

President AMLO invites US special forces to train troops in Mexico

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Even as billions around the world see US imperialism as a global pariah due to its support for the Israeli genocide in Gaza, the pseudo-leftist Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) has invited US Special Forces to train their Mexican counterparts for two months in early 2024.

The request to the Mexican Senate for the entry of 11 armed US personnel to participate in the exercise “Strengthen the capabilities of the Special Forces of the Ministry of National Defense” was signed by López Obrador less than a week after he met with US President Joe Biden in San Francisco on November 17.

Throughout the summit, AMLO made no mention of the massacre of thousands of Palestinian civilians and the destruction of hospitals, schools and refugee camps by Israel with bombs supplied by Washington.

Instead, López Obrador declared that US-Mexico “relations of friendship between our peoples, of respect and cooperation” are “excellent.” He added, “As a result, we are the main trade partners of the world.”

He also managed to match his demeaning spectacle in 2020—when he thanked then President Donald Trump for being respectful to Mexicans after Trump called them murderers and rapists—by telling migrants to “thank President Biden, who is the first US president in recent times to open a legal pathway for migration.”

Biden has in fact embraced the anti-immigrant agenda of the Trump-led Republican fascists, adding new policies to block asylum seekers, continuing mass deportations, and deploying hundreds of US troops on the US-Mexico border. The “legal pathways” set up are inaccessible to all but the wealthier migrants and are aimed at covering up the violation of US and international law on the right to asylum.

At the same time, AMLO has deployed 34,000 troops along Mexico’s borders and thousands more in the interior to “contain” migrants attempting to reach the United States, effectively extending the US border southwards.

Mexico participates frequently in Pentagon military exercises, which often take place on Mexican soil like the

yearly exercise “Friendly Forces,” with the latest taking place in August in Tijuana, Baja California. Twelve US Army personnel were also allowed to participate in a joint training exercise in Chihuahua in April-May. Moreover, the US Northern Command has led the construction this year of a disaster response training facility in Mexico City.

During last year’s PANAMAX exercise simulating a 20-nation response to secure the Panama Canal, Mexican Navy Capt. Carlos Renan Ancona worked as director of Multinational Force South Intelligence. He explained to *Diálogo Américas* that while Mexico falls under the purview of the US Northern Command, “We share a lot of information and work very closely with Southern Command in many real-life activities, in our day-to-day work.”

What sets the latest invitation by López Obrador apart is the rapidly changing global context. The US-Israeli genocidal onslaught in Gaza has exploded any humanitarian or democratic pretensions of US imperialist operations abroad and exposed the predatory agenda of world war and recolonization to secure US hegemony globally.

As a result, AMLO’s nationalist rhetoric about defending Mexican sovereignty has been exposed as so much hot air, and it becomes apparent that the biggest “transformation” under his term has been the complete integration of Mexico into the US-NATO axis for economic and military confrontation against China, Russia and Iran.

Claims like the one that recently appeared in the pseudo-left *Jacobin* magazine that AMLO is “focused on national sovereignty and autonomy from US imperialism” ring more hollow than ever.

Even Reuters felt compelled to mention in its brief report on the invitation of US troops that Mexico “lost much of its territory to the United States due to war in the 1840s and also endured US military incursions in the early 20th century.”

In fact, the emerging eruption of US imperialism has already seen a resurfacing of the same colonial attitudes that led to such incursions in the past, with all leading Republican candidates and numerous Congress members

calling to deploy the US military to Mexico ostensibly against the drug cartels. This recalls the actions and outlook of President Woodrow Wilson, who ordered a seven-month occupation of the Port of Veracruz in 1914, during the Mexican Revolution.

Wilson wrote: “Concessions obtained by financiers must be safeguarded by ministers of state, even if the sovereignty of unwilling nations be outraged in the process. Colonies must be obtained or planted, in order that no useful corner of the world may be overlooked or left unused.”

Last March, López Obrador felt compelled to declare: “We are not going to permit any foreign government to intervene in our territory, much less that a government’s armed forces intervene. ... We are not a protectorate of the United States, nor a colony of the United States.”

At this stage in history, however, it is impossible to conceal the underlying objectives behind military-to-military relations with the Pentagon. Among many such documents, one could cite the 1954 Top Secret NSC 5432 memorandum titled “US Policy Toward Latin America,” which called upon the Pentagon to “Seek ultimate military standardization, along U.S. lines, of the organization, training, doctrine and equipment of Latin American armed forces, countering trends toward the establishment of European military missions in Latin America.” This summarized what is known as the Monroe Doctrine.

A 1965 Defense Department secret document “Study of U.S. Policy Toward Latin American Military Forces” indicates that the local militaries must be prepared “to remove government leaders from office whenever, in the judgment of the military, the conduct of these leaders is injurious to the welfare of the nation.” It cites key “US political interest” in securing the Panama Canal and access to strategic raw materials and “to protect and promote American investment and trade.”

In times of special social “ferment,” the shift turns to crushing social opposition. For instance, the 1965 document indicates that under John F. Kennedy, in response to the 1959 Cuban revolution, the US “began furnishing equipment and training specifically identified as intended for internal security.” Such programs set the stage for fascist-military dictatorships across the region that tortured, killed and “disappeared” hundreds of thousands of workers, peasants, youth and intellectuals.

Given that the economic supremacy of the US dollar and industry have rapidly collapsed in the years since, US imperialism relies today more than ever on employing its military advantage to counteract the relative decline of its economic influence in the region and globally.

Under AMLO, the discredited frameworks used by the same corrupt Mexican ruling class to serve imperialism have

merely changed names to facilitate their expansion. The North American Free Trade Agreement became the USMCA. The Plan Merida of US military aid to Mexico became the “Bicentennial Framework,” which already involves comparable sums of money. The Federal Police created under Plan Merida has been militarized and turned into a National Guard. The gangster-ridden Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM) is being replaced, albeit so far in a small percentage of workplaces, by a new pro-corporate bureaucracy of so-called “independent” unions funded and trained by the Solidarity Center, a CIA front run by the AFL-CIO bureaucracy.

Even as the new US, Mexico, Canada trade agreement was coming into force in 2020, military, aerospace, auto, electronics and other key US industries warned that they could not operate if Mexican suppliers did not reopen after brief shutdowns during the beginning of the deadly COVID-19 pandemic.

AMLO reproduced Trump’s re-opening and demonstrated the same willingness to sacrifice the lives of hundreds of thousands of workers at the behest of Wall Street and the Pentagon.

The López Obrador administration has faithfully represented the interests of US imperialism and the Mexican ruling class in offering a source of cheap labor and resources for industries to move away from Asia in preparation for war against China. Foreign Secretary Alicia Bárcenas proclaimed Mexico “the near-shoring country” last month in Washington.

Even more blatantly, AMLO boasted last month: “Economic cooperation, economic integration, strengthening our region to compete with other regions of the world, it is very important to maintain good economic relations, and in Mexico, there are auto parts plants of the US war industry, how would their economy work without ours?”



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