

## United Nations Reform and the Role of Latin America

Whatever one's position during the heated debate over intervention in Iraq, analysts and policymakers generally agreed that the United Nations emerged from the ordeal as a wounded institution. Supporters of the invasion lamented the Security Council's impotence in enforcing its own resolutions, while opponents of the war fretted over the organization's inability to temper the actions of the world's sole superpower. Several traumatic events in 2003 led UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to conclude that the organization was at a "fork in the road." These included not only the bitter Security Council wrangling over Iraq, but also revelations

about the oil-for-food scandal and the terrorist bombing of UN headquarters in Baghdad. In September 2003, Annan established a panel to assess the changing landscape of threats facing the international community and to recommend UN reforms aimed at effectively addressing these new challenges. The High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change released its report in December 2004, laying out a broad agenda for reform, including proposals to reconfigure the Security Council to be more 'representative' of the international community.

On April 18, 2005, as part of its project on Creating Community in the Americas Hemisphere, the Latin American Program convened several distinguished current and former permanent representatives to the UN to discuss UN reform and the implications for Latin America. Speakers agreed that a major restructuring was needed but recognized the many obstacles that still stand in the way of reaching a global consensus on how to effect change.

Former U.S. Secretary of State *Madeleine Albright*, who also served as permanent representative to the UN from 1993 to 1997,



(from left) Amb. Madeleine Albright, Amb. Emilio Cárdenas, and Amb. Heraldo Muñoz.

United Nations Reform and the Role of Latin America	1-2	Forums with Mexican Political Leaders	14
Seminar Series on Democracy in Mexico	2-4	Creating Community in the Hemisphere	14-15
The OAS: Chile's Vision	4-5	Education and Social Development in the Americas: The Case of Argentina	15-17
Debt and Default: The Future of the Argentine Economy	5-6	Challenges to Regional Integration in the Amazon	17-18
The Peace Process in Colombia and U.S. Policy	6-8	Crucial Needs, Weak Incentives: Social Sector Reform, Democratization and Globalization in Latin America	18
Democratic Innovations in Local Government	9-10	Staff Notes	19-20
Affirmative Action in Brazil and the United States	10-11	Recent Publications	21-22
Latin American Prisons in Crisis	11-13		
Income, Inequality and Freedom in Brazil	13		

recounted attempts in the early 1990s to restructure the Security Council to better reflect the global power structure. She noted that many of the factors responsible for scuttling previous attempts at reform remain. A 1993 proposal, for example, to include Germany and Japan as permanent members met strong resistance from Italy. Chinese opposition to Japan's inclusion and potential Mexican and Argentine opposition to Brazil are major challenges facing current reform efforts. In addition, Albright noted that shifting alliances and voting blocs—based, for example, on an EU 'common position'—add a convoluted dimension to Council decision-making. Albright cautioned that enlarging the Council threatened to further complicate this dynamic.

*Emilio Cárdenas*, Argentina's former UN ambassador, emphasized that the reforms recommended by the High Level Panel go "way beyond the Security Council" and could potentially involve amending the UN Charter. Cárdenas traced the debate over UN reform to the "quick fix" proposal in the early 1990s to add Germany and Japan as permanent members of the Council. These two countries, he noted, are still referred to as 'the enemy' in the UN Charter, but are now the second and third largest contributors of UN funds. Cárdenas observed that most Latin American countries have not desired a position on the Security Council, considering it an additional complication in developing foreign policy. Brazil is the only Latin American country that has consistently campaigned for permanent member status and has been successful in garnering regional support for its bid. While supporting the reform efforts, Cárdenas cautioned that the Secretary-General's call to develop a consensus on Security Council reform before the next summit was unrealistic and unlikely to produce results.

*Heraldo Muñoz*, Chile's current ambassador to the UN, described himself as a "moderate optimist" on the prospects for reform, suggesting several factors that make it more likely to succeed now than in the past. These include the impact of the Iraq war, the oil-for-food scandal, and a growing recognition that the global power structure has changed. Many countries have accepted that it will be impossible to address terrorism and pandemic diseases in a globalized world without strong multilateral institutions like the UN. In short, "every-

one needs a vibrant, dynamic, effective UN," including the United States, which has relied on the UN to provide assistance to the Iraqi interim government in organizing elections and helping in the preparation of a new constitution.

Muñoz noted that the Security Council has become increasingly effective in the aftermath of the Cold War, which explains why so many countries desire membership. He also acknowledged that a reform proposal calling for one new Council seat for a representative of "the Americas" poses a disadvantage to Latin America. Does Brazil compete with Canada? The lack of specified criteria for membership complicates the reform effort and contributes to regional competition for limited seats. Muñoz suggested that the criteria could include such factors as GNP, per capita GNP, financial and other resource contributions to the UN, or general diplomatic initiatives. Muñoz argued that a strategy for global UN reform could be based on a formula in which industrialized countries would achieve changes they desire (modernizing the Secretariat, getting agreement on a global definition of terrorism, and gaining support for a global effort to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction) in exchange for supporting initiatives important to developing states (increased attention to development, disease, and poverty-reduction, as well as a more representative Security Council). By framing the reform package as a compromise where all countries gain support for the changes they desire in exchange for accepting other reforms which they do not favor as much, Muñoz suggested that a major overhaul of the UN may indeed be possible. ■

## Seminar Series on Democracy in Mexico

The Mexico Institute held a series of seminars looking at important aspects of Mexico's evolving democracy, including the strength of electoral institutions, advances and challenges in access to information laws, the construction of the rule of law, and the role of race and ethnicity.

A first seminar, held on April 14, 2005, and co-sponsored with the National Security Archive, focused on "Building Transparency in Practice: Mexico in Comparative Perspective." *Kate Doyle* of the National Security Archive highlighted the

importance of the country's new transparency law and similar laws at the state level. Before, she said, "information was bought, whispered, leaked, but not accessible." Now information can be obtained legally through clear institutional channels.

A panel of Mexican officials involved in implementing transparency laws at the federal and state level discussed the challenges of implementing the laws giving citizens access to information. *María Pérez Cepeda* of the Querétaro Commission on Government Information observed that 23 Mexican states have already passed access to information legislation and 17 states have institutions to oversee these laws. *Luis Silva* of the Ministry of Public Administration explained that despite the continuing levels of corruption in Mexico, transparency issues are gaining importance within the federal government. *Hugo Martínez McNaught* of the Federal Institute for Access to Information (IFAI) noted that there continues to be considerable resistance within the bureaucracy to disclosing information.

In the same seminar, a panel of experts from Washington-based institutions discussed Mexico's transparency laws in light of other international experiences. *Daniel Kaufman* of the World Bank Institute observed that access to information laws alone are not sufficient to ensure good governance; rather, these laws need to be instituted in the context of a comprehensive strategy to fight corruption, promote fiscal transparency, and ensure freedom of the press. *Richard Bissell* of the National Science Foundation argued that, in order to be effective, freedom of information laws need to be tied to issues that people care about. Since individuals often feel victimized by public institutions, transparency laws can serve as important tools for empowerment around concrete needs.

*Tom Blanton* of the National Security Archive noted that the Mexican access to information law had built on the best practices around the world, but that the top-down nature of the reform meant that it was especially important to build constituencies that support it and ensure its permanence over time. Wilson Center Fellow *Jonathan Fox* argued that transparency does not automatically lead to accountability. Therefore, it is important to have organizations that can use the transparency laws effectively, present information to

citizens in ways that are usable, and hold public officials accountable for their actions once information has been revealed.

A second seminar, on May 11, 2005, focused on the role of Mexicans of African descent in Mexican society. Co-sponsored with the Inter-American Foundation and the Inter-Agency Task Force on Race in Latin America, the seminar, "No Longer Invisible: African Descendants in

Mexico," discussed the history, conditions, and political engagement of Afro-Mexicans on Mexico's Atlantic and Pacific coasts. *Bobby Vaughn* of Notre Dame de Namur University in California argued that Mexicans of African descent are almost invisible in Mexican society. There are barriers to recognizing blacks as a cultural group, even in states such as Guerrero, Veracruz, and Oaxaca that have large African populations. Unlike the way indigenous peoples are recognized, blackness is seen as a physical trait but not a cultural identity. Social movements in the Costa Chica region, especially an organization known as México Negro, have only recently begun to use race as a positive identity.

*Sagrario Cruz-Carretero* of the Universidad Veracruzana agreed that it is important to talk about black identity in Mexico, since many Afro-Mexicans live in difficult conditions similar to that of indigenous groups. To this day, she said, there is blatant discrimination, intolerance, and bias towards Afro-Mexicans. Cruz-Carretero also addressed the increasing number of Afro-Mexican migrants to the United States. Although the dynamics vary from community to community, she has found that major tensions exist between Afro-Mexicans and other ethnic minorities, including Latinos and African-Americans. *Jonathan Fox* observed that local governments had become a key institutional space appropriated by indigenous groups, and wondered whether Afro-Mexican groups were doing something similar. Challenges remain along the Pacific coast, he said, particularly in democratizing local governments in the face of ongoing repression of local civic



**María Pérez Cepeda**



Bobby Vaughn

leaders. Fox noted that it was important to untangle the ways that institution-building and ethnic identity could be mutually reinforcing.

On May 13, 2005, the Mexico Institute hosted a third seminar on the rule of law in Mexico with Pulitzer-prize winning journalists *Mary Jordan* and *Kevin Sullivan* of *The Washington Post*. They highlighted some tangible indicators that the Mexican justice system is moving in the right direction, despite some detours along the way. They noted that there is a new generation of sitting judges that has great potential for improving the judicial system. The power that governors used to have over local judicial authorities is becoming diluted, to the benefit of local leaders. Some states are moving from written to oral trials. Although not all involved in the criminal justice system are well-qualified, Mexico continues to invest in human capital to create a better future. The advancement of the free press and the creation of a more active civil society are also helping ensure greater transparency in the justice system, they concluded.

On June 23, 2005, a fourth seminar looked at “Challenges in the 2006 Mexican Elections,” with a special emphasis on the role of electoral institutions. Panelists agreed that the Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE) is a highly regarded institution backed by solid electoral laws that do not require major changes in the near future. However, all pointed to the danger that the politicization of the citizen counselors’ selection process may pose if the 2006 elections turn out to be highly compet-

itive. Participants agreed that the IFE’s greatest challenge is to strengthen citizens’ perceptions of the counselors’ integrity and transparency. Wilson Center/Comexi Scholar *Jacqueline Peschard* of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México deemed it essential to create a monitored pact among the different parties that would encourage acceptance of the electoral rules. She also underscored the importance of national and international election monitors to observe the electoral process. *Jesús Silva-Herzog Márquez* of the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México worried that the election campaigns would not focus on substance. He said that many important issues needed to be addressed, including fiscal reform, federalism, the country’s relationship with the United States, and regional inequalities. *Armand Peschard-Svedrup* of the Center for Strategic and International Studies anticipated the emergence of corruption scandals within each party, which could undermine public enthusiasm for the electoral process. Overall, the panelists agreed that the 2006 elections would be held without major problems, but that political actors might try to discredit the process for their own benefit. The result would be citizen disillusionment. ■

## The OAS: Chile’s Vision

In the midst of his campaign for the position of secretary-general of the Organization of American States (OAS), a campaign which would be crowned with success five months later, *José Miguel Insulza*, then-Minister of the Interior of Chile, presented his vision for the future of the regional organization at a seminar on January 31, 2005. Insulza opened by highlighting a central paradox. On the one hand, the institution appears strong: all foreign ministers attend the OAS General Assembly once a year, there are strong

The Woodrow Wilson Center’s Mexico Institute and the Division of United States Studies joined with the Migration Policy Institute and Manhattan Institute to launch a major Task Force on Immigration and America’s Future. The Task Force is chaired by Center President Lee H. Hamilton and former Senator and Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham and includes key stakeholders, scholars, and opinion leaders involved in the immigration debate. The Task Force is designed to generate new ideas for U.S. immigration reform. More information on this initiative is available at [www.wilsoncenter.org/mexico](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/mexico).



regional institutions such as Caricom and Mercosur, and legal, political, and economic instruments form part of a complex and important system. On the other hand, among the public at large, there is a sense that the OAS is irrelevant and does not do very much. According to Insulza, making the OAS responsive to the real problems of the region by addressing the concerns of its citizens is the key to restoring confidence in the institution.

Insulza identified democracy, security, and development as the three pillars of the inter-American system. He noted that the Inter-American Democratic Charter, signed on September 11, 2001, after a long process of consultation, reaffirmed the Organization's commitment to democracy in the Western hemisphere and spelled out the procedures for dealing with crises affecting the continuity of democratic rule. Insulza faulted the OAS, however, for an overemphasis on crisis resolution, saying that that should give way to crisis prevention by focusing on the multiple challenges to democratic governance in the region. He noted in particular the malfunctioning of institutions, corruption, a lack of transparency, endemic poverty, criminality, and drug trafficking. He cited a poll carried out by Latinobarómetro that demonstrated a decline in support for democracy in recent years, as peoples' hopes for improvements in their lives under a democratic system have been dashed. Assisting in the building of strong institutions was central to promoting democratic governance in the region, he said.

On security matters, Insulza maintained that international terrorism was only one of the many problems faced by the hemisphere. Increases in common crime, the growth of urban gangs and transnational organized crime, epidemics such as AIDS, and natural disasters contribute to the insecurity felt by Latin Americans. While he said international cooperation on terrorism has been strong, these other aspects of a multidimensional security agenda deserve greater attention and commitment.

Insulza called for more effective instruments and programs to reduce poverty, noting dramatic improvements in Chile over the last fifteen years. On other economic matters, he attributed the lack of progress in negotiating the Free Trade Area of

the Americas (FTAA) to its narrow vision. Insulza argued, for example, that the failure to consider the effects of economic opening on small countries—fully half of the OAS membership—meant that some countries view the dangers of an FTAA as greater than the benefits. No one opposes globalization, he maintained, but it is still not the case that every country believes its interests are considered in the negotiations. Insulza concluded by calling for OAS reforms that would make the organization more responsive, efficient, and representative. For that to happen, he said, the OAS needed to concentrate on a smaller number of core priorities and work cooperatively with other regional institutions such as the Inter-American Development Bank, the Economic Commission on Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Pan American Health Organization. ■

## Debt and Default: The Future of the Argentine Economy

On April 19, 2005, the Program on Science, Technology, America, and the Global Economy (STAGE) and the Latin American Program co-hosted a discussion on the Argentine economy with *Paul Blustein*, international economic correspondent for *The Washington Post* and author of the recently published *And The Money Kept Rolling In (And Out): Wall Street, the IMF, and the Bankrupting of Argentina*.

Blustein cited a number of factors contributing to the country's debt crisis and default. The decision to link the peso to the dollar eliminated Argentina's ability to use monetary policy or adjust its exchange rate. The proceeds from extensive privatization of government assets went largely to consumption, rather than to reduction of the budget deficit. In addition, Argentina did not attempt to reduce the independence of the provinces, which issued their own international debt. Blustein acknowledged that shifts in the global economy created additional problems for Argentina, in that in the late 1990s, the price of the country's grain, beef, and other exports declined on world markets. At the same time, the U.S. dollar (and thus the Argentine peso) gained in value relative to other currencies, making Argentine exports more expensive in world markets.

In assessing the role of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Blustein argued that

despite Argentina's structural problems and the growing risk of default, the IMF continued to provide new loans, as did Wall Street and other international financial centers. Blustein was particularly scathing in his comments about Wall Street, detailing the same kind of conflicts of interest that characterized the Enron scandal. Blustein said he was skeptical that markets have learned their lesson, saying that with interest rates low around the world, investors have been scouring the globe for investments that paid the higher interest rates found in emerging market countries.

*Claudio Loser*, former head of the IMF's Western Hemisphere Department, cast the IMF's role in a more positive light. IMF staff was critical of Argentina's decision to move from a floating exchange rate to the fixed rate required by peso convertibility to the dollar. Loser also noted that the IMF did warn Argentina that it was on the road to financial difficulties, but such warnings were ignored.

Latin American Program Director *Joseph S. Tulchin* commented on the need to bring Argentine politics back into the equation. He noted that Argentine President Saúl Menem abused the system of subsidies to the provinces in order to maintain power. In evaluating emerging markets, Tulchin observed that the investor must be aware that institutions are often fragile. He added that investors are failing to make use of Argentina's current commodity boom and thereby failing to strengthen the country's financial institutions.

To avoid future financial collapse in developing countries, Blustein offered several suggestions. First, emerging market countries should adopt a Chilean-like system of taxing short-term capital flows to discourage speculation. Second, the IMF should provide a conventional level of loans and only under exceptional national circumstances, or when the international financial system itself may be at risk, should the IMF provide a larger loan. In this case, the IMF should make its justification clear and transparent to the financial world. Finally, due to the difficulty that countries in default have in negotiating with a host of creditors, Blustein favored resuscitating the Sovereign Debt Restructuring Mechanism, which creates a kind of bankruptcy procedure that forces all creditors to the same negotiating table. ■

## The Peace Process in Colombia and U.S. Policy

Three seminars with distinguished diplomats and public officials from Colombia, the United States, and Mexico explored the peace process with paramilitary groups of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), the attempt to facilitate peace talks between the Colombian government and guerrillas of the National Liberation Army (ELN), and related issues of U.S. policy.

On June 14, 2005, U.S. ambassador to Colombia William B. Wood outlined progress in attaining major goals of U.S. policy. He said that counter-narcotics efforts have been increasingly successful in stemming the flow of cocaine and heroin from Colombia to the United States, Europe, and other parts of Latin America. Eradication and interdiction efforts in 2004, he said, for the first time ever prevented more than half of the country's cocaine production from making it to market. On counter-terrorism, Wood described as a "real breakthrough" the expanded authority Congress gave the Bush administration in 2002 to use counter-narcotics funding for counter-terrorism, saying that the measure had permitted an unprecedented level of coordination and cooperation between the U.S. and Colombian governments. He cited progress during the administration of Colombian President Álvaro Uribe in lowering the numbers of victims of homicides, massacres, kidnappings, terrorist attacks, and new internal displacement, even though Colombia has the third largest number of internally displaced people in the world, after Sudan and the Congo.

Elaborating on the security situation, Wood said that as of June 2005, more than 60 leaders of the FARC, ELN, and AUC had been captured or killed since President Uribe took office and that roughly 7,000 people had deserted from all three organizations. Major population centers such as Bogotá, Medellín, and Baranquilla were safer than before, although violence had gone up in Cali due to fights between two factions of the Norte del Valle cartel. Despite the unpopularity of extradition within Colombia, Wood said that approximately 215 individuals had been extradited to the United States, including the two most important captured members of the FARC, "Simón

Trinidad” and “Sonia,” as well as powerful ex-drug lords Gilberto and Miguel Rodríguez Orujuela.

Heated exchanges during the discussion period focused on the peace process with the AUC and the peace and justice law at the time still under consideration by the Colombian Congress. Wood took issue with the argument that paramilitaries are increasing their violent, brutal, anti-democratic political influence; they had political influence through corrupt payments, intimidation, and a reservoir of wrong-headed support, he said, but less than at their high point. He cited divisions among the paramilitary leadership and the disappearance of AUC commander Carlos Castaño as evidence of a decline in their “malign influence.” Wood addressed at length the issue of trade-offs between peace and justice, and described the Uribe government’s goal in the AUC peace process as reducing violence against the innocent. He argued that the human rights debate in Colombia had shifted away from the protection of the innocent to the punishment of the guilty. “Bad guys” were going to get more out of the peace process than they deserved, he maintained, but innocent people were also likely to get from the peace process what they so desperately needed. To what degree were people willing to put peace at risk, he asked, for stricter standards of justice? Arguing that neither peace nor justice would be served perfectly in Colombia’s peace process, the real question was how to find the right balance between those two goals. Wood predicted (correctly) that Uribe’s peace and justice legislation would be approved by the Colombian Congress, and indicated his support for the pending law. He concluded that discussion needed to focus on its implementation.

On July 20, 2005, Colombian Vice President *Francisco Santos*, Foreign Minister *Carolina Barco*, and newly-named Attorney General *Mario Iguarán* visited Washington to explain the peace and justice law and seek international backing. In a joint forum organized by the Latin American Program with the Inter-American Dialogue and the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Foreign Minister Barco said that the Uribe administration decided to pursue the two active peace processes it inherited from the previous administration. These included talks taking place in Cuba with the ELN guerrillas, and talks with

the AUC that had been initiated by the Catholic Church.

Although Mexico’s mediation of the talks with the ELN collapsed in mid-2005, she said that “new rapprochements” with the ELN were underway. Barco said that existing legislation governing peace talks in Colombia allowed for amnesty for political crimes, and had led to the individual demobilization of 7,647 members of the FARC, AUC, and ELN. However, she said, the government saw the need for a more comprehensive legal framework to guide the peace process with all armed groups, in order to balance peace and justice, respond to the demands of the international community, and incorporate relevant experiences from such places as South Africa and Northern Ireland. The peace and justice law that was approved by the Colombian Congress in late June 2005, she said, reflected two years of democratic debate within Colombia and abroad.

Paraphrasing British Prime Minister Tony Blair’s comments to President Uribe during his July 2005 visit to the U.K., Barco said that a peace process inevitably requires “a compromise between the ideal and what is possible.” She said that the peace and justice law was unprecedented in Colombia and supported by 71 percent of the population. She expressed hope that the United States and others in the international community would support the implementation of the law.

*Vice President Francisco Santos* maintained that the demobilization of the AUC—to reach 15,000 combatants by year’s end—is likely the largest ever undertaken in the hemisphere. He also noted that violence had been drastically reduced in areas of AUC demobilization and that the sophisticated weapons being turned in by the paramilitaries “are no longer killing Colombians.” Santos acknowledged that the peace and justice law is imperfect, but described it as a necessary complement to existing legal norms that seek to encourage negotiations. In particular, Santos said that the law would serve as a vehicle to solve seri-



Colombian Foreign Minister Carolina Barco



Colombian Vice President Francisco Santos

ous crimes committed over the past 15 years, in that information provided through confessions would complement that obtained through ongoing and past investigations. He said that a National Commission of Reparation and Reconciliation would draw up a “complete and detailed report” about abuses committed by illegal armed groups, and that “the public admission of responsibility and remorse,” coupled with a request for forgiveness from victims of abuse, was unprecedented in Colombia. Santos said that the form and amount of reparation—defined as restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, moral satisfaction—would be established by judges and executed by the state. Santos also emphasized the importance of the peace and justice law as an incentive for individual combatants, particularly of the FARC, to desert. In response to claims by critics that the law would allow paramilitaries to enter politics, Santos stated that all demobilized combatants would be identified and fingerprinted as part of the disarmament process and that those prosecuted would be banned from serving in public positions. Santos concluded the peace and justice law, “though far from perfect, reflects the will of a clear majority of the Colombian nation.”

Subsequent discussion focused on criticism of the law’s utility as an instrument to disband the paramilitaries, end illegal activities such as drug trafficking, and provide justice to victims. In response to questions about the law’s ability to ensure that full and truthful confessions were given and assets relinquished by former combatants, Colombian Attorney General *Mario Iguarán* stressed that the language of the law was strong and explicit in requiring confessions and the relinquishing of illegally-obtained assets in order to receive benefits, including reduced sentences. Questioned about the government’s ability to investigate crimes, Iguarán said that 20 units of the *Fiscalía*, each with 10–15 officials, not 20 individuals, would be responsible for carrying out

investigations, and that the 60-day investigation period was twice as long as that provided for in an ordinary proceeding. Vice President Santos, meanwhile, indicated that his use of the word “*jihadistas*” to describe NGO’s critical of the AUC peace process was in error and spoken out of frustration. The Colombian government, he insisted, maintained an open, serious, and fruitful dialogue with non-governmental organizations.

A June 20, 2005, session organized by the Latin American Program and the Mexico Institute featured *Andrés Valencia*, Mexico’s former ambassador to Colombia and Israel, who served as facilitator of a peace dialogue between the government of Colombia and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) from June 2004 to April 2005. The off-the-record session covered the demands and apparent motives of both sides, the nature of contacts with the ELN’s central command, and the attempt to arrange in Mexico a face-to-face meeting between Colombian officials and ELN representatives. That effort failed ostensibly over the refusal of the ELN to pledge to cease kidnappings during a cessation of hostilities during the meeting, although Valencia indicated that there were also other factors. ■



Amb. Andrés Valencia

*A transcript of the session with Ambassador Wood, and the prepared statements of Vice President Santos, Foreign Minister Barco, and Ambassador Valencia are on the Latin American Program’s website, [www.wilsoncenter.org](http://www.wilsoncenter.org).*



## Democratic Innovations in Local Government

The Latin American Program is nearing completion of a two-year initiative to analyze democratic innovations in local governments throughout Latin America. The comparative project brings together researchers from six countries—Mexico, Guatemala, Colombia, Bolivia, Brazil, and Argentina—to explore new approaches to strengthening representation, participation, and transparency in municipal governments. The project aims to understand under what conditions these democratic innovations emerge, what impact they have on state-society relations, and whether they are sustainable. As part of this initiative, the Program co-sponsored three seminars in the first six months of 2005 with local counterpart institutions in Bolivia, Guatemala, and Colombia. These meetings built on findings from previous seminars in Mexico and Argentina. In addition, the Latin American Program teamed up with the Inter-American Foundation, the Institute for Development Studies, and the University of Texas to hold meetings in Washington, D.C. and Austin, Texas, to address this issue from different angles and to encourage a dialogue between policymakers and scholars.

A March 11, 2005, seminar in Cochabamba, Bolivia, organized by the Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Económica y Social (CERES), discussed Bolivia's Popular Participation Law. Conference organizer *Roberto Laserna* of CERES outlined the heightened role that municipalities play in public life since the passage of the law. Participants stressed positive experiences, in which municipalities have innovated with building new forms of citizen participation, as well as the contradictions built into the system, which play representative and participatory structures off against each other.

At an April 8, 2005, seminar in Guatemala City, scholars, local and national government officials, and civil society representatives debated the role of the Municipal and Regional Development Councils as a strategy for building citizen engagement in local policymaking. Organizer *Luis Mack* of FLACSO-Guatemala emphasized that the experiences were relatively new but that they had the potential to strengthen citizens' voices in public decision-making. Over two hundred partici-

pants at the meeting concurred that these councils represented an important advance in bridging the gap between civil society and government representatives. Conference attendees agreed, however, that the real impact on policymaking was still unclear.

In the May 13, 2005, seminar in Bogotá, Colombia organized by the Universidad de los Andes, researchers and policymakers discussed a series of innovations in the use of public space in the cities of Bogotá, Medellín, and Bucaramanga. In keynote addresses, former Bogotá mayors *Antanus Mockus* and *Enrique Peñalosa* highlighted their experiences developing civic engagement through redesigning public space and building shared values. Public officials and scholars from Bucaramanga and Medellín emphasized similar innovations in those cities. Seminar organizer *Gabriel Murillo* of the Universidad de los Andes stressed that cities need to pay attention to public space—both physical and civic space—as a means of strengthening citizens' ability to deliberate about public matters.

Seminars in Washington, D.C. on March 10, 2005, and Austin, Texas on March 8, 2005, considered various cases in Latin America in which local governments have sought to build institutional channels for citizen participation. Co-sponsored with the Inter-American Foundation and the University of Texas, these seminars addressed initial findings from a report by *Gonzalo de la Maza* and *Rodrigo Villar* that examines the construction of public spaces for dialogue between citizens and local governments. *Anthony Bebbington*, *Cristina Filgueras*, and *Aldo Panfichi* presented recent research on local governments in Ecuador, Brazil, and Peru, respectively, which addressed both the challenges and limitations of these experiences.

In a related seminar on March 18, 2005, the Wilson Center and the Inter-American Foundation hosted a roundtable discussion among representatives of cities and civil society organizations in Latin America and representatives of international institutions in Washington. Among other presenters, *Sergio Ernesto Zurano* of the municipality of Morón, Argentina, described his city's experience in creating a new model of transparency that allows citizens to monitor public expenditures. *Adriana Clemente* of the International

Institute for Environment and Development highlighted the experience of municipal councils in Argentina that emerged in the aftermath of the 2001 economic crisis. These councils were created to monitor public decision-making but soon evaporated for lack of support and training.

On April 15, 2005, the Latin American Program hosted a meeting on “Linking Participation and National Policy Processes,” co-organized with the Institute for Development Studies, University of Sussex. Through an analysis of cases from Mexico, Brazil, Chile, India, South Africa, and the Philippines, participants sought to understand the potential and limitations of citizens’ movements that seek to influence national policies outside of electoral channels. Seminar organizer *John Gaventa* described these experiences as efforts to “scale up” citizen engagement at the local-level in order to have an impact at a national level. ■

## Affirmative Action in Brazil and the United States

Striking similarities characterize the field of race relations in the United States and Brazil: both are American nations with a history of immigration that includes Africans brought as slaves and Europeans who arrived as settlers; both are racially diverse nations that have sought to counter the lingering effects of past injustices; and both have adopted public and private affirmative action policies in an attempt to address longstanding racial disparities. The two countries differ, however, in the history and evolution of race relations and also

in the genesis and application of their affirmative action policies. There are additional differences in the way affirmative action policies are dealt with in the legal system, and the roles played by NGOs and other non-governmental political actors.

These important issues were examined at an April 11, 2005, session sponsored by Brazil @ the Wilson Center and the Center’s Division of United States Studies. Assistance from the World Bank in Brasília enabled panelists and participants to interact via live videoconference from Washington and multiple locations in Brazil.

Speaking from Brasília, *Ricardo Henriques*, executive secretary of the Brazilian Ministry of Education, underscored the extent to which income gaps reflect levels of education, asserting that an educational quota system is necessary in Brazil. This is particularly true for Afro-Brazilians, who account for an estimated 45 percent of Brazil’s population but only 2 percent of its university students. Quotas, or “reserved seats,” constitute one mechanism for reducing the gap, and Brazil recently enacted a law setting aside 50 percent of the entrance spaces at public universities for Afro-Brazilians and indigenous peoples from disadvantaged socio-economic and educational backgrounds. Current legislation has made coursework in African Studies a requirement for all university students. Henriques underscored the importance of coupling policies directed at universities with ones aimed at primary and secondary education. He said that Brazil is developing new approaches to middle-school teaching, revising and increasing financing for the primary school level, and experimenting with methodologies for keeping Afro-Brazilian students in schools by, e.g., utilizing new technologies and enhanced tutoring.

*Philippa Strum*, director of the Division of United States Studies, defined affirmative action as consisting of “programs that seek to remedy past discrimination.” She suggested that the creation of affirmative action programs in education reflects a recognition that many white Americans have better qualifications for university admission only because they have not had to contend with the same obstacles as minority groups. These obstacles include poor health care and the lack of encouragement to exceed academically and to apply or prepare for college. Strum cited statistics



(from left) Melissa Woods, Robert Cottrol, Philippa Strum, Luis Bitencourt.

from 1972 demonstrating the extent of educational and income disparities, despite the elimination of formal discrimination under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Such evidence convinced private and public entities of the need for affirmative action programs. Despite progress, Strum maintained, much remains to be accomplished and the need for affirmative action still exists.

*Robert Cottrol*, Harold Paul Green research professor of law and professor of history and sociology, George Washington University, compared affirmative action programs in Brazil and the United States. The United States uses a preference model, in which race is one of many subjective factors that influence university admissions decisions. Race is categorized on the basis of the “one drop” rule, where even the smallest percentage of one’s heritage is a basis for racial categorization. Brazil, however, relies on a more specific classification regime using such terms as *moreno*, *mestizo*, and *negro*. As a result, racial categories are more elastic but less easily quantifiable. The two countries also differ, Cottrol said, in the quality of public universities. State-funded universities in the United States range from non-competitive to elite, varying considerably from state to state and within states. Brazil’s public universities, all run by the federal government, are considered the country’s best, relying exclusively on the challenging *Vestibular* exam for admission. Minorities in the United States face numerous disadvantages when applying to elite schools, Cottrol continued, including the effects of inadequate secondary education, poverty, households with limited education, and the psychological burden of exclusion. Noting that U.S. courts have held affirmative action to be legitimate only as a means for diversifying institutions rather than as a remedy for overall societal exclusion, he indicated his preference for the remedial model.

*Ivete Sacramento*, president of the State University of Bahia (UNEB), commented on social inclusion policies in Bahia, where 85 percent of the population is black. Programs designed to target this population have been developed in over 2,000 communities throughout the state and include educational and work initiatives. Dr. Sacramento, the first Afro-Brazilian woman dean of her university, noted that studies conducted by UNEB during the last decade had shown that

there was minimal representation of Afro-Brazilians and a marked preference given to those who had attended elite private schools. The greatest challenge for rectifying discrimination, she said, may be the conceptualization of race and the use of racial terminology, because many Afro-Brazilians do not self-identify as black.

*Melissa Woods*, assistant counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund and a participant in the *Gratz v. Bollinger* affirmative action case recently decided by the U.S. Supreme Court, described the racial situation in the United States as one of willful neglect. While legal discrimination existed for hundreds of years, courts have held that affirmative action is unconstitutional in the absence of a showing of a specific pattern of discrimination by the relevant institution. She noted that the major civil rights legislation of the 1960s was passed only following violence, and insisted that the future of racial equality in the United States depends on people reminding each other of both past and continuing injustices.

Meanwhile, Professor *José Jorge Carvalho*, of the University of Brasília pointed out that while the United States acknowledged segregation as a wrongdoing in the early 1900s, members of Brazil’s elite have insisted that racism and discrimination never existed in their country. He surmised that the image consciousness of the Brazilian elite vis-à-vis international opinion might affect that view. ■

## Latin American Prisons in Crisis

On February 15, 2005, the Latin American Program and Wilson Center Fellow *Mark Ungar* hosted a meeting of the Prisons in Crisis Project, an initiative that brings together government officials, activists, and specialists working on prison reform in Latin America. The project arose as a response to inhuman prison conditions and ineffective penal policies throughout the region: with record levels of overcrowding, violence, killings, and due process violations, prison conditions now constitute one of Latin America’s worst human rights abuses. The project draws in experts from eight countries in order to highlight the extent of the crisis and develop a comprehensive international response.

*Enrique Navas*, Uruguay's director of Prisons, Penitentiary Facilities, and Centers of Recuperation, presented figures on the extreme overcrowding and processing delays in the country's prison system. He blamed the situation on such factors as the increased length of sentences, neglect of basic needs and international standards, budget cuts, and the termination of auto-financing by which prisons were able to reinvest earnings in their own facilities. To resolve these problems, Navas proposed the construction of new penitentiary centers, the expansion of existing facilities, assessments by international organizations, an increase in the number and quality of personnel, better coordination with the Health Ministry, budget credits, and the implementation of prisoner auto-financing mechanisms.

*Julita Lemgruber*, former director of the prison system and former ombudsman for the police in the state of Rio de Janeiro, discussed the severe levels of violence and abuse in Brazil's prisons, the population of which more than doubled between 1995 and 2003. This overcrowding reflects a heightened rate of incarceration that has not led to a decrease in crime. In fact, crime in Brazil has only continued to mount. Adequate health and medical services are not provided to prisoners, and most prisons have not created manuals for basic prison regulations or sufficiently trained prison personnel. However, Lemgruber pointed out that the creation of ombudsmen, alternatives to incarceration, and "open" or "semi-open" prisons, are helping to improve conditions in some states.

Addressing the Honduran case, *José Gustavo Zelaya*, coordinator of the legal aid program of Casa Alianza, presented extensive findings on the situation in Honduran prisons. He said that the facilities are 32 percent over official capacity, rarely meeting minimum standards of hygiene and other basic needs. He gave special emphasis to the

extreme level of violence in most prisons, with 258 deaths reported in 2004 alone. Citing the new "anti-gang" law of 2003 that imprisons members of gangs, he said that most violence and abuse is directed against youth detainees. According to Zelaya, the number of deaths in prisons has skyrocketed—reflected most notably in massacres over the past two years of over 200 youth gang members. He cited the government's "zero tolerance" criminal policies as a leading cause of the country's prison crisis.

Discussing the penal system in Mexico, *Marcelo Bergman* of the Centro de Investigación and Docencia Económicas (CIDE) presented the results of a survey of prisoners and penitentiary personnel in three Mexican states. He said that an increase in the length of prison sentences has led to an explosion in the prison population that so far has outpaced the slow increase in infrastructure. With this jump in population, he reported, the already precarious state of rehabilitation and education programs has worsened, corruption has increased, resources for prisoners have decreased, and control of prisons is more and more in the hands of gangs. Although budgets do not cover basic needs, Bergman said, the problem is not a lack of funds but of administration and effective control. The lack of institutional coordination, the increase in sentences for minor crimes, and inadequate planning have made Mexican prisons into a "space of punishment" for the poor and marginalized. The dissuasive effect of incarceration is limited, he said, as those who end up in prison are not the most dangerous criminals, but those unable to corrupt the authorities or afford an adequate legal defense. In a social atmosphere of increasing insecurity, Bergman said, there is very little political will to reverse this situation.

*Allen Beck*, chief of the corrections statistics program at the U.S. Department of Justice, pre-



(left to right) Mark Ungar, Enrique Navas, José Gustavo Zelaya, Julita Lemgruber, Marcelo Bergman, Allen Beck.



sented a sobering report on the incarceration levels in the United States. Rates have soared over the last 25 years and the prison population has increased by over 500,000 inmates since 1995. The main causes for increased imprisonment at the state level are tougher sentences, particularly for violent offenses and drug violations. There were 500,000 drug offenders in prison and jail in 2002, up from 380,000 in 1995. There was also an increase in the number of parole violators being returned to prison; in 2003, approximately 200,000 parolees and 350,000 probationers failed and were incarcerated. There has also been a growth in the jail population, which Beck said was due to the increasing use of jails for housing by other correctional authorities, the rising number and longer stays of pre-trial detainees, and the growth in the number of community release violators. Beck said that except for the Federal system, increases in capacity have outpaced population growth. Beck stated that prisons have high levels of mental illness, drug dependency, and a rate of HIV/AIDS infection that is at least three-and-a-half times higher than in the civilian population. Nonetheless, he said, the number of deaths, injuries, and other violent episodes have all dropped since the mid 1990s. At the same time, he emphasized that African-American men are the most likely to be imprisoned, with fully one third of those born in 2001 expected to serve time in prison. ■

## Income, Inequality and Freedom in Brazil

The scope of Brazil's natural and human resources has propelled it to a position of leadership on many issues in the Amazon region and throughout the hemisphere. However, with almost 50 million of the country's 181 million inhabitants living below the poverty line, Brazil has one of the most unequal income distributions in the world.

Various Brazilian administrations have taken different approaches to combating inequality, but perhaps none has been so ambitious as the Citizens' Basic Income (CBI) legislation, signed into law by Brazilian President Luis Inácio Lula da Silva in January 2004. The CBI has at its core the notion that an unconditional and guaranteed minimum income can make great strides in eradicating pover-

ty. The initiative is to be implemented gradually over the next several years.

Brazil @ the Wilson Center and the Inter-American Development Bank hosted a February 20, 2005, session with the principal author of the CBI legislation, Brazilian Senator *Eduardo Suplicy*. A member of Lula's *Partido Trabalhadores* (Workers Party) and a Public Policy Scholar at the Wilson Center, Suplicy detailed the basic premises and principal components of the CBI program. He said that its most widely-known aspect, the *Bolsa Familia* program, is only a preliminary phase of the initiative. *Bolsa Familia* consolidates education, nutrition, gas, and food card programs, and participation is contingent on the fulfillment of parental responsibilities toward children, including making sure that they receive vaccinations, adequate levels of nutrition, and attend school.

Suplicy acknowledged criticism of *Bolsa Familia* by the Brazilian press, which has lambasted the program for its bureaucratic inefficiency and failure to reach many in need. Suplicy noted, however, that many of Brazil's poor participate in an informal economy, which makes income, and therefore eligibility, hard to determine.

The Citizens' Basic Income initiative takes a different approach. Based on the premises of economic freedom and the right of every citizen to participate in the wealth of a nation, the program is designed to provide a regular, universal, and unconditional stipend for every Brazilian. This aspect of universality eliminates the monumental challenge of determining eligibility through earnings, at the same time removing the stigma as well as the disincentive to seek and maintain employment that are associated with contingency-based welfare programs.

Since Lula signed the measure into law, Senator Suplicy has continued to champion CBI principles beyond Brazil's borders. He cited recent and related successes of programs such as the Child Trust Fund in the United Kingdom and the Alaska Permanent Fund in the United States. ■



Senator Eduardo Suplicy

## Forums with Mexican Political Leaders

The Mexico Institute hosted a series of forums with key political leaders from different parties to discuss perspectives on governance and the upcoming 2006 presidential elections in Mexico. On April 26, 2005, *José Natividad González Parás*,



Mexican presidential candidate  
Jorge Castañeda

governor of Nuevo León, laid out a series of innovations his government has pursued since he was elected in 2003. He noted that his administration has signed an agreement with Texas and other Mexican border states to promote binational competitiveness, pursued electoral reforms to allow reelection in local elections, redesigned the justice system to permit oral arguments in open court, and extended the state's access to information

law. He predicted that his party, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), would remain unified and win the 2006 elections.

On May 4, 2005, four members of the Mexican Congress from the Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD) spoke about the attempt to impeach Mexico City mayor Andrés Manuel López Obrador and the PRD's prospects for governing Mexico in 2006. *Juan José García* observed that where the PRD has governed, it

has done so responsibly and inclusively, transitioning from an opposition movement to a party of good government. *Pablo Franco* noted that the party needed to develop internal mechanisms to allow different segments of the party to bridge their differences and to appeal broadly to citizens. *Víctor Suárez* argued that citizens had come out to the streets to protest the López Obrador impeachment because they believe in democracy, not necessarily because they supported the mayor; the party needed to capitalize on this energy by capturing Mexicans' democratic aspirations. *Adrián Chávez* stressed that a future PRD national government would work to make development a priority while at the same time preserving fiscal integrity.

On July 13, 2005, *Jorge Castañeda*, former foreign minister of Mexico and an independent candidate for president, argued in a public forum that Mexico needs to foster a competitive economy, create an integrated social safety net, invest in education, and strengthen the rule of law. Castañeda also highlighted the importance of independent candidacies for Mexico's democracy. He suggested that an independent president might be better situated to enact the kind of major political reform that Mexico needs.

On July 20, 2005, Senator *Fernando Margán* and Congresswoman *Adriana González* of the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) spoke about the upcoming primary election process within their party. The process includes three different days of primaries in different regions of the country, followed by a run-off, if needed, between the two top vote-getters. They argued that the PAN was the only party that had a truly democratic internal process for selecting its candidate for president. As a result, they said, the process will produce a strong candidate with support from the party membership. ■

## Creating Community in the Americas

The Creating Community in the Americas project aims to expand the debate about Latin America and hemispheric security outside the region and to promote discussion within Latin America of security issues of concern to neighbors or to the region as a whole. The project conducts public meetings in Washington and



(from right) Rut Diamint, Joseph S. Tulchin, Lilian Bobea, Raúl Benítez, Anthony P. Maingot (behind), Orlando Pérez, Wilfredo Lozano.

throughout Latin America to explore the nuances of security issues at the hemispheric or global levels and brings actors or decision makers in the region together to exchange views on topics of common concern. Private workshops among actors from neighboring countries aim to build mutual confidence and overcome a tendency among Latin American nations to approach security issues as a kind of zero-sum game. The ultimate goal of the project is to understand new ways of evaluating security threats so that new kinds of policies can be formulated.

Over the past five years, a core team of researchers including *Raúl Benítez Manaut* (Mexico), *Luis Bitencourt* (United States/Brazil), *Lilian Bobea* (Dominican Republic), *Ricardo Córdova* (El Salvador), *Rut Diamint* (Argentina), and *Claudio Fuentes* (Chile) has adopted a common perspective and methodology, which uses the notion of soft power to argue that all nations have the capacity to be rule makers rather than rule takers; in order to understand where best they might participate, leaders should understand security as occurring on different levels, national, regional, hemispheric, and global. (For a fuller explanation, see Raúl Benítez Manaut, *Mexico and the New Challenges of Hemispheric Security*, Woodrow Wilson Center Reports on the Americas, No. 11, 2004.)

To stimulate more open debate within the region itself, the project conducted seven meetings outside the United States between January and August 2005. Two, held in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, concerned U.S. foreign policy toward Haiti and Cuba, respectively. The remainder dealt with particular sub-regions or, in the case of Brazil, with a single country. Policy issues discussed included terrorism, drug trafficking, international crime, border patrol, arms proliferation, the mission of the armed forces, and making military expenditures more transparent. Private workshops of specialists and government officials were accompanied by public meetings featuring a major public figure—*President Leonel Fernández* in the Dominican Republic, *Minister of Defense José Pampuro* in Argentina, *Acting Minister of Defense, Vice-Almirante Afonso Barbosa* in Brazil, and *Minister of Defense, General Otto Romero Orellana* in El Salvador. Summaries of these meetings and related documents can be



(from right) **Amb. José Octavio Bordón, Juan José Llach, and Enrique Morad.**

found on Creating Community's new website, [www.wilsoncenter.org/lap/creatingcommunity](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/lap/creatingcommunity).

Creating Community also took the security debate to Spain. A meeting in Barcelona on February 22–24, 2005, co-sponsored with the Fundación CIDOB, considered “La percepción Europea y Latinoamericana sobre la seguridad.” On February 28, 2005, the project joined with the Centro de Investigación para la Paz in Madrid to explore “Nuevos retos y perspectivas de seguridad en América Latina.” The purpose of these meetings was to juxtapose the Spanish perspective on international terrorism with the positions taken by the United States and the nations of the hemisphere. Both co-sponsoring organizations have published documents summarizing the discussion.

Two other meetings in Washington dealt with the architecture of the hemispheric system. (See the related articles on the January 31, 2005 Director's Forum with then-candidate for OAS Secretary-General José Miguel Insulza, and the April 18, 2005, panel on UN reform with Madeleine Albright, Emilio Cárdenas, and Heraldo Muñoz.) ■

*The Creating Community website will welcome comments and eventually include a chat room on international security issues. Woodrow Wilson Center Reports on the Americas No. 18, Seguridad en las Américas después del 11 de septiembre: Un rompecabezas no resuelto, a portion of which will also appear in English, will be published at the end of 2005.*



## Education and Social Development in the Americas: The Case of Argentina

On June 20, 2005, Argentina @ The Wilson Center hosted a conference on education reform, with special attention to the experience of Argentina. The conference drew leading experts and policymakers from Argentina, the United States, Venezuela, and Brazil to analyze questions of accountability, decentralization, standards, and other issues at the forefront of the education debate.

*Juan Carlos Navarro* of the Inter-American Development Bank outlined the progress made in Latin America over the last fifteen years in expanding government spending on education, enrollment rates, and years of education. Despite these positive indicators, however, Navarro pointed to three basic deficits of the education systems in Latin America: first, the quality of education has remained stagnant; second, the discrepancy between the education provided to the poor and the wealthy is wide and growing in many countries; and third, higher education in Latin America is significantly under-developed.

Analyzing the debate over the role of education as a social function, *Simon Schwartzman*, president of the Institute of Work and Society in Brazil, explained that education was traditionally conceived as a means of spreading a set of common values and national culture. As the link between education and economic development became apparent, however, the perceived importance of education grew and divergent opinions emerged over who was best suited to administer the system (hence the debate over standards, which implies a transfer of control from the teachers to government planners).

Expanding on the relationship between economics and education, SUNY-Albany professor of education *Daniel Levy* focused on the global “marketizing” of higher education. He noted that there is a worldwide trend towards increased privatization of higher education, particularly in Latin America, where roughly 40 percent of all those enrolled in higher education are in private universities. The cause of this growth in private education in the region stems from an increasing receptivity to markets over the last two decades and a diminished trust in the state’s capacity to manage

the system. While not explicitly endorsing the privatization of higher education, Levy noted that 70–80 percent of universities are privatized in East Asia and suggested the Latin America might benefit from replicating certain aspects of the East Asian educational example.

In a keynote address, SUNY-Albany education professor *Alan Wagner* outlined the global progress towards increasing accountability and assessment in education. Increased attention by policymakers and developments in data collection have improved our ability to establish benchmarks for countries and measure their success over time, develop more sophisticated indicators (which helps refine analysis), and begin to measure the ‘outcomes’ of students’ knowledge and skills globally (through tests such as the PISA assessment). *Jeff Puryear* of the Inter-American Dialogue gave a brief overview of the results of educational assessments in the region and in Argentina. He noted that Latin America lags behind others in a variety of educational indicators and argued that such assessments can serve to spur policy-makers into action.

Subsequent panelists focused on the quality of education in Argentina and shared their personal experience with the promotion of educational development at the national, provincial and municipal levels. Argentine ambassador *José Octavio Bordón* characterized the current condition of the education system as positive, despite the challenges posed by the recent financial crisis. He emphasized the importance of implementing a National System of Evaluation, but warned against its misuse. For Bordón, the main challenges facing the education system in Argentina are building the political consensus needed for reform and building a public-private partnership that will help finance and regulate the education system. Drawing upon his research at the IAE-Austral University, *Juan José Llach* gave a more negative assessment of the state of education in Argentina. Llach highlighted the gap that exists within Argentina and across countries in terms of resources and outcomes. Llach argued that major steps have to be taken in order to reduce these gaps: the government should give priority to poor areas, implement a system of incentives for teachers, and grant universal access to kindergarten.

Arguing that education is a national strategic priority in Argentina, *Enrique Morad*, director of



the Bank of Boston Foundation, recommended that the public and private sectors join efforts in improving the quality of education. *Esteban Bullrich*, vice-president of *Recrear* in the city of Buenos Aires, highlighted the importance of local government in the promotion of quality in education. Both Morad and Bullrich described examples of successful non-traditional approaches to education, including that of *El Grupo Cruz del Sur XXI*, an organization formed by teachers, local authorities, and businessmen in the broadcast media. Its goal has been to reduce the marginalization of students by incorporating street pop culture within the curriculum and pressing for improvements in social spending. Another initiative, Project Tartagal, targets education programs for young children and works to improve teacher training.

*Silvia Esteban*, National Deputy for Santa Cruz province, stressed that the education system could not be analyzed outside the context of the recent economic crisis and grave social inequality. Esteban emphasized the need to reach a political consensus over education reforms, regardless of the ideological differences among actors, and the need to have a more inclusive system with equal opportunities for education for the whole society. She envisioned a system in which poorer schools implement compulsory extended stay in order to increase students' creativity, efficiency, discipline, and general performance. ■

## Challenges to Regional Integration in the Amazon

Since signing the Amazon Cooperation Treaty in 1978, eight Amazon Basin countries—Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Surinam, and Venezuela—have struggled with how to promote regional economic development without furthering environmental degradation. The Amazon is the largest remaining tropical forest in the world; it covers an area as large as half the United States and contains roughly one-third of the world's plant and animal species and one-fifth of its fresh water. While agreeing on the need for cooperative solutions, however, the eight countries of the region have found it difficult to balance the central goals of development and environmental preservation.

*Rosalía Arteaga*, secretary-general of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO), discussed challenges to regional integration in the Amazon at a February 1, 2005, forum co-sponsored with the Organization of American States and the Woodrow Wilson Center's Environmental Change and Security Project. A native of Ecuador and its former vice president and (briefly)

its president, Arteaga outlined the ACTO's programs to address issues involving water, forest, soils, protected natural areas, biological diversity, biotechnology, biotrade, territorial planning, human settlement, indigenous affairs, social infrastructure, health, education, transportation, electric power, and communications.

According to Arteaga, the greatest challenge is not how to proceed with the substantive nature of the ACTO's mission, but rather, how to fund these important projects. A major goal of her visit to Washington was to further relations with potential partners, including the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Development Bank. Several initiatives were under discussion, with projected costs ranging from \$4 to \$45 million. They are aimed at bolstering research networks and centralizing data (perhaps in an integrated database for the region), in order to facilitate accurate and effective recommendations and management for the region.

During the discussion, several in the audience raised concerns about the impact that further infrastructure development might have on the Amazon. Arteaga responded by detailing the kinds of questions ACTO itself often considers: what is the human cost of the project, and what are the benefits for the population? She believes projects carried out by the ACTO and its partners show quantifiable benefits and are easier to monitor and manage than the alternative: the indiscriminate, and in many cases illegal, exploitation of nature. While the ACTO does not possess a legal/enforcement arm of its own, Arteaga is confident that the organization "can have a voice,



Rosalía Arteaga

even if [we] don't have force." In the end, participants agreed that initiatives such as the ACTO will only be successful if all of the "players" in the region—governments, residents, and commercial interests—place long-term ethics and responsibility above short-term economic gain. ■

## Crucial Needs, Weak Incentives: Social Sector Reform, Democratization, and Globalization in Latin America

On January 12, 2005, the Latin American Program hosted the book launch of *Crucial Needs, Weak Incentives: Social Sector Reform, Democratization, and Globalization in Latin America*. The book, edited by Rutgers University political scientist *Robert R.*



Joan M. Nelson

*Kaufman* and Wilson Center Senior Scholar *Joan M. Nelson*, takes up a central dilemma confronting Latin American governments: how to undertake needed reforms while minimizing political risks. While these sector reforms are crucial—better health and education systems are essential for reducing profound inequality, enhancing prospects for sustained economic growth in an increasingly competitive world, and raising the quality of democratic governance—

they also challenge powerful vested interests. The political risks of reform are seldom matched by the prospects for political rewards. Using a case study approach, *Crucial Needs, Weak Incentives* explores how various Latin American governments have dealt with—and at times overcome—this apparent contradiction.

Joan Nelson pointed out that, because the benefits of most reforms are not apparent immediately,

politicians suffered the political backlash from their policies but were not in office long enough to receive credit for their long-term success. There are no costs, she said, for inaction. Nelson indicated that successful reform was often linked to goals outside the health or education sectors, such as labor market deregulation or economic reform. She mentioned that reform also often occurred in a post-crisis atmosphere in which the power of vested interests and the status quo had been weakened.

Robert Kaufman stated that the rise of interest group politics, the participation of non-governmental organizations in policy debates, and the increased community involvement that have come with democratization and globalization have been crucial in making social reforms more salient politically. He noted, however, that just as globalization and democratization empower those who seek progress, they also empower those who seek to preserve the status quo.

In contrasting the social reform experiences of Latin American and East Asia, commentator *Shahid Burki* of Emerging Market Partners asked why social reform in Latin America had been much less successful. He suggested several possible explanations, including the wasting or misallocation of resources, the capture of reform programs by vested interests, and the role of democratization in providing opportunities to oppose reforms.

*Juan Carlos Navarro* of the Inter-American Development extended this argument to remind us that the politics of reform during the 1950s, '60s, and '70s were more easily navigated because they involved the "politics of expansion," whereas the politics of the '90s and today are more difficult because many groups do not as easily accept the "politics of efficient, quality reform." "Big bang" reforms were less helpful in his view than a consistent, well thought-out, "piecemeal" approach. He echoed the conclusions of the volume in cautioning international financial institutions to pay attention to the political impediments to reform when devising programs. ■

# Staff Notes

The summer of 2005 was a time of many transitions at the Latin American Program. Founding Director of Brazil @ the Wilson Center, *Luis Bitencourt*, accepted a position at the National Defense University's Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies. We wish Luis well in his new position, and look forward to his ongoing collaboration with the Brazil Project as a Woodrow Wilson Center Senior Scholar. Two team members, *Trisha Fields* and *Heidy Servin-Baez*, left at the end of the summer to pursue graduate studies. Beginning in September 2005, Trisha is attending the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University, where she will concentrate on global reproductive health. Heidy is studying public policy with a focus on economic development at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. *Elizabeth Bryan* also began graduate school this fall, at American University's School of International Service, where she will concentrate on international development. Elizabeth will remain with the Latin American Program on a half-time basis. We also wish a fond farewell to Program Assistant *Cristina Jiménez*. Although with us only a short time, Cristina was instrumental in ushering several projects to completion.

The Latin American Program is pleased to welcome new staff members who joined us over the summer and early fall.

*Jessica Varat* joined the LAP team in July as a Program Assistant. Jess is a recent graduate of Wellesley College, with degrees in International Relations and Spanish. Her main interests are indigenous movements, democratic governance, and diplomacy. She previously served the Latin American Program as an intern during the summer of 2004. *Kelly Albinak* also joined us as a Program Assistant in August 2005. Kelly has a B.S. in Communications and a certificate in Spanish from Northwestern University. Prior to joining LAP, Kelly spent two years as an office manager in the Chicago area. An aspiring Foreign Service Officer, Kelly's main interests are international diplomacy and security studies. Finally, summer 2005 intern *Kate Brick* joined the Mexico Institute as a program assistant. Kate has a B.A. in Latin American Studies from George Washington University. She spent her junior year at the Universidad de Chile in Santiago and later interned at the American Civil Liberties Union, Washington Legislative Office.

## Interns

The Latin American Program would like to formally thank the following interns for their energy, hard work, and willingness to share their talents and skills with us.

### Summer 2005

*Kate Brick* – George Washington University

*Daniel Budny* – Georgetown University and Columbia University

*Yomara Guerra Aguijosa* – Georgetown University and Universidad de las Américas, México

*Elliott Jones* – Brown University

*Joshua Smith* – Georgetown University and the University of Colorado at Boulder

### Fellows

The Latin American Program is delighted to welcome two Woodrow Wilson Center Fellows for the 2005–2006 academic year.

*Felipe Agüero*, Associate Professor of International Studies at the University of Miami, will work on a project entitled “Business, Politics, and Social Responsibility in Latin America.”

*John D. French*, Associate Professor of History at Duke University, will work on a project entitled “Building Movements in a World in Flux: Leadership, Consciousness, and Mobilization among Metalworkers in Sao Paulo, Brazil, 1950–1980”.

### Public Policy Scholars

*Pamela Starr*, a professor at the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM) rejoined us in July–August 2005 as a public policy scholar affiliated with the Mexico Institute. She was previously at the Wilson Center as a Mexico Institute/Consejo Mexicano de Asuntos Internacionales (Comexi) short-term scholar in 2003. While at the Wilson Center, she worked on a project entitled “Pesos for Dollars: The Politics of Dollarization in Latin America.”

*Nicolás Lynch*, director of the Ph.D. program in social sciences at the Universidad de San Marcos in Lima, Peru, and former Minister of Education of Peru, joined us from June – September 2005. His project focused on “Educational Reform and Radical Influence in Peru.”

At the end of June 2005, we bade farewell to *Jacqueline Peschard*, a professor at Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) and former citizen counselor of the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) in Mexico. She joined us as a Mexico Institute/Consejo Mexicano de Asuntos Internacionales (Comexi) short-term scholar. During her stay, she researched “Electoral Federalism in Mexico.”



# Recent Publications

## Books

Cynthia J. Arnson and I. William Zartman, eds., *Rethinking the Economics of War: The Intersection of Need, Creed, and Greed* (Baltimore, MD: Woodrow Wilson Center Press and The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).

Hugo Frühling, Joseph S. Tulchin and Heather Golding, eds. *Crimen y violencia en América Latina: Seguridad ciudadana, democracia y estado* (Bogotá: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2005).

Joseph S. Tulchin and Gary Bland, eds. *Getting Globalization Right: The Dilemmas of Inequality* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005).

## Woodrow Wilson Center Reports on the Americas

Joseph S. Tulchin, Lilian Bobea, Mayra P. Espina Prieto and Rafael Hernández with Elizabeth Bryan, eds. *Changes in Cuban Society since the Nineties*, No. 15, April 2005.

Joseph S. Tulchin, Lilian Bobea, Mayra P. Espina Prieto and Rafael Hernández with Elizabeth Bryan, eds. *Cambios en la sociedad cubana desde los noventa*, No. 16, June 2005.

Andrew D. Selee and Leticia Santín, eds., *Democracia y Participación en Municipios Mexicanos*, No. 17, August 2005.

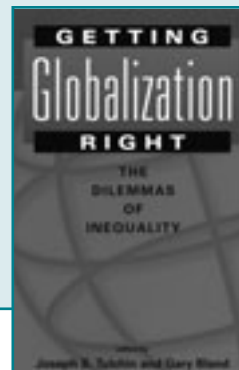
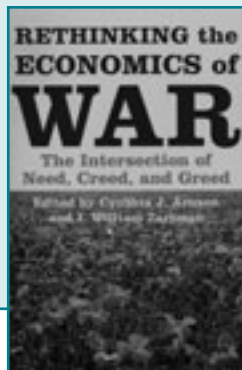
## Conference Reports

Andrew Selee, ed. *Perceptions and Misconceptions in U.S.-Mexico Relations*, 2005.

Rossana Fuentes-Beraín, Andrew Selee, and Heidy Servin-Baez, eds. *Writing Beyond Boundaries: Journalism Across the U.S.-Mexico Border*, 2005.

## Special Reports

Cynthia J. Arnson and Elizabeth Bryan, eds. "The Role of the Media in the Consolidation of Democracy," February 2005.



### **Woodrow Wilson Center Updates on the Americas**

*Updates on the Americas* are available for download online at [www.wilsoncenter.org/lap](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/lap) under our Publications section.

### **Thinking Brazil**

*Thinking Brazil Updates* are available for download online at [www.wilsoncenter.org/brazil](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/brazil)

*Brazil Update*, No. 15 “Regional Integration in the Amazon: Moving Forward with the ACTO,” March 2005.

*Brazil Update*, No. 16 “Setting a Course for Equality: Guaranteed Minimum Income in Brazil,” March 2005.

*Brazil Update*, No. 17 “Race, Inequality, and Education: Challenges for Affirmative Action in Brazil and the United States,” April 2005.

### **U.S.-Mexico Policy Bulletins**

*U.S. – Mexico Policy Bulletins* are available for download online at [www.wilsoncenter.org/mexico](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/mexico)

Enrique Krauze, *U.S. – Mexico Policy Bulletin*, No. 2, “You and Us: The Dynamics of Mexico-U.S. Relations,” February 2005.

Jacqueline Peschard and Jesús Martínez Saldaña, *U.S. – Mexico Policy Bulletin*, No. 3, “The Debate Around Voting Rights for Mexicans Living Abroad,” March 2005.

José Luis Alberro, *U.S. – Mexico Policy Bulletin*, No. 4, “A U.S.-Mexico Partnership in Energy: A Policy of Convenience,” April 2005.

T. Alexander Aleinikoff, *U.S. – Mexico Policy Bulletin*, No. 5, “No Illusions: Paradigm Shifting on Mexican Migration to the United States in the Post-9/11 World,” May 2005.

Andrew D. Selee and Heidi Servin-Baez, *U.S. – Mexico Policy Bulletin*, No. 6, “Writing Beyond Boundaries,” July 2005.

## The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

Lee H. Hamilton, President and Director

### Board of Trustees

Joseph B. Gildenhorn, Chair; David A. Metzner, Vice Chair. Public Members: James H. Billington, Librarian of Congress; John W. Carlin, Archivist of the United States; Bruce Cole, Chair, National Endowment for the Humanities; Margaret Spellings, Secretary, U.S. Department of Education; Condoleezza Rice, Secretary, U.S. Department of State; Lawrence M. Small, Secretary, Smithsonian Institution; Tommy G. Thompson, Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Private Citizen Members: Joseph A. Cari, Jr., Carol Cartwright, Donald E. Garcia, Bruce S. Gelb, Daniel L. Lamaute, Tamala L. Longaberger, Thomas R. Reedy

### Wilson Council

Bruce S. Gelb, President. Elias F. Aburdene, Charles S. Ackerman, B.B. Andersen, Russell Anmuth, Cyrus A. Ansary, Lawrence E. Bathgate II, Theresa Behrendt, John Beinecke, Joseph C. Bell, Steven Alan Bennett, Rudy Boschwitz, A. Oakley Brooks, Donald A. Brown, Melva Bucksbaum, Richard I. Burnham, Nicola L. Caiola, Mark Chandler, Peter B. Clark, Melvin Cohen, William T. Coleman, Jr., David M. Crawford, Jr., Michael D. DiGiacomo, Beth Dozoretz, Elizabeth Dubin, F. Samuel Eberts III, I. Steven Edelson, Mark Epstein, Melvyn J. Estrin, Sim Farar, Susan R. Farber, Roger Felberbaum, Julie Finley, Joseph H. Flom, John H. Foster, Charles Fox, Barbara Hackman Franklin, Norman Freidkin, John H. French, II, Morton Funger, Gregory M. Gallo, Chris G. Gardiner, Gordon D. Giffin, Steven J. Gilbert, Alma Gildenhorn, David F. Girard-diCarlo, Michael B. Goldberg, Roy M. Goodman, Gretchen Meister Gorog, William E. Grayson, Ronald Greenberg, Raymond A. Guenter, Cheryl F. Halpern, Edward L. Hardin, Jr., John L. Howard, Darrell E. Issa, Jerry Jasinowski, Brenda LaGrange Johnson, Shelly Kamins, James M. Kaufman, Edward W. Kelley, Jr., Anastasia D. Kelly, Christopher J. Kennan, Willem Kooyker, Steven Kotler, William H. Kremer, Raymond Learsy, Dennis A. LeVett, Francine Gordon Levinson, Harold O. Levy, Frederic V. Malek, David S. Mandel, John P. Manning, Jeffrey A. Marcus, John Mason, Jay Mazur, Robert McCarthy, Linda McCausland, Stephen G. McConahey, Donald F. McLellan, Charles McVean, J. Kenneth Menges, Jr., Kathryn Mosbacher, Jeremiah L. Murphy, Martha T. Muse, John E. Osborn, Paul Hae Park, Gerald L. Parsky, Jeanne L. Phillips, Michael J. Polenske, Donald Robert Quartel, Jr., J. John L. Richardson, Margaret Milner Richardson, Larry D. Richman, Carlyn Ring, Edwin Robbins, Robert G. Rogers, Otto Ruesch, Juan A. Sabater, Alan M. Schwartz, Timothy R. Scully, J. Michael Shepherd, George P. Shultz, Raja W. Sidawi, Kenneth Siegel, Ron Silver, William A. Slaughter, James H. Small, Shawn Smeallie, Gordon V. Smith, Thomas F. Stephenson, Norman Kline Tiefel, Mark C. Treanor, Anthony G. Viscogliosi, Christine M. Warnke, Ruth Westheimer, Pete Wilson, Deborah Wince-Smith, Herbert S. Winokur, Jr., Paul Martin Wolff, Joseph Zappala, Richard S. Ziman, Nancy M. Zirkin

### Honorary Wilson Council Members

Hushang Ansary, Bill Archer, James A. Baker III, Jack S. Blanton, Sr., José Cancela, Richard L. Carrión, Jean Case, Stephen M. Case, William S. Cohen, Jerry Colangelo, Norm Coleman, Philip M. Condit, Denton A. Cooley, Gray Davis, Arturo Díaz, William H. Draper III, David Efron, Dianne Feinstein, Luis Ferré, Charles Foster, Esq., Sam Ginn, Richard N. Goldman, Slade Gorton, Allan Gottlieb, Dennis J. Hastert, Roger Hertog, Roy M. Huffington, Ray L. Hunt, Bobby Inman, Dale M. Jensen, E. Floyd Kvamme, Joseph P. Lacher, Dan Lewis, Howard Lincoln, Thomas Loeffler, Robert J. Lowe, Donald B. Marron, John McCain, Michael S. McGavick, Robert A. Mosbacher, Sr., Peter Munk, Marilyn Carlson Nelson, George E. Pataki, Nelson Peltz, Alex Penelas, Richard Perry, Robert Pincus, Lee R. Raymond, William T. Solomon, James R. Thompson, Jr., R. E. (Ted) Turner III, Paul A. Volcker, Thomas W. Weisel, David H. Williams, Reba Williams

### **The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars**

*Lee H. Hamilton, President and Director*

The Center is the living memorial of the United States of America to the nation's twenty-eighth president, Woodrow Wilson. Congress established the Woodrow Wilson Center in 1968 as an international institute for advanced study, "symbolizing and strengthening the fruitful relationship between the world of learning and the world of public affairs." The Center opened in 1970 under its own board of trustees.

In all its activities the Woodrow Wilson Center is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, supported financially by annual appropriations from Congress, and by the contributions of foundations, corporations, and individuals. Conclusions or opinions expressed in Center publications and programs are those of the authors and speakers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Center staff, fellows, trustees, advisory groups, or any individuals or organizations that provide financial support to the Center.

### **The Latin American Program**

The Latin American Program serves as a bridge between the United States and Latin America, encouraging a free flow of information and dialogue between the two regions. The Program also provides a nonpartisan forum for discussing Latin American and Caribbean issues in Washington, D.C., and for bringing these issues to the attention of opinion leaders and policy makers throughout the Western hemisphere. The Program sponsors major initiatives on Decentralization, Citizen Security, Comparative Peace Processes, Creating Community in the Americas, U.S.-Brazilian relations and U.S.-Mexican relations.

ONE WOODROW WILSON PLAZA, 1300 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20004-3027



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
OFFICIAL BUSINESS  
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$300