Mexican delegation in Washington, DC for talks on tariffs

Mexico City, June 3 (RHC)-- Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (AMLO) says his administration expects good results from a meeting with White House officials set to take place in Washington on Wednesday, June 5th. The talks will take place to discuss the sudden announcement last week of progressive tariffs imposed by the U.S. on all Mexican goods.

On May 30th, United States President Donald Trump announced via his Twitter account that he will order the punitive 5 percent tariffs to start on June 10, and threatened an increase every 30 days to a height of 25 percent, if Mexico does not halt the flow of migrants, largely from Central America, who make their way north to the U.S. border through Mexican territory.

AMLO's first official reaction Friday to the economic bombshell was to indicate that he would proceed with "caution and respect" and that the country would not fall for Trump's ?provocation.? On Saturday, the Mexican president displayed his conciliatory approach, saying at a news conference in Veracruz, that Mexico could be ready to step up measures to contain a recent surge in migration in order to reach a deal with the United States.

He also announced that a major Mexican delegation led by Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard will travel to Washington to discuss the dispute with U.S. officials directly. Lopez Obrador said he expects the talks to succeed.

?It was decided to hold a meeting on Wednesday (June 05) in Washington. The U.S. delegation will be led by Secretary of State Pompeo and the Mexican delegation will be led by Marcelo Ebrard."

The Mexican president made allusions to the possibility of the country pursuing legal recourse against its northern neighbor and largest trading partner, but emphasized his desire to ?maintain good relations with the United States.?

"There are international options that we could turn to. We think that won't be necessary, that we will achieve a good agreement through dialogue, and we won't resort to legal processes.

Lopez Obrador ruled out Mexico engaging in a trade war with the United States but noted that his government had a "plan" in case Trump did apply the tariffs to ensure his country would not collapse economically. He did not provide details of the plan.

Trump?s ultimatum stocks tumbling, not just of Mexican financial assets, but of those in the United States and around the world. The move was met resistance from U.S. business leaders and lawmakers worried about the impact of targeting Mexico, one of the United States' top trading partners.

The Trump administration has suffered political damage over its handling of what the president has called "an emergency at the border," with young migrant children dying in the care of Border Patrol. Political analysts in Mexico feel that this behavior by Trump will only get worse as the U.S. election in 2020 approaches and his administration looks for a scapegoat in Mexico.

Meanwhile, some Mexican business groups have urged the government to retaliate against any Trump tariffs. On Friday, Mexico's top farm lobby said AMLO should target agricultural goods from the states that support the Republican Party.

The leftist president is walking a fine line between maintaining his values and protecting his people from an increasingly aggressive administration that has been using tariffs, sanctions, and other economic pressure to push other countries to fall into line with U.S. interests.

He said, "We Mexicans should unite, there should be national unity at this time. All of us, independent of our political and ideological differences, our ways of thinking, our religions, we should defend Mexico."

?The main thing is to report what we're already doing on the migration issue, and if it's necessary to reinforce these measures without violating human rights, we could be prepared to reach that deal," Lopez Obrador said.

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