2017-2018

More Jobs in the Western Hemisphere:

A Winning Trade and Investment Strategy in the Context of NAFTA Negotiations Introduction

In 2017, with support from the Ford Foundation, Global Americans convened a working group of high-level, former policymakers, business leaders and scholars to discuss bipartisan and cross-regional ways to build on the past two decades of inter-American relations. The initial set of policy topics addressed by our High-Level Working Group on Inter-American Relations and Bipartisanship are closely connected, and they reflect a long-standing hemispheric and bipartisan consensus that has helped to promote U.S. and hemispheric economic, diplomatic and security interests.

Our group, representing civil society, academia, and the policymaking and business communities in the U.S., Latin America and the Caribbean, has produced an initial series of papers laying out members' consensus opinions on the topics of:

- Economic integration and trade
- Combating organized crime and narcotics trafficking
- Greater U.S.-Latin American collaboration on anti-corruption
- Expanding and improving education exchanges in the Americas
- Extra-hemispheric actors

Future topics will include rebuilding Venezuela and re-thinking development assistance.

All these topics are inter-related. But rather than address them collectively we have decided to narrow our focus to specific, constructive and actionable issues and recommendations. Globalized trade displaces individual workers and recasts labor markets as investments and production shifts. These legitimate criticisms of the effect of trade agreements on the lives of workers and their communities must be addressed. But the individual impact of the global competition for jobs and investment should not be attributed solely to trade and investment agreements. For example, NAFTA has indisputably created more jobs than it has displaced.

Convinced that the countries of the Americas will be able to solve their shared challenges only through collaboration, the members of our high-level working group have made a series of recommendations on each of the topics outlined above. While there are many trade agreements and relations in the hemisphere that we will address later, this paper deals specifically with U.S.-hemispheric relations under NAFTA. Yes, NAFTA has fundamentally changed the nature of the production process in North America, and the agreement needs updating; but the United States as a whole, and its workers, are better off because of the agreement. Moreover, an updated, improved NAFTA will be key to promoting U.S. leadership and national interests with the rise of extra-hemispheric actors.

More Jobs in the Western Hemisphere: A Winning Trade and Investment Strategy in the Context of NAFTA Negotiations Executive Summary

The urgent requirement to create greater numbers of good and sustainable jobs for the peoples of the Western Hemisphere means that the nations of the region must find ways to trade fairly and effectively and invest productively. Strong economic connections between the United States and its neighbors are crucial for increasing the global strength and influence of the U.S. and the region at large. If the U.S. is to remain a hemispheric leader—especially as powers from outside the hemisphere like China and Russia try to exert their influence—and if national and regional economic growth is to increase, the region must work together to safeguard, modernize and build our economic relationships.

While there are many important trade agreements in the hemisphere, this paper focuses on U.S. relations under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). It is necessary to acknowledge immediately that globalized trade displaces individual workers and recasts labor markets. These legitimate criticisms of the effect of trade agreements on the lives of workers and their communities must be addressed. But a U.S. retreat from international trade and investment will only displace more workers and communities. There is no doubt that NAFTA needs to be updated and modernized to a 21st Century rules-based trading system, but the hard fact is that U.S. political, diplomatic and economic leadership depends upon staying in a modern NAFTA, leveraging it to compete globally, and expanding programs to help workers thrive in all three NAFTA member nations.

Here's why updating and improving NAFTA matters:

- <u>Five million</u> Americans have jobs that depend on trade with Mexico;
- 30 states each have more than 50,000 jobs that depend on trade with Mexico, led by California, Texas, Illinois, Florida, and New York.
- In 28 states, Mexico is the number one trading partner for the U.S.
- On average, when a U.S. company increases employment in Mexico by 10 percent, its workforce in the United States increases by 1.3 percent and its exports from the U.S. increase by 1.7 percent.

2017-2018

If the U.S. withdraws from NAFTA:

- U.S. GDP is <u>projected</u> to fall by 0.64 percent within 3-5 years.
- The U.S. farm sector alone will <u>lose \$13 billion</u> in profits per year.
- The U.S. will lose \$12.8 billion in exports to Mexico per year.
- U.S. exports to the world <u>will fall</u> 2.5 percent to 5 percent within 5 years and 4.4 percent-10 percent within 10 years.

Pulling out of NAFTA represents a retreat from U.S. national interest, legacy and power in the hemisphere. We believe that, for the United States, the benefits of NAFTA far outweigh the costs, recognizing that much more needs to be done to alleviate the displacement of those individuals and communities who do not benefit.

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Jobs supported by trade with Mexico

2017-2018

Updating NAFTA and incorporating higher standards in many crucial areas would include reflecting the technological advances of the last two decades, for example, the spread of e-commerce through companies like EBay, Amazon, and Etsy. Modernizing dispute settlement, increasing cooperation on climate and energy, and making labor protections more enforceable would help to bring the decades-old agreement into modern times. And last, eliminating obstacles to service exports would be beneficial for the U.S., which has a high-skill advantage in industries like education, financial services, construction, healthcare, and travel. If the U.S. can convince more of its trading partners to liberalize barriers to trade in services, American workers and business will benefit from the <u>coming infrastructure boom</u>.

With that goal in mind, we offer a series of recommendations for U.S. leadership to consider. Here are some highlights:

1) The United States should not withdraw from NAFTA. NAFTA needs to be updated to better protect U.S. interests, including improved labor and environmental standards, updated sections on e-commerce and reducing barriers to trade in services. But abandoning an agreement with two of the U.S.'s three largest trading partners and the two largest buyers of U.S. exports, or making negotiating demands that provoke others to leave, will hurt the millions of Americans whose jobs rely on trade with Canada and Mexico, damage American business, and raise prices for U.S. consumers.

2) **Modernize it instead.** Strengthening NAFTA can also serve as a model for modernizing other U.S. trade deals in the region—with Chile, Peru, Colombia, Panama, and Central America and the Dominican Republic—and serve as a pathway for making those deals fairer in areas such as rules of origin, trade in services and procurement.

3) **Update the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program**. The United States, which spends less on worker training and employment programs than almost all of its developed peers, should update and expand the system for helping displaced workers by emphasizing training and apprenticeships, and by increasing funding for vocational and life-long learning, along with subsidies for part-time opportunities to keep workers in the workforce.

4) Make NAFTA a Hemisphere building block to global fair trade. Fair and mutually beneficial trade and investment agreements are not just about the economic benefits that accrue to member economies. Trade and investment agreements are crucial geo-strategic building blocks that expand U.S. national and international power and build the foundations for diplomatic, political and strategic success. We believe this is especially important as our Hemisphere today faces efforts by nations such as China and Russia to reset the global rules to promote their vision of how citizens should live and prosper. A successful modernization of NAFTA would provide the global economy with a new gold standard for what 21st Century, rules-based trade agreements need to look like.

More Jobs in the Western Hemisphere: A Winning Trade and Investment Strategy in the Context of NAFTA Negotiations Report

Why NAFTA matters

Meet Frank. He makes \$19 per hour as a production worker in Allentown, Pennsylvania. That's more than double the state's minimum wage. Frank works at a massive bakery which manufactures products that can be found on supermarket shelves around the country, including six of the top twelve bread brands in the United States. In the heart of the Rust Belt, Frank has a well-paying job that isn't going anywhere. His employer? Bimbo Bakeries, Mexico's ninth-largest company, which employs over 27,000 Americans in 60 locations in the U.S.

Meet Barbara. She makes \$55,000 per year as a plant manager just outside Birmingham, Alabama. Barbara oversees a cement plant, one of twelve owned by her employer across the United States, that has brought stable jobs and tax dollars to a region struggling to adapt to the changing economic landscape brought on by globalization and automation. Her employer? CEMEX, a Mexican building materials company that employs 9,830 Americans across the country.

Barbara and Frank are just two of the five million Americans who have jobs that depend on trade with *Mexico alone*. There is no denying that the rapid globalization of trade and investment has badly hurt some U.S. workers and communities. Trade and investment policies need to be updated, revised and in some cases rethought, to do more to support jobs at home. And where preserving jobs is not possible, the federal government needs to institute robust and effective adjustment policies.

But both Barbara and Frank demonstrate why economic integration in the Americas is a keystone to maintaining a strong and thriving U.S. economy.

At the same time, it should be recognized that NAFTA is only one in a network of regional agreements that have strengthened hemispheric relations. They include the Pacific Alliance (Colombia, Chile, Mexico, and Peru); MERCOSUR (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay); CAFTA-DR (the U.S. agreement with Central America and the Dominican Republic); U.S. bilateral agreements with Chile, Colombia, Panama, and Peru; and dozens of bilateral agreements between other Latin American countries.

One more introduction: meet Pablo. Twice in the 1990s, Pablo tried to immigrate illegally to the U.S. For the last 10 years, Pablo has worked as one of the hundreds of thousands of Mexican employees at Wal-Mart, the largest private sector employer in the country. He proudly

2017-2018

supports his family and no longer has any intention or desire to risk an undocumented journey to America. He has the work he needs at home.

To repeat the point made above, NAFTA and some of the other trade agreements can and must be improved to better reflect the global economy, U.S. economic strengths in services, and workers' rights. But walking away from existing trade agreements will hurt the U.S. economy, U.S. workers and U.S. hemispheric interests.

U.S. partners in the hemisphere have already responded to the message coming from Washington in ways that are likely to complicate future trade relations. Even as the Trump administration raises doubts about the future of the U.S. commitment to creating future opportunities for mutually beneficial patterns of trade and investment, for example by fulfilling his campaign promise to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), Latin American countries are seeking closer trade relations among themselves and with extra-hemispheric actors as a means of strengthening their own economies—and as a response to China's global and increasingly regional economic and diplomatic activities.

The benefits of trade and investment

Globalized trade displaces individual workers and recasts labor markets as investments and production shifts. These legitimate criticisms of the effect of trade agreements on the lives of workers and their communities must be addressed quickly. But the individual impact of the global competition for jobs and investment should not be attributed solely to trade and investment agreements. For example, NAFTA has indisputably created more jobs than it has displaced. Ending the agreement would destroy U.S. jobs and displace workers on a large scale. Advances in information technology and automation have had a far greater impact on jobs and the structure of employment in the United States.

Yes, NAFTA has fundamentally changed the nature of the production process in the region creating joint supply chains and integrated production platforms in North America—and the agreement needs updating; but the United States as a whole, and its workers, are better off because of the agreement.

According to a <u>2017 study</u>, more than five million Americans have jobs that depend on trade between the United States and Mexico. Thirty states have more than 50,000 jobs supported by trade between the two countries. Mexican companies such as Bimbo, CEMEX, and the Southern Copper Corporation directly employ more than a hundred thousand Americans, and run factories, plants, and mines across the country, including in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Tennessee, Colorado, Arizona, and Texas.

Take, for example, Hernando County, in northwest Florida, which overwhelmingly voted for

2017-2018

President Trump in 2016. CEMEX, a Mexican company, owns and operates a cement plant in Brooksville, Florida. The company is the <u>fourth largest employer</u> in the county and the largest taxpayer. Every year, CEMEX pays over \$250,000 in corporate taxes, more than 3 percent of the county's total tax income. If NAFTA is repealed, and relations sour between the United States and Mexico, the county risks losing its largest source of tax income and its fourth largest employer.

CEMEX'S presence in Hernando County isn't an isolated example. Pinal County, Arizona, is the second fastest growing county in the United States, where over 70 percent of voters chose President Trump in 2016. ASARCO, which is owned by Grupo México, <u>employs</u> more than 1,000 people in the county and is the third largest taxpayer. Likewise, Comal County is a mostly rural part of the San Antonio metropolitan area in Texas. CEMEX operates a cement plant in New Braunfels, the county seat. It's the <u>second largest</u> taxpayer in the county, making up almost 2 percent of total taxes paid.

The pattern is repeated across the country. Mexican companies employ more than 100,000 American workers and pay millions of dollars in taxes. These jobs and tax dollars are the tangible benefit of NAFTA in communities across the United States.

State economies have also become deeply tied to exports to Mexico—many of them high-end manufactured products. To cite just a few examples, Arkansas has seen a 700 percent growth in exports to Mexico since the signing of NAFTA, making Mexico the state's second largest export market; 24 percent of South Carolina's exports to Mexico are plasma TVs; the greatest exports from Florida, Kentucky and Wisconsin to Mexico are transportation equipment, in the case of Kentucky representing 31 percent of the state's sales to Mexico; 40 percent of Michigan's exports to Mexico are automobiles; Mexico is Iowa's number one export market; 99 percent of Kansas' corn exports go to Mexico; and Ohio is the sixth largest exporter to Mexico in the United States.

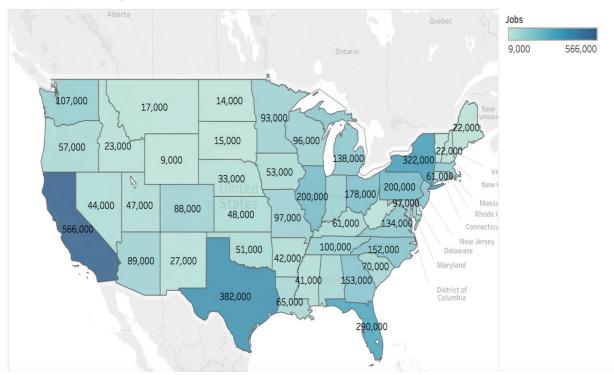
An examination of the economic relationship between the U.S. and Mexico—the typical brunt of American criticism of NAFTA—shows how free trade between the two countries has had a net benefit for all segments of society. The U.S. is the largest destination of Mexican Foreign Direct Investment, which has <u>quadrupled</u> since 2005. Since 1994, Mexican companies have moved into the U.S. market and now employ more than 123,000 American workers. Bimbo has over 27,000 employees in the U.S. and has two large plants in Hazleton, PA. The Southern Copper Corporation has 11,500 employees in the United States. Lala has three production plants, which distribute to over 25,000 grocery stores in the United States. Mission Tortillas has 22 plants across the country. CEMEX runs 12 cement plants and 345 ready-mix concrete plants throughout the continental U.S. and has over 9,000 employees.

A diverse array of Mexican companies, including GCC, Nemak, and ASARCO run plants,

2017-2018

factories, refineries, and mines in states typically associated with job loss from globalization, including Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and Tennessee.

The benefits of NAFTA to Americans extend beyond direct employment from Mexican corporations. California alone has 556,000 U.S.-Mexico trade-dependent jobs, and 30 states have more than 50,000 jobs supported by bilateral trade. The U.S. also collaborates with its NAFTA partners more than it does with other countries; of all the U.S. trading partners, Canada (63 percent) and Mexico (53 percent) have the highest percentage of intra-industry trade, and that means jobs for U.S. workers engaging in manufacturing and production across the border.



Jobs supported by trade with Mexico

The United States, Mexico, and Canada aren't really competitors anymore. Their economies are complementary and closely linked. They produce together. They work together. Production chains zig-zag across NAFTA borders. For example, the average car manufactured in the U.S. crosses NAFTA borders *eight* times on its way to becoming a finished product.

2017-2018

President Trump based his decision to withdraw the United States from the TPP on the premise that the agreement would have hurt U.S. workers. Although it's true that individual workers (and even communities) can suffer displacement from agreements like the TPP, these losses must be compared with the combined benefits of the agreement to workers and to the nation. Estimates about the effect of the TPP on real income project an increase of \$131 billion annually by 2030 (more than \$1,000 per household). According to Harvard economist Robert Z. Lawrence, U.S. households in all five quintiles of income distribution would have benefited from the agreement.

The belief that millions of jobs are being outsourced to Mexico is not true in the aggregate. On average, when a U.S. company increases employment in Mexico by 10 percent, its workforce in the United States <u>increases</u> by 1.3 percent and its exports from the U.S. increase by 1.7 percent. While we recognize that individual workers experience the pain of job loss and displacement from free trade agreements, the annual benefits from TPP between 2017 and 2030 were projected to be more than 12 times the cost.

Withdrawing from NAFTA will not bring jobs back to previously displaced workers. Worse, it would create new displacements—of workers and communities whose livelihoods have come to depend on trade with Canada and Mexico. Even new tariffs <u>won't help bring back jobs</u>. With the imposition of new tariffs, the Federal Reserve would likely raise interest rates, hurting sectors like housing and exports. Furthermore, though tariffs might help producers of raw goods (i.e. steel), the nature of modern trade—which is largely made up of intermediate goods—means that downstream consumers (i.e. the auto industry) are hurt and the effect of tariffs on job creation is unclear.

Trade integration furthers U.S. national interests internationally

Economic integration isn't just a matter of economics. Trade agreements—as we've seen in Israel (the first U.S. FTA, completed in 1985)—are an essential component of the broader U.S. strategic policy. They strengthen diplomatic relations among the members and serve as a point of alliance for other issues. In the case of NAFTA, one need only look at the common front that Mexico and Canada have presented on U.S. issues regarding terrorism, UN votes and human rights (on questions ranging from Venezuela to Syria) to realize how tight diplomatic bonds are between the "three amigos."

As the specter of isolationism looms over U.S. policy in the hemisphere, other countries in the Americas have signaled their intent to continue with integration. But the retreat of the region's chief economic power is a serious risk to U.S. and regional power and influence, especially as China and Russia look to assert their economic and diplomatic interests in the region. There's no doubt that China understands that countries that are significant economic partners are more likely to have shared diplomatic interests. The countries of the hemisphere, including the U.S.,

2017-2018

must not forget this. A hemisphere that is more connected through trade will also be more closely aligned politically and better prepared to face pressures from outside the region. Countering the risk of rivalry from rising powers was in fact a central piece of the Trump Administration's national security strategy released in December 2017.

NAFTA and a path forward

The United States has signed FTAs with 20 countries, but NAFTA is undeniably the agreement with the most significant economic impact on the country. Since the agreement came into force in 1994, trade and investment between Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. has skyrocketed, and intermediate goods cross NAFTA borders multiple times before becoming finished products.

The belief that increased protectionism will help American workers isn't realistic. Less than 3 percent of mass layoffs since 1996 can be attributed to import competition and outsourcing, and only a fraction of manufacturing job loss is due to trade liberalization (<u>the vast majority</u> comes from technological innovation). For the average American, the benefits of NAFTA far <u>outweigh</u> the costs.

Updating NAFTA and incorporating higher standards would include reflecting the technological advances of the last two decades, for example, commerce and digital flows through companies like EBay, Amazon, and Etsy. Modernizing dispute settlement, increasing cooperation on climate and energy, and making labor protections more enforceable would help to bring the decades-old agreement into modern times. And last, eliminating obstacles to service exports would be beneficial for the U.S., which has a high-skill advantage in industries like education, financial services, construction, healthcare and travel. If the U.S. can convince more of its trading partners to liberalize their barriers to trade in services, American workers and business will benefit from the <u>coming infrastructure boom</u>.

Expanding the safety net for workers affected by free trade

Creating a powerful national system for retraining and helping the workers who are displaced by trade is necessary to evenly disperse the benefits of trade across society. Though the U.S. has successfully reduced barriers to trade around the world in the last fifty years, Washington has never created a comprehensive system to help those who are negatively affected by trade. The U.S. <u>spends less</u> on assistance programs than almost all of its developed peers. The average OECD country spends 0.53 percent of GDP on active labor market programs, but the U.S. only spends 0.11 percent. If policymakers want to keep the U.S. competitive in the global marketplace while avoiding the backlash from displaced workers and communities that stokes isolationism, this needs to change.

Building a functional national assistance program starts with revamping the Trade Adjustment

2017-2018

Assistance program (TAA). The TAA is outdated and inefficient. The average wait time for job training after application is seven months, and less than 2 percent of these programs provide on-the-job training. Relocation assistance is minimal, and is used by less than 1 percent of program participants. In its current form, the TAA has been shown to have <u>minimal impact</u> on displaced workers' future employment chances.

This doesn't have to be the case.

Countries like Germany, Denmark and Switzerland have had success with their own national programs, all of which share certain traits: robust training programs, often mandatory with the incentive of benefits, for displaced workers; collaboration with corporations for displaced workers, including apprenticeships and short-term employment; and subsidized part-time employment to keep displaced workers in the workforce. Critics may point to the comparatively small size of the Nordic countries, but Germany is Europe's economic powerhouse, and these programs are all easily scalable to an economy the size of the United States. The money needed to rejuvenate the TAA is minimal in the context of a national infrastructure bill, promised by the Trump administration in 2018, and should be included in the legislation.

But building a society that evenly distributes the benefits of free trade doesn't stop with the TAA. Revamping federally funded education to increase focus on vocational training and <u>lifelong learning</u> would make it easier for workers to adjust to a constantly changing job market.

The U.S. government needs to work domestically to assist workers displaced by trade. At the same time, it can also work to improve existing bilateral and multilateral agreements. The NAFTA renegotiations are an opportunity to show what a progressive, modern, free trade agreement can look like. The U.S. delegation should work to ensure stricter labor standards that are <u>easier to enforce</u> (including updating the agreement to enforce international labor agreements like ILO 182 and improving dispute settlement mechanisms), in addition to implementing wage-loss insurance for displaced workers.

Fair trade preserves U.S. global influence

The tangible benefits of NAFTA and our other trade relationships within the Western Hemisphere are clear. As powers from outside the hemisphere seek to increase their influence abroad and undermine U.S. interests, it is important not to diminish the influence of the United States. Weakening inter-hemispheric economic relationships will hurt workers, both in the U.S. and across the hemisphere, and will diminish U.S. global influence.

The objective is clear: modernize our agreements to make them work better for workers and businesses, both in the U.S. and in neighboring countries. In addition to NAFTA, the U.S. has bilateral FTAs with Chile, Colombia, Panama, and Peru, and a multilateral FTA with the other

2017-2018

Spanish-speaking countries of Central America and the Dominican Republic. Now is the time to build and modernize our trade relationships, using NAFTA negotiations as a building block for our trade relationships throughout the region.

Our Recommendations

1) Instead of withdrawing, the U.S. should work to update NAFTA with the aim of better protecting U.S. interests. That includes working towards improved labor and environmental standards, updating sections on e-commerce, and reducing barriers to trade in services. NAFTA should reflect the modern economies of Canada, Mexico and the United States. Abandoning an agreement with two of the U.S.'s largest trading partners, or making demands that provoke others to leave, will hurt the millions of Americans whose jobs rely on trade with Canada and Mexico, damage American business, and raise prices for U.S. consumers.

2) Make an updated NAFTA the model for modernizing other U.S. trade deals in the region, so it can serve as a pathway for making them fairer in areas such as rules of origin, trade in services and procurement.

3) The United States, which spends less on worker training and employment programs than almost all of its developed peers, **should update and expand its Trade Adjustment Assistance program**. A revamped system for helping displaced workers should emphasize training programs, apprenticeships, increased funding for vocational and lifelong learning, and subsidies for part-time opportunities to keep workers in the workforce.

4) Fair and mutually beneficial trade and investment agreements are not just about the economic benefits that accrue to member economies. The U.S. should consider trade and investment agreements as crucial geo-strategic building blocks that expand U.S. national and international power and build the foundations for diplomatic, political and strategic success. We believe this is especially important as our Hemisphere today faces the growing presence of countries such as China and Russia, who seek to reset the global rules to promote their vision of how citizens should live and prosper.

2017-2018

Signatures:

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Enrique García, Bolivia Former President of CAF: Development Bank of Latin America

Marc Grossman, United States Vice Chairman of the Cohen Group, Former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

Arturo Sarukhan, Mexico Former Ambassador to the United States

Members

Tomas Bilbao, United States Managing Director, Avila Strategies

Diana Correa Corrales, Mexico *Professor of Sociology, Economics, and Politics, Tecnológico de Monterrey*

Javier Corrales, United States Dwight W. Morrow 1895 Professor of Political Science, Amherst College

María Mercedes Cuéllar, Colombia Former Minister of Economic Development

Lucia Dammert, Peru Associate Professor, Universidad de Santiago de Chile Mark Feierstein, United States Senior Advisor, Albright Stonebridge Group Former Senior Director for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Obama Administration

Jose W. Fernandez, United States Partner, Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher

Marco Antonio Fernández Martínez, Mexico Professor, School of Government, Tecnológico de Monterrey Coordinator, Anticorruption and Education Program, México Evalúa

Kenneth N. Frankel, Canada *President, Canadian Council for the Americas*

Juan S. Gonzalez, United States Associate Vice President, The Cohen Group

2017-2018

David N. Greenlee, United States

Former Ambassador to Bolivia, Paraguay

Carlos Antonio Heredia Zubieta,

Mexico Associate Professor, Department of International Studies, Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE)

Donna Hrinak, United States

President, Boeing Latin America Former Ambassador to Brazil, Venezuela, Bolivia, the Dominican Republic

Richard L. Huber, United States President, InVina

Edna Camelia Jaime Treviño, Mexico *Founder and Director, México Evalúa*

Tomislav Kuljis, Bolivia *President, Hipermaxi S.A.*

Beatriz Leycegui, Mexico Partner, SAI Law & Economics

Angel Gustavo Lopez Montiel, Mexico Professor of Political Science, Tecnológico de Monterrey

William McIlhenny, United States Senior Non Resident Fellow, The German Marshall Fund of the United States

Mauricio Meschoulam Uziel, Mexico Director of the Mexico Research Center for Peace

Frank Mora, United States Director & Professor, Kimberly Green Latin America and Caribbean Center, Florida International University

Patricio Navia, Chile *Clinical Professor, Liberal Studies, New York University*

Gray Newman, United States Adjunct Professor, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University Former Chief Latin America Economist, Morgan Stanley

Ivan C. Rebolledo, United States Managing Partner, TerraNova Strategic Partners LLC

Julissa Reynoso, United States Former Ambassador to Uruguay Partner, Winston & Strawn

Iliana Rodríguez Santibañez, Mexico Director, Law and International Affairs Program, Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico City Campus

Christopher Sabatini, United States Lecturer, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University Director, Global Americans

2017-2018

Benito Sotelo, Mexico

Director, Legislative Analysis, Tecnológico de Monterrey

Dee Smith, United States *CEO, Strategic Insight Group Vice-Chair, Advisory Council of LLILAS/Benson Latin American Studies and Collections, University of Texas at Austin*

Carlos Andrés Uribe, Colombia *President, Ladrillera Santafé*

Observers

Antonio Garza, United States Former Ambassador to Mexico Counsel, White & Case

Stephanie Lavaux, France & Colombia *Professor of International Relations, Universidad del Rosario*

Adriana Mejía Hernández, Colombia Executive Director, Instituto de Ciencia Política Hernán Echavarría Olózaga

Andrés Molano Rojas, Colombia Academic Director, Instituto de Ciencia Política Hernán Echavarría Olózaga

Charles Shapiro, United States President, World Affairs Council of Atlanta Former Ambassador to Venezuela

Moisés Wasserman, Colombia Professor and Former Rector, Universidad Nacional de Colombia **Alexander F. Watson,** United States Former Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs