

Mexico Remains Shielded From New U.S. Tariffs as Trade Agreement Holds

By Alberto de la Peña, Edward M. Lebow | July 24, 2026

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The United States Trade Representative has announced that effective July 24, 2026, the United States will impose tariffs of 10 percent and 12.5 percent on goods from 60 economies under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, citing those nations' failure to impose and effectively enforce prohibitions on the importation of goods produced with forced labor. The new duties replace the temporary 10 percent global import surcharge that had been imposed under Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974.

Since February 2026, the United States has used a variety of legal tools to impose tariffs on its trading partners. Each previous measure was either blocked by the courts or reached its legal expiration date.

Throughout these changes, the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) has continued to protect qualifying Mexican exports.

Mexico's Economy Ministry has confirmed that the new tariffs imposed July 24 on 60 trading partners will not change the effective tariff rate on Mexican goods. He also stated that more than 80 percent of Mexican exports to the United States qualify under the USMCA's trade rules and continue to enter the U.S. market without tariffs. The remaining goods that do not qualify under the USMCA and were subject to the prior surcharge will now face the new duty at a comparable rate.

The USMCA remains significant because it is not a temporary exemption but a binding trade agreement with enforceable rules, a formal dispute resolution process and a built-in review mechanism. Mexico's duty-free access rests on this legal foundation. Without it, Mexico would likely face the same tariff rates now being applied to 60 other economies.

Mexico has not imposed tariffs on U.S. imports, helping avoid reciprocal measures. Separate tariffs on steel, aluminum, automobiles and trucks from Mexico remain in effect under earlier trade actions.

Negotiations continue as part of the ongoing USMCA review, and Mexico continues to engage with the United States under the agreement's framework on trade and labor standards.