the year 1918 when the then President Venustiano Carranza presented the doctrine that now bears his name to the Congress of the Union. That speech was a response that aimed to dissuade attempts by the United States government to interfere in the recently declared Political Constitution of the United Mexican States of 1917. The Doctrine considers that diplomacy should not be used in order to pursue personal interests, rather it should ensure the general interests of civilization and the establishment of universal brotherhood. At the same time, it should not serve to put pressure on the governments of weak countries either.

By themselves, the principles established in the Carranza Doctrine, which would become the basic principles of Mexican foreign policy, are **non-intervention**, **self-determination of peoples**, **legal equality of nations**, and the **peaceful settlement of disputes**.

Later, in 1930, the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Genaro Estrada Félix, promulgated the doctrine that would take his name. Initially, the Estrada Doctrine spoke out against countries deciding whether a foreign government is legitimate or illegitimate, especially if it came from revolutionary movements. This doctrine arose because of the multiple coups that were taking place in Latin America and the international custom of each country to recognize the legitimacy of each government.

Over the years, this doctrine has reformed the principles of its predecessor, in addition to annexing other principles such as neutrality or adding to the self-determination of peoples that **no nation can intervene in the conflicts of others**. Currently, the government of Mexico claims to adhere to the Estrada Doctrine. In such a way that Article 89 Section X of the Mexican Constitution indicates that the Executive Branch will direct foreign policy under the normative principles of **non-intervention**; the **peaceful settlement of disputes**; the proscription of the threat or use of force in international relations; the legal equality of States; international cooperation for development; respect, protection and promotion of human rights, and the struggle for international peace and security.

Estrada Doctrine, Andrés Manuel and the war

Since the beginning of the war, Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador declared the position of **neutrality** that Mexico has in the face of the conflict and confirmed adherence to the Estrada Doctrine. López Obrador has reaffirmed this position multiple times in his morning conferences called *Mañanera*. Among his statements is that Mexico maintains a **friendly relationship with all the peoples** and with all the governments of the world. Also, he added that the war is irrational due to the loss of human lives and that **Mexico is not in favor of the war, it never has been**, because maintaining a war is irrational and conflicts must be resolved through dialogue.

In September 2022, the Minister of Foreign Relations, Marcelo Ebrard, representing the Mexican president, proposed to the United Nations the creation of a committee for dialogue and peace in Ukraine. It was suggested that the said committee should have the intervention of the UN Secretary General himself, Antonio Guterres, the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, as well as the Vatican's head of state, Pope Francis.

This would be for the purpose of reaching an agreement to stop the war in Ukraine, specifically, achieving a five-year truce in the conflict that triggered the Russian invasion of Ukrainian territory. It is important to note that among the statements calling for a solution to the conflict, the Mexican representatives ask for an end to the war because of the human lives that have been lost and because of the economic instability (inflation) caused.

The *Mañanera*



Morning press conference that Mexican President López Obrador has held every business day since he took office on December 1st, 2018. His name derives from a vulgar pun with an obscene meaning.

To get more information:



AMLOPEDIA

It is an artificial intelligence-powered search engine created by developer Magio Bustillos that allows users to search for information and particular topics in the videos of the Mexican president's morning conferences. It is a "neutral tool, without political affiliation or favoritism" that only seeks to facilitate access to the content that is generated every morning in the meeting that López Obrador holds with the media.

<https://amlopedia.org/>

In addition, López Obrador has certainly questioned the role that the UN has had in this conflict, as well as insinuating that the war was indeed influenced by the interests of the war industry. While acknowledging that Russia's invasion of Ukraine is reprehensible, Obrador considers it highly questionable how the United States and the other NATO countries offer arms and economic support to Ukraine, while applying economic and trade sanctions to Russia. Very clearly, this criticism is attached to the principles of the Estrada Doctrine previously mentioned, and it is because of these principles that Mexico has not applied, nor will it apply commercial sanctions to the Russian nation.

2. Neighborly tension: The United States and Mexico (And an opportunity for Russia)

Historically, Mexico has disobeyed the Estrada Doctrine on multiple occasions, especially when it comes to unjust causes and dangers to humanity. However, the faithful follow-up of the doctrine that President López Obrador has had seems to have more to do with his need to adjust the government's foreign policy to his ideological interests and a political agenda that favors his high popularity ratings, according to experts.

Since the beginning of this administration, there has been endless disapproval of the Mexican president towards the US government. The protagonists of this tension are the negotiations of the new North American free trade agreement, where Mexico has been reproached multiple times for the immigration crisis, the production and export of fentanyl, among other things.

Consequently, López Obrador has maintained his position of confronting the United States and "not giving his arm to twist as past administrations had done." The president has made it very clear that his government seeks to break away from the American yoke. That is where the Estrada Doctrine comes in, retaking the beginnings of its predecessor, the Carranza Doctrine, to dissuade the meddling of the US government. The Obrador administration may have seemed to ignore these principles to personal preferences.

It is worth pointing out the occasions in which this administration showed its support for Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro after the failed coup attempt that took place in 2019. Or, in that same year when he gave political asylum to the former Bolivian president, Evo Morales, after the political crisis that forced him to leave the presidency and flee his country.

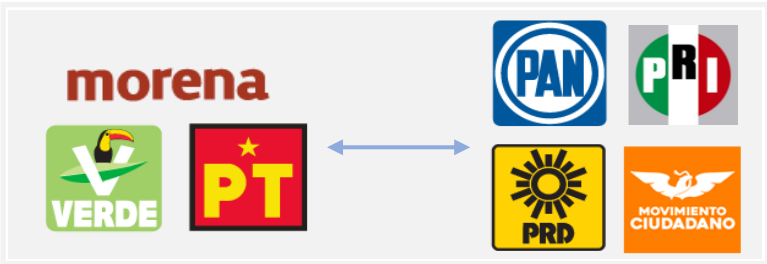
Since then, there has been a notable rapprochement of the Mexican government with its counterparts in Russia, Turkey, Bolivia, and Venezuela. In addition to that, more recently, Mexico has received invitations from Brazil to join the BRICS. Although Mexico has declined these invitations, the mere proposal is enough to inflame the existing tension with the United States, which has already been worsened by agricultural problems between producers in both countries and the continuous decline in the value of the dollar.

In this way, an opportunity arose for Russia to get closer to cooperating with the Mexican government. In September 2021, Vladimir Putin and Andrés Manuel López Obrador signed an agreement on "cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space **for peaceful purposes.**" This was ratified by the Russian side in October 2022 and according to the Russian Embassy in Mexico "the agreement provides for, among other things, the possible installation of GLONASS stations," for which "a complementary agreement must be signed." However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico denied that actions related to the GLONASS system are currently or will be in the future taken into consideration. This agreement received multiple criticisms from the Mexican and American media due to the possibility of having "Russian spy satellites in Mexican territory". Perhaps, for this reason the said agreement has not yet been ratified by the Mexican Senate.

In addition, Putin has recently declared that the Russian nation is interested in increasing trade with Mexico, carrying out joint projects in energy, the pharmaceutical industry, and agriculture, as well as expanding academic, cultural, and scientific exchanges.

3. The opposition stands with Ukraine

On the other hand, despite the fact that the Mexican president does not show support for Ukraine, other sections of his government do, very explicitly. In Mexico, there is a very marked division of support between the political parties. This is due to rather a cultural issue



than a division between conservatives and liberals.

On one side, there is Morena (left party), the party of President López Obrador, with its allies, the Partido

Verde Ecológico, also known as Verde (center-left party) and the Partido del Trabajo abbreviated as PT (leftist party). While on the other side, there are the "opposition" parties: the Partido Acción Nacional, known as PAN (right-wing party), the Partido Revolucionario Institucional, abbreviated as PRI (center-left party), the Partido Revolución democrática, better known as PRD, (leftist party) and Movimiento Ciudadano (center-left party). The opposition has tried to carry a very different agenda from Morena's.

At the end of 2021, a few months before the Russian invasion, the Mexico-Ukraine Friendship Group was established in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, chaired by the

deputy Riult Rivera Gutiérrez of the PAN. This group had the purpose of strengthening diplomatic relations between both nations, however, in the following months it would become more relevant in the shows of support from the Mexican country to its Ukrainian counterpart. This group would be maintaining active communication with different Ukrainian leaders, and even meeting them in person, as well as planning a virtual meeting from the Union Congress with President Volodymyr Zelensky.

In July 2022, representatives Salomón Chertorivski Woldenberg, Julieta Mejía, Jorge Álvarez Máynez, and Riult Rivera visited Ukraine at the express invitation of the Ukrainian Parliament, **the trip was made with personal and non-public resources**. The visit had three main objectives. First, to bring attention and make visible the humanitarian tragedy that is taking place there; second, to show that this conflict also affects Mexico, and third, to combat the disinformation about the war that exists in Mexico and Latin America.

During their visit, the deputies had working meetings with the mayor of Kyiv, Vitaliy Klitschko, and with the speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament Ruslan Stefanchuk. They also informally met with the military, deputies, mayors, and citizens.

In March 2023, the president of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, Santiago Creel Miranda, met with the Ukrainian vice-chancellor, Melnyk Andriy, and the Ukrainian ambassador to Mexico, Oksana Dramaretska. Representatives Jorge Álvarez, Riult Rivera, and Salomón Chertorivski also participated in the meeting.

One of the purposes of that meeting was to seek the virtual presence of President Zelensky in the Congress of the Union so that he could



address legislators, as well as social and political leaders who wished to listen to him. Said a virtual meeting would take place a month later.

On April 20, 2023, a regular meeting of the Ukraine-Mexico Friendship Group of the Chamber of Deputies took place, where the Ukrainian president called on Mexico to show its leadership as a promoter of peace between nations.



While deputy Santiago Creel reiterated to President Zelensky the official position of the Mexican State, which condemns Russia's invasion of Ukraine, as well as armed conflicts, for which he spoke out to preserve democracy and world order.

Meanwhile, the president of the Friendship Group, deputy Riult Rivera Gutiérrez (PAN) reiterated Mexico's rejection of interventionist war actions, for which he emphasized that the contribution of elements that effectively strengthen peace in Ukraine and in the world will continue (These positions differ somewhat from that expressed by President López Obrador).

However, regarding this remote meeting, the Political Coordination Board from the Union Congress chaired by Deputy Ignacio Mier Velazco stated that the regular meeting of the Mexico-Ukraine Friendship Group **does not represent the consensual position of the Chamber of Deputies**, for what the speeches delivered are in a personal capacity and do not correspond to a message from Congress.

Both parties confirmed their intentions to work on joint projects in the areas of culture, education, medicine, and economy. In turn, the Tlajomulco government declared that it had a strong commitment to peace and expressed solidarity with the Ukrainian city. It is important to note that the organization and mediation for this meeting to take place were carried out by Deputy Salomón Chertorivski.

Ukraine's friends

Santiago Creel Miranda



President of the Chamber of Deputies. Possible presidential candidate in the 2024 elections.

Salomón Chertorivski Woldenberg



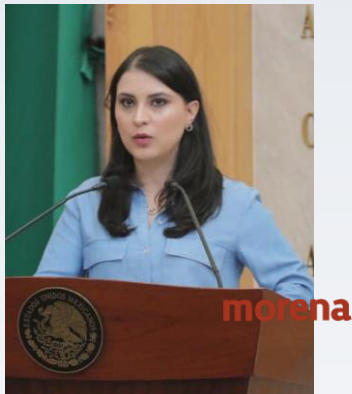
Member of the Chamber of Deputies and economist. Mexican with Ukrainian roots.

Jorge Álvarez Máynez



Member of the Chamber of Deputies.

Julieta Mejía Ibáñez



Member of the Chamber of Deputies

Riult Rivera Gutierrez



Member of the Chamber of Deputies

Salvador Zamora Zamora



Municipal President of Tlajomulco, Jalisco. Signed a twinning with the city of Irpin

Civil Support

Unfortunately, there are no surveys that describe the perception of Mexicans about the war. The closest thing there is it's the poll conducted by Gallup in 2022, which indicates that 65% of the population of Mexico disapproves of Russia's leadership actions. Therefore, disapproval would have increased by 33% between 2021 and 2022.

However, the support of the population for Ukraine is something that can be seen as divided as the opinions of the political parties. They range from pro-Russian and hate-Ukrainian comments to protests filled with Ukrainian flags in Mexico City.



These protests have been led by Ukrainians living in Mexico, activists, politicians who support the cause, civil associations and diplomatic from various embassies such as those of Ukraine, Poland, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, and the European Union, among others.

One of the associations that work hard in support of Ukraine is the Ukrainian Diaspora in Mexico, A.C., which was founded by Ilona Dluzhynska, according to its website the association was born as a response of the Ukrainian and Mexican community to the brutal Russian invasion. They provide support to Ukrainian refugees in Mexico.



They have the Axolotl Project which consists of giving prostheses to people who lost limbs due to the war.

In addition, Diaspora contributed to feeding and accommodating more than 10,000 Ukrainians who passed through Mexico City in 2022 in shelters and volunteer houses. And, as if that were not enough, in August 2022, they coordinated, with the support of the National Health Service, Mexican Food Safety and Quality, the National Seed Growers Association, A.C. and the Embassy of Ukraine in Mexico, the shipment of millions of Mexican seeds to the Odesa region.

Trustworthy media

There seems to be a coincidence between the newspapers that supports President López Obrador and those who support Russia.

At the same time, those who criticize the president the most are those who in turn criticize Russia's actions. Some of these are:

- [El Universal](#)
- [El Economista](#)
- [El Financiero](#)
- [Excélsior](#)

For more information:

AMLOPEDIA. <https://amlopedia.org/>

El Economista. <https://www.eleconomista.com.mx/>

El Financiero. <https://www.elfinanciero.com.mx/>

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