

Development Council study says

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U.S., Mexico should discuss differences

WASHINGTON (AP) — For their own security, the United States and Mexico need to reconcile their disagreements over Central America, immigration and trade, according to a paper released Tuesday by the Overseas Development Council.

"We are at a stalemate in some of our important trade and investment questions, an uncertainty and an equally uncertain prospect with regard to the management of the border and migration issues," Guy Erb, chairman of the council's U.S.-Mexico Project and an author of the paper said at a press brief-

ing. Mexico must produce a million jobs a year just to keep pace, but that goal cannot be met because of Mexico's recession, Erb said.

"The task of the American policymaker is to negotiate a way to help the Mexican policymaker accomplish that task, and we're not doing that either, so consequently I am very concerned about the direction of the relationship," he said.

U.S. policies toward Central America "take scant regard of Mexico's delicate political balance," said Cathryn Thorup, another author of the paper and director of the U.S.-Mexico Project.

"Current U.S. policy to eradi-

cate the threat from the left in Central America is being pursued no matter what the costs are to Mexico and to U.S.-Mexico relations," she said. "And what we say in our paper is that jeopardizing this relationship with Mexico is a much greater potential security threat to the United States than any threat that is posed in Central America."

Mexico fears that if the U.S. intervenes in Central America, that means it could do the same to Mexico some day, said Lorenzo Meyer, a professor at El Colegio de Mexico who is on sabbatical at the Woodrow Wilson Center here.

Meanwhile, Mexico's econom-

ic situation is "working against the stability" of the Mexican government, creating an "issue of political legitimacy."

For now, he said, Mexico's political stability is based on a "lack of alternatives."

Erb said the U.S. Congress would probably not be offended by receiving suggestions from Mexico on how to handle the influx of undocumented workers across the border.

But Meyer said Mexico would not presume to interfere in what it perceives as a U.S. domestic issue.

Also, Mexico fears that an agreement on immigration that would require Mexico to control the outflow of workers, which will fail while Mexico's leadership loses ground politically, Lorenzo said.

Ms. Thorup said both countries currently gain from the status quo on immigration, but predicted with or without action by Congress, control of the U.S.-Mexico border will be tightened.