

Luis Maira, *The United States Facing Changes in the International Arena*

The author describes and analyzes some aspects regarding the origin and evolution of the United States in order to understand the country's actions in the international arena, the handling of its foreign policy and its reaction in times of crisis, particularly after the events of September 11. He also presents an overview of the transformations and transition periods the international system has experienced in the course of history. He highlights the current world restructuring after the terrorist attacks, as well as the elements that make up the new international scene. He explores the emergence of conflicts that differ substantially from the conventional wars between States. The work reviews the problems of fundamentalism and terrorism. The author finally ponders on the immediate future and the decision-making process in the United States.

Miguel Marín Bosch, *Mexico in Negotiation for Disarmament: the Geneva Conference on Disarmament*

In this essay, the author presents the background and historic course of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and examines the outstanding aspects of the role Mexico has played in it. It also describes CD functions and structure, its problems and achievements. Marín recalls central characters of Mexican diplomacy who have been responsible for the significant work the country has carried out in this field. The author reviews the efforts deployed by the UN to ban and reduce arms, and mentions the treaties originating in the CD. He closes with some thoughts on the scarce participation of the non-gov-

ernmental organizations (NGOs) in the work of the CD and on the topics it should consider today.

Martha Bárcena Coqui, *Evolution of the United Nations Collective Security System*

The author explores the collective security system of the United Nations (UN) and the problems it has faced over the last decades. Phenomena such as globalization, the end of the cold war, incorporation of new actors in international relations and ethnic confrontation, organized crime and other factors of transnational nature are among them. This has brought about complex changes in the work of the organization and has fostered a debate on the meaning of international security, both in government and in academic fields. On this matter, she highlights the prevailing positions and proposals. She further insists on the need to redefine the UN collective security system, taking into account historic experience, peacekeeping operations and the use of mechanisms such as *preventive action* to avoid conflicts.

Lilia Bermúdez Torres, *New Threats to International Peace and Security*

The author explains the existing relation between the new items in the world agenda and international security, as well as its implications within the UN. She analyzes the causes that originated the appearance of the so-called *new international agenda*. She points out its defining features and discusses the positions that have been contended within the organization to respond to the new threats to peace. She explores different approaches: contention, coercion, military, and also reviews the preventive approach, which promotes international

cooperation, and that Mexican diplomacy has faithfully followed. She finally offers elements that have contributed to limiting the militarist orientation, which dominated the early years of the post-cold-war period, and the perspectives of the cooperation approach.

Susana Chacón, *Mexico's Foreign Policy: One Year after the Change of Government*

The author evaluates Vicente Fox's first year in office on foreign policy related matters. She stresses its basic objectives, concerns and commitments. She also emphasizes the fundamental approach of Mexico's Foreign Affairs Ministry, as well as the most relevant actions it has undertaken, both in the national and in the international arenas. According to the author, this first year, *activism* has been instrumental in maintaining a significant presence abroad. She also reviews the events during this period regarding Mexico's international relations. Finally, she describes the most significant changes in Mexico's foreign policy during the present administration.

David J. Sarquís, *History or the Current Situation: Redefining the Analysis of the History in International Relations*

In this essay, the author describes the general characteristics of two basic approaches to the study of international relations: historical research and the analysis of current situations. He establishes, on one hand, the difference between the analysis of history and historicism, and on the other, provides the grounds to criticize *presentism*, the tendency to focus only on current affairs. The author understands this as an attitude that implicitly rejects the study of history to seek the general laws of human development. The author describes the scope and the limits of both methods, and makes the point

that as opposed as they may seem, these approaches actually complement one another, in the effort to understand international relations as an object of study.

Helen Clark, *New Zealand and Mexico: How to Benefit from the Flow of Knowledge from the Pacific*

The author offers a general overview of the current situation in New Zealand, its population, economy, domestic policy and its relation with the rest of the world. She points out how globalization has impacted the country, and considers the benefits it seeks to obtain from this process. She reviews relations with Mexico and with Latin America, and points towards the fields where it is possible to increase cooperation. She also underlines the concerns and the main objectives of New Zealand's government in education, scientific research, direct foreign investment, immigration and electronic commerce. Regarding foreign policy, she points out to the country's position on terrorism, disarmament and support to the UN.

Mei Zhaorong, *The International Situation and China's Foreign Policy*

This work presents the comments of specialists on the changes in the international strategic configuration after the fall of the Berlin Wall. It deals with topics such as moving from a bipolar world to a situation of one superpower coexisting with other countries with less power. It studies the impact of economic globalization, a multi-polar trend. The essay discusses China's position towards the current international panorama and its proposals regarding terrorism and the conflict in Afghanistan. The author emphasizes the basic principles and objectives of China's foreign policy.