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## **Mexico and the European Union announced the start of negotiations for the Modernization of the Bilateral Legal Framework**

On the occasion of her visit to Mexico, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, Federica Mogherini, announced, together with the Secretary for External Relations, Claudia Ruiz Massieu, and the Secretary of the Economy, Ildefonso Guajardo Villareal, that, on Monday 23 May 2016, the Council of the European Union approved the mandate to negotiate the modernization of the EU-Mexico Global Agreement.

This announcement follows the VII EU-Mexico Presidential Summit in June 2015 where the commitment to update the bilateral framework in its three pillars (political, trade and cooperation) was confirmed with a view to adapt it to the new reality between the parties and the international context.

Both sides agreed to carry out the first round of negotiations next June, at a date to be agreed by both parties, and to proceed rapidly with the negotiation process in order to define as soon as possible the new legal framework between themselves.

The process that is starting today is of fundamental importance for the external relations of both Mexico and the European Union. The updating of our legal framework will be key to establishing a closer and deeper political dialogue. In relation to international cooperation, we will continue to support national development in various areas, as well as to promote triangular cooperation arrangements, including in Central America and the Caribbean. With regard to the economic dimension, we aim to achieve greater integration of our economies, to take full advantage of our linkages, and to adjust to the new global realities in trade and capital flows.

Both sides are fully confident that this new legal framework will, in the short, medium- as well as long-term, serve the interests of 625 million Europeans and Mexicans.

## **Background**

In January 2013, at the 1<sup>st</sup> EU-CELAC Summit in Santiago de Chile, the then-Presidents of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, and of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, agreed with President Enrique Peña Nieto with a view to updating the legal framework governing relations between the European Union and Mexico. This framework is provided by the Economic Partnership, Political Cooperation and Cooperation Agreement, known as the Global Agreement, in force since 2000, and the Strategic Partnership signed in 2009, whose content was set out in the Joint Executive Plan in 2010.

The purpose of revising these bilateral instruments is to determine what can be updated in order to improve their performance and to make the Mexico-European Union relationship deeper, more balanced and more efficient. The goal is to create a framework within which the challenges of an increasingly complex international environment can be fully met.

Both the European Union and Mexico have undergone deep changes in the past 15 years. The European Union underwent the biggest enlargement in its history, expanding to 28 Member States, and its integration was further deepened as a result of the Lisbon Treaty. These changes have allowed the European Union to play an ever-more prominent role as an international actor.

Moreover, significant changes have occurred in recent years on the international stage, particularly with regard to political dialogue, trade and investment, and cooperation. In the political sphere, the number of international actors has grown, new issues have appeared on the international agenda, and new challenges have arisen. In trade and investment, the rules relating to the flow of goods, services and capitals have evolved as a result of the conclusion of new and ambitious agreements. Finally, in relation to international development cooperation, modalities have become more diverse and Mexico, in particular, has established its Agency for International Cooperation (AMEXCID), thus strengthening its capacity as a cooperation donor.

These factors make it necessary to update the tools, institutions, dialogues and mechanisms of the European Union-Mexico relationship. It is essential to adapt them to the new realities of globalization in order to take full advantage of the opportunities provided by this relationship.

From January 2013 up till now, both sides have worked to define a strategy to make the required changes to the bilateral legal framework. In addition to impact studies, a Joint Vision Report was drawn up in which we expressed our level of ambition and our common starting point for defining our new institutional and functional framework.