

Soekarno and Lopez Mateos: Mexico-Indonesia Relations and Foreign Policy, 1959-62



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Via Zoom

Following US subversion that attempted his overthrow in the mid-1950s, Indonesian president Soekarno visited Mexico in 1959, 1960 and 1961. He met with Mexican president Adolfo López Mateos, and the two struck up a warm friendship. They had similar ideas about foreign policy, including a desire to express their differences with US foreign policy – for López Mateos, a marked change in direction for Mexico. They had similar ideas about nascent Castro's Cuba, for example, in the context of self-determination in the post-colonial era. Soekarno, a notorious charmer, also met and fell in love with Mexican actress Ana Bertha Lepe, likely the reason for the “unofficial” nature of his 1960 visit, purportedly for reasons of “health.” Although the lasting effects of the relationship are

questionable, the two countries have returned to warmer relations following the 1965-99 administration of Soekarno's successor, Suharto, exemplified in the September 2019 erection of a statue of Soekarno in Mexico City.

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