

A True Democracy

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The democratic society that Mexicans want is not just a legal structure and a political regime, but a system of life, based on the constant cultural, social and economic improvement of our citizens. Unfortunately, political parties have hijacked the concept of democracy and have a limited focus on their electoral agendas.

The challenge we have to consolidate democracy is more an effort of cultural change than the modification of laws and institutions.

A democratic culture is recognizing and supporting an initiative from the opposition if it contributes to an economic improvement for the people.

A democratic culture is supporting a government program from an opposing party if it strengthens the country's social development.

A democratic culture is to participate in an open debate and action to deepen an inclusive and egalitarian culture in our society.

But there are many signs of our slow pace to consolidate true democratic ideals.

The political parties are not the only ones to blame. Federal, state and municipal governments are favoring party affiliations over profiles and abilities to respond to collective needs when selecting public servants.

First is loyalty to the governing party, and then abilities and competences for the job at hand, which has generated growing government inefficiency across the board.

Samuel Huntington stated in his analysis of political change in changing societies that the most important aspect for a nation's development is not its form of government but its degree of government.

In Mexico we have fallen into the exaltation of democracy to reach power, but once governments are seated, far from thinking of the next generation, they are focused only on the next election.

The results are the weakening of the state apparatus, a lack of effectiveness in the rule of law, and a hindrance of public moral, while facing grave threats of organized crime.

The old conservative ideal of “peace and order” is not being achieved. We are neither living with peace nor order. Nor is the old progressive ideal of “justice and equality” being served, as we are failing to generate a fair, and much less, equitable society.

The challenge of the PAN is to return focus to the true needs of society and not just to the 2012 elections.

The challenge of the PRD is to create a progressive political proposal that is up to the stature of its growth and presence in the national political arena.

The challenge of the PRI is to place its experience at the service of Mexico’s structural change.

But the biggest challenge is that of Mexican society that does not get its earnings from politics. Because every day our citizens need to more actively participate in the strengthening of a democratic culture.

Leadership must rise, strengthen and prevail throughout the country in community, academic, professional, industry and neighborhood sectors to generate responses from the parts to the whole; from the bottom to the highest levels, for a true citizen empowerment that proposes and demands action.

Only this way, will the still-unrepresented citizens have a voice. Today’s democracy is fed by and serves modern Mexico. However, it offers nothing to the traditional, and much less to the marginalized Mexico’s.

When democracy addresses the recognition of racism in Mexico, when democracy mean true opportunities for social mobility, when it present in the system of justice, and when it will measure governments on the basis of results, then and only then will we be achieving the ideals expressed long ago in our Constitution.