

The process in Mexico

Mexican approval and implementation of the NAFTA will be undertaken both by formal Senate ratification of the Agreement, and by passage in Congress (the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies) of the necessary amendments to domestic law. The Mexican Congress is in ordinary session from April 15 through July 15, 1993.

President Salinas sent the NAFTA to the Senate on December 18, 1992. Under the January 2, 1992 Law of Treaties, treaties submitted for ratification by two-thirds of the Senate must be turned over to a committee, which then analyzes them and makes recommendations to the full Senate. Even before the signing of the NAFTA on December 17, 1992, President Salinas had begun the process of consultations with both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies through formal testimony and informal briefings.

Once ratified, the NAFTA will have the force of domestic law. In addition, President Salinas has announced his intention to proceed with amending legislation to several statutes, requiring the approval of both chambers. The Executive Branch has announced officially its intent to amend more than 30 domestic laws through ordinary legislation.

AGREEMENTS ON LABOUR AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Canada, the United States and Mexico have pursued discussions on environment and labour matters almost from the moment negotiations on the NAFTA got under way in June 1991. The Government of Canada made proposals in the NAFTA negotiations to strengthen the treatment of environmental and labour matters.

Canada is prepared to work closely with the United States and Mexico in reaching additional agreements on the environment and labour at talks resuming in mid-March. Our objective is to establish a firm foundation for close and continuing co-operation in these fields.

Co-operation on environmental issues

For the first time, and directly as a result of the NAFTA, the three countries will work together to improve the continental environment -- a process of ongoing trilateral co-operation launched in Washington last September by the environment ministers from Canada, the United States and Mexico.