

Hemisphere Insider

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Program News**Americas Program
Cohosts Peru's
Minister of Defense**

March 27, the CSIS Americas Program and the Inter-American Dialogue cohosted Peru's minister of defense Alberto Otárola for a discussion on the security priorities of the Ollanta Humala administration as well as regional security trends. Minister Otárola cited drug trafficking and terrorism as critical transnational problems that require both bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the United States and Latin American countries. He also noted that Latin American ministries of defense have been important partners for regional security integration. The minister said that exchanging regional experiences aids economic development, the peaceful resolution of disputes, cooperation on law enforcement, and the strengthening of democracy and human rights.

In Depth*Nuclear Energy and Alternatives in Latin America*

Four Latin American countries—Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico—attended the March 26–27, 53-state nuclear security summit in South Korea. During the summit, the nations committed to nuclear security as outlined in the Seoul Communiqué, which stressed the importance of nuclear technologies for peaceful civilian use. Recognizing the risks of nuclear energy, Chile and Mexico have already completed joint nuclear security projects with the United States and Canada to convert highly enriched uranium from research reactors to low-enriched uranium. Nonetheless, perspectives on nuclear energy differ among the four countries.

Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico continue to expand their nuclear energy capabilities, with each nation looking to open additional nuclear power plants. Chile, however, continues to examine feasibility, because of its susceptibility to earthquakes. Given dependence on fuel imports, Chile is also eager to adopt alternative sources of energy. A recent visit by President Sebastian Piñera to the world's largest tidal power plant in Seoul preceded a memorandum of understanding to exchange expertise with South Korea, as Chile hopes to explore such applications on its extensive coastline. —**Siremorn Asvapromtada**

In the News*North America: Mexico*

On March 28, Mexico's secretary of communications and transportation Dionisio Pérez-Jácome announced the Agenda Digital Nacional, a plan to deliver universal Internet access by 2015. The agenda has six action items, including the use of information technology to improve education and health care as well as advance government transparency. At the end of 2011, Mexico had 13 million fixed broadband users and 7.8 million mobile users out of a total of 40.6 million Internet users. —[El Universal \(Mexico\)](#)

Central America: El Salvador

El Salvador's legislature recently approved two treaties. One was a free trade agreement among Mexico, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. The second was a pact with Cuba to trim trade barriers and increase cooperation. A similar accord is under discussion with Venezuela. —[La Prensa Grafica \(El Salvador\)](#)

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Argentina Suspended](#)

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toward Asia](#)

Upcoming Events

April 10: "Police Reform in Latin America—Implications for U.S. Policy," CSIS, B1-B Conference Room, 9–11 a.m.

April 24: "Leveraging Research Networks in the Americas," CSIS, B1-A/B Conference Center, 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.

May 9: "Mexico: Elections and Prospects for Structural Reform," CSIS, B1-A/B Conference Room, 9 a.m.–12 p.m.

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Caribbean: Regional

Brian Greaney, acting deputy chief of mission at the U.S. embassy in Barbados, said the United States directed a total of US\$133 million into the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) during the first two years of the Obama administration. He announced several new allotments of funds under the initiative, including US\$14 million for two interceptor boats to go each of the seven nations that compose the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and for regional communication upgrades; \$1.5 million to upgrade prison facilities; and \$450,000 to provide polygraph capabilities to regional law enforcement agencies. —[The Gleaner \(Jamaica\)](#)

Haiti/Dominican Republic

Haitian president Michel Martelly visited with counterpart Leonel Fernández of the Dominican Republic for an official state visit. The two presidents signed several technical agreements, one focusing on social programs and another on trade and investing between the neighboring countries. —[Caribbean Journal \(USA\)](#)

South America: Colombia/Venezuela

Heads of Colombia's Ecopetrol and Venezuela's PDVSA, the two nations' state oil companies, announced the creation of a joint enterprise, with plans to construct a pipeline to the Pacific and a natural gas treatment plant in addition to hydrocarbon extraction. The company plans to begin operating in October. —[El Espectador \(Bolivia\)](#)

Chile

Following two months of protests in Chile's southern Patagonia region, Minister of Energy Rodrigo Alvarez submitted his resignation. Alvarez, the fourth energy minister in the two-year-old Sebastian Piñera presidency, allegedly had been left out of negotiations between the government and local Aysen community leaders. The conflict, which centered on high energy prices and subsidies toward petroleum and firewood, highlights continued difficulties the country faces in acquiring affordable energy, given dependence on imports to meet growing needs. —[Bloomberg \(USA\)](#)

Brazil

Brazilian aircraft manufacturer Embraer announced the sale—valued at US\$180 million—of its A-29 Super Tucano aircraft to three African countries—Angola, Burkina Faso, and Mauritania. The planes will be deployed for border patrol and counterinsurgency missions. This agreement came after the U.S. Air Force cancelled an order for 20 Super Tucanos for use in Afghanistan. —[La Tercera \(Chile\)](#)

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