

‘Mexico is not a US colony!’: AMLO Condemns Invasion Threats, Celebrates Nationalization of Oil, Lithium

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Mexico's leftist President AMLO condemned "hypocritical" Republicans who want the US military to invade, declaring "Mexico is an independent and free country, not a US colony or protectorate!" In a massive rally, López Obrador also celebrated the expropriation of oil and lithium, condemning exploitative foreign corporations.

Mexico's leftist President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) organized a massive rally in the heart of the capital, honoring the anniversary of the country's nationalization of its oil reserves and expropriation of foreign corporations.

AMLO also used the demonstration as an opportunity to publicly condemn US politicians who have proposed militarily invading Mexico to combat drug trafficking.

"We remind those hypocritical and irresponsible politicians that Mexico is an independent and free country, not a colony or a protectorate of the United States!" López Obrador declared.

"They can threaten us with committing some kind of abuse, but we will never, ever allow them to violate our sovereignty and trample on the dignity of our homeland!" he asserted.

AMLO added,

"I want to make it clear that this is no longer the time of [Felipe] Calderón or [Genaro] García Luna, that it is no longer the time of the shady links between the government of Mexico and the agencies of the US government".

The Mexican leader then led a chant: "Cooperation? Yes. Submission? No! Interventionism?

No!”

AMLO delivered this fiery speech on March 18 in the Zócalo, the plaza in the heart of Mexico City.

His government officially convened the event to commemorate the [85th anniversary of the 1938 oil nationalization](#) by revolutionary former President Lázaro Cárdenas.

López Obrador dedicated half of his hour-long speech to discussing the history of the Cardenista revolution, and the lessons it provides for today.

AMLO praised Cárdenas for challenging foreign corporations and defending national sovereignty, while redistributing land to the poor, protecting labor rights, encouraging unions, and forming an alliance with workers and peasants against the “conservative oligarchy” that had ruled Mexico during the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz, before the 1910 revolution.

The speech was one of the most passionate examples of López Obrador’s left-wing nationalist ideology.

AMLO made clear parallels between the government of Cárdenas and his own government today, between Cárdenas’ oil nationalization and [López Obrador’s nationalization of Mexico’s lithium reserves](#).

El zócalo lleno conmemorando la expropiación petrolera, la defensa de la soberanía y la cuarta transformación. pic.twitter.com/qefBTHwh0w

— Dra. Claudia Sheinbaum (@Claudiashein) [March 19, 2023](#)

Far-right Republicans call for the US military to invade Mexico

This March, a series of far-right US politicians from the Republican Party have called for the military to invade Mexico, in the name of supposedly fighting drug cartels.

Extreme-right Congressman Marjorie Taylor Greene falsely claimed in a March 15 tweet that Mexican cartels “are planting bombs on our land in our country”. (She posted a photo which did not show a bomb, according to US Border Patrol, but rather “a [duct-taped ball filled with sand](#) that wasn’t deemed a threat to agents/public”.)

“Our US military needs to take action against the Mexican Cartels”, she insisted. “End this Cartel led war against America!”

Greene is a Donald Trump loyalist and supporter of the neo-fascist QAnon cult. She ran for office inciting violence against the left, shooting and blowing up the word “socialism” in her campaign ads.

Explosive found by Border Patrol Agents Jan 17th. Agents have surveillance of who brought it in and when and confirmed it was the Cartel.
This changes everything.
Not only are the Cartels murdering Americans everyday through drugs and crime, but now they are planting bombs on... pic.twitter.com/8uxwbd1sOn

— Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (@RepMTG) [March 15, 2023](#)

But Greene is far from alone.

Republican Congressman Dan Crenshaw has [introduced multiple bills](#) to authorize the US military to attack cartels in Mexico.

Legislation that Crenshaw introduced in January cites the 2001 [Authorization for Use of Military Force](#) (AUMF), which was passed a week after the 9/11 attacks, in order to justify the US military to invade Mexico.

In an op-ed, Crenshaw compared [Mexican drug cartels to ISIS](#), al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, and Saddam Hussein.

The Republican lawmaker also called for the US to impose sanctions on Mexico – one of its top three trading partners.

The Mexican drug cartels are an enemy every American should want to defeat.

We can't let this chance to save American lives pass us by. My thoughts in [@USAToday](#): <https://t.co/AblhC1qFlw>

— Rep. Dan Crenshaw (@RepDanCrenshaw) [March 8, 2023](#)

Greene wrote that she is “proud to co-sponsor Rep. Dan Crenshaw’s legislation to declare WAR on the Mexican cartels”.

“We must authorize the use of military force to eliminate the thugs who are smuggling drugs and illegal aliens across our southern border”, Greene insisted.

The far-right Republican also suggested that Washington should impose sanctions on Mexico.

“There is a war going on that affects every single American, but it’s not in Ukraine or the Middle East, it’s on our Southern border”, Greene declared.

I’m proud to co-sponsor [@RepDanCrenshaw](#)’s legislation to declare WAR on the Mexican cartels.

We must authorize the use of military force to eliminate the thugs who are smuggling drugs and illegal aliens across our southern border, leading to crime and the murder of countless...

— Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (@RepMTG) [March 14, 2023](#)

In the US Senate, another Trump ally, Lindsey Graham, wants the US military to intervene in Mexico.

“We are going to unleash the fury and might of the U.S. against these cartels”, Graham

proclaimed in a March 8 press conference.

Graham compared Mexican drug cartels to ISIS and al-Qaeda, referring to them as “narcoterrorists” and calling to “[give the military the authority](#) to go after these organizations wherever they exist”.

Trump’s former CIA director and secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, published an article declaring, “It Is Time for America To [Declare War on the Drug Cartels](#)”.

“As Secretary of State, I suggested we use drones to strike the cartels”, he boasted.

With blatantly neocolonial rhetoric, Pompeo claimed that Mexico has a “total lack of sovereignty”. (In his memoir, Pompeo admitted that the Trump administration tried to overthrow Venezuela’s government because it supposedly put “out the welcome mat for Russia, China, Iran, Cuba, and the cartels in a twenty-first-century [violation of the Monroe Doctrine](#)”, referencing the 200-year-old colonial doctrine.)

As Secretary of State, I suggested we use drones to strike the cartels.

Here's why:<https://t.co/hdys6kVK98>

— Mike Pompeo (@mikepompeo) [March 17, 2023](#)

Borrowing George W. Bush-era “war on terror” rhetoric, Pompeo referred to the cartels as “narco-terrorist entities”, and insisted that “the U.S. government should designate the major drug cartels – the Gulf Cartel (responsible for the recent kidnapping and murders), the Cartel Del Noreste, the Cartel de Sinaloa, and the Cartel de Jalisco Nueva Generacion to name a few – as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO)”.

Pompeo also tried to link China to Mexican drug cartels as well, without any evidence. He asserted that the US war on cartels “will require going after the Chinese Communist Party-backed entities that are funneling precursor compounds to cartels”.

AMLO condemns US threats: “Mexico is not a colony!”

In his March 18 speech, López Obrador declared:

Friend, I cannot forget to mention that, in recent days, some legislators from the United States, who are accustomed to hypocritically throwing stones while forgetting that they live in glass houses, have a propagandistic plan. As we say here, in popular language, they are scheming. And for electoral purposes, political operatives are saying that, if we don’t stop the traffic of fentanyl to the northern border, they are going to propose in Congress that North American soldiers occupy our territory, to fight organized crime.

First, I want to make it clear that this is no longer the time of [Felipe] Calderón or [Genaro] García Luna, that it is no longer the time of the shady links between the government of Mexico and the agencies of the US government.

The most important thing is that, from here, from this Zócalo, the political and cultural heart of Mexico, we remind those hypocritical and irresponsible politicians that Mexico

is an independent and free country, not a colony or a protectorate of the United States, and that they can threaten us with committing some kind of abuse, but we will never, ever allow them to violate our sovereignty and trample on the dignity of our homeland!

Cooperation? Yes. Submission? No! Interventionism? No!

AMLO then shouted out the following words, and the audience replied: "Oligarchy? No! Corruption? No! Classism? No! Racism? No! Freedom? Yes! Democracy? Yes! Honesty? Yes! Social justice? Yes! Equality? Yes! Sovereignty? Yes!"

The president concluded his speech chanting: "Long live the oil expropriation! Long live the workers and technicians, of before and today, in the national oil industry! Long live General Lázaro Cárdenas del Río! Long live Mexico! Long live Mexico! Long live Mexico!"



Mexican President Lázaro Cárdenas declaring the nationalization of the railroads in 1937

AMLO honors Lázaro Cárdenas' revolutionary legacy

AMLO spent the first half of his speech discussing the legacy of leftist former President Lázaro Cárdenas.

He explained:

General Lázaro Cárdenas did not hesitate to rely on those below to carry out his transformation. The general's strategy can be summarized in three important, consecutive actions. First, he gave land to the peasants and helped the workers. Then, he motivated them to organize. And finally, with that social base, he was able to carry out the expropriation of the oil and other national resources, which Porfirio Díaz had given away to individuals, fundamentally to foreigners.

In the Cardenista strategy, the most important thing was meeting the economic and social demands of the peasants and workers.

...

It is undoubtable that the peasants saw in Cárdenas a faithful representative of the revolutionary cause. The agrarian reform ensured that many people were loyal to the Cardenista government, and from then on, there was an alliance between the peasants and the state.

Moreover, during Cardenismo, the workers felt that their labor rights were guaranteed, with strict adherence to the law. Cárdenas respected the economic struggle of workers for better salaries and better labor conditions.

...

The organization and political mobilization of the masses advanced the goal of valuing the economic independence of our country.

Thereby, with the expropriation of the oil corporations, national goods and resources were returned to the nation, which since the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz had been in the hands of foreigners.

...

There has not existed in Mexico a president as close to humble people as General Cárdenas, nor a president as dedicated to the cause of social justice.

For example, already as president, in power in 1935, he wrote in his notes the following: "Ending the miseries that the people suffer from is above all other interests".

...

I quote General Cárdenas; he says: "We made considerations of the circumstances that could arise if governments like those of England and the United States, in the interest of supporting the oil companies, pressured the government of Mexico with violent measures. But we also took into account that there is already the threat of a new world war with the growing provocations of Nazi-fascist imperialism, and that this would stop them from attacking Mexico in the case of the expropriation, among other reasons".

And taking advantage of this circumstance, on March 18, 1938, the oil expropriation was carried out.

...

He then made known, by radio, to all of the nation, the step taken by the government, in defense of its sovereignty, reintegrating into its domain the oil wealth that, as the same general said, "Imperialist capital has been taking advantage of to keep the country in a humiliating situation".

In response to Cárdenas' expropriation of Mexico's oil wealth, AMLO explained, "The millionaires requested a US [military] intervention. They complained to the United States".

He then added with a sarcastic tone, "That sounds familiar, that sounds familiar, that sounds familiar".

The millionaires "went and complained so that [the United States] would come here to

protect their companies”, AMLO added.

But the threat of Nazi Germany and the clear signs that World War Two was coming prevented the US from militarily intervening to stop the nationalization, López Obrador argued.

He also noted that the US leader at the time was Franklin Delano Roosevelt, whom AMLO referred to as “one of the best presidents that that country has had in all of its history”.

“But the corporations were not as conscious and respectful” as FDR, López Obrador continued.

Foreign corporations thought that “Mexicans were born to enrich foreigners”, he said, “and that God put important natural resources below Mexico’s soil to increase the fortunes in the treasure chests of the exploiters and concessionaires”.

AMLO recalled that Cárdenas’ government was forced to “confront a boycott, pressures, and acts of sabotage promoted and funded by the foreign oil companies in our country”.

The Mexican president continued:

The oil expropriation caused deep discomfort among a minority, above all among the wealthy at the time, in sectors of the middle class, and in the majority of the media.

It is interesting, and this is a lesson, to highlight that, historically, the right wing always regroupes when a democratic change is trying to be carried out, and it becomes plainly intolerant, and even violent when it comes to social demands in favor of the people and the control of the nation.

López Obrador discussed the example of Francisco Madero, a leader of the Mexican Revolution who governed as president from 1911 to 1913, but who was toppled and murdered in a coup d’état sponsored by the United States and carried out by the right wing.

AMLO emphasized:

Let us remember that the overthrow of President Madero, our apostle of democracy, relied on the intervention of the US ambassador, but that overthrow was carried out by internal right-wing groups that had previously promoted a campaign of hatred and smears, consisting of ridiculing the leader, President Madero, in their newspapers, to the point of treating him as crazy and spiritualist.

As an example of the long history of Mexico’s right-wing elites betraying their country’s national interests in collaboration with foreign corporations, AMLO pointed out that the country’s right-wing party PAN, which governed from 2000 to 2012, had been created in 1939 as a representation of the wealthy oligarchic forces that opposed Cárdenas’ oil expropriation.

The Mexican president finally summarized his discussion of Cárdenas: “In this brief history, there are greater lessons. The main one is that only with the people, only with the support of the majority, is it possible to carry out a popular transformation to guarantee justice and confront the reactionaries who don’t want to lose their privileges”.

AMLO boasts of unprecedented government spending on social programs to help working-class Mexicans

Later in the March 18 speech, AMLO boasted of the unprecedented social spending his government has carried out:

All of the [government's] savings are used to finance social programs, such as pensions for the elderly, support for people with disabilities, single mothers, peasants and fishermen; with scholarships for students from poor families; internet for everyone; programs to build and improve housing; favorable loans; fertilizers and guaranteed prices for small producers in the country; the Wellness Bank; the drive for public education and health care, universal and free.

This year, more than 25 million people will receive direct support totaling 600 billion pesos. In other words, out of the 35 million homes that there are in the country, 71% are already benefiting from at least one of the social programs.

With this policy of attention to the neediest, the most vulnerable, and especially the youth, we have also been able to reduce crime

...

[These policies] have allowed us to avoid more debt. We have not requested additional debt since we are in government.

...

The price of gasoline, diesel, gas, and electricity has not increased.

...

Also, public investment has increased, which did not happen for many years. This year, more than 1 trillion pesos will be spent on public works. That is to say, we are going to keep building roads, bridges, trains, airports, hospitals, universities, markets, sports facilities, piers, and natural, recreational, and ecological parks.

...

In the time that we have been in government, the minimum wage has increased by 90% in real terms, and more than double at the border.

Do you remember what the lying technocrats said about raising the salary, that there was going to be inflation? Pure nonsense! That is not true.

Of course we have to increase wages in a responsible way, to strengthen the internal market, as we are doing, and thereby to achieve well-being for our people.

...

"We have also directed our resources and efforts toward achieving food self-sufficiency and energy self-sufficiency.

...

We can ensure that we are guaranteed to have oil sovereignty. Next year, we are not going to buy gasoline, diesel, or other oil products abroad. We are going to process all of our raw materials.

...

And recently, the lithium was nationalized, strategic minerals used in making batteries, for electric cars and the storage system for clean energy. It fills me with pride to remember that.

While listing the accomplishments of his government, López Obrador also referenced the negotiations in 2018 and 2019 that led to replacing NAFTA with the new United States - Mexico - Canada Agreement (USMCA).

AMLO said with pride:

We were able to remove from the free trade agreement a broad chapter that compromised our oil in that agreement and put in its place a small paragraph that I am going to read to you.

It says that the United States and Canada recognize that “Mexico reserves its sovereign right to reform its Constitution and its domestic legislation; and [Mexico has the direct, inalienable, and imprescriptible ownership of all hydrocarbons](#) in the subsoil of the national territory”.

The Mexican president added:

We are going to continue with that collective conscience. We are going to continue pushing back against the dirty war, the smear campaigns, and the manipulation attempts that they will continue to carry out because they have no other choice, our adversaries and their media outlets, sold out, bought up, in the hands of members of the corrupt conservative bloc.

But at the same time, we must have faith in the wisdom and loyalty of the people.

...

I maintain that, whatever they do, the oligarchs will not return to power. An authentic and true democracy will continue to prevail in our beloved Mexico.

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