

Dear Mister Howard Davies, Director of the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Dear Ernesto Cordero Arroyo, Secretary of Finance of Mexico

Dear Professor George Philip. Head of the Department of Latin American Politics

Dear members of LSE's academic community

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In February 1922, Professor Edwin Cannan, suggested that the phrase "*rerum cognoscere causas*" be the motto of the London School of Economics. *Rerum cognoscere causas*, or "to know the causes of things" is –literally- the reason behind the existence of the institution where we gather today.

It is a truism that we live in a hyper connected world, which manifest itself in many dimensions. Some like to call it globalization, others, new world order. In any case, we are constantly reminded that the problems of the 21st century arise from this distinct trait.

But another truth that is often left unspoken, is that the solutions to these challenges can only be harnessed by making use of the strengths and potential of hyper connectivity itself.

While some portray today's societies as individualistic, ironically, humanity never before had greater possibilities of working in a cooperative manner in order to overcome its challenges. LSE, as a school that currently houses students from 43 different countries, is a reflection of globalization but also a meeting ground for individuals to discuss how to render fairer societies through different approaches but with one common vocation: the forging of answers through reason.

Mexico is precisely in that process today. Last year we celebrated the bicentennial of our independence and the centennial of our revolution. The beginning of our third centennial as an independent nation this year is a unique opportunity to rethink and reshape ourselves, learn from our mistakes and achievements and cast the future deserved by millions of ordinary Mexicans who perform extraordinary actions everyday.

Of the two preconditions necessary to fully unfold our potential: macro economical stability and security, we have fulfilled and successfully maintained the first one for more than 15 years, even amid an unprecedented global financial crisis. The country is making important progress on the second one: improving security and the rule of law to recover peace and tranquillity for our citizens in their communities.

We are a nation mainly formed by a growing sophisticated middle-class. In 1994, Mexico became the first Latin American member of the OECD. Ours is the second country with more free trade agreements in the planet, we export more manufactured goods than the rest of Latin America combined, and we have long played a significant role in the world, especially since the second half of the 20th century.

But we must be, all we can be.

Mexico's economy is one of the largest in the world but within some years it will rank among the top ten. We will continue to be a committed, leading and trust worthy actor in multilateral affairs, from climate change to the reshaping of international institutions both financial and political; we will

profit from our culture, demographic dynamics, advantages as a major manufacturing base, sophistication to design and certainly will keep implementing pertinent policies to cope with very difficult times and challenges as we have done in the past. We will do much better off in the future. For Mexico, History is written in future tense, it is about what is to come for us. It is up to us.

The challenge now is to engage Mexicans in a new era of transformation, to consolidate functional institutions, but more so, to integrate those sectors of the population that still remain on the margins of opportunities and services. We must enhance the capability of the State to provide sustained and increasing wellbeing for its population, to be able to create not equality of conditions but of opportunities. It is also the time for a renewed vision of how we engage ourselves with the world.

The Mexican students at LSE are true representatives of the intellectual strength and creative spark necessary to drive the country successfully into its third centennial. This occasion, marks the starting point of a unique opportunity in which for 4 days, the London School of Economics and

Political Science will discuss the nature of Mexico's challenges, its inherent potential and confidently point out some wise guidelines.

I would like to praise our LSE students for their central role in conceptualizing and organizing this week, and to express my gratitude to the School for hosting this series of thought and debate on Mexico. I sincerely hope this to be a confirmation of a growing trend of LSE's engagement with our country, that is already been highly rewarding for all.

To open these sessions, we are very lucky to have here today Mexico's Finance Minister, Ernesto Cordero, a true representative on his own of Mexico's future leadership, along with other high-ranking members of our Government who will be present throughout these days.

Rerum cognoscere causas is not only a motto but also the reason why Mexico comes to LSE this week.

On behalf of Mexico, welcome and thank you very much.