



**Gary L. Springer**  
*Secretary-General*



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***Gulf of Mexico States Accord Secretariat***  
Biography

In February 2000, Gary L. Springer was appointed by Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris to organize the Gulf of Mexico States Accord Secretariat. The Accord is an international cooperative agreement between the six Mexican states and five US states located on the Gulf of Mexico. Mr. Springer was unanimously elected Secretary-General of the Accord by the Executive Committee on August 18, 2000. The Tampa-based Secretariat is housed within the Center for International Business at the University of South Florida, where Mr. Springer also serves as an adjunct professor of international business in the College of Business Administration.

Gary L. Springer brings unique qualifications to a Mexico-focused project. Mr. Springer has spent over 20 years working with Mexican private businesses and public officials on business and policy issues that directly affected the Mexico-US relationship and the business bottom line. During this time, he has worked with the Mexican public and private sectors on public policy issues, trade disputes and corporate transactions. His business clients have included companies in the cement, steel, resort, retail, telecommunications, environmental technologies and agribusiness industries, as well as the Mexican Business Council for International Affairs (CEMAI, now COMCE). On the public sector side, Mr. Springer was policy and business advisor on the lead counsel team for the law firm of Shearman & Sterling which advised the Mexican Secretary of Commerce during the negotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement. While Vice President for Latin America at Fleishman-Hillard (international communications firm), he also worked with the Office of the President of Mexico, the Banco de Mexico and the Mexican Investment Board on crisis management issues during the winter of 1994-95.

Gary L. Springer has also served as Executive Director for the Pinellas County Economic Development “Mexico Initiative,” approved by unanimous consent by the Pinellas County Commission in January 2000. His mandate includes continuing to develop business relationships between Mexican and



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Pinellas companies; “branding” the Pinellas County area among Mexican businesses and public officials; and promoting new trade and investment flows with Mexico. During the year 2000, the Initiative produced over \$23 million in new expected business for Pinellas County firms.

Mr. Springer was appointed Director of Enterprise Florida’s Mexico Office in August 1998, and he was responsible for the organizing the public sector and business agenda for the largest trade mission in Florida’s history to Mexico in July 1999, achieving a record \$200 million in anticipated new export sales by Florida companies. In October 1999, Mr. Springer teamed with Pinellas County Economic Development to plan and execute the area’s first structured in-bound trade and investment mission from Mexico, which resulted in approximately \$13.5 million in anticipated new export sales and new strategic alliances between Pinellas County and Mexican firms.

From 1995-97, Gary was senior director of the worldwide International Trade & Customs Services and the Latin America Center of KPMG Peat Marwick LLP. He created and was responsible for two business units -- Market Expansion Analysis and Strategy, and International Economic Development. While there, his team was contracted by a group of Mexican corporate CEOs to prepare a report on the “critical factors of success for attracting foreign direct investment,” a study that analyzed global best practices with suggested implications and implementation strategies for the Mexican market. His KPMG team was also contracted by the Florida Chamber Foundation to conduct the research and prepare “International Cornerstone”, a strategic look at Florida’s future competitive position in the global economy.

Gary’s long-time activities in the arena of US-Mexican corporate and government relations are well-known in government and business circles in Mexico. For example, while vice president of Fleishman-Hillard, an international communications and public relations firm, Gary was responsible for establishing the company’s wholly-owned subsidiary in Mexico (1994-1995). During that time, he led the teams that advised major US corporate clients and the Mexican government during the Mexican financial crisis of late 1994. With a Mexican colleague, he published an article in the University of Miami’s *Journal of Inter-American Studies and World Affairs* on the business implications of the Mexican crisis for companies doing business in Mexico -- and in Latin America. He was



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also called upon by the Mexican government and by the Mexican Investment Board for strategic advice during the financial crisis.

Mr. Springer was Senior Advisor for Latin America at the international law firm of Shearman & Sterling, where he was a member of the team which served as lead counsel to the Government of Mexico for the NAFTA negotiations (1990-94). In addition to advising on policy and political matters critical to the negotiation and implementation of NAFTA, he advised the Mexican Secretary of Commerce Washington and Mexico teams in the areas of liaison with the US private sector, coalition building, crisis and issues management, environmental and labor issues, and formation of the North American Development Bank.

From 1984-1990 while director of business programs at the Council of the Americas in New York, Gary was the senior staff person for the US Council of the Mexico-US Business Committee, the organization that, with the CEMAI (Mexico), helped to lay the foundation for the NAFTA over a period of eight years. He also staffed the Committee's Advisory Group on Capital Development for Mexico, whose final report was delivered to President Miguel de la Madrid in 1988, and whose program was eventually implemented by the Salinas administration. Gary is an expert in business-government relations and consensus-building within the private sector, and has actively managed binational work programs on trade liberalization, foreign direct investment attraction, and capital formation for Mexican and US business interests.

Mr. Springer holds a Master of Arts in Government from Georgetown University, and a B.A. in International Relations from West Virginia University.