

The New Latin America in the Emerging Global Order

Panel: Session 3 (Violet/Cosmos)

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Organizing Institution: Centre for International Governance Innovation

Speakers: Jorge Heine, Centre for International Governance Innovation (moderator)
Amaury de Souza, Brazilian Center for International Relations
Andres Serbin, Regional Coordination for Economic and Social Research
Marcos Robledo, Diego Portales University, Santiago

Panel Short Summary

Min Kyung Cha, Yonsei University
Kyle Cassily, Seoul National University

Latin America must forge a common strategy in order to avoid being left behind in a globalizing world, panel moderator Jorge Heine said to open discussion. Latin America is a region traditionally known for coups and earthquakes, but the past decade has seen the emergence of a region that is increasingly stable, democratic, and independent from U.S. influence. For the first time in 200 years, a financial crisis originating in North America did not wreak havoc in Latin America. Regional leaders have met increasingly in recent years with the rise of political cooperation institutions like the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR). Latin America has historically looked inward, but has turned its focus outward in the last 10 years.

Brazil, now the sixth-largest economy, aims to become the fifth largest by 2020, marking it as a rising power. It already maintains strong economic ties with China, Amaury De Souza said, and it will look to expand its markets to both developed and emerging regions, notably Asia-Pacific. Brazil also seeks to integrate South American infrastructure by providing financing through its national bank. It is also important to establish credible military capabilities in order to permanently join the UN Security Council and cement its economic power. The country hopes to use its soft power to become a global player and participate in shaping world order.

Since the 1990s, Chile has played a greater role in creating regional structures and promoting more equitable global governance as its economy has risen. Marcos Robledo

highlighted that Chile's path to economic success via an expansion into the Asia-Pacific region is now serving as a role model for Latin American nations, especially Colombia and Peru. This has led to a debate about what kind of relationship Latin America will build with Asia in the future. Robledo noted that Chile is concerned with the G20's inability to create the norms and governance that global trends currently demand. Chile has tackled this issue with urgency while the global economy proceeds to unprecedented levels.

In discussing the new phase of regionalism in Latin America, Andres Serbin argued that in comparison to the 1990s when Latin American countries' main objective and concern was in making Free Trade Agreements, there had been a shift away from trade. The region centers its attention now on infrastructure, energy financing, and security. Regional structures are now playing a greater role and allow leaders of state to meet frequently. However, Serbin noted that challenges still remain for them. The current institutions, like CELAC, lack support structure and must invoke greater citizen participation.

The discussion formed consensus that Latin America, especially South America, has turned toward Asia to expand its markets. The whole region, led by Brazil and Chile, has seen massive economic growth and increased independence from the U.S. In the past, when the U.S. sneezed, Latin America caught a cold. That is no longer the case since the U.S. pursued engagement in other regions the past decade, which caused the spark of autonomy that has led to regional cooperation institutions. Latin America will be globally oriented while working to reinforce regional institutions.

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