



April 17, 2024

Hon. Antony Blinken  
Secretary  
Department of State  
201 C St. NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Hon. Tom Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Blinken and Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the public and private sector members of the Border Trade Alliance, we write to respectfully urge you to work with your counterparts in Mexico to ensure that Mexico lives up to its obligations under the 1944 treaty between our two countries on the tributaries that flow into the Rio Grande.

As you are aware, the Rio Grande serves as the sole source of fresh water for the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, sustaining crucial agricultural activities and livelihoods in the region. The effectiveness of this vital resource is contingent upon the equitable distribution of water as outlined in the treaty.

Unfortunately, Mexico's compliance with the treaty obligations regarding water deliveries has been inadequate, resulting in significant hardships for the South Texas agricultural sector and the jobs it supports.

Despite the absence of extraordinary drought conditions or hydraulic system accidents, Mexico has accumulated a surplus of nearly 3 million-acre feet of water in the reservoirs on the six-named tributaries since August 2022.

Furthermore, Mexico is currently behind in its deliveries to the United States by more than 800,000 acre feet of water within the current five-year Treaty Delivery Cycle. This deficiency has led to dire consequences, including the forced fallowing of acreage, the closure of essential agricultural operations such as a sugar mill operated by the Rio Grande Valley Sugar Growers, Inc., and substantial economic losses totaling \$993.2 million in economic output and over 8,000 lost jobs.

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Given these pressing concerns, we urge the Department of State and Department of Agriculture to take immediate action to engage in negotiations with Mexico to ensure compliance with the terms of the 1944 agreement. Mexico possesses sufficient water in storage in the tributaries from which the United States is entitled to receive water and it is imperative that Mexico honors its commitments under the treaty.

We believe it is essential to address this issue promptly to mitigate further economic losses and safeguard the livelihoods of those reliant on the Rio Grande's water resources.

We appreciate your attention to this matter, and we stand ready to support your efforts to uphold the integrity of the treaty and ensure the equitable distribution of water between our two nations.

Sincerely,



Lance Jungmeyer  
Chairman



Britton Mullen  
President