

López Obrador Does Not Rule Out Comprehensive Mining Law Reform

By Fernando Mares | Wed, 09/07/2022 - 21:26

A month after the collapse of a coal mine in Sabinas, Coahuila, where 10 miners remain trapped and rescue works do not seem to yield results, President López Obrador said he does not rule out a comprehensive reform to the Mining Law, aimed at preventing such incidents from happening again. The reform would also set stricter rules for extractive activities.

During his daily morning press conference, López Obrador said that he might be on time to propose a comprehensive reform to the Mining Law before his presidential term finishes. His reform is aimed at regulating existing mining concessions and preventing the government from signing contracts with companies that operate irregularly.

López Obrador clarified that with the reform, the government would not grant new concessions but it will respect those that were previously granted. He added that during previous administrations, the federal government granted the industry over 120 million ha of land, which represents 60 percent of the national territory. “I do not want to be misunderstood, those granted concessions will be respected. The policy that we defined is based on not granting new concessions,” said López Obrador.

Safety matters have become an important concern for Mexican politicians since the mine collapse in Coahuila. On Aug. 18, 2022, [MBN reported](#) that Napoleón Gómez Urrutia, Senator for ruling party MORENA and Head of the National Union of Mining, Metallurgical, Iron, Steel and Similar Workers of the Mexican Republic (SNTMMSSRM), stated that mining operations should be required to incorporate modern technologies and to carry out proper inspections validated by officers of the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (STPS). Gómez said that he would also propose a comprehensive reform to the Mining Law and the ratification of the International Labor Organization’s (ILO) Safety and Health in Mines Convention to ensure a safer operational environment for miners.

Alejandro Armenta, Senator, MORENA, said that during the next Senate session, one of the main priorities of the chamber will be the revision of mining projects

conditions. He added that he will also push for the ratification of ILO's convention, arguing that mining is one of the most dangerous extractive activities. Armenta's statements were made holding what seems to be a confrontational stance towards mining, saying that "[the government] will not allow more exploitation and looting to the detriment of Mexican workers."

López Obrador did not mention exactly when is he planning to propose his reform, but it seem to have the support from at least most of MORENAs senators and one of the most important Unions in Mexico.

Source: mexicobusiness.news