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Claudia Sheinbaum wins historic election as Mexico's first woman president

written by Lallan Schoenstein
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Protest in Mexico City on May 10. The marchers demanded an investigation of the disappearance and homicide of over 100,000 Mexican people.

Claudia Sheinbaum, the first woman to be elected president of Mexico, won by a large margin of 60%. She will begin a six-year term on Oct. 1. Until then, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador — known by his initials AMLO — will continue to hold office. Sheinbaum and AMLO's Morena (Movimiento de Regeneración Nacional) party won a two-thirds majority in Congress.

The ruling party's triumph can be attributed mainly to AMLO's successful efforts in combating poverty throughout his six-year term. Both local and international agencies have reported that approximately nine million Mexicans have been lifted

out of poverty due to significant improvements in their income levels. This positive change can be primarily attributed to two key factors: a substantial increase in pensions and the sustained growth of salaries, which improved by 3.3%.

A former mayor of [Mexico City](#), Sheinbaum has a background in science and a Ph.D. in energy engineering. While she is of Jewish ancestry, she is not religiously observant or active in Mexico City's Jewish community.

Sheinbaum's policies may differ somewhat from López Obrador's. While the federal government tended to downplay the importance of coronavirus testing, Mexico City expanded its testing regimen. Sheinbaum set limits on businesses' hours and capacity when the virus was rapidly spreading. She also publicly wore protective masks and urged social distancing.

Her most significant challenge will be addressing Mexico's high levels of violence and homicides. She has pledged to expand the National Guard created by López Obrador and to continue his strategy of targeting the social issues that make young Mexicans vulnerable to cartel recruitment. During her final campaign rally, she said: "We will promote a strategy of addressing the root causes and continue moving toward zero impunity."

A major source of the violence originates from the northern border, leading to the influx of illegal arms, hostile migration processes, and drug trafficking. Last January, AMLO filed a lawsuit against U.S. arms manufacturers responsible for smuggling rifles to drug trafficking cartels.

Sheinbaum faces growing pressure from the banks and big business interests to cut the popular social programs started by AMLO, demanding neoliberal fiscal austerity policies. Under neoliberal policies, spending on social programs, such as welfare, education, and health care, is reduced or cut altogether, and state-owned enterprises are privatized.

The income from Pemex, Mexico's state-owned oil company, has been a key to AMLO's progressive programs. Sheinbaum is a climate scientist who wants to move into clean energy. She closed her campaign before gigantic banners of support from oil industry workers.

The Nov. 5 U.S. presidential election is of deep concern for Mexico. Both Biden and Trump promote hostile relations with Mexico. Either of their administrations will impact security, trade, and immigration policies.

