

The meeting provided Secretary Calderón, who was appointed to the cabinet post by President Vicente Fox on September 2, 2003, with an opportunity to meet for the first time with high-ranking officials from the U.S. Department of Energy, as well as energy company executives. Calderón assumed the energy portfolio with vast political and legislative experience, having served as the President of the National Action Party from 1996 to 1999, and Leader of the party's faction in Congress from 2000 to 2003. Secretary Calderón engaged the select audience in a candid discussion on the political challenges and prospects for energy sector reform in that country. Secretary Calderon also offered a status update on the multiple service contracts (MSCs) and outlined additional investment opportunities in other areas of the energy sector. In attendance were Deputy Secretary of Energy, Kyle McSlarrow; Under Secretary for Energy, Science, and Environment, Robert Card; Assistant Secretary of Energy for Policy and International Affairs, Vicky Bailey; and Director for Inter-American Affairs at the National Security Council, Veronica Angulo. Several energy company executives were also in attendance. The intense level of interest in meeting with Secretary Calderón-who was accompanied by Deputy Secretary of Energy Hector Moreira-speaks of the importance of Mexico to the United States from an energy security standpoint. Mexico is among the United States' top five foreign oil suppliers. The United States not only imports crude oil and electricity from Mexico, it also supplies Mexico with over 10 percent of its refined petroleum products, and is a net natural gas exporter to Mexico. In this context, the meeting with Secretary Calderón represented an important opportunity to bring together energy policymakers and stakeholders from both countries for a frank discussion of reform prospects and business opportunities in the Mexican energy sector.