

MEXICO POLITICAL WEEKLY SUMMARY

| December 4 - 10

- **Mexican officials have sped up the transfer of thousands of migrants from southern Mexico to other regions this week as northern border states prepare to receive asylum seekers** sent back to Mexico from the United States under the reinstated “Remain in Mexico” program.
- **The Undersecretary of Health, Hugo Lopez-Gatell, reported that Mexico City officials would begin offering a third Covid-19 vaccine booster dose to residents over the age of 60** on Tuesday, as part of a government plan to roll out booster shots.
- **As part of the Bilateral Bicentennial Understanding recently agreed to by Mexico and the U.S on October 8, nine agents and four executives of the United States Drug Control Administration (DEA) will operate in Mexico with work visas that the Mexican federal administration has agreed to grant them.** The agents will focus on collaboration against organized crime, drug trafficking and illicit arms trafficking that end up in the hands of criminal groups.
- **The federal government will deploy another 300 members of the National Guard to the municipality of El Nayar, Nayarit, to face the spiral of violence caused by criminal groups.** The troops deployed in the municipality of El Nayar will seek to contain or assist their counterparts who are on the Zacatecas side of the border. During the presentation of the Support Plan for Nayarit, the Secretary of National Defense, Luis Sandoval, explained that the strategy began on December 7 and will conclude on January 7 with an evaluation of the results.
- **On Wednesday, President Lopez Obrador asked for his former anti-corruption czar to be investigated for corruption.** The president’s request came after the newspaper *Reforma* reported that Nieto bought or acquired four properties and an Audi car worth a combined 40 million pesos (US \$1.9 million) while UIF chief, a role for which he was paid a net monthly salary of just over 107,000 pesos (US \$5,100).
- **Gunfire was reported on a beach in Mexico’s Caribbean resort of Cancun Tuesday, sending tourists scrambling for cover, but authorities said nobody appeared to be injured.** Lucio Hernandez, the chief of police of the state of Quintana Roo, said the attackers apparently pulled up to the beach on jet skis and opened fire at a beach in Cancun’s hotel zone.
- **More than 2,700 customs agents have been dismissed for corruption since the current government took office in late 2018, but none has been formally charged or taken into custody.** Customs chief Horacio Duarte told a press conference at Mexico City airport on Tuesday that 2,712 customs agents have been fired during the past three years and 39 formal criminal complaints have been filed with the federal Prosecutor General’s Office.
- **Guerrero got a new federal security plan in October, Zacatecas got one in November, and now Baja California is to become the third state in as many months to qualify for reinforced security efforts.** President Lopez Obrador said Monday that he will travel to Tijuana –Mexico’s most violent city– on Saturday to address security issues in the northern border state, where more than 2,500 homicides were recorded in the first 10 months of the year.

- **The United States has returned the first two migrants to Mexico since restarting a Trump-era program to remove asylum seekers from U.S. soil,** officials said Wednesday, after Mexico agreed last week to accept the return of migrants.
- **Thousands of migrant children and adolescents living in a makeshift camp in southern Mexico are at risk of malnutrition, disease and potentially being separated from their families,** the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said on Wednesday.
- **Twitter says it has removed this week 3,465 accounts operating as “State-backed information operations”, propaganda and disinformation in six countries,** including Mexico. The others were Russia, China, North Korea, Uganda and Venezuela.
- **At least 54 people were killed and dozens injured in a truck accident in southern Mexico on Thursday, the authorities said, with most of the victims believed to be migrants coming from Central America.** The accident, which took place in the state of Chiapas, occurred when a truck carrying more than 100 people overturned near Tuxtla Gutiérrez, the capital. Authorities identified 95 Guatemalans among the people caught up in the accident, as well as three people from the Dominican Republic, a Honduran, a Mexican and an Ecuadorean.
- **At least 650 people died attempting to cross the Mexico-U.S. border this year, more than any other year since the International Organization for Migration began documenting deaths in 2014.** The UN agency said that "The rising migrant death toll in the border region is highly alarming".

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- **Covid-19 cases are rising in the country; on Thursday Mexico's health ministry reported 293 more confirmed deaths and 3,180 new cases,** bringing the country's official death toll since the pandemic began to 296,186 and the number of infections to 3,911,714.
- **During a meeting at the Kaluz Museum, in Mexico City, President Lopez Obrador and the Mexican Business Council agreed to discuss the electricity reform bill, attract more investment and resist inflationary pressure.** Upon leaving the meeting, the President pointed out that there was an atmosphere of "cordiality, cooperation and will to continue working together."



What to expect next week?

- Dic 11** | President Lopez Obrador will travel to Tijuana, Baja California, to review security issues.
- TBD Dic 13-17** | The national leadership of the National Action Party (PAN), headed by Marko Cortes will meet with Secretary of Interior, Adan Lopez to review priority issues for the PAN and the federal government.
- Dic 16** | The National Governors Conference (Conago) will meet with President Lopez Obrador next week in Tabasco.