Forum: Fourth Committee (Decolonization and Special Political)

Question of: Strengthening the growing independence of Latin American countries from the US

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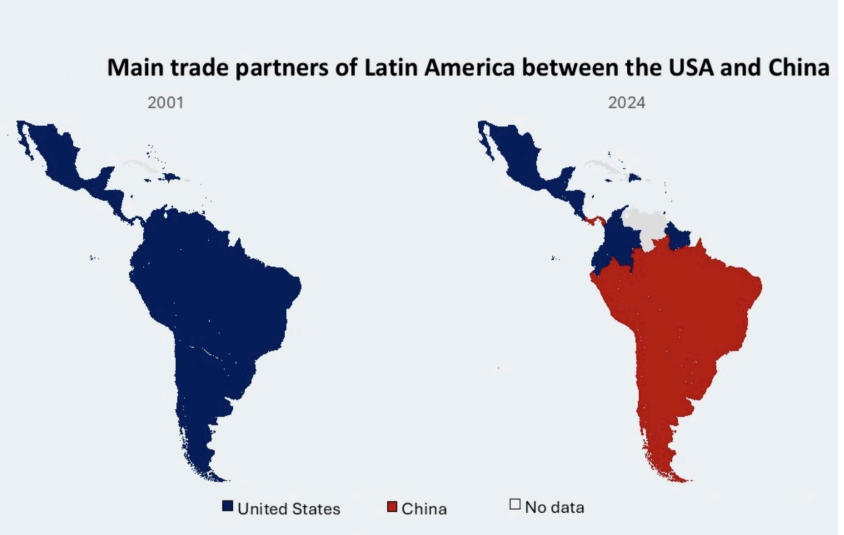
I. Description of the issue

The growing independence of Latin American countries from the U.S. has become an increasingly significant issue rooted in geographical proximity and historical power imbalances. For many years now, the U.S. has played a dominant role in the region through trade, investment, military cooperation, and political influence. Due to economic vulnerability, many economies in the region rely heavily on the export of natural resources and agricultural commodities, which makes their economies highly sensitive to U.S. demand, fluctuating prices, and monetary policy. As a result, their ties deepened and, in some cases, created significant dependence on economic growth and security. Since the early 2000s, however, many Latin American countries have sought to reduce their dependence on the United States, politically, economically, and in terms of security matters. Even though the U.S. remains one of the most important trading partners and investors in the region, the geopolitical landscape of the Western Hemisphere is undergoing a significant transformation. Latin American governments have increasingly taken measures to diversify their international relationships and strengthen regional cooperation, gradually reducing the influence of the traditional hegemony of the United States. Aimed at increasing their political and economic autonomy, governments across the region have pursued policies and sought greater independence in foreign policy decision-making. A key aspect of this issue is the transition from a unipolar regional structure to a multipolar framework, which means as much as a shift from the domination of a single major power to global power being dispersed among multiple great powers. One significant factor is the growing interaction with China, which has become the second-largest trading partner for Latin America as a whole, following the US an



preceding the EU, and is the largest trading partner of several countries, including Brazil, Chile, and Peru. Since its accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001, China has increasingly integrated with the global economy while continuously strengthening its ties economically and politically with Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). Their investment in infrastructure, energy, mining, and technology projects has provided many countries with alternative sources of investment and trade to the economic influence of the United States. Consequently, this diversification has altered the degree of leverage historically exercised by the United States, allowing Latin American Nations to pursue independent foreign policies that align more closely with their domestic interests. The extent of economic and political dependence varies considerably among the different countries because of geography, economic structure, and foreign policy priorities. Mexico remains highly integrated with the U.S. economy through the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, while countries such as Brazil and Chile have established broader trade diversification. Furthermore, regional organizations such as the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) also play a significant role in promoting greater independence. This shift towards independence, however, creates complex diplomatic and economic points of friction. The United States frequently views the growing presence of external competitors as a direct challenge to its original sphere of influence, while conversely, Latin American nations defend these partnerships as an important expression of national sovereignty and economic development. The tension even extends into international forums, where traditional bodies like the Organization of American States (OAS) have, in some cases, been supplemented by purely regional organizations that exclude North American representation. While some governments view greater autonomy as a means of reducing dependence and promoting national interests, others emphasize the continued benefits of close cooperation with the United States. Ultimately, this issue is particularly relevant for the United Nations because it affects international development, trade, migration, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Even though the past years show significant progress, the January 2026 U.S. military intervention in Venezuela has intensified discussions on the future of relations in the Western Hemisphere and proves that the issue is not yet solved and should be further discussed by the UN. Therefore, the major challenge remains to navigate this realignment while maintaining regional stability, respecting sovereignty, and fostering constructive, diplomatic relations while respecting international law.

Figure 1- Change of main trade parters 2001vs. 2024

II. Key terms

Latin America:
A cultural and geographic region in the Americas where Romance languages, primarily Spanish and Portuguese, are predominantly spoken. It encompasses 20 countries and multiple territories stretching from Mexico through Central America and the Caribbean, down to the southern tip of South America.

Western Hemisphere:
The half of the Earth that is located west of the Prime Meridian and east of the International Dateline. It mainly includes North America, South America, parts of Africa and Europe, and the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

UN:
The United Nations is the world's largest international organization, comprising 193 member states. Its primary goals are maintaining global peace and security, protecting human rights, promoting sustainable development, and upholding international law.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):
A collection of 17 interconnected universal objectives adopted by the United Nations in 2015. Designed to be achieved by 2030, they serve as a shared blueprint to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure global prosperity.

Autonomy: The ability of a country to make independent political, economic, and diplomatic decisions and govern themself without excessive external influence.

Dependency:
A situation in which one country relies heavily on another for trade, investment, security, or development assistance.

Sovereignty:
The supreme, independent authority and power of a state to govern itself without external interference.

Hegemony:

Refers to the political, economic, or cultural dominance of one group, state, or culture over others. It describes a situation where a single entity possesses enough power and influence to dictate the norms, values, and direction of a larger group or region.

Political intervention:

Intentional actions by one government or organization to interfere in the affairs of another country or in its own domestic economy. It often involves force or coercion with the main purpose of changing or influencing a situation.

Multilateral:

Describes something that involves or is participated in by more than two parties, nations, or groups.

Regional Integration: The process through which neighboring countries increase cooperation through political, economic, or social agreements.

Monroe Doctrine:

The U.S. foreign policy of 1823 that declared opposition to European intervention and colonization in the Western Hemisphere.

Roosevelt Corollary: An addition to the Monroe Doctrine, articulated in 1904, which asserted the right of the U.S. to intervene in the internal affairs of Latin American and Caribbean nations to maintain stability, effectively establishing the U.S. as an international police power in the Western Hemisphere.

Operation Condor:

A secret terror and intelligence network, established by right-wing military dictatorships in South America. The United States provided intelligence cooperation and political support to several participating military regimes during the

Figure 2- U.S. intervention in Latin America

Cold War, although the extent of direct involvement in Operation Condor remains debated among historians.

III. Background information

To be able to understand the issue and find possible solutions, it is important to have an overview of the historical background and to understand previous events that have shaped the region. The relationship between the United States and Latin America is historically defined by economic ties, ongoing power shifts, and the historical legacy of the Monroe Doctrine. It was a foundational 1823 U.S. foreign policy that warned European powers to stop interfering in the affairs of the Western Hemisphere and declared that the Americas were no longer open to colonization. Over time, this doctrine was often used to justify increased U.S. involvement in Latin American affairs, especially throughout the twentieth century. Under the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine in 1904, the United States asserted the right to intervene militarily in the internal affairs of Latin American nations to stabilize their economies and prevent European influence. This resulted in military occupations and interventions in countries such as Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua, as depicted in Figure 2. To repair relations and alleviate regional tension, the U.S. pivoted to the Good Neighbor Policy in the 1930s. This policy renounced direct military intervention, leading to the withdrawal of U.S. troops and paving the way for Pan-American cooperation, which was particularly vital in World War II. During the Cold War era, however, their relationship became deeply intertwined with the global geopolitical struggle against the Soviet Union. To prevent the spread of communism, the United States implemented a range of political, economic, intelligence, and military policies throughout Latin America. The results were numerous covert CIA operations, military and financial support for right-wing dictatorships, and direct destabilization of democratically elected socialist governments. Key interventions include the CIA-orchestrated overthrow of Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala (1954), the Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba (1961), and later backing right-wing dictatorships and anti-communism proxy forces in Central and Latin America, for instance, the cooperation with several governments associated with Operation Condor in the 1970s and 80s. The global trade patterns during this era were heavily skewed, as although foreign investment contributed to economic growth in some sectors, many Latin American economies remained dependent on commodity exports and experienced limited industrial diversification. This contributed to the increased economic dependency on the United States and has shifted the US interventions toward counter-narcotics, immigration, and free trade. The region's external debt as well as the export and trade concentration have tied countries like

Mexico closely to American economic cycles, making their economies highly sensitive to U.S. demand. However, globalization also created new opportunities for Latin American States to

diversify their economies and expand trade relations with Europe, Asia, and other developing countries. China has gained significant influence in the region, particularly in Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Argentina. Together with regional organizations that have emerged, for instance, CELAC, UNASUR, and MERCORSUR, this has contributed to a more multipolar regional environment and reshaped the hemispheric dynamic.

IV. Major Countries and Organizations Involved

United States:

The United States remains the largest source of foreign investment in many Latin American countries and continues to play an important role in trade, security, and migration issues.

Brazil: As the largest economy in Latin America, Brazil plays a central role in regional affairs by promoting multilateral diplomacy and strengthening relations with China and other emerging economies.

Mexico: Mexico maintains close economic ties with the United States through the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement but also seeks diversified international partnerships.

Argentina:

Argentina has pursued greater cooperation with emerging economies and regional organizations while maintaining important relations with the United States.

Venezuela: Venezuela has been one of the strongest advocates for reducing U.S. influence in Latin America.

China: China has become a major investor and trading partner throughout the region.

Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC): An intergovernmental mechanism for dialogue and political cooperation, consisting of 33 countries. It was established in 2011 to promote regional integration, unity, and development, acting as a unified voice in international negotiations

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC):

The commission was established by the UN and provides a framework to help its member states to achieve equitable long-term economic and social development.

Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR):

A prominent South American economic and political bloc with the primary goal to promote free trade, the frictionless movement of goods and services, and regional economic integration.

Organization of American States (OAS):

The world's oldest regional multilateral organization, bringing together the nations of the Western Hemisphere. It serves as a central forum for political dialogue, collective action, human rights, and security.

V. Timeline of Events

Year	Event
1823	Proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine by the United States
1898	After the Spanish-American War, the U.S. emerged as a dominant power in the Caribbean and Latin America
1904	The Roosevelt Corollary was added to justify U.S. intervention in Latin America
1933	The Good Neighbor Policy reduced direct military intervention but maintained U.S. influence through diplomacy
1948	Creation of the Organization of American States, a strong regional organization that initially reflected strong U.S. leadership
1959	During the Cuban Revolution, Cuba broke away from U.S. influence and aligned with the Soviet Union

Year	Event
1962	The Cuban Missile Crisis highlighted Latin America's role in Cold War rivalry and U.S. security policy
1973	The Coup in Chile reinforced concerns about U.S. interference in Latin America
1980s	The U.S. interventions in Nicaragua and El Salvador increased anti-U.S. sentiment across parts of Latin America
1991	The formation of MERCORSUR promoted regional economic cooperation independent of the U.S.
1994	The North American Free Trade Agreement deepened economic integration between the U.S., Canada, and Mexico
2004	The creation of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our America offered an alternative to U.S. led economic models
2008	The creation of the Union of South American Nations reflected efforts to address regional issues without U.S. leadership
2010	The creation of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States symbolized greater regional independence
2013	China became a major trading partner for many Latin American countries, which further reduced the region's economic dependence on the U.S.
2020s	Latin American countries increasingly diversified their trade and foreign policy, reducing reliance on the United States while maintaining relations with it
2023-2025	Several Latin American countries show greater interest in BRICS, which demonstrates efforts to diversify diplomatic and economic partnerships beyond the United States

XI. Previous attempts to solve the issue:

Regional Integration:

Organizations such as MERCOSUR and CELAC were established to strengthen economic, political, and diplomatic cooperation among Latin American countries. They seek to promote regional integration, facilitate trade, and provide platforms for dialogue and coordination.

Economic Diversification:

Latin American countries have expanded trade with Europe, Asia, and Africa to reduce dependency on the United States. In particular, expanding trade and investment with China has provided many

countries with additional export markets and diverse opportunities instead of reliance on a single partner.

Sustainable Development Programs:

Several governments have implemented policies promoting industrial development, renewable energy projects, and economic diversification to strengthen long-term economic resilience.

Multilateral Diplomacy:

Latin American countries increasingly participate in global forums such as the United Nations, BRICS, and the Group of Twenty. This has increased access to broader sources of investment, financing, and international support.

VII. Possible Solutions:

1. Strengthen regional trade & cooperation

Supporting and funding organizations such as CELAC, the Southern Common Market, and the Union of South American Nations could strengthen the region's bargaining position in international negotiations. Furthermore, it helps to coordinate trade, infrastructure, healthcare, environmental protection, and security policies more independently from the United States. Meanwhile, it encourages dialogue between member states and thereby improves policy coordination among the countries.

2. Invest in domestic industries

Many Latin American countries mainly export raw materials and import finished goods; therefore, governments could encourage investment in domestic manufacturing, agriculture, and technology factors. Building stronger local industries could help to create more jobs, increase economic resilience, and reduce dependence on foreign companies and imported manufactured goods.

3. Improve infrastructure and digital connection

Investing in transportation, ports, and internet infrastructure could allow countries to trade more efficiently while expanding access to global markets and improving regional connectivity. Additionally, an improved infrastructure also supports education and innovation, which helps to develop advanced industries in the long term.

4. Promote sustainable development

Developing renewable energy and sustainable use of natural resources can reduce reliance on imported energy and fossil fuels while creating new industries. Latin America has significant renewable energy potential, including solar, wind, and hydroelectric power, and by supporting climate finance and green technology transfers, this could serve as an alternative to external imports.

5. Maintain balanced foreign relations and expand partnerships

Latin American countries may consider pursuing a balanced foreign policy by further cooperating with multiple global powers rather than relying on any single partner. In terms of trade as well as investment opportunities, strategic partnerships with countries across different regions allow governments to diversify their relations and preserve foreign policy autonomy.

VIII. How to prepare as a delegate:

All delegates are required to write at least one draft resolution and a minimum of two, preferably three, position papers so that all topics of the forum are fully covered. The deadline to send in the documents is set for 28.08.2026. Please contact me via the email at the top. Documents that are

handed in after the deadline will not be corrected, and the delegate will not be taken into consideration for the awards.

The delegates should inform themselves about the following questions:

- How is your country involved in the issue, and what effects would growing independence have on your economy?
- Does your country have a certain alliance or close relation with a Latin American country?
- What are the benefits and risks of reducing dependence on the United States?
- What factors contribute most to Latin American dependence on external powers?
- How can countries strengthen autonomy without damaging their economic growth?
- How can the UN support sustainable development and regional cooperation?
- What measures could be taken in order to maintain peace, avoid tension, and respect sovereignty while solving the issue?
- How can Latin American countries diversify their international partnerships without replacing one form of dependence with another?

IX. Relevant UN Treaties and events:

The UN Charter:
Emphasizes the sovereign equality of a state, the importance of non-intervention in domestic affairs, and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/ctc/uncharter.pdf

UN Economic and Social Council Resolution 106 (VI) of 25 February 1948:
Officially established the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, which is now known as the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

https://docs.un.org/en/e/RES/106(VI)

UN Generell Assembly Resolution 1514(XV), 1960-61:

The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples promotes self-determination and political independence for countries and peoples under colonial and foreign rule.

https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/206145?v=pdf

UN Generell Assembly Resolution 2131(XX), 1965:
The Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of their Independence and Sovereignty further emphasizes the right of nations to make independent decisions without external intrusion.

https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/203886

UN Generell Assembly Resolution 2625(XXV), 1970:
The declaration on friendly relations further reinforces national sovereignty, self-determination and non-interference.

https://treaties.un.org/doc/source/docs/A_RES_2625-Eng.pdf

The 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development by the UN:
Includes goals that are related to economic development, reduced inequalities, and international cooperation.

https://sdgs.un.org/goals

X. Useful links

UN website:
https://www.un.org/en/

UN Digital Library:

https://digitallibrary.un.org/

Cambridge Dictionary:
https://dictionary.cambridge.org/

Historical background:
https://www.britannica.com/topic/History-of-US-Intervention-in-Latin-America-and-the-Caribbean

https://www.britannica.com/topic/20th-century-international-relations-2085155/The-Locarno-era-and-the-dream-of-disarmament

XI. Sources

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https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2025/769504/EPRS_BRI(2025)769504_EN.pdf

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