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Miranda Intelligence – Public Affairs Chatter

A Shared World Cup, a Divided Trade Table

As the World Cup puts North America on the global stage presenting the world's biggest sporting event, this week's second round of USMCA talks brings more friction than fanfare. Canada will again be absent from the bilateral discussions, and while both Mexico and Canada have formally notified Washington of their wish to extend the treaty to 2042, the US has been conspicuously (and predictably) less enthused. There is a growing expectation in business and policy circles that Washington may prefer the annual review mechanism instead, which would undermine some of the stability provided by the trade pact, but be better than outright cancellation.

This second round of bilateral talks opened in Washington on Monday and is focused on Mexico's counter-proposals after the US set out its positions on rules of origin for autos, steel and aluminium in the first round.

The talks are occurring as even with USMCA uncertainty Mexico's exports to the US are growing nicely, especially excluding the troubled auto-related sector. This underlines that while USMCA is of course important, other factors – such as US economic growth, demand for low-cost but skilled Mexican workers in a tight US labor market, geographical proximity amidst rising energy costs, geopolitical tensions with China – will continue to play a big part in driving Mexico's exports, whatever exactly happens to the treaty.

Meanwhile, Mexico is trying to push a harder line. President Sheinbaum has said she believes all three countries are in agreement that the treaty should remain in place because it has benefited each of them, but also stressed the central disagreement emerging in the talks: Washington wants tighter rules of origin and is pushing hard for more of the value chain to be produced specifically in the United States, while Mexico is insisting that production should deepen across the whole region, not just north of the border.

The delegation in Washington this week also includes Roberto Lazzeri (now confirmed as Mexico's new ambassador to the US), Marcelo Ebrard, Julio Berdegué and Altagracia Gómez. Ebrard framed the talks themselves as a positive sign for the survival of the treaty, noting that all is proceeding as it should according to the treaty's six-year review mechanism. The US team is again led by Deputy USTR Jeffrey Goettman, with bipartisan representation from the House Ways and Means Committee and a business contingent reportedly including around 60 executives.

Key items on the agenda this week include agriculture and energy. Washington wants to address a trade imbalance that has grown steadily as Mexican fruit, vegetable and beverage exports have gained ground, while Mexico remains deeply dependent on US grains and meat.

Energy will be an even trickier topic. The review is becoming a test of whether North America can function as a more integrated energy market or whether ideological divergence will fragment the supply chains that nearshoring depends on. Both the US and Canada have objected to Mexico's nationalistic energy policy, alleging it violates the free trade treaty; meanwhile, the Sheinbaum administration, while remaining rhetorically committed to energy sovereignty, is also courting more private energy investment to try to meet increased demand and resolve transmission bottlenecks.

Mexico today still enjoys a relatively favourable trade position, though this rests on the continued functioning of the treaty itself. According to US Senate data, Mexican exports generated $22.99 billion in tariff revenue for US customs in the 12 months to April 2026 — second only to China's $86.57 billion — at an average rate of 4.19 per cent, among the lowest of any major trading partner. Canada and Taiwan face similarly low effective rates, at 3.37 and 3.19 per cent respectively, while nearshoring rival Vietnam is taxed at 10.18 per cent and most other top-ten partners face rates above 10 per cent. The Section 122 authority underpinning the current tariff regime expires on 24 July, and a newly proposed Section 301 forced-labour tariff of 10 per cent was this week confirmed to be exempt for USMCA-compliant goods — roughly 85 per cent of Mexico's export volume — with a 45-day consultation period now open for the remaining 15 per cent.

The question this week is whether these talks bring Mexico a firmer footing in the challenging climb ahead.

A Tighter Clock for Administrative Litigation

Mexico's overhaul of the Federal Law on Administrative Litigation Procedure is less flashy than a constitutional reform and, for that reason, easier to underestimate. Published in the Official Gazette on 9 June and in force from 10 June, the reform rewrites key parts of how cases are handled before the Federal Administrative Justice Tribunal (TFJA). The headline is procedural discipline: stricter deadlines for courts and parties, stronger use of the summary route, faster notifications and a firmer push towards digital litigation. The stated aim is to make administrative justice more agile, particularly in tax matters. The practical effect is that litigants will now have less room to improvise and much less tolerance for missed timing.

The most immediate change is the introduction of mandatory deadlines. Motions without a specific statutory deadline must now be resolved within five days, and judgments must be issued within 45 days after the evidentiary stage closes. In summary proceedings, the case must be resolved within six months. That route also becomes more important under the reform, because it is now expressly available for disputes involving VAT refunds and undue payments, provided the amount does not exceed 30 times the annual UMA. Just as importantly, choosing the wrong procedural route will no longer automatically sink a claim; the Tribunal must redirect the case into the correct channel. That is a useful correction to an old litigation hazard, but it also confirms the broader direction of travel: a tighter system that prefers procedural correction over dead-end formalism, while still demanding more precision from those using it.

The other structural shift is digital. The reform strengthens the Online Justice System, gives broader legal force to the electronic signature, and allows authorities and third parties to file electronically even in cases otherwise proceeding through the traditional route. This creates what is effectively a hybrid model on the way to fuller digitalisation. At the same time, the reform tightens the rules on suspension of the challenged act, especially where public order or social interest is invoked, and narrows access to the review appeal, reserving it for cases of higher economic or legal significance. The Jurisdictional Bulletin also becomes the main notification channel, with legal effect now taking hold in two working days instead of three.

Security Cooperation Moves Into a New Phase (and a New Venue)

The Mexico–US security meeting held on 12 June mattered not only for its agenda, but for its setting. The Sheinbaum government framed the encounter as a working-level session led by Roberto Velasco alongside officials from across the security cabinet — the FGR, Security Ministry, Defence, Navy and National Guard — but attention was drawn to the fact that the talks were held not at the Foreign Ministry but at the new US embassy in Mexico City. In a relationship where protocol carries its own symbolism, the choice of venue was noted. Formally, the meeting fits within the bilateral understanding reached months ago and, according to Sheinbaum, did not include politically sensitive cases such as Rubén Rocha Moya. Substantively, however, the United States is clearly presenting the session as the launch of a more operational phase in the relationship.

The US framing was made explicit in the embassy statement announcing the launch of the Bilateral Implementation Group (BIG), described as the next stage in security cooperation, with 15 US agencies working alongside their Mexican counterparts to produce "measurable results." The emphasis is less on dialogue than delivery: fentanyl and other illicit drugs, firearms trafficking, migration, illicit finance, fuel theft and emerging threats addressed through advanced technology. The statement also came with an unusually detailed set of claims — a more than 95 per cent reduction in maritime drug flows to the United States, a fall in US overdose deaths, over 400 tonnes of drugs seized and more than 2,300 clandestine laboratories dismantled in Mexico. A further 36,000 illegal firearms were cited as seized by US authorities, including thousands allegedly destined for criminal groups in Mexico.

That operational posture found a sharper edge in remarks from US anti-drugs tsar Sara Carter, who said in an interview on Sunday that Washington is actively working to identify individuals within Mexican government structures who have allegedly facilitated cartel operations and is pursuing legal orders against them. But Carter also praised the intelligence-sharing that led to the killing of El Mencho, describing the bilateral cooperation as something she had never seen before at that level (which she credited to Trump).

Sheinbaum, asked about Carter's remarks at Monday's mañanera, declined to engage directly. "I don't want to get in an argument with her," she said, reaffirming the principle of bilateral cooperation without sacrificing sovereignty.

Mexico's Space Ambition

Mexico's new National Space Programme 2026–2030 is a signal that the government wants to turn space policy into an economic and industrial priority, with satellite connectivity and Earth observation at its centre. Among its core commitments is a National Centre for the processing and analysis of satellite imagery, designed to process data from a future Mexican satellite constellation and apply it across environmental monitoring, agriculture, civil protection and national security. The project would rely in part on the Ixtli satellite constellation now being developed by specialists at UNAM, and reflects a broader policy move: Mexico wants to generate, process and analyse more of its own space-based data rather than remain primarily a buyer of foreign services.

The programme implicitly opens space for companies involved in satellite manufacturing, imaging, data analytics and downstream service integration, as well as telecoms, software and earth observation applications. It also aligns with the government's wider digital and industrial agenda through the ATDT, which suggests that the space file will not be treated only as a scientific niche. Mexico already has a growing aerospace manufacturing base and an established need for better connectivity, environmental monitoring and logistics intelligence. In that sense, the PEM is trying to connect existing industrial capabilities with domestic public-sector demand.

The programme is directionally clear, but still short on the specifics investors look for first: budget, timetable, technical specifications and procurement path. The government has outlined the strategic logic of the project, but the ATDT has not yet provided figures on the capital required, the sequencing of the infrastructure, or the operational model for the new centre. That leaves the private sector with something useful but incomplete: a policy signal without a full commercial map.

Chatter box

Teachers Keep Their Leverage. The CNTE has rejected the federal government's latest offer and is keeping both the national strike and the protest encampments in place. After meetings with the Interior Ministry and the Education Ministry, the government put forward two main concessions: a gradual dismantling of the USICAMM teacher evaluation and promotion system, and the creation of a public pension insurer. The union dismissed both as insufficient, insisting instead on the full repeal of the 2007 ISSSTE pension reform and wider changes to the education framework. The government is still emphasising dialogue and has ruled out forcibly clearing the camps, but the CNTE's own message is simpler: the mobilisation continues.

At this point, the dispute is becoming less about the immediate disruption and more about whether the government can convert negotiation into actual law and policy. The administration has already outlined a consultation process with teachers from August and is preparing a legislative route to replace USICAMM. The difficulty is that the CNTE's core demands are not administrative adjustments; they require statutory change and carry substantial fiscal cost.

Succession Before Its Time. The Supreme Court has publicly denied reports that ministers are already discussing who will succeed Chief Justice Hugo Aguilar Ortiz when his term ends in 2027. The clarification followed press reports suggesting that a majority of ministers were seeking to position somewhat more pragmatic Justice Yasmín Esquivel as the next Court president instead of the more radical Justice Lenia Batres. In an official statement, the Court stressed that no public or private sessions have been held regarding the succession and described the reports as speculative.

The episode highlights an unresolved constitutional issue left by the judicial reform. Article 94 appears to establish a rotation mechanism linked to the results of the 2025 judicial election, under which Batres would be the next president after Aguilar. However, Article 97 still provides that the Court's president should be elected by the Plenum for a four-year term. Until that contradiction is clarified, the debate is less about personalities than procedure. The Court has effectively signaled that any succession discussion remains premature, but the legal ambiguity will eventually require an institutional resolution before 2027.

Samuel García's Case Moves Forward. Nuevo León's Congress has formally advanced impeachment proceedings against Governor Samuel García after the Anti-Corruption Committee approved a motion to begin the process. García now has 15 business days to submit his defense before the matter can be referred to the full legislature. The complaint, promoted by Morena legislators, is based on allegations that public resources were redirected to companies linked to the governor and his family. García and Movimiento Ciudadano have rejected the accusations and described the proceedings as politically motivated.

The significance lies in the procedural path now set in motion. Under Nuevo León law, the governor's response must first be evaluated before the case can reach the plenary, where a two-thirds majority would be required to declare the impeachment admissible. Even then, the final decision would not rest with Congress but with the state's Superior Court of Justice, which would determine whether removal from office or disqualification is warranted.

A Delayed Appointment. President Claudia Sheinbaum announced that Senate President Laura Itzel Castillo will become the next head of the Ministry for Women, replacing Citlalli Hernández, who left the cabinet in April to take on political responsibilities within Morena ahead of the 2027 elections. However, Castillo will only assume the position once her term leading the Senate concludes at the end of August, meaning the ministry will continue to be run on an interim basis by Deputy Minister Ingrid Gómez for at least another two months. The appointment brings formal clarity after weeks of uncertainty, but also extends a transition period in one of the administration's newest cabinet-level institutions. The Ministry for Women was created as a flagship component of Sheinbaum's gender-equality agenda, with responsibilities ranging from violence prevention to the mainstreaming of gender policies across government.

The Coahuila Fight Continues. Morena is trying to prevent Coahuila from settling as a routine local defeat and recast it instead as a dispute over the legality of the vote. In the statement circulated by its state organisation, the party says it has already activated a full litigation strategy: an electoral challenge seeking the nullification of the election in all 16 districts, a complaint before the Special Prosecutor for Electoral Crimes, a filing with the INE's audit unit over alleged spending cap breaches, and a referral to the UIF to trace the source of funds allegedly used for vote buying and coercion. Morena wants to move the discussion into the procedural arena, framing the election around violence, public official intervention, vote buying and alleged irregularities in more than 900 polling stations.

Repatriated Mexicans, Covered: The IMSS published rules on Monday formalising how repatriated Mexicans will be enrolled in the social security system under a presidential decree issued in April. The programme, which runs through 31 December 2026, entitles repatriated nationals and their legal dependants to in-kind IMSS benefits — medical and surgical care, medications, hospital treatment and obstetric services — for up to three months from the date of enrolment, or until they enter formal employment or voluntarily join the standard contributory regime.

The rules, approved by the IMSS Technical Council and published in the DOF, establish the INM as the entity responsible for providing beneficiaries' CURP numbers to the IMSS, which in turn issues a Social Security Number for enrolment. The INM must register as a national-level employer, use the IDSE platform to register participants and maintain records including full name, NSS, CURP and programme entry date. Repatriated individuals can locate or

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INTELLIGENCE

generate their NSS through the IMSS website, mobile app or their local subdelegación, and must register at their assigned Unidad de Medicina Familiar to access medical services.

Laura Camacho
Executive Director Miranda Public Affairs & Intelligence
laura.camacho@miranda-partners.com