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FEATURED Q&A

What Will Be Accomplished at the Summit of the Americas?

Q Leaders from throughout the Western Hemisphere will gather this April in Cartagena, Colombia for the sixth Summit of the Americas. The planned focus of the summit is how to boost development and address other challenges through the use of physical integration and closer regional cooperation. How much progress will be made toward those goals? What other issues will dominate the summit? How useful is the Summit of the Americas as a forum for addressing common needs in the hemisphere?

A Peter Hakim, member of the Advisor board and president emeritus of the Inter-American Dialogue: "The Summit of the Americas has rarely shaped the course of hemispheric affairs. Mostly, it has simply reflected them. The first, in Miami in 1994, was conceived at a high point in inter-American relations. Recent summits, held during a period of regional discord, turned out badly. Two—in Mexico in 2003 and Trinidad in 2009—generated little interest and had no impact. The third, in Argentina in 2005 clearly damaged U.S.-Latin American relations. So, what should we expect this April in Cartagena, Colombia? One reason for optimism is that the region is upbeat after several years of good economic and social news. Moreover, Venezuela's disruptive capacity has diminished. Colombia has restyled its relations in South America and ended a tense standoff

with Venezuela. Brazil under Dilma has moderated its regional ambitions. U.S. relations with Latin America, however, are stalled. While not conflictive, they lack energy or purpose. True, Congress finally ratified long-delayed trade pacts with Colombia and Panama, but new trade deals appear unlikely, and Washington's political acrimony is blocking progress on other critical hemispheric issues. So far, the United States has not shown much initiative with regard to the April summit. A more

Continued on page 2



Iranian Leader Arrives in Cuba, Third Stop on Tour of Region

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad flashed a victory sign Wednesday after arriving at Havana's José Martí International Airport. The Iranian leader's visit to Cuba is the third stop on his tour of Latin America. See story on page 2.

Photo: Juventud Rebelde.

Inside This Issue

FEATURED Q&A: What Will Be Accomplished at the Summit of the Americas?	1	Colombia's Santos Rejects Negotiations With Rebels	2
Iranian's Ahmadinejad Continues Latin American Tour in Cuba	2	Germany's E.ON Buying Stake in MPX Energia	3
Haiti to Begin Clearing Camp Near National Palace	2	In Focus: Mexico Making Strides in Fight Against Cartels: Public Security Sec'y	3

NEWS BRIEFS

Haiti to Begin Clearing Camp Near National Palace

With help from abroad, Haiti's government will start relocating people who have camped outside the National Palace since the country's devastating January 2010 earthquake, the Associated Press reported Wednesday. In six weeks, earthquake survivors will start to be moved to homes north of Port-au-Prince, said President Michel Martelly. Canada's minister of international cooperation, Beverly Oda, said her country will assist in the effort. About half a million people are still living in camps around the Haitian capital.

Colombia's Santos Rejects Negotiations With Rebels

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos is continuing to refuse to negotiate with the rebels of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC, until they show "clear acts of peace," the BBC reported Wednesday. FARC leader Rodrigo Londoño, known as "Timochenko," had said in a statement on Monday that there are "issues we are interested in dealing with at a hypothetical negotiating table." Santos reiterated that the talks would only happen if the FARC, which has been weakened in recent years by the government's offensive, releases all hostages and ends its attacks.

Argentina's Government Tightens Import Restrictions

Beginning in February, importers sending goods to Argentina will have to register an affidavit with the country's tax agency, AFIP, Dow Jones reported Wednesday, citing the country's official bulletin. The measure is aimed at maintaining the trade surplus, which has contracted as the country imports more.

Political News**Iranian's Ahmadinejad Continues Latin American Tour in Cuba**

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on Wednesday continued his four-nation tour of Latin America with his arrival in Cuba, Reuters reported. Cuban Vice President Esteban Lazo greeted the Iranian leader and was driven away for a meeting with President Raúl Castro. Ahmadinejad's arrival in Havana came on the same day an Iranian nuclear scientist was killed in a car bombing in Tehran. Iran blamed the attack on the United States and Israel, but Ahmadinejad did not comment on it when he arrived at José Martí International Airport in the Cuban capital. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said the United States was not involved in the attack, according to the Associated Press, and a spokesman for

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said, "It is not our policy to comment on this sort of speculation when it arises," *The Wall Street Journal* reported. Like Ahmadinejad's stops in Venezuela and Nicaragua, his one-day

Trade between Iran and Cuba amounted to \$27 million in 2009.

trip to Cuba was part of an effort to show support for the region's leftist governments. Iran has provided Cuba with hundreds of millions of dollars in credits, which Cuba has used for new Iranian-manufactured rail cars, Reuters reported. Trade between the two countries amounted to \$27 million in 2009, a decline from \$46 million in 2008, according to Cuban government data. Iran and Cuba also are

Featured Q&A

Continued from page 1

engaged United States would be helpful, but this summit will have to depend on the leadership of Colombia and other regional governments. What the presidents should seek from one another is cooperation on a few concrete problems that require collective action, including the region's expanding wave of criminal violence and the continuing fight against poverty and inequality through more equitable growth and enhanced education. It would be useful, but unlikely, for the assembled leaders to talk frankly about the hemisphere's most contentious issues—the deterioration of democracy and the rule of law in some countries, and the failure of the United States to reform its migration and drug policies."

A Julia Buxton, senior research fellow in the department of peace studies at the University of Bradford in the United Kingdom: "Latin America has made progress in addressing poverty and marginalization over recent years. While this has been driven by national govern-

ments, improved regional cooperation has provided a framework for agreeing to norms and ambitions in relation to development, distribution and economic growth. Along with Mercosur, ALBA and Unasur, the Americas summits have served as mechanisms for negotiation and discussion of difference between states, enabling trust and confidence to build and lessons learned to be exchanged. The United States and Western Europe have frequently written off these integration and development initiatives—condemning them as Utopian schemas of Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez. But these have gained traction, institutional form and support from the region and its big hitters, most specifically Brazil. At what would seem to be a high point for regional cooperation, it is therefore possible to be bullish about prospects for the sixth Summit of the Americas. The four sub-agendas demonstrate the capacity of the summit process to canalize common hemispheric priorities and concerns. Progress on these issues should not be problematic; the 34

Continued on page 4

two of the four countries on the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism. Syria and Sudan are the others. Ahmadinejad is due to leave Havana Thursday morning for Ecuador, where he will conclude his tour of the region.

Company News

Germany's E.ON Buying Stake in MPX Energia

Germany's **E.ON**, the country's largest utility, is purchasing a 10 percent stake in Brazil's **MPX Energia** for 850 million reais (\$471 million), Bloomberg News reported Wednesday. E.ON is planning to establish a joint power-generation venture with the Brazilian company, which is controlled by Brazilian billionaire Eike Batista. The companies intend to generate 20,000 megawatts of power in what could be a \$34 billion venture, said Batista, Reuters reported. "The deal fits with E.ON's strategy to generate growth in

“The deal fits with E.ON's strategy to generate growth in quickly growing non-European markets ...”

— *Bernhard Jeggle*

quickly growing non-European markets and minimize risks by teaming up with partners," **Landesbank Baden-Wuerttemberg** analyst Bernhard Jeggle told Bloomberg News in a phone interview. The announcement came just weeks after E.ON said it would make an investment of 7 billion reais (\$8.9 billion) over the next five years in renewable energy projects. The venture will "enable us to create significant value in thermal and renewable power generation in Brazil," E.ON's chief executive officer, Johannes Teyssen, said in a statement Wednesday. E.ON and MPX plan to close the deal in this year's second quarter.

In Focus

Mexico Making Strides in Fight Against Cartels: Public Security Sec'y

By Rachel Sadon

WASHINGTON—Despite the pervasiveness of grisly headlines, Mexican security forces are nonetheless making gains in the fight against organized crime, the country's secretary for public security, Genaro García Luna, said Wednesday.

Speaking at the Woodrow Wilson Center, García Luna argued that measuring the effectiveness of the country's security strategy must go beyond data from just a single year.

"The process takes time. If you look at the figure for one year without looking at the larger process, it will look like a failure." Reducing violence, such as happened in New York and Medellín takes, on average, seven to eight years, he said.

Pointing to statistics from the National Public Security System, García Luna noted that the country's homicide rate per capita has dropped steadily since 1997 and is lower than those of Honduras, El Salvador, Jamaica, Venezuela, Colombia, and Brazil.

While Mexico is beginning to see breakthroughs in its battle against drug cartels, he said, more important is the capacity building that has occurred over the past few years, furnishing the police with more advanced technology, systems, procedures and human resources.

Nevertheless, García Luna's speech came just hours after the Mexican government released the latest drug war statistics, which recorded 12,903 murders linked to organized crime from January to September of 2011. The figure brings the official number of drug-fueled deaths to 47,515 since President Felipe Calderón launched the government's offensive in late 2006.

The bloody toll has propelled public security to the forefront of Mexicans' concerns, along with the economy, in an election year. PRD candidate Andrés Manuel López Obrador has said that if elected, he would withdraw the army from the streets within six months of taking office, while Calderón's government has aimed to highlight its successes.

"It's important to note that 2011 is the first year in which growth in the homicide rate is significantly lower than in previous years," the attorney general's office said in a statement, Reuters reported. The latest figures for drug-related homicides represent an 11 percent increase from the same period in 2010, but between 2009 and 2010, they grew by 70 percent.

According to García Luna, who also met with U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder and officials from the FBI, ATF and DEA during his three-day trip to Washington, perception of the problems is exacerbated by the excessive brutality of the violence.

"The foundation of a safe country is in the early detection of crime. When society is inhibited, or intimidated, they stop participating and this severs the process," he said.



García Luna spoke Wednesday at the Wilson Center in Washington.

Photo: Wilson Center.

Featured Q&A*Continued from page 2*

states bring to the table experience and capacity in these areas as well as a shared interest in advancing these issues. There are two rejoinders. Echoing OAS president José Miguel Insulza, it is vital there be progress in defining approaches and policy rather than a focus on document wording and iteration. There is also the perennial risk that the United States will seek to securitize the discourse and agenda, a move that would only serve to further isolate America in the hemisphere."

A Jason Hafemeister, member of the Advisor board and vice president of Allen F. Johnson & Associates: "Thanks to a useful accident of timing, the Summit of the Americas should advance the implementation of the U.S.-Colombia FTA. Both governments have signed the deal and the only thing holding back the tariff cutting and market opening called for in the agreement is certification that legal changes have been made in laws and regulations to allow implementation. Colombia's commitments to step up labor enforcement get the most attention, but many other details are at issue, ranging from the particulars of import quota rules to intellectual property protection. The summit provides Colombia the chance to press the United States to finish the certification process and have a posi-

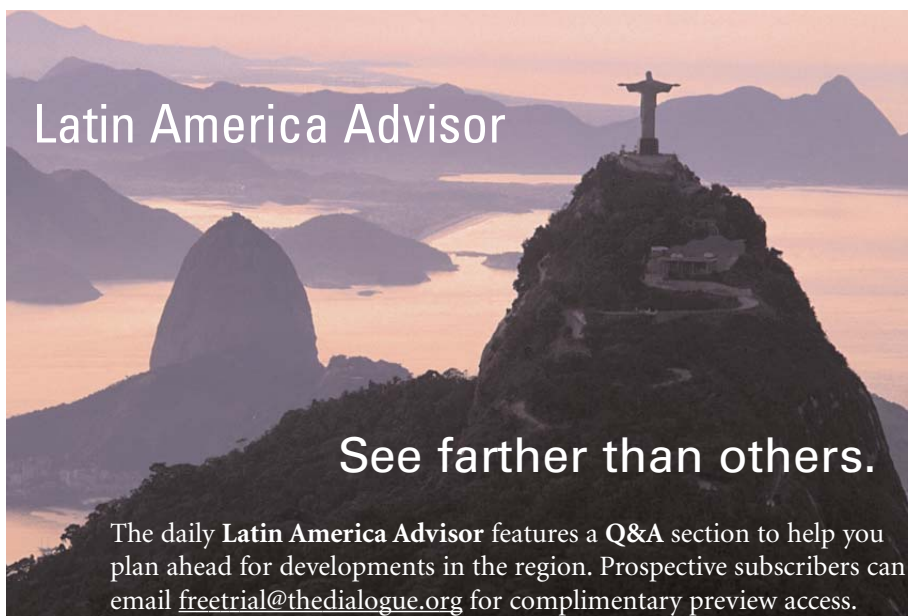
tive announcement for the president's trip. Failing to move forward after the seeming endless delays in completing the agreement will create difficult questions for the United States from the meeting's

“If the summit passes without progress on the FTA front, it will be a bad sign for the trade agenda in 2012.”

— Jason Hafemeister

host. Beyond advancing Colombia-U.S. trade ties, implementing the FTA could help transition the focus on trade to the next generation of issues. That includes the role of Latin American countries in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which currently is the only game in town for influencing the closer integration of world markets through trade. If the summit passes without progress on the FTA front, it will be a bad sign for the trade agenda in 2012."

The Advisor welcomes reactions to the Q&A above. Readers can write editor Gene Kuleta at gkuleta@thedialogue.org with comments.

**Latin America Advisor**

is published every business day by the Inter-American Dialogue, Copyright © 2012

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Latin America Advisor is published every business day, except for major U.S. holidays, by the Inter-American Dialogue at:

1211 Connecticut Avenue, Suite 510

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-822-9002 Fax: 202-822-9553

www.thedialogue.org ISSN 2163-7962

Subscription Inquiries are welcomed at freetrial@thedialogue.org

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