

*Hemisphere Insider**Program News***PDAS John Feeley  
Previews Latin American  
Security Challenges**

November 9, the Americas Program welcomed Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs John Feeley for a private discussion on current and emerging security challenges in the Americas. Feeley also provided an update on the status of U.S. security assistance, including the Mérida Initiative, the Central American Regional Security Initiative, the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, and Colombia's ongoing Security Dialogue. Feeley assumed his position in May 2012, after serving as the U.S. coordinator for the Summit of the Americas, the deputy chief of mission at the U.S. embassy in Mexico, and the director of the Office of Central American Affairs.

**In Depth**

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*Colombian Security Aid Expands in the Western Hemisphere*

Add the Dominican Republic to the list of countries to which Colombia provides security assistance. Following a recent bilateral meeting between diplomats and police, Colombia announced it will work with counterparts in the Dominican Republic to build up that country's counternarcotics capability. For Colombia, the announcement underscores a transformation from being a major recipient of U.S. security assistance a decade ago to becoming a major provider to other countries today. Now, Colombia's armed forces and police are working throughout Latin America and the Caribbean and have undertaken efforts to advise 12 West African nations on counternarcotics. For instance, the Colombian National Police provides training and assistance in community policing, academy instructor training, and curriculum development to Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Panama under the terms of the U.S. Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI). Colombia also provides police training and technical assistance to Mexico (more than 7,000 officers have been trained under the joint U.S.-Mexico Mérida Initiative) and Haiti. In addition to capacity building, Colombia has undertaken large-scale operations as a multinational partner. Notably, the Colombian navy and air force joined forces with the United States and the European Union in Operation Martillo, a detection and interdiction campaign targeting drug trafficking in Central America. Given Colombia's recent success in restoring security to large areas within its borders, it is no surprise that it is lending its expertise to other countries in the region. Time will tell whether its achievements are transferrable, however. —**Anna Lukacs**

**In the News***Caribbean: Cuba*

After a third attempt to locate viable petroleum reserves, the Scarabeo-9 platform is leaving Cuban waters. During the past year, major oil companies Repsol, Petronas, and PDVSA all failed to drill a producing well. The departure of the rig, built in China to sidestep U.S. trade sanctions, leaves the Cuban government with little hope of developing local resources in the near term. That would have cushioned Cuba's struggling economy and eased dependence on petroleum aid from Venezuela. —*Associated Press (U.S.)*

*Central America: Guatemala*

Guatemalan president Otto Perez Molina has appealed to U.S. president Obama to grant Guatemalans Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and cease deportations

## Americas Publications

[Mexico: Prospects for a New Foreign Policy](#)

*Coming:* Policy Recommendations for a New Administration

## Americas Blog Posts

[Haiti: Education Is Key](#)

[Mexico's Labor Reform—A Positive Sign for More to Come](#)

## Americas Calendar

November 16–17: Ibero-American Summit (Cadiz)  
November 18: Honduras General Election Primaries  
December 1: Inauguration of Enrique Peña Nieto (Mexico)  
December 16: Venezuela Gubernatorial Elections  
January 2013: Barbados Parliamentary Elections  
February 17: Ecuador General Elections, First-Round

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following the 7.4 earthquake that struck the nation November 7. Guatemala remains in a state of emergency, with the current death toll at 52 and at least 22 missing. Many areas remain without electricity and potable water.

—*La Prensa (Guatemala)*

### North America: *Canada*

Quebec's minister of the environment, Daniel Breton, criticized private sector plans to bring oil from Canada's Alberta province to Quebec. Enbridge Inc. and TransCanada Corp. both plan to ship crude from Alberta's oil sands to markets on Canada's east coast. The minister asserted that Quebec must "retain sovereignty in the matter," but it remains to be seen if the Québécois will block cheaper domestic oil, considering the high prices they now pay for foreign imports. —*Financial Post (Canada)*

### *Mexico*

Mexico's long-awaited labor reform bill passed in the Senate by a vote of 99 to 28, with full passage awaiting President Felipe Calderón's signature. According to the Mexican Business Coordinating Council (CCE), the much-anticipated reform advances Mexico's position in the World Economic Forum's competitiveness index by 8 positions overall and 30 positions in the labor category. The CCE estimated that the legislation could boost growth by about 1.5 percent. —*El Economista (Mexico)*

### South America: *Brazil*

The Brazilian government is now taking steps to ease the entry and immigration of skilled workers from abroad. President Dilma Rousseff's program, "Brazil with Open Arms," aims to suspend certain bureaucratic procedures for qualified foreigners working in areas where technological innovation is needed, such as petroleum engineering. Brazil's current immigration policy, which dates back to 1981, is considered outdated by many policymakers. —*Estadão (Brazil)*

### *Colombia*

Colombia's economically liberal Social Party of National Unity (known as the "U" Party) has informed President Santos that it will not support a proposal to limit foreign land ownership in Colombia. The proposal, advanced by conservative senator Hernán Francisco Andrade, would prohibit foreigners from owning more than 10 percent of Colombia's land. The U Party opposes the initiative, stating it would hurt foreign investment and injure the economy at a time when the European economic crisis and the U.S. "fiscal cliff" threaten to hit Colombian growth. —*El Espectador (Colombia)*

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**Americas Program Staff:** Stephen Johnson, director; Michael Graybeal, program coordinator

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