

Cassio Luiselli Fernández, *Brazil and Mexico: A Necessary Rapprochement*

This article looks at the implications of a greater political and economic rapprochement between Mexico and Brazil, in terms of both Latin American integration and the challenges posed by globalization. The author, Cassio Luiselli, begins with a brief overview of the historic rapport between these, Latin America's leading economic powers, noting that, for the last 10 years or so, bilateral relations have been conducted cordially and respectfully, but that the two nations can hardly claim to have close ties. More recently, however, trade and investment have grown rapidly and the governments of Felipe Calderón and Lula da Silva have taken steps to acknowledge this new scenario by creating a high-level bi-national commission to provide an institutional framework for relations between Mexico and Brazil. If ties are successfully strengthened, says the author, a strategic economic integration agreement could be on the cards sometime in the future. Luiselli then discusses the implications of globalization and the "sliding" of the North Atlantic toward the North Pacific, which has become the gravitational center of the global economy and political power, particularly in light of the rapid rise of China and other Asian nations. His conclusion, which he supports with facts and figures, is that although they would gain clout in specific global affairs, neither Brazil nor Mexico are likely to occupy center stage in the new power configuration of the 21st century. Finally, he analyzes the role played by Brazil and Mexico as emerging powers, and the possible opportunities and mutual advantages they stand to gain in cer-

tain key sectors by forging closer ties. According to the author, seven areas in which bilateral cooperation would be of strategic importance are: the energy, industrial and infrastructure sectors, sustainable regional and territorial development in Latin America, the building of “people-to-people” ties, the reciprocal teaching of Spanish and Portuguese, and concerted joint efforts to promote Latin American integration.

Fermín Romero Vázquez, *Toward a Mexican Space Policy*

In this article Fermín Romero Vázquez reflects on the importance of drawing up a space policy that would position Mexico as a major player on the international space agenda in the medium to long term, with all the benefits this would entail for Mexican society. This year, the space issue features strongly on the domestic agenda, mainly because of the creation of the Mexican Space Agency (AEXA) and the hosting of the VI Americas Space Conference by Pachuca (November 15-19, 2010). This conference will afford Mexico the opportunity to assume the Pro Tempore Secretariat, draw up a policy for the aerospace sector, and possibly spearhead the region’s space agenda. After making an in-depth assessment of Mexico’s performance in terms of both its domestic space agenda and the international one, Romero Vázquez offers some suggestions as to how to bring the sector up to speed technologically. This, he says, would require greater coordination of the activities of the aeronautical, aerospace, telecommunications and IT sectors, which are currently dispersed throughout various levels of government, academic and research institutions, and the private sector. And while Mexico is still a long way from wielding influence on the international arena, its fledgling space industry has made some

noteworthy advances. In the medium term and with sufficient government backing, Romero Vázquez believes the industry has the potential to become a launch platform for the much-needed development of our country.

Alexandra Délano, Immigrant Integration vs. Transnational Ties? The Role of the Sending State

According to Alexandra Délano, recent research into migration has shown that maintaining ties with the country of origin and integration with the country of destination are not mutually exclusive processes. Ties with the motherland tend to grow weaker over time, with immigrants generally becoming fully integrated by the third generation, but often it is the government of the country of origin that encourages their continued existence. Critics argue that encouraging the upkeep of such transnational ties hinders integration. In the specific case of Mexico, the author illustrates that policies designed to reach out to migrants have both explicit and implicit objectives, including the furthering the government's political and economic interests, the need to maintain its legitimacy in the domestic and international arena, and secure a continued flow of remittances. However, since the 1990s, programs targeting Mexican migrants in the United States have also aimed to improve their quality of life. In this context, the question core to this essay and that needs to be discussed at greater length is whether or not the services and programs Mexico provides via its 50 consulates and the Institute for Mexicans Abroad (IME) facilitate or hinder the integration of migrants into U.S. society. Délano attempts to gauge the impact of these services—which include preventive healthcare and medical references, adult learning and leadership programs, to cite just a few—on inte-

gration based on interviews with Mexican migrants resident in the United States, program coordinators and civil servants in six U.S. cities. He also looks at how the United States has reacted to Mexico's activism on these issues and the implications of these programs within the broader debate on shared responsibility in the handling of migratory issues.