

*Hemisphere Insider*

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**Program News****Americas Program  
Welcomes Haiti Scholar**

The Americas Program is pleased to announce that, in collaboration with the Partners of the Americas, it is hosting Melissa Jocelyn as a visiting Partners Legislative Fellow during the month of October. Ms. Jocelyn currently serves as a member of Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe's policy formulation staff. Earlier she worked in Haiti's National Commission to Fight Drugs (CONALD). Ms. Jocelyn obtained an LL.M. from Louisiana State University and a law degree from Faculté de Droit et Des Sciences Economiques in Port-au-Prince. While in Washington, Ms. Jocelyn will get to know the various government and nongovernmental institutions that manage various aspects of U.S.-Haiti policy. *(continued →)*

**In Depth***Salvadoran Government Struggles to Meet Obligations*

After a year of impressive growth of more than 10 percent in 2011, Panama is set to nearly match the feat this year, with an IMF forecast of 8.5 percent growth—the highest in the hemisphere. But El Salvador, with an economy of comparable size, seems remarkably less prosperous. The country has shown troubling signs in recent months as growth rates stagnate and fiscal stresses become more evident.

According to local newspaper reports, salary payments to National Civilian Police (PNC) employees were in arrears for September, and equipment and food allocations for some of the force were behind schedule. Similar revenue shortfalls have affected teachers' salaries. Behind all this, El Salvador's exports were down 3.6 percent in June this year over last. President Mauricio Funes has defended his government's financial health, disputing claims of missed salary payments to government employees. He admitted that some expenses, such as government fuel subsidies for buses, have been delayed, contending that notions of insolvency as portrayed by the newspaper *El Diario de Hoy* are "absolute lies." Funes argues that in the past, late payments on subsidies have not been characterized as crises by the media. Still, any sign of stress through delinquent payments is cause for worry. El Salvador has Central America's lowest projected growth rate this year, according to the IMF, and its tax base will not likely expand to help with shortfalls. Unless growth picks up in the near future, Funes and the executive branch will need to find new ways to keep obligations in line with revenues if the government is to remain solvent. —**Alek Suni**

**In the News***Caribbean: Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago*

CARICOM member nations have an annual food import bill of some \$4 billion and insufficient landmass to achieve food security. Nonetheless, the region has set a goal of 25 percent nutrition sufficiency by 2015. In that spirit, Guyana and Trinidad have agreed to collaborate on reducing the region's reliance on imports. Dr. Arlington Chesney, executive director of the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), stressed the vital role that countries with sufficient land (Suriname, Guyana, and Belize) could play in improving agricultural production. —*The Gleaner (Jamaica)*

*Central America: Costa Rica and Honduras*

Costa Rica's president Laura Chinchilla and Honduran president Porfirio Lobo recently agreed to strengthen the exchange of police data between their two

She will also be conducting research on creating and strengthening durable institutions in Haiti.

## Upcoming Votes

October 28: Brazil Municipal Elections (second round)

November 4: Nicaragua Municipal Elections

November 6: Puerto Rico Statehood Referendum

December 16: Venezuela Gubernatorial Elections



## Americas Blog Posts

[Venezuela's Vote: Not Over Until It's Over](#)



*Photo credits: Melissa Jocelyn, by Michael Graybeal (page 1); election pictures, by Wilfredor (page 2).*

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nations in order to strengthen law enforcement efforts. The leaders met in Costa Rica as part of Chinchilla's effort to improve bilateral relations with Central American nations. Chinchilla stated that in addition to exchanging information on criminal cases, she hopes to share penal reform recommendations with Honduras and bolster bilateral trade. —[La Nación \(Costa Rica\)](#)

### North America: Canada

Canadian oil company TransCanada Corporation is planning to export crude oil from Canada's east coast to Asia by way of a cross-country pipeline. The concept would allow TransCanada to bypass controversial pipeline projects in the west. Although TransCanada is confident of its competitiveness in Asian markets, its immediate priority will remain supplying eastern Canadian refineries with crude oil to prevent them from turning to expensive foreign imports from Europe and the Middle East. —[The Globe and Mail \(Canada\)](#)

### Mexico

Mexican president-elect Enrique Peña Nieto is looking to pass an energy reform bill in 2013 that would allow private investment in the state oil company Pemex. By most accounts, opening the energy sector to private investment in capital and technology will increase oil production and spur growth in the Mexican economy. The head of Peña Nieto's transition team, Luis Videgaray, did not elaborate on the specifics, but gave assurances that investment does not mean privatizing Pemex. —[El Economista \(Mexico\)](#)

### South America: Brazil

The Workers' Party (PT) and the center-right Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB) were the two biggest winners in Brazil's municipal elections this weekend. One or the other is leading in each of the 83 largest cities, or those with populations greater than 200,000. The PT and PSDB constitute the country's principal political movements since 1994 and will face off in many of the second-round mayoral elections on October 28. —[Folha \(Brazil\)](#)

### Colombia

Colombian trade minister Sergio Diaz-Granados met with Chinese counterpart Chen Deming this week to promote business between the two countries and work toward establishing a free trade agreement. According to *China Daily*, the ministers signed a bilateral agreement on economic and technological cooperation as well as a memorandum of understanding on "strengthening trade cooperation." China ranks as Colombia's second-largest trading partner behind the United States. —[Colombia Reports \(Colombia\)](#)

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