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10 urgent reforms

President Calderón highlighted ten urgent reforms in his speech on September 2. Some excerpts:

"Today the priority must be to get back on the track of sustainable human development, fighting poverty, accelerated economic growth with justice and job creation. This is the task for everyone, and to achieve these objectives, Mexico needs unity of proposals and unity of action. ...

"I am the first to recognize that compared to the vision of Mexico to which we aspire, what we have achieved is insufficient. ...

"In order for Mexico to change, and change fundamentally, all those who have any responsibility given to them by the voters have to change."

The ten urgent reforms put forward are:

1. Intensify anti-poverty programs. Increase the targeting of social expenditure to the poorest families. This is *"first and fundamental."*
2. Achieve universal health coverage, regardless of social condition; *"an unequalled opportunity."*
3. Improve educational quality, *"by overcoming the morass of interests and inertia."*
4. Public sector finance reform, *"eliminating all programs and budget items that do not contribute decisively to the objectives I have outlined."*
5. Transform state enterprises radically *"to eliminate privileges, stop the lack of transparency and corruption."*
6. Telecommunications reform to increase coverage, promote convergence and increase competition.
7. Transform the labor sector to increase access by women and young people to jobs; increase productivity without undermining worker rights.
8. Regulatory reform, to eliminate all government regulations unless they can be explicitly justified.
9. Deepen the fight against crime, with greater coordination between levels of government and more citizen participation.
10. A new generation of fundamental political reform. *"The citizenry are not satisfied with their political representation and perceive an enormous gap between their needs and the actions of their governors, representatives, and politicians."* Revise electoral rules to move beyond *"effective suffrage"* to *"effective democracy,"* *"so that politics ceases to be synonymous with conflict and paralysis."*

([Presidencia 9/2](#), [9/2](#))

Key Dates

9/8: Delivery of 2010 economic package to Congress

9/16: Independence Day

10/18: Tabasco and Coahuila local elections

11/15: Deadline for budget approval

12/31: Terms end for President of Banco de México, CNDH, and two Supreme Court ministers

President Calderón makes emotional call for urgent change

The President told Mexicans that, "It is the hour to change, and it is the hour to change fundamentally," in a televised speech from the National Palace on 9/2, the day after Government Secretary **Fernando Gómez Mont** delivered the legal *Informe* in writing to Congress. Among those present for the speech were two who would like to succeed him: State of Mexico governor **Enrique Peña Nieto** (PRI) and Mexico City mayor **Marcelo Ebrard** (PRD).

Pundits praise speech

Most political commentators praised the President's speech:

- **Jaime Sánchez Susarrey:** "Felipe Calderón made a radical course change. ... The fundamental premises of the start of the government – to go for the possible changes, not to open too many fronts and to seek consensus among all the political forces – have been thrown overboard. Today, the proposal is to go for an integrated program of fundamental changes." (*Reforma* 9/5)
- **Ricardo Alemán:** "Not only the best piece of oratory of [Calderón's] government, but also the most intelligent political strategy, since circumstances have put him on the ropes.... No one can deny the self-criticism of the speech, or the importance of the change in direction in priorities and strategies. ... The President recognized that the reforms approved during the first half of his government – the possible reforms – have failed and that he needs to resume the course begun in 1996: the desirable reforms." (*Universal* 9/6)
- **Leo Zuckermann:** "Finally, after a long wait, the President defines himself: he wants to be a relevant political actor. He understands the gravity of the situation and, as a result, he's going for all the marbles.... The rhetoric will have to be transformed into specific actions. ... We will see how much Calderón is thinking of pursuing the fundamental changes. For the time being, he declared that he wants to join the battle. That by itself is an excellent signal." (*Excelsior* 9/3)

Cabinet changes announced

President **Calderón** announced three cabinet changes to start the second half of his *sexenio*. All three slots are areas where changes were expected.

Arturo Chávez Chávez was nominated to become Attorney General. (This post requires Senate confirmation.) He replaces **Eduardo Medina-Mora** who will go to the foreign service. Chávez is a law partner in the firm of **Diego Fernández de Cevallos**, has been Undersecretary of Government, and—most controversially—was Attorney General in Chihuahua when the scandal of the missing and murdered women in Ciudad Juárez first came to light. Chávez was forced to resign in 1998 after the Human Rights Commission issued a highly critical report of the investigations into the murders.

Juan José Suárez Coppel was named to head Pemex in place of **Jesús Reyes Heróles**. Suárez Coppel was CFO of Pemex during the Fox government and chief of staff in the Ministry of Finance under **Francisco Gil Díaz**.

Agriculture Secretary **Alberto Cárdenas** was replaced by **Francisco Javier Mayorga**, who held the same position at the close of the Fox administration. ([Universal 9/7](#), [Excelsior 9/8](#))

Three Mexico City borough presidencies still in doubt

All three of the 16 Mexico City borough presidency elections not won by the PRD continue to generate controversy. The Electoral Tribunal for the Federal District (TEDF) ruled that *panista* **Carlos Orvañanos**, the winner in Cuajimalpa, exceeded spending limits. If the ruling stands on appeal, there will be a new election in Cuajimalpa and neither Orvañanos nor the PAN will be allowed to compete. The TEDF made a similar ruling in the election of *panista* **Demetrio Sodi** in Miguel Hidalgo, based largely on a TV interview that Sodi gave during the halftime of a soccer game in May. However, the Federal Electoral Tribunal, which is the final authority, just ruled that the interview was a permissible exercise of freedom of speech, even if it was electoral propaganda. This probably clears the way for Sodi, one of the highest profile *panistas*, to take office. Meanwhile, **Rafael Acosta**, aka 'Juanito,' continues to infuriate his former PRD and PT colleagues by dancing around the question of whether he will take office as head of Iztapalapa, or resign in favor of the preferred PRD standard bearer, **Clara Brugada**. ([Universal 9/4](#), [Reforma 9/7](#))