



Alvarez: BTA conference in Mexico City was a great success



MEXICO CITY, August 18 - The Border Trade Alliance in conjunction with event producer *MexicoNow* last week held a conference in Mexico City attended by over 500 professionals and government officials involved in cross-border trade.

The Aug. 7 conference featured presentations and panel discussions

on all facets of the U.S.-Mexico cross-border commerce relationship, including border crossing processes, the latest in maquiladoras and border region infrastructure.

The event provided a lot of useful insight for businesses wanting to understand more about the trade climate between our two countries. I was extremely impressed by the quality of speakers and the content they offered.

Speakers included Laura Dogu, the deputy chief of mission for the U.S. Embassy. Dogu provided attendees on the U.S. and Mexico's attempts to foster a border environment more conducive to commerce while still secure under the two countries' joint accord on 21st Century Border Management. The U.S. and Mexico are actively engaged in working together to spur more cross-border trade. But both countries acknowledge that without real improvements in processes and facilities, long wait times at the ports will discourage business and diminish the region's competitiveness.

On the evening of Aug. 6, conference attendees were invited to join U.S. Ambassador Tony Wayne for a special reception at the ambassador's home. Many members of Mexico's Congress attended.

What a wonderful opportunity to speak directly with Mexican leaders about the unique issues facing their country. We were all very impressed by Ambassador Wayne's comments that evening. Our country is well served in Mexico.

The BTA also held a board of directors meeting as part of the event.

The BTA made some recent leadership decisions that I believe underscore the organization's reputation as the leading voice for the border. We formally welcomed our new president, Noe Garcia, to his post. We're really excited to have Noe on board. He brings a level of experience in policy circles and professionalism that will only strengthen our profile.

And we also are re-launching our Mexican entity, BTA México, by naming Angie Plascencia as our

director of that entity. Angie is a familiar face to many in the Rio Grande Valley, having done work in years past with the Rio Grande Partnership. I know that by having a regular presence in Mexico before lawmakers and key agency officials that we are creating even more value for our members. It's a very exciting time for the BTA.

Julian Alvarez is a board member of the Border Trade Alliance. He is also president and CEO of the Rio Grande Valley Partnership.

Write [Julian Alvarez](#)