

BAYLOR BRIEFS

***THE NEGATIVE: CASEBOOKS ON SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASING
U.S. ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT TOWARD CUBA, MEXICO OR
VENEZUELA***

Volume II

**CURRENT U.S. POLICY
SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASING U.S.
ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT TOWARD
CUBA, MEXICO OR VENEZUELA**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. An Overview of U.S. Economic Engagement Toward Cuba, Mexico or Venezuela	1
II. Strategic Overview	2
III. Cuba Has Adequate Access to International Trade	3
IV. The Obama Administration Has Already Sufficiently Loosened the Embargo	4
V. The U.S. Is Adequately Prepared to Act in the Event of an Oil Spill in Cuban Waters	6
VI. Cuba Already Has as Many Tourists as It Can Handle	7
VII. The TSRA Adequately Allows for Food and Medicine Sales to Cuba	8
VIII. Cuban Baseball Players Already Have Adequate Access to Major League Baseball	9
IX. Hurricane Preparation Collaboration Already Exists	10
X. Telecommunication Sales to Cuba Are Already Allowed	11
XI. Microfinance Loans Are Already Sufficiently Available for Latin American Nations	12
XII. Fair Trade Is Working Now Because It Is Voluntary	13
XIII. Mexico Best Deals With Its Own Poverty Issues	14
XIV. Existing Firearms Trafficking Enforcement Measures Are Sufficient	17
XV. Border Security Is Sufficient at Present	20
XVI. Existing Guestworker Programs Are Meeting the Needs of Immigrants	21
XVII. Existing Programs Adequately Regulate Money Laundering	23
XVIII. The Colorado Water Agreement Solves the Problem of Water Delivery	24
XIX. “Beyond Merida” Is Fully Supported by the Obama Administration	25
XX. The Mexican Trucking Issue Has Been Resolved	26
XXI. Mexico Is Already Developing a Smart Electrical Grid	27
XXII. There Will Be No Economic Meltdown in Venezuela	28
XXIII. ALBA Provides a Useful Alternative to Reliance on U.S. Hegemony	29
XXIV. Concluding Words on Inherency	30
INDEX TO EVIDENCE	31
EVIDENCE	32

I. INTRODUCTION: AN OVERVIEW OF U.S. ENGAGEMENT TOWARD CUBA, MEXICO OR VENEZUELA

Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its economic engagement toward Cuba, Mexico or Venezuela.

This brief introduction is designed to provide a thumbnail overview of existing U.S. economic engagement toward Cuba, Mexico, and Venezuela.

In the case of Cuba, the U.S. has had very little economic engagement over the past half century. The U.S. economic embargo of Cuba formally began in 1963 with the Cuban Asset Control Regulations (CACR), prepared at President Kennedy's direction by the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC). These regulations prohibited any trade or other economic transactions between U.S. entities and Cuban nationals or the government of Cuba. The embargo, which had started as just a policy decision of the executive branch, was given the force of law through two acts of Congress: The 1992 Cuban Democracy Act (CDA) and the 1996 Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act (more commonly called the Helms-Burton Act).

The Obama administration has, however, taken some steps to loosen the embargo. At the 2009 Summit of the Americas, President Obama said "the United States seeks a new beginning with Cuba." As part of this new beginning, he announced that Cuban-Americans would be able to travel freely to Cuba and limits on family remittances would be lifted. In addition, he supported a move to accept Cuban membership in the Organization of American States – an invitation that the Cuban government declined to accept. Over the next two years, the Obama administration offered additional gestures, such as allowing U.S. telecommunication companies to do business in Cuba and allowing all Americans (even non-family members) to send remittances to Cuba.

Cuba has, however, responded in disappointing fashion to the overtures offered by the Obama administration. In December of 2009, the Cuban government arrested U.S. Agency of International Development contractor, Alan Gross, for the "crime" of trying to assist some members of Cuba's small Jewish community in establishing a connection to the Internet. Over strong U.S. objections, the Cuban government convicted Mr. Gross of "subversion" and sentenced him to fifteen years in prison. In addition, the Cuban government has continued to arrest record numbers of political dissidents. Reports of extreme human rights abuses have been verified by international groups such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. The Obama administration has taken the position that any further loosening of the economic embargo should be conditioned on a positive response from the Cuban government.

The issues related to economic engagement with Mexico could not be more different than those with Cuba. Whereas the U.S. has almost no trade relationship with Cuba, Mexico is America's second largest trade partner. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) ties the U.S. and Mexican economies closely together. Of all Mexican exports, 85 percent – more than \$200 billion annually – are bound for the United States. The United States, in turn exports about \$220 billion annually to Mexico, more than to any country other than Canada. Critics claim that NAFTA benefits large corporations at the expense of workers in the U.S. and Mexico. But considerable evidence indicates that NAFTA benefits the poor by promoting job growth and increasing wage levels.

The other major issue of U.S. economic engagement related to Mexico is the matter of violence at the hands of drug trafficking organizations (DTOs). The Merida Initiative was a 2007 agreement between the U.S. and Mexico, calling for \$1.6 billion in U.S. funding to assist in fighting the drug cartels. The Obama administration has negotiated a follow-on agreement called "Beyond Merida" – a program designed to focus less on the military aspects of fighting the drug war and more on economic development.

Among the three topic countries, Venezuela is the one most in transition. Long-time Venezuelan president, Hugo Chávez, died in March of 2013, creating the need for a new presidential election. Nicolas Maduro, the hand-picked successor of Chávez, promised to continue Venezuela's opposition to U.S. influence in the Hemisphere. The opposing candidate, Henrique Capriles, had urged a closer relationship with the United States. The narrow of electoral victory for Maduro has created a difficult choice for the Obama administration. The U.S. has, so far, chosen to question the legitimacy of Maduro's election, endorsing Capriles' call for a complete electoral recount. Ironically, despite the political disagreements, the U.S. remains the main purchaser of Venezuelan oil exports.

II. STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

This casebook is designed to provide background materials on the economic engagement topic in order that negative teams may construct “inherency” positions. Every affirmative case must have an inherency component: this requires that the affirmative case prove that the harm cited by the affirmative will continue, absent the adoption of the affirmative plan. If the negative team can demonstrate that the harm cited by the affirmative team will be addressed as well or better by some present system mechanism than by the affirmative plan, then the negative team should win the debate. Several guidelines should be carefully followed by the negative team as it prepares its inherency positions on the economic engagement topic:

1. AVOID CONTRADICTING DISADVANTAGES: The negative position is much more credible and persuasive when it is internally consistent. Suppose that the affirmative case calls for lifting the ban on U.S. oil companies doing business with Mexico. The harm claim in the case is that the foreign companies now attempting to drill for oil in the deepwater regions of the North Cuba Basin are likely to have an oil spill, devastating fragile environmental regions. The negative hopes to win the debate with a disadvantage argument that allowing U.S. oil companies to join the drilling effort will dramatically increase the risk of a spill, turning the case harm. Yet the first negative speaker chooses to use an inherency argument claiming that Cuba is very protective of the environment and will take appropriate steps to avoid an oil spill. This inherency argument alone would never be sufficient to defeat the case since the affirmative team would argue that the best intentions will be irrelevant in accidental oil spills. Yet the inherency argument also takes out the oil spill disadvantage. A better strategy, in this case, would be to avoid the inherency argument altogether rather than to risk contradicting the disadvantage.

2. THINK BEYOND THE LIMITS OF THE AFFIRMATIVE INHERENCY CLAIM: Inexperienced first negative debaters simply listen to the affirmative inherency claim and then attempt to directly deny this claim. Occasionally this is a wise decision, but usually it is not. Direct denial of the inherency claim offered by the affirmative keeps the negative inherency attack on the ground chosen by the affirmative. Consider the following example: The affirmative team proposes that the U.S. should expand economic assistance to Mexico by doubling the funding for Plank 4 of “Beyond Merida” – essentially a foreign aid program designed to reduce poverty as a way of fighting drug violence. The first negative debater argues that the Obama administration is already increasing funding for “Beyond Merida.” This is an especially unfortunate choice given that the second negative speaker expects to win the debate with an argument that increasing foreign aid is the link to a “politics” disadvantage. Because of the inherency argument, the disadvantage is shown to be either untrue or nonunique. It would have been better for the first negative speaker to make no inherency argument at all than to make one that contradicts the disadvantage. In any case, the affirmative team can easily defeat the inherency argument by pointing out that Mexico has its own poverty reduction program – called Oportunidades – that is far superior to any foreign aid program that the U.S. might offer (see page 14 in this volume). The proper reaction is to avoid inherency arguments that follow the pattern of “the affirmative plan is already being done.” Instead, make inherency arguments showing how some existing mechanism wholly different from the affirmative plan is solving the affirmative harm. In this case, the inherency argument could show that the Mexican government has its own resources and is fully capable of addressing its own poverty problems. This argument minimizes the affirmative harm without undermining the politics disadvantage.

3. INTEGRATE THE INHERENCY ATTACK INTO THE NEGATIVE STRATEGY: The inherency position should be **ADVOCATED** by the negative team. Some debate judges do not require that the negative team advocate anything, or even that the negative position be consistent. Most judges, however, expect the negative team to defend some policy. Whether the judge requires it or not, the negative position will inevitably be more credible and persuasive when the negative team can advocate some alternative to the resolution.

III. CUBA HAS ADEQUATE ACCESS TO INTERNATIONAL TRADE

1. CUBA HAS FOUND SUBSTITUTE TRADING PARTNERS.

David Seaman, (Prof., Social Science, U. Osnabruck, Germany), U.S. DEMOCRACY PROMOTION: THE CASE OF CUBA, 2010, 57.

While the U.S. embargo creates an extremely difficult economic situation in Cuba, the island is able to find relief from much of the economic pressure in several ways. Firstly, the lack of international support for the embargo has made it possible for Cuba to continuously find substitute trading partners and adapt to new and changing circumstances, helping fill the void created by the end of the massive Soviet subsidies and aid. Cuba enjoys trade with several Western capitalist states, foremost Canada, Spain, and the Netherlands, Cuba's three largest Western trading partners. Most recently, the country has developed close trade relations with Venezuela and China, which together now make up more than 50% off all trade for Cuba.

2. THE EMBARGO IMPOSES MINIMAL HARDSHIP GIVEN OTHER TRADING PARTNERS.

Steve Chapman, (Staff), CREATORS SYNDICATE, Sept. 18, 2010. Retrieved Dec. 26, 2012 from Nexis.

The regime prefers to blame any problems on the Yankee imperialists, who have enforced an economic embargo for decades. In fact, its effect on the Cuban economy is modest, since Cuba trades freely with the rest of the world. How potent can the boycott be when we're the only participant? Cubans have had to pay for their meager economic gains by surrendering their political liberties. In its latest annual report, Human Rights Watch says, "Cuba remains the one country in Latin America that represses virtually all forms of political dissent."

3. ACTIVE TRADE RELATIONS HAS NOT IMPROVED CUBA'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD.

Tony Karon, (Staff, Time Magazine), DO WE REALLY NEED AN EMBARGO AGAINST CUBA?, Apr. 21, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.time.com/time/arts/article/0,8599,48773,00.html>.

Cuba has been trading normally with most of Latin America and Europe for more than a decade now, and Castro has shown no sign of reforming his system or ending repression. The idea that trade promotes human rights is a self-serving myth promoted by corporate America, and there's little reason to believe that an end to the embargo would automatically improve the political situation in Cuba.

4. BRAZIL HAS GIVEN HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO SUPPORT MODERNIZATION EFFORTS IN CUBA.

UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL, Feb. 2, 2012. Retrieved Dec. 26, 2012 from Nexis.

Economic upgrading in all sectors and a phased end to Cuba's international isolation offer lucrative opportunities for Brazil's state and private sectors. Brazil will invest \$640 million in a \$900 million modernization of the Mariel container port, west of Havana, led by the Brazilian firm Odebrecht. Brazil is also giving Cuba \$400 million in credits for food imports and investing \$200 million in modernizing Cuban agriculture. Rousseff pledged Cuba a long-term commitment to help its economic regeneration.

5. CANADA HAS TRIED AND FAILED TO USE ITS TRADE RELATIONSHIP WITH CUBA TO MODERATE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES.

Ana Covarrubias, (Prof., Foreign Policy, Center for International Studies, Mexico), HUMAN RIGHTS REGIMES IN THE AMERICAS, 2010, 178.

In January 1997, the Cuban and Canadian governments signed a Joint Declaration of Ministers of Foreign Relations during Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy's visit to Cuba. The Declaration strengthened the Canadian-Cuban rapprochement even more by encouraging Canadian development aid, trade, investment, cultural exchange, diplomatic contacts and support of Cuba in international forums. The Canadian government started granting technical aid to reform Cuban institutions in the economic, legal and judicial spheres. But Castro's government did not react as the Canadian government expected and, in the face of a lack of improvement in the area of human rights, the Canadian government started to cool its relations with Cuba. In April 1998, Jean Chrétien visited Cuba and pressed for the release of members of the opposition known as the Group of Four (Grupo de Trabajo de la Disidencia Interna), but failed. Ten months later, after issuing the Law for the Protection of the National Independence and Economy of Cuba, Castro's government charged the dissidents with sedition and tried them in a closed trial. The dissidents were found guilty and sentenced to between three and a half and five years in prison. Chrétien informed the Cuban government that Canada would review all the bilateral projects that had been agreed upon. In the face of Cuba's resistance to change and the hardening of its policies against the opposition, Canada put an end to human rights programmes with the Cuban government.

IV. THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION HAS ALREADY SUFFICIENTLY LOOSENED THE EMBARGO

1. THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION HAS ALREADY MADE AN EFFORT TO ENGAGE CUBA.

David Bernell, (Prof., Political Science, Oregon State U.), *CONSTRUCTING U.S. FOREIGN POLICY: THE CURIOUS CASE OF CUBA*, 2011, 140-141.

Obama's May 2008 campaign speech to the Cuban American National Foundation spoke to the idea of engagement, demonstrating not only consistency with the past by holding out for Cuban freedom, but a departure as well by advocating a new strategy to achieve that goal. Obama stated, "Now I know what the easy thing is to do for American politicians. Every four years, they come down to Miami, they talk tough, they go back to Washington, and nothing changes in Cuba . . . It's time for more than tough talk that never yields results. It's time for a new strategy. . . It is time to pursue direct diplomacy, with friend and foe alike. . . . I would be willing to lead that diplomacy at a time and place of my choosing, but only when we have an opportunity to advance the interests of the United States, and to advance the cause of freedom for the Cuban people." [ellipses are in the original]

2. THE U.S. IS NOW FOLLOWING A VERY REASONABLE POLICY OF AWAITING A RESPONSE FROM CUBA.

Lana Wylie, (Ph.D. Dissertation, Political Science, U. Massachusetts), *PERCEPTIONS OF CUBA: CANADIAN AND AMERICAN POLICIES IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE*, 2010, 107.

President Obama followed through on his campaign promise to ease restrictions on travel by Cuban Americans and allow greater levels of remittances. Just before heading off to the Summit of the Americas meeting in Trinidad and Tobago in the spring of 2009, he announced that Americans with relatives in Cuba could visit Cuba without any restrictions and could also send as much money as they like to family on the island. In July 2009 he removed the electronic billboard that had displayed messages from the Interests Section critical of the Cuban government and reopened migration talks with the Cuban government that had been suspended in 2003. Yet Obama has also said that the next major move is up to the Cubans. His administration reiterates the traditional calls for change within Cuba. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has explained: 'We're continuing to explore ways to further democracy in Cuba and provide the Cuban people with more opportunities.' When Obama's changes were criticized as insufficient by Fidel Castro, Hillary Clinton responded: 'Well, we would welcome him releasing some political prisoners.'

3. ACADEMIC TRAVEL IS NOW PERMITTED.

Daniel Fisk, (Former, Deputy Assistant U.S. Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs), *THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI INTER-AMERICAN LAW REVIEW*, Fall 2010, 79-80.

As of October 1, 2010, in addition to those who claim to have "close family" in Cuba, others who can legally travel to Cuba include journalists and support personnel; full-time professionals to conduct research or to attend professional meetings and conferences; those involved in the production or distribution of agricultural products, medicines and medical devices; and U.S. telecommunications service providers. It is also possible to travel to Cuba to pursue educational activities, including course work and academic research; to engage in free-lance journalism, public performances, and activities related to private foundations, research, or educational institutions; or to pursue activities related to the export or import of informational materials.

4. U.S. AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS NOW CUBA'S MAIN SUPPLIER OF FOODSTUFFS.

Paolo Spadoni, (Prof., Political Science, Augusta State U.), *FAILED SANCTIONS: WHY THE U.S. EMBARGO AGAINST CUBA COULD NEVER WORK*, 2010, 170-171.

The passage of the TSRA in 2000 punched a significant hole in the U.S. embargo against Cuba. The United States is now the main supplier of foodstuffs to the island and U.S. sales reached record levels in 2007-2008.

5. U.S. INVESTMENT IS NOW INCREASING.

ST. PETERSBURG TIMES, Jan. 18, 2011, 12A.

The White House announced three steps Friday that officials said will enhance the "free flow of information" between the two nations. The administration will relax travel restrictions for U.S. citizens seeking to visit Cuba. It will enable Americans to send money to the island to support private enterprise. And it will allow direct flights to Cuba from a host of new American gateways, almost certainly to include Tampa International Airport. The moves build on the Obama administration's 2009 reversal of Bush-era travel restrictions on Cuban-Americans to the island.

6. FAMILY TRAVEL TO CUBA IS NOW FREELY ALLOWED.

Daniel Erikson, (Sr. Adviser to the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs), *SHIFTING THE BALANCE: OBAMA AND THE AMERICAS*, 2011, 108.

Beginning in April 2009, the Obama administration implemented several changes in the rules governing legal travel and financial engagement with Cuba. On April 13, the White House announced that it would work to remove restrictions on family travel and remittances to Cuba and expand the definition of family for such purposes, allow telecommunication companies to provide increased access to networks within Cuba, and broaden the definition of goods that may be legally donated to persons in Cuba. The main goal of these changes was a dramatic increase in travel to Cuba by Cuban Americans, whom Obama characterized as the best ambassadors for democracy. While the regulations on family travel and remittances did not take effect until September 3, Obama's early statements sent a signal that the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) would be more lenient with requests for engagement with Cuba than under his predecessor.

7. HIGH-LEVEL TALKS BETWEEN U.S. AND CUBAN REPRESENTATIVES ARE ONGOING.

David Bernell, (Prof., Political Science, Oregon State U.), *CONSTRUCTING U.S. FOREIGN POLICY: THE CURIOUS CASE OF CUBA*, 2011, 139.

While the progress in thawing U.S.-Cuban relations has been limited since April 2009, the Obama Administration has continued to explore opportunities for engagement. In July of 2009, Obama began the resumption of immigration talks with Cuba. These talks, which began in 1994 in the wake of a wave of illegal Cuban immigration to the United States, were suspended by George W. Bush in 2003. In a similar vein, the two governments have held talks on the resumption of direct postal service between the two countries. In one such instance, in September of 2009, Cuban authorities invited a State Department official to turn her planned, brief visit to Cuba into a six-day stay that included meetings with not only government officials, but also opposition figures and people from Cuban civil organizations.

8. U.S. TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES ARE NOW ALLOWED TO DO BUSINESS IN CUBA.

David Bernell, (Prof., Political Science, Oregon State U.), *CONSTRUCTING U.S. FOREIGN POLICY: THE CURIOUS CASE OF CUBA*, 2011, 2-3.

The arrival of Barack Obama in the White House has led to expectations (and concerns) that U.S. policy could soon change. In April of 2009, soon after his inauguration, President Obama stated at a Summit of the Americas meeting that the United States sought a new beginning with Cuba, and that he was willing to have his administration engage the Cuban government on a wide array of issues. The President did initiate a change, lifting restrictions on family visits and remittances sent to the island. He also permitted investments there by U.S. telecommunications companies, and resumed talks on migration that the Bush administration halted in 2003. He has, however, held off on more far reaching measures, insisting that Cuba first take steps to improve its human rights record and move toward democracy.

9. REMITTANCES ARE NOW FREELY ALLOWED TO CUBA.

Daniel Fisk, (Former, Deputy Assistant U.S. Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs), *THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI INTER-AMERICAN LAW REVIEW*, Fall 2010, 80-81.

President George W. Bush returned to a more restrictive remittance policy, keeping the Clinton era amount of \$ 1,200 annually, but limiting remittances to immediate family in Cuba. President Obama lifted those restrictions in April 2009. Through a policy directive, the Obama Administration removed the limits on amounts and frequency of remittances, and also expanded the members of a family in Cuba who are eligible to receive funds.

10. THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION SUPPORTED CUBA'S ENTRANCE INTO THE OAS.

Miroslav Nincik, (Prof., Political Science University of California, Davis), *THE LOGIC OF POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT*, 2011, 110.

Castro's retirement from active leadership in 2006 and the 2008 U.S. election opened prospects for policy change. During the presidential campaign, Barack Obama promised to reconsider the U.S. stance toward Havana, as did future secretary of state Hillary Clinton. In April 2009, Raul Castro expressed a willingness to discuss a broad range of issues with Washington. Although President Obama extended the sanctions for another year, he also took measures to end restrictions on the ability of Cuban-Americans to visit and send money to family in Cuba. In June 2009, the Organization of American States, with no U.S. opposition, ended Cuba's suspension.

V. THE U.S. IS ADEQUATELY PREPARED TO ACT IN THE EVENT OF AN OIL SPILL IN CUBAN WATERS

1. U.S. COMPANIES ALREADY HAVE NECESSARY LICENSES ALLOWING THEM TO ASSIST IN CONTAINING AN OIL SPILL IN CUBAN WATERS.

Michael Bromwich, (Dir., Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Dept. of the Interior), FOREIGN OCS READINESS, Senate Hearing, Oct. 18, 2011, 7.

The U.S. is also taking measures to ensure that the appropriate private industry parties are able to respond quickly in the event of an oil spill in Cuban waters. The Department of Commerce and the Treasury Department have a long-standing practice of providing licenses to address environmental contingencies in Cuban waters. The Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) has issued a number of licenses for post-incident oil spill containment and cleanup items for use by U.S. companies in Cuban waters. These items include booms, skimmers, dispersants, pumps and other equipment and supplies necessary to minimize environmental damage in the event of a spill. Several such applications are currently under review by BIS, including applications for a subsea well containment system and related equipment, such as remotely operated submersible vehicles and subsea construction, dive support, and well intervention vessels. In consultation with the Department of State, the Treasury Department can issue licenses to U.S. entities to prepare for and to operate in the event of an oil spill. The Treasury Department has been issuing such licenses for over a decade, including licenses for environmental response, maritime salvage, and spill prevention activities.

2. FOREIGN DRILLING COMPANIES HAVE SUBMITTED TO U.S. SAFETY INSPECTIONS PRIOR TO DRILLING ATTEMPTS.

Jennifer Dlouhy, (Staff), THE HOUSTON CHRONICLE, Nov. 3, 2011, 1.

The U.S. has no say in the company's drilling or in the Cuban regulations that will govern the work. And America's power to influence the planned drilling is even more limited because of the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba, which generally bars commerce with the nation and caps the amount of American-made components in offshore drilling vessels and other equipment at 10 percent. Nevertheless, the Interior Department has used its leverage with Repsol, which has leases to drill in American Gulf waters, to extract a commitment that the company will follow U.S. standards for its Cuban drilling. Repsol also has agreed to allow Coast Guard and Interior Department inspectors to evaluate the Scarabeo 9 rig that will drill the well, before that vessel crosses into Cuban waters.

3. THE U.S. COAST GUARD IS PREPARED TO RESPOND IN THE EVENT OF AN OIL SPILL IN CUBAN WATERS.

James Coon, (Chief of Staff, House Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation), OFFSHORE DRILLING IN CUBA AND THE BAHAMAS: THE U.S. COAST GUARD'S OIL SPILL READINESS AND RESPONSE PLANNING, Hearing, Jan. 30, 2012, x.

Despite limitations on enforcement and oversight capability, the Coast Guard has taken a number of steps to prepare for a potential spill in the North Cuba Basin. In order to prevent a spill from occurring, the Coast Guard has engaged with Repsol officials from the company to review their spill prevention and response plans. Repsol agreed to allow Coast Guard and BSEE inspectors to visit the MODU and review its safety systems.

4. PRIVATE U.S. COMPANIES HAVE ALREADY ENGAGED IN TALKS WITH CUBAN AUTHORITIES IN PREPARATION FOR AN OIL SPILL RESPONSE.

Paul Schuler, (CEO, Clean Caribbean & Americas, Fort Lauderdale, FL), FOREIGN OCS READINESS, Senate Hearing, Oct. 18, 2011, 29.

In the past 20 years CCA has responded to a number of spills in the Caribbean, Latin America and North America. We have been involved in Cuba since 2001 when we first applied and received licenses from the Department of Treasury and Department of Commerce to travel and to export our equipment to Cuba. This was in response to drilling that took place by Repsol and Petronas. CCA staff, including myself, have traveled to Cuba for contingency planning, training, drills and exercises with these companies. With the new round of drilling coming up we have recently been back to Cuba to work with Repsol and Petronas. CCA is jointly developing Repsol's oil spill contingency plan with our sister cooperative Oil Spill Response Limited in the UK. OSRL also has a large stockpile of air mobile equipment and they have no limitations on sending equipment and personnel to Cuba.

VI. CUBA ALREADY HOSTS AS MANY TOURISTS AS IT CAN HANDLE

1. TOURISM TO CUBA IS AT RECORD LEVELS.

Caribbean Journal, CUBA REPORTS "RECORD NUMBER" OF TOURIST ARRIVALS IN 2012, Jan. 22, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.caribjournal.com/2013/01/11/cuba-reports-record-number-of-tourist-arrivals-in-2012/>.

Almost 2.84 million foreign tourists traveled to Cuba in 2012, according to a report in Cuba's Granma government newspaper. That number reportedly represented growth of 4.5 percent from 2011, and represented a record for the Caribbean island. Cuba said the growth came largely from improvements from markets including Canada, its largest source market, which brought more than one million tourists for the second year in a row. Argentina, China and Brazil were among the other countries contributing to tourism growth.

Latin American Herald Tribune, CUBA BREAKS TOURIST RECORDS, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.laht.com/article.asp?CategoryId=14510&ArticleId=356461>.

Cuba welcomed more than 1 million tourists in the first four months of the year, a record, according to the government, which on Tuesday announced a policy of "real estate development" linked to the sector. At a press conference during the 30th annual FITCUBA tourism fair in Havana, Tourism Minister Manuel Marrero said that the island received 1,053,000 visitors between January and April, a figure that represents the "highest four-month period in the history of Cuban tourism." The figure is an increase of 101 percent over the number of tourists who came to Cuba during the same period in 2009, although tourism revenues for the two periods were "similar."

2. U.S. TOURISM TO CUBA HAS INCREASED.

Elizabeth Newhouse, (Staff, Center for International Policy), TEXAS GULF COAST LEGISLATORS LEARN FROM CUBA'S HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS MODEL, 2010, 6.

So far this year there has been a 130 percent increase over last year in Americans visiting Cuba, and charter flights from Miami now land at many Cuban cities.

Peggy Goldman, (Travel Advisor, Huffington Post), DISPELLING FOUR MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT TRAVEL TO CUBA, Apr. 13, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/peggy-goldman/traveling-to-cuba_b_3062395.html.

Americans can legally visit Cuba by traveling with tour providers who have People-to-People licenses, which allow them to interact and exchange ideas with the Cuban people. A typical itinerary is filled with activities that offer a wide range of interactions between Cubans and American tourists. From something as simple as sharing dinner with a Cuban family to attending cultural events, visiting schools, meeting with local artists and sharing an organic lunch at a local community farm, the day is spent meeting, talking and exchanging views. For people who love learning about other cultures, meeting new people and learning how others live, it's a trip made in heaven.

3. CUBA DOESN'T EVEN HAVE THE CAPACITY TO RECEIVE MORE TOURISTS.

Reuters News Service, THE GUARDIAN, Jan. 24, 2012. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jan/24/cuba-tourism-arab-spring-us>.

"We are at capacity," said the manager of a foreign hotel company. "The beach resorts, Havana city are totally full. In the interior of the country, there is nowhere to find a room, nowhere." Cuba just completed its best year for tourism with 2.7 million visitors in 2011, and experts say bookings suggest it will almost certainly beat that number this year. "I think 2012 will be a very good year and I see real difficulties in how to organize and manage all this in 2013 and 2014," said the head of a European travel agency's Havana office.

4. THE BUMPER CROP OF TOURISTS HAS DONE NOTHING TO IMPROVE HUMAN RIGHTS.

Jose Perales, (Sr. Program Analyst, Woodrow Wilson Center Latin American Program), THE UNITED STATES AND CUBA: IMPLICATIONS OF AN ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP, Aug. 2010, 8.

Canada is Cuba's largest source of tourism revenue and it sends the largest number of tourists. Considering that Canada is a consolidated democracy, were the conventional wisdom to hold this Canadian-Cuban exchange should have had some sort of positive effect on the island's politics. Indeed, over 900,000 Canadian visited Cuba in 2009, but they came largely for reasons of tourism, not human rights. [Joel] Brito [director of Cuba's International Group for Corporate Social Responsibility] expects that a surge in U.S.. tourism would likewise change little, if anything, within Cuba. He estimated that the number of U.S. visitors to Cuba would swell to upwards of 3 million in the year following a lifting of travel restrictions. However, this tourism itself will not fix Cuba's problems.

VII. THE TRADE SANCTIONS REFORM ACT (TSRA) ADEQUATELY ALLOWS FOR FOOD AND MEDICINE SALES TO CUBA

1. THE U.S. IS ALREADY CUBA'S LEADING SUPPLIER OF FOOD.

Alexa Van Sickle, (Staff), FORBES, Jan. 29, 2013. Retrieved Feb. 18, 2013 from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/bmoharrisbank/2013/01/29/is-cuba-the-next-emerging-market/>.

The U.S. is, despite the embargo, the largest exporter of food and agricultural products to Cuba, providing around 30% of Cuba's food imports. Under the 2000 Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act, hundreds of U.S. businesspeople travel to Cuba every year to sell agricultural goods. The catch is that Cuba must pay cash up front on these transactions. Regardless, Cuba has bought over \$3.5 billion in agricultural products from the United States since trade began in 2001. Modest sales of \$138 million that year climbed steadily to a peak of \$710 million in 2008, according to statistics from the U.S.-Cuba Trade and Economic Council.

Jose Perales, (Sr. Program Analyst, Woodrow Wilson Center Latin American Program), THE UNITED STATES AND CUBA: IMPLICATIONS OF AN ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP, Aug. 2010, 1.

The last decade has been marked by a significant growth in economic ties between the United States and Cuba, a response to the partial relaxation of certain embargo restrictions, explained Jose Raid Perales, Senior Program Associate of the Latin American Program. This has been particularly true within the agriculture and tourism industries. For instance, in 2000 the United States implemented the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act; in the following eight years bilateral agricultural trade and farm sales more than tripled. Furthermore, since 2003, the United States has supplied annually more agricultural products to Cuba than any other nation; from 2003 to 2008 an estimated 35 percent of Cuba's agricultural imports came from the United States.

2. THE U.S. ALLOWS U.S. COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES TO TRAVEL TO CUBA IN ORDER TO PROMOTE THEIR PRODUCTS.

Mark Sullivan, (Specialist in Latin America, Congressional Research Service), CUBA: ISSUES FOR THE 112TH CONGRESS, Feb. 24, 2012, 34.

U.S. commercial agricultural exports to Cuba have been allowed for several years, but with numerous restrictions and licensing requirements. The 106th Congress passed the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 or TSRA (P.L. 106-387, Title IX) that allows for one-year export licenses for selling agricultural commodities to Cuba, although no U.S. government assistance, foreign assistance, export assistance, credits, or credit guarantees are available to finance such exports. TSRA also denies exporters access to U.S. private commercial financing or credit; all transactions must be conducted in cash in advance or with financing from third countries. TSRA reiterates the existing ban on importing goods from Cuba but authorizes travel to Cuba, under a specific license, to conduct business related to the newly allowed agricultural sales.

3. THE U.S. ALLOWS SALES OF MEDICINES AND MEDICAL DEVICES TO CUBA; THEY USUALLY BUY THEM ELSEWHERE BECAUSE THEY CAN FIND THEM CHEAPER.

Otto Reich, (Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs), TAKING SIDES: CLASHING VIEWS IN AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY, 2010, 233.

Presently, sales of medicine and agricultural commodities to Cuba are, while subject to certain restrictions, legal. Sales of medicine have been legal since passage of the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 (CDA); the Government of Cuba, however, has been reluctant to purchase medicine and medical equipment from the United States at least in part because it finds prices to be too high.

4. CUBA IS NOW MOVING TOWARD AGRICULTURAL INDEPENDENCE.

Christina Ergas, (Prof., Sociology, U. Oregon). FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: SUSTAINABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE IN CUBA, Mar. 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.globalresearch.ca/food-sovereignty-sustainable-urban-agriculture-in-cuba/5332167>.

The pursuit of food sovereignty has yielded many benefits. Urban agriculture has increased food production, employment, environmental recovery and protection, and community building. Perhaps the most impressive strides are in the area of food security. In the early 1990s, during the Special Period, Cubans' caloric intake decreased to approximately 1,863 calories a day. In the midst of food scarcity, Cuba ramped up food production. Between 1994 and 2006, Cubans increased urban output by a thousand fold, with an annual growth rate of 78 percent a year. In 2001, Cubans cultivated 18,591 hectares of urban land; in 2006, 52,389 hectares were cultivated. As a result of these efforts, the caloric intake for the population averaged 3,356 calories a day in 2005.

VIII. CUBAN BASEBALL PLAYERS ALREADY HAVE ADEQUATE ACCESS TO MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

1. SPORTS AGENT JOE CUBAS HELPS CUBAN BASEBALL PLAYERS DEFECT TO THE U.S.

Rachel Solomon, (J.D. Candidate, Hofstra U. School of Law), *JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND LAW*, 2011, 162-163.

The day after Christmas in 1997, Orlando Hernandez, a Cuban commonly known by his nickname "El Duque," and seven of his friends left Cuba for the United States in a twenty-foot sailboat. After four days, their ship was in such abysmal condition that they were forced to land in the Bahamas. While determining whether to send El Duque back to Cuba, the Bahamian government placed him in a detention center. During this time, the Commissioner of Baseball, Bud Selig prohibited any major league team from meeting with El Duque. Joe Cubas went to the Bahamas and strongly advised El Duque to seek refuge in a third country, unsure if the Bahamian government would send El Duque back to Cuba or grant him refugee status. Upon receiving El Duque's permission, Cubas arranged with Costa Rican President Jose Maria Figueras for an indefinite, albeit temporary, visa for the ball player. El Duque's "defection story" ended when he signed as a free agent with the Yankees for \$ 6.6 million. Unfortunately, most Cubans will not be as lucky as El Duque or Yunel Escobar, another player who defected from Cuba to play baseball in the United States.

2. LARGE NUMBERS OF CUBAN BASEBALL PLAYERS NOW DEFECT.

Baseball World, CHASING DREAMS: CUBAN BASEBALL DEFECTORS, Jan. 15, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://baseballworld.com/2010/01/15/chasing-dreams-cuban-baseball-defectors-part-1/>.

According to the Cuban baseball website, CubanBall.com, nearly 200 players have defected since 1980. Although just a small number of would-be big leaguers have struck paydirt, the majority of defectors have enjoyed the opportunity to showcase their baseball skills. Prior to Jose Contreras four-year, \$32 million contract with the New York Yankees after defecting from the Americas Cup in Mexico in 2002, former Villa Clara pitcher Rolando Arrojo was the standard bearer with a \$7 million deal from the Tampa Bay Devil Rays. However, the price tag for top Cuban prospects have skyrocketed in recent years.

3. CUBAN BASEBALL PLAYERS ARE ABLE TO EARN MASSIVE SALARIES.

La Vox Media Group, CUBAN BASEBALL PLAYERS LOOK TO PLAY ABROAD, July 23, 2012. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.voxxi.com/cuban-baseball-players-look-to-play-abroad/>.

Meanwhile, the financial pull of big league payola has soared to new heights for Cuba's highly coveted "amateurs." Cuban defectors this year have signed more than \$100 million in free agent contracts — shattering the old records for Cuban deals and sending dreams of riches through every level of Cuban baseball. The first stunner was the four-year, \$36 million deal signed by outfielder Yoenis Cespedes with the Oakland A's in March, a record amount for a Cuban defector at the time. Cespedes allegedly fled from the island to the Dominican Republic on a speedboat sent by baseball agents, taking his entire family along to avoid the painful separation that often punishes Cuban defectors who leave illegally. Cespedes went straight into the A's starting lineup, batting cleanup, and was named American League player of the week on Monday. He's batting over .300 so far this year.

4. WHETHER CUBAN BASEBALL PLAYERS CAN RETURN TO THEIR HOMETLAND IS TOTALLY UP TO THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT, NOT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

Fox News Latino, CUBAN DEFECTORS GET A CHANCE TO RETURN HOME, Nov. 17, 2012. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2012/11/17/cuban-defectors-get-chance-to-visit-home/>.

Under Cuban law, those who abandoned their homeland have had to apply for permission to return, even for the kind of brief family visit Elvis Gregory hopes to make. Many high-profile people considered deserters have had their requests to return rejected by a communist-run government that complained about the large financial investment it made in their careers. Some didn't even bother to ask, knowing their petitions would be turned down. Exiles who want to return for visits must use Cuban passports and will be able to come as often as they like. They initially will be allowed to stay up to 90 days, with possible extensions. But a change taking effect in January will make it simpler for Cubans to visit the homeland they abandoned. It essentially establishes a single set of rules governing the right of return that will apply to everyone who left illegally, no matter what the circumstances of their departure. The new rules could potentially affect many leading cultural and athletic figures, from musicians and doctors to ballet dancers and former Yankee pitcher Orlando "El Duque" Hernández. Tens of thousands of people once considered traitors could now be welcomed home.

IX. HURRICANE PREPARATION COLLABORATION ALREADY EXISTS

1. THE U.S. NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER COLLABORATES WITH CUBA.

Richard Anthes, (President, University Association for Atmospheric Research), CLIMATE FOR U.S.-CUBA WEATHER COOPERATION, Dec. 8, 2011. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.democracyinamericas.org/blog-post/cuba-central-interview-with-dr-richard-anthes-on-the-climate-for-u-s-cuba-weather-cooperation/>.

Question: I take it that your experience with them is not unique; that they already have some on-going relationships with the National Weather Service, particularly in Miami, and also with NOAA. **Dr. Anthes:** Yes, they have always had a very close relationship with the National Hurricane Center, which is part of the National Weather Service and is in Miami – sharing data and experiences during cases of hurricanes in the Caribbean affecting Cuba and the United States. So, they have always had that very close contacts and communication; they talk by phone all the time when the hurricanes are threatening either Cuba or the United States.

Marc Lacey, (Staff), NEW YORK TIMES, Aug. 20, 2009. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/21/world/americas/21storm.html?_r=0.

The gusty winds, heavy rains and ocean swells that hurricanes produce do not know the difference between Guantánamo and Galveston, which has made the weather one of the few topics on which the United States and Cuban governments regularly engage. “We’ve had a close working relationship in regard to tropical cyclones that goes back to the ’70s and ’80s,” said Max Mayfield, who retired in 2007 after seven years as director of the National Hurricane Center in Miami. “Any storm that goes toward Florida goes over Cuba, so we need their observations. And they need our data from the aircraft.”

Daniel Erikson, (Senior Associate, Inter-American Dialogue), THE CUBA WARS: FIDEL CASTRO, THE UNITED STATES, AND THE NEXT REVOLUTION, 2010, 311.

Last, American and Cuban meteorologists remain in frequent contact for the purpose of tracking hurricanes in The Caribbean. Lixion Avela, a Cuban American who is the senior meteorologist with the National Hurricane Center in South Florida, shared with me this theory about why this cooperation is sustained, no matter how rough the official rhetoric gets on both sides: “I don’t think that any Miami politician would be so stupid as to be happy that there are one thousand people killed in Cuba by a hurricane, because everybody has a relative down there.” Indeed, the cooperation between American and Cuban authorities to protect their citizens from dangerous weather is one area where enlightened self-interest has taken precedence over political antagonisms.

2. COLLABORATION ALREADY EXISTS ON CUBA’S DISASTER PREPARATION SYSTEM.

Marc Lacey, (Staff), NEW YORK TIMES, Aug. 20, 2009. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/21/world/americas/21storm.html?_r=0.

Wayne Smith, a former American diplomat in Havana who is now a fellow at the Washington-based Center for International Policy, has brought an array of American officials to Cuba in recent years to look at how Cuban disaster preparedness programs manage to keep the number of hurricane deaths on the island so low. Among those who made the trip last month were Russel Honoré, a retired lieutenant general who was the commander of the military’s Hurricane Katrina task force; Robert Turner, regional director of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority East; and Stewart Simonson, assistant secretary for emergency preparedness in the Department of Health and Human Services during the George W. Bush administration.

Elizabeth Newhouse, (Analyst, Center for International Policy), ARE WE READY FOR THE NEXT BIG ONE?, July 12, 2010. Retrieved may 15, 2013 from <http://www.ciponline.org/research/html/ready-next-big-one-texas-gulf-legislators-learn-from-cubas-model>.

Concern about the catastrophic effect of a hurricane on the giant oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and on earthquake-shattered Haiti added a sense of urgency to the Center for International Policy’s latest trip to Cuba. In May, Wayne Smith led a delegation of four Texas Gulf Coast state legislators, whose districts include Houston, Galveston, and Brownsville—some of the state’s most hurricane-vulnerable—to examine Cuba’s hurricane preparedness and discuss ways to cooperate.

3. TOP U.S. AND CUBAN ATMOSPHERIC SCIENTISTS MEET REGULARLY.

Franco Ordonez, (Staff), PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE, May 24, 2012, A10.

Peter Agre, a Nobel laureate in chemistry and the head of the Johns Hopkins Malaria Research Institute, led 18 U.S. scientists associated with the American Association for the Advancement of Science on a trip to Cuba in December to meet with counterparts about potential cooperation in marine and atmospheric sciences, and sustainable fisheries. For some American scientists, going to Cuba is like tasting a piece of forbidden fruit. The scientific landscape has been largely untouched for decades.

X. TELECOMMUNICATION SALES TO CUBA ARE ALREADY ALLOWED

1. THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION HAS ALREADY ALLOWED THE SALE OF TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT TO CUBA.

Roberta Jacobson, (Assistant U.S. Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs), THE PATH TO FREEDOM: COUNTERING REPRESSION AND STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY IN CUBA, Senate Hearing, June 7, 2012, 42.

In April 2009, the President directed the Departments of State, Treasury, and Commerce to take certain steps to increase the flow of information to the Cuban people. In response, the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) made certain changes to its licensing policy, as reflected in the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (CACR), 31 CFR. 515. Among other changes, OFAC created a general license, authorizing transactions incident to the establishment of facilities to provide telecommunications services linking the United States and Cuba, including but not limited to fiber optic cable and satellite telecommunications facilities. Access to a freer flow of information will provide the Cuban people, including democracy activists and civil society, with information and tools that better prepare them to freely determine their own future and support communication between Cuba and the outside world.

INTELLIGENCER JOURNAL/NEW ERA, Sept. 15, 2010, A9.

Last month President Obama lifted restrictions on Cuban-Americans who want to travel and send money to their island homeland. And U.S. telecommunications firms were freed to seek business there. So, it is easy to see the direction the Obama administration is headed.

Nick Miroff, (Staff, GlobalPost), CUBA: NO DEAL WITH U.S. TELECOMS, Oct. 18, 2009. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/cuba/091018/cuba-says-no-deal-us-telecoms>.

The Obama administration's move gave permission to American telecommunications companies to install fiber-optic cable and satellite links between the United States and Cuba. It also allows for roaming agreements between U.S. and Cuban mobile phone providers, while enabling U.S. residents to pay for American satellite radio and television services for Cubans, which are generally illegal on the island.

2. THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION VIEWS THE LOOSENING OF TELECOMMUNICATION RESTRICTIONS AS A TEST OF CUBAN INTEREST IN ENGAGEMENT.

Abraham Lowenthal, (Prof., International Relations, U. of Southern California), SHIFTING THE BALANCE: OBAMA AND THE AMERICAS, 2011, 2.

The new administration also announced initiatives on Cuba, loosening restrictions on travel and remittances by Cuban Americans and opening up the possibility of U.S. investment in telecommunications networks with the island. The president himself called for a "new beginning" in U.S.-Cuba relations. The State Department began exploratory conversations with Cuban officials on a potential postal service agreement and resumed long-suspended bilateral consultations on migration.

3. CUBA HAS ESSENTIALLY SAID "NO THANKS" TO THE OFFER OF U.S. TELECOMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT TRADE.

Nick Miroff, (Staff, GlobalPost), CUBA: NO DEAL WITH U.S. TELECOMS, Oct. 18, 2009. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/cuba/091018/cuba-says-no-deal-us-telecoms>.

For years, U.S. mobile phone companies and internet providers have been banned from doing business with Cuba, further isolating one of the least-connected countries in the hemisphere. So when the Obama administration loosened those restrictions earlier this year, it looked like a tech surge was in store for the communist-ruled island. But after months of silence, Cuba seems to be saying no thanks. Other outstanding trade and legal grievances need to be resolved before American telecommunications companies are granted access, a Cuban telecom official said Saturday, in a statement that appeared to rebuff one of the Obama administration's key Cuba policy initiatives.

4. IN THE ABSENCE OF CUBAN COOPERATION, THE OFFER OF TELECOMMUNICATION TRADE ACCOMPLISHES NOTHING.

Nick Miroff, (Staff, GlobalPost), CUBA: NO DEAL WITH U.S. TELECOMS, Oct. 18, 2009. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/cuba/091018/cuba-says-no-deal-us-telecoms>.

The White House announced in April that it would provide exemptions from long-standing U.S. sanctions against Cuba's communist government, so that companies like Verizon, Sprint and AT&T could bring better phone and internet service to the island to "promote the freer flow of information." But the Castro government exerts strict control over the island's communication networks, and American companies would have to reach a deal with the government's telecom monopoly, ETECSA.

XI. MICROFINANCE LOANS ARE ALREADY SUFFICIENTLY AVAILABLE FOR LATIN AMERICAN NATIONS

1. EUROPEAN COUNTRIES PROVIDE HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS.

Jose Perales, (Sr. Program Analyst, Woodrow Wilson Center Latin American Program), *ENGAGING CUBA: POLICY OPTIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES, EUROPE, AND THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE*, Jan. 2010, 3.

Between 1993 and 2003 and at Cuba's request, the E.U. granted projects up to 130 million, mainly for humanitarian reasons but also to support reforms such as management, labor law, fiscal policy, and others. Cooperation was resumed in 2008, envisaging some 40 million euros in 2009-10 for projects on environment, food security, agricultural reform, humanitarian aims, as well as science and technology.

2. U.S. RESIDENTS MORE THAN ONE BILLION DOLLARS PER YEAR IN REMITTANCES.

Mark Sullivan, (Specialist in Latin America, Congressional Research Service), *CUBA: ISSUES FOR THE 112TH CONGRESS*, Feb. 24, 2012, 15.

Key sectors of the economy that generate foreign exchange include the export of professional services (largely medical personnel to Venezuela); tourism, which has grown significantly since the mid-1990s, with 2.53 million tourists visiting Cuba in 2010; nickel and cobalt mining, with the Canadian mining company Sherritt International involved in a joint investment project; and a biotechnology and pharmaceutical sector that supplies the domestic healthcare system and has fostered a significant export industry. Remittances from relatives living abroad, especially from the United States, have also become a significant source of hard currency, with more than \$1 billion sent to Cuba annually in remittances from families living abroad.

3. ALL U.S. RESIDENTS ARE NOW ALLOWED TO SEND REMITTANCES – THIS IS NO LONGER LIMITED TO FAMILY MEMBERS OF CUBAN-AMERICANS.

Mark Sullivan, (Latin America Specialist, Congressional Research Service), *CUBA: ISSUES FOR CONGRESS*, Nov. 12, 2012, 39.

The policy changes were subsequently enacted through modifications to existing regulations of the Departments of Treasury and Homeland Security published in the Federal Register on January 28, 2011. The January 2011 measures: (1) increased purposeful travel to Cuba related to religious, educational, and journalistic activities (general licenses are now authorized for certain types of educational and religious travel; people-to-people travel exchanges are authorized via a specific license); (2) allowed any U.S. person to send remittances to non-family members in Cuba and make it easier for religious institutions to send remittances for religious activities (general licenses are now authorized for both); and (3) allowed all U.S. international airports to become eligible to provide services to licensed charter flights to and from Cuba.

4. MICROENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT IS NOT THE PROPER RESPONSE TO POVERTY.

Milford Bateman, (Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute), *CONFRONTING MICROFINANCE: UNDERMINING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*, 2011, 8.

In its 2010 flagship report *The Age of Productivity: Transforming Economies from the Bottom Up*, the Inter-American Development Bank dramatically revised the core narrative as to why Latin America has been bedeviled—at least until quite recently—by spectacularly high levels of poverty, inequality, and deprivation. The IDB showed that this situation arose not because of insufficient foreign investment, as many institutions to the north had previously claimed was the case, but because Latin American governments and institutions had seriously misallocated the scarce financial resources they had at hand. Put simply, far too much of Latin America's scarce capital resources (especially savings and remittances) had been channeled into informal low-productivity microenterprises and self-employment, and far too little had gone into the much more productive, innovative, and job-creating formal SME sector.

5. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT MICROENTERPRISE SOLUTIONS WORK.

Milford Bateman, (Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute), *CONFRONTING MICROFINANCE: UNDERMINING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT*, 2011, 27.

In the early 1980s Latin America became the location for a "microfinance revolution." Within a few years a quite dramatic increase in the availability of microfinance was secured, notably in Bolivia and in de Soto's native Peru. Notwithstanding the massive increase in the supply of microfinance, things have not worked out at all as de Soto and others predicted. For sure, the continent quickly became the location for millions of new micro-enterprises. However, it remains an awkward fact that there is no solid evidence whatsoever linking the quickly achieved superabundance of microfinance and microenterprises to any positive impact upon the level of poverty or development.

XII. FAIR TRADE IS WORKING NOW BECAUSE IT IS VOLUNTARY

1. AMERICANS ARE INCREASINGLY IN LOVE WITH THE ORGANIC FOOD REVOLUTION.

Heather Rogers, (Sr. Fellow, Demos), GREEN GONE WRONG: HOW OUR ECONOMY IS UNDERMINING THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVOLUTION, 2010, 4.

Indeed green goods have become all the rage. In the decade leading up to the economic crash of 2008-9, eco-products conquered the market. Whole Foods, the all-natural grocery store chain, turned into a Wall Street darling, while such food manufacturing giants as General Mills, Kraft, and Unilever began offering organic goods. And Wal-Mart set out to make itself into a top vendor of organic groceries. During that time the organic-foods industry expanded by double digits each year, far outstripping conventional food, which remained stalled at less than 3 percent annual growth.

2. FAIR TRADE GROWTH IS NOW EXCEEDING ALL EXPECTATIONS.

Leonardo Becchetti, (Prof., Economics, U. of Roma), THE ECONOMICS OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: THE WORLD OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISES, 2010, 128-129.

Fair trade has exceeded the rosiest expectations of experts in the field. Only a decade ago, socially responsible products were a very small niche of the market and few observers were prepared to predict that these products would conquer significant market shares and create contagion among traditional market actors. A common mistake in commenting on fair-trade figures is to consider the ratio between fair-trade sales and the total volume of trade. This indicator is inappropriate, since it fails to take into account that fair-trade products do not exist for the entire range of products sold and traded in the market. Hence, a better approach is to calculate fair-trade market shares for those specific products for which a fair-trade alternative exists. In fact, while fair trade represents less than 0.01 per cent of world trade in physical merchandise, fair-trade products generally account for sizeable market shares in their product categories in Europe and North America.

3. FASTER GROWTH WOULD ACTUALLY THREATEN THE FAIR TRADE MOVEMENT.

Alex Nicholls, (Prof., Social Entrepreneurship, U. of Oxford), FAIR TRADE, CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY AND BEYOND: EXPERIMENTS IN GLOBALIZING JUSTICE, 2010, 93.

Despite some criticisms of specific aspects of the model — notably its economics, impact and marketing — fair trade continues to enjoy widespread popular support and is a growing consumer-driven market trend in the North. However, the exponential growth of fair trade as a consumer-driven model of economic development has created both internal and external structural tensions that could threaten its continued success.

4. GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT WOULD UNDERMINE THE FAIR TRADE MOVEMENT BY CREATING RESENTMENT.

Tim Wilson, (Dir., Free Trade Unit, Institute of Public Affairs), FAIR TRADE, CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY AND BEYOND: EXPERIMENTS IN GLOBALIZING JUSTICE, 2010, 124.

Government should limit the extent to which it directly seeks to promote economic, social and environmental goals because of the distance such an approach creates between individuals. First, public provision of such social goods can potentially promote resentment and social division between those who provide through taxes or equivalent levies for the costs of economic redistribution and social and environmental programmes, and those who benefit from them.

5. GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT UNDERMINES PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR VIRTUOUS BEHAVIOR.

Tim Wilson, (Dir., Free Trade Unit, Institute of Public Affairs), FAIR TRADE, CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY AND BEYOND: EXPERIMENTS IN GLOBALIZING JUSTICE, 2010, 124-125.

Government intervention discourages individuals from taking responsibility for the society in which they live. A commitment to a limited government does not imply a limited commitment to others and to the society. Quite the opposite: direct government provision of goods and services to a population transfers the obligation of taking care of a society away from individuals and towards the government. In response, individuals believe that the money they pay in taxes enables the government to respond to all their social and environmental concerns. This fosters a culture where individuals absolve themselves of responsibility for the society in which they live. Conversely, limited government requires the voluntary participation of individuals, through direct personal or financial contributions to charities, to assist others in their society. The motivation for doing so is purely self-interested: to improve the state of the society in which they live.

XIII. MEXICO BEST DEALS WITH ITS OWN POVERTY ISSUES

1. THE MEXICAN ECONOMY IS STRONG ENOUGH TO SUPPORT ITS OWN POVERTY PROGRAM.

Thomas Friedman, (Staff), NEW YORK TIMES, Feb. 24, 2013, SR-11.

In India, people ask you about China, and, in China, people ask you about India: Which country will become the more dominant economic power in the 21st century? I now have the answer: Mexico.

Thomas Friedman, (Staff), NEW YORK TIMES, Feb. 24, 2013, SR-11.

Mexico has signed 44 free trade agreements — more than any country in the world — which, according to The Financial Times, is more than twice as many as China and four times more than Brazil. Mexico has also greatly increased the number of engineers and skilled laborers graduating from its schools. Put all that together with massive cheap natural gas finds, and rising wage and transportation costs in China, and it is no surprise that Mexico now is taking manufacturing market share back from Asia and attracting more global investment than ever in autos, aerospace and household goods. “Today, Mexico exports more manufactured products than the rest of Latin America put together,” The Financial Times reported on Sept. 19, 2012.

2. CUBA IS DEVELOPING AN ACTIVE MIDDLE CLASS.

Barack Obama, WASHINGTON WIRE, May 3, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2013/05/03/text-of-obamas-speech-in-mexico-city/>.

Indeed, I see a Mexico that has lifted millions from poverty. Because of the sacrifices of generations, a majority of Mexicans now call themselves middle class, with a quality of life that your parents and grandparents could only dream of. This includes new opportunities for women, who are proving that—when given the chance—you can shape the destiny of your country, too.

3. MEXICO’S NEW PRESIDENT IS FULLY COMMITTED TO ERADICATING POVERTY.

Reuters NewS Service, MEXICO’S PENA NIETO TO LAUNCH DRIVE TO END HUNGER, Jan. 18, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/01/18/mexico-penanieto-hunger-idUSL1E9CIJWT20130118>.

Pena Nieto said last week he aimed to change the "face of marginalization, poverty and social contrasts" in Mexico. At the outset of his presidential election campaign, Pena Nieto vowed to raise 15 million people out of poverty. Upon taking office in December, he pledged to guarantee families a minimum standard of living in the battle on hunger. Pena Nieto has cited Brazil's efforts to put an end to poverty as an inspiration for his plans. Under its former president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Brazil lifted around 20 million people out of poverty between 2003 and 2009.

4. MEXICO’S OPORTUNIDADES PROGRAM IS AN IMPRESSIVE ANTI-POVERTY EFFORT.

Mexico Secretariat for Social Development, OPORTUNIDADES: A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.oportunidades.gob.mx/Portal/wb/Web/oportunidades_a_human_development_program.

Benefits received by our beneficiaries [Oportunidades]: Direct cash transfers paid every two months typically to women and mothers, contributing to the improvement of quality, quantity and diversity of food, thus providing for better nutrition. Starting 2012, the cash transfer to compensate energy consumption expenses has been integrated to the nutritional aid. Educational grants for girls, boys and teens, starting on their 3rd grade and up to their senior year of High School. In localities with less than 2,500 inhabitants grants are also given to first and second graders. Economic incentives for students that finish their High School Education before turning 22 years old, through ‘Youth with Oportunidades’ (Jóvenes con Oportunidades). Cash transfers to purchase school supplies at the beginning of each cycle for elementary school students, and annually for middle and high school students. Basic health care and communal educative workshops for the promotion of health, created mainly for teen beneficiaries (15 years and older including high school students). Nutritional supplements for all infants between 6 and 23 months old, undernourished children between the ages of 24 to 59 months old and pregnant or breastfeeding women. Starting in 2009, health institutions have started the distribution of calorie free supplements in order to prevent obesity. Special cash transfers for every adult 70 years or older who is a member of a beneficiary family meanwhile its incorporated to the SEDESOL’s Program 70 and more. Starting in 2008, beneficiary families began receiving the Food Aid for Better Living, an additional transfer to help protect their economy from the effects of the hike in global food prices. Starting 2010, our beneficiaries receive the Child Benefit for a Better Living, a direct cash transfer for every child 0 to 9 years old in order to support their proper nutrition and development. Every home receives a maximum of 3 child benefits.

5. OPORTUNIDADES REACHES 30% OF THE MEXICAN POPULATION.

Tina Rosenberg, (Pulitzer-Prize Winning Journalist), INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, Jan. 6, 2011, 6.

This is likely the most important government anti-poverty program the world has ever seen. It is worth looking at how it works, and why it has been able to help so many people. In Mexico, Oportunidades today covers 5.8 million families, about 30 percent of the population. An Oportunidades family with a child in primary school and a child in middle school that meets all its responsibilities can get a total of about \$123 a month in grants. Students can also get money for school supplies, and children who finish high school in a timely fashion get a one-time payment of \$330.

6. OPORTUNIDADES IS AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT MEXICO.

Mexico Secretariat for Social Development, OPORTUNIDADES: A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.oportunidades.gob.mx/Portal/wb/Web/oportunidades_a_human_development_program.

The main purpose of the Mexican Government policy is to accomplish access to equal opportunities for better living, thus reaching human development and social welfare for its people. The program's objective is contributing to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty, favoring the development of capacities in education, health and nutrition of its beneficiary families. Nowadays the Program assists 6.5 million families being present in every state of the country and covering 100% of the nation's municipalities emphasizing those most marginalized; it benefits approximately 187,000 localities throughout the country, 99% of which are rural and semi-urban.

7. OPORTUNIDADES SOLVES POVERTY BY OFFERING BOTH SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS.

Ray Suarez, (Staff, PBS), IN MEXICO: A PLAN TO BEAT POVERTY WITH HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION, Dec. 29, 2009. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/health/july-dec09/mexico_12-29.html.

Started 12 years ago by the Mexican government, the program, called Oportunidades -- or Opportunities -- gives a small subsidy every other month to poor mothers, like Santo Domingo resident Sixta Orcasita. But there is a catch, one that separates Oportunidades from traditional welfare plans. Orcasita and millions of mothers like her across Mexico must first sign a contract to raise healthier, better-educated children. Orcasita has six children. Both she and her husband, Eraclio Bello, never made it past grade school. To get their cash, they must keep their youngest children, 15-year-old Karina and 13-year-old Alex, in school. They must also bring them in for regular checkups at the health clinic. And Sixta Orcasita must participate in monthly nutrition classes, so she can cook healthier meals for the family. Attendance is monitored, and the monthly allotment of cash, about \$60 for each child, plus a monthly food stipend, will be quickly pulled if mothers fail to get their children to school or clinic. The goal is to break the cycle of poverty.

8. OPORTUNIDADES BREAKS THE INTER-GENERATIONAL CYCLE OF POVERTY.

Nicholas Rowe, (Henriksen Fellow, Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies), MEXICO'S OPORTUNIDADES: CONDITIONAL CASH TRANSFERS AS A SOLUTION TO GLOBAL POVERTY?, 2011, 5.

In a little more than a decade, a remarkable consensus had been achieved among evaluators, consultants, and academics close to international financial institutions regarding the strengths of conditional cash transfers: they target the poorest with minimal exclusion and inclusion errors, promote investments in human capital that break the intergenerational transmission of poverty, reduce poverty in the short term and the long term, lower income inequality, and are cost effective.

9. OPORTUNIDADES INCREASES SCHOOL ENROLLMENT.

Ray Suarez, (Staff, PBS), IN MEXICO: A PLAN TO BEAT POVERTY WITH HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION, Dec. 29, 2009. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/health/july-dec09/mexico_12-29.html.

Of the 185 children in Santo Domingo, 108 of them are enrolled in Oportunidades. Nationally, more than 25 million people, one-quarter of the population of Mexico, are enrolled. Not surprisingly, most families are from rural areas like Santo Domingo, where living is often hand-to-mouth, and where officials say the conditional cash program has been most effective. School enrollment jumped 85 percent in some rural areas just two years after the cash program was introduced. Rates of malnutrition and anemia have dropped, as have childhood and adult illnesses. At Santo Domingo's middle school, Asuncion Ortiz, a teacher here for 16 years, says, changes from the cash program are easy to see.

10. OPORTUNIDADES IS FAR SUPERIOR TO NORMAL WELFARE PROGRAMS IN REDUCING POVERTY.

Public Radio International, MEXICO'S ANTI-POVERTY PROGRAM, OPORTUNIDADES, Jan. 1, 2009. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.pri.org/stories/business/Global-Development/mexico-anti-poverty-program.html>.

Welfare reform was designed to put poor people to work, but it has not ended what's called "the culture of poverty," handed down through generations. In rural Mexico, mothers from five million of the poorest families are getting cash grants from the government, but only if their kids stay in school, if parents and children get regular medical checkups and if the mothers attend workshops to learn what it takes to stay healthy. The poverty rate has dropped so much that the Oportunidades program is being adopted in 30 other countries. There's even a pilot project in New York City. There's much debate over the causes of poverty, but if this form of tough love helps end it, who cares?

10. MEXICO IS EXPANDING THE OPORTUNIDADES PROGRAM.

Dario Debowicz, (Analyst, International Food Policy Research Institute), THE IMPACT OF OPORTUNIDADES IN MEXICO, Dec. 2011. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/dsgfs_opportunidades.pdf.

Oportunidades (previously named Professa) is a CCT [conditional cash transfer] program in Mexico that consists of three components: one related to education, one to health, and one to nutrition. According to Levy, Oportunidades transfers represent, on average, 25 percent of household income for Mexico's rural poor and between 15 and 20 percent for the urban poor. The program has expanded rapidly since its inception: starting from 140 thousand households in August 1997, it reached 5 million households at the beginning of 2008.

11. OPORTUNIDADES HAS BECOME A MODEL FOR THE WORLD AS A POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAM.

Mexico Secretariat for Social Development, OPORTUNIDADES: A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.opportunidades.gob.mx/Portal/wb/Web/opportunidades_a_human_development_program.

Conditional cash transfers have won Oportunidades many international acknowledgments therefore many countries visit Mexico to learn about its operation so it can be implemented in other nations. Nowadays Oportunidades' model is being applied in more than 30 countries in America, Africa and Asia it is also being analyzed worldwide (for example Ivory Coast, Morocco, Jamaica, Pakistan, Philippines and Cameroon).

Santiago Levy, (Economist, Inter-American Development Bank), IN MEXICO: A PLAN TO BEAT POVERTY WITH HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION, Dec. 29, 2009. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/health/july-dec09/mexico_12-29.html.

The evidence is very compelling. And on my many years of experience working in development in all regions of the world with the World Bank, I have never seen one program that receives so much interested and that has been replicated in as many countries as this model of conditional cash transfers.

Veronica Miranda, (Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Anthropology, U. Kentucky), ANTHROPOLOGIES, Mar. 15, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.anthropologiesproject.org/2013/03/opportunidades-co-responsibility-and.html>.

Oportunidades is revered both nationally and internationally as a success and a model poverty alleviation program. These evaluators support the Mexican government's emphasis on including the extremely poor in programs that ultimately lead to their transition out of poverty. In *Oportunidades*, the poor are required to participate in specifically designated practices that are intended to increase their "human capital"; these include the attainment of continuous education, the regular attendance of health checkups, and the eating of nutritional foods.

12. POVERTY IN MEXICO IS DECREASING RAPIDLY.

Tina Rosenberg, (Pulitzer-Prize Winning Journalist), INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, Jan. 6, 2011, 6.

In Mexico today, malnutrition, anemia and stunting have dropped, as have incidences of childhood and adult illnesses. Maternal and infant deaths have been reduced. Contraceptive use in rural areas has risen and teen pregnancy has declined. But the most dramatic effects are visible in education. Children in Oportunidades repeat fewer grades and stay in school longer. Child labor has dropped. In rural areas, the percentage of children entering middle school has risen 42 percent. High school inscription in rural areas has risen by a whopping 85 percent.

XIV. EXISTING FIREARMS TRAFFICKING ENFORCEMENT MEASURES ARE SUFFICIENT

1. FIREARMS TRAFFICKING IS ALREADY ILLEGAL.

Chris Knox, (Director, Firearms Coalition), GUN TRAFFICKING LAWS ALREADY EXIST, Mar. 7, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2013/03/07/gun-trafficking-laws-the-firearms-coalition/1972165/>.

A bill approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee on Thursday describes the newly minted crime of "gun trafficking." That sounds great on the surface. Digging further, however, reveals that the activities lumped under the new legal term gun trafficking — purchasing a firearm for someone who is otherwise prohibited from possessing a gun, buying guns to be illegally smuggled out of the country, delivering guns in the knowledge that they will be used in the furtherance of crimes — are already illegal under existing law. So what does Congress hope to accomplish by adding yet another layer of federal law to the already ample prohibitions against acts that we all agree should be illegal? It's the desire to "do something." Congress wants to be seen as "taking action."

2. HUGE PENALTIES ALREADY EXIST FOR FIREARMS TRAFFICKING.

Lawrence Keane, (General Counsel, National Shooting Sports Foundation), GUN INDUSTRY SUPPORTS LAWS AGAINST STRAW PURCHASES, Apr. 15, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.freep.com/article/20130415/OPINION04/304150024/gun-laws-straw-purchases-background-checks>.

It is already illegal to buy a gun for someone who can't legally buy a gun for themselves; you could get up to ten years in jail and be fined as much as \$250,000 dollars. The problem is that straw purchasers are rarely severely punished. According to a 2012 report to the Department of Justice, more than 72,000 people were denied a gun purchase in 2010 because they failed the background check. In the end, only 13 were successfully prosecuted. Vice President Joe Biden himself declared "we simply don't have the time or manpower to prosecute everybody who lies on a form, that checks a wrong box, that answers a question inaccurately," regarding the lack of prosecutions for lying on the federal gun purchase form.

3. WE ALREADY CONDUCT AN EXTENSIVE ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN TO EDUCATE GUN SHOP OWNERS AND GUN BUYERS ABOUT THE RISKS OF STRAW PURCHASES.

Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, STRAW PURCHASES POLICY SUMMARY, Oct. 28, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://smartgunlaws.org/straw-purchases-policy-summary/>.

To aid FFLs [federally licensed firearms dealers] in better identifying and deterring potential straw purchases, as well as educate the public on the consequences of purchasing a firearm for someone who cannot legally purchase or possess one, ATF, the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs, and the National Shooting Sports Foundation have partnered to promote the "Don't Lie for the Other Guy" campaign. ATF's role is to identify key cities in which to launch the campaign, and provide FFLs in those metropolitan areas with enhanced training to identify straw purchasers. The NSSF's role is to lead a public awareness campaign using print, radio and television media to educate the community on the definition of a straw purchase and the severe penalties associated with attempting such a purchase.

4. WE ALREADY ASSIGN THOUSANDS OF FEDERAL AGENTS TO THE TASK OF ENFORCING FIREARMS TRAFFICKING LAWS.

Ray Walser, (Analyst, Heritage Foundation), U.S. STRATEGY AGAINST MEXICAN DRUG CARTELS: FLAWED AND UNCERTAIN, Apr. 26, 2010, 10.

Mobile response teams of 25 Customs and Border Protection officers are charged with searching for smuggled arms and cash. Project Gunrunner provided \$76.6 million to the ATF between 2004 and 2008 to investigate gun sellers who violate U.S. laws. As many as 2,553 U.S. agents and investigators are engaged in the enforcement and investigation of violations of U.S. laws regarding firearms.

5. MORE THAN 800 PEOPLE ARE IN U.S. PRISONS FOR GUN TRAFFICKING CHARGES.

Dianne Feinstein, (U.S. Senator, California), HALTING U.S. FIREARMS TRAFFICKING TO MEXICO, June 2011, 9.

Project Gunrunner is an ATF-led initiative in cooperation with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and the Mexican government intended to "stem firearms trafficking to Mexico by organized criminal groups." Since it began in 2006, Project Gunrunner has had notable success. The ATF has seized in excess of 10,000 firearms and 1.1 million rounds of ammunition destined for the Southwest border. It has also conducted 11,745 firearms licensee compliance inspections. As a result of Project Gunrunner investigations, 809 defendants are serving an average of 104 months in prison and an additional 260 are under court supervision.

6. BORDER STATES HAVE THEIR OWN STATE LAWS AGAINST FIREARMS TRAFFICKING.

Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, STRAW PURCHASES POLICY SUMMARY, Oct. 28, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://smartgunlaws.org/straw-purchases-policy-summary/>.

Several states have adopted their own prohibitions on straw purchasing. For example, California prohibits any person, corporation or dealer from selling, loaning, or transferring a firearm to: 1) any person he or she knows or has cause to believe is not the actual purchaser or transferee of the firearm; or 2) any person who is not the person actually being loaned the firearm, if the person, corporation, or dealer has either: a) knowledge that the firearm is to be subsequently loaned, sold, or transferred to avoid gun transfer requirements under California law; or b) knowledge that the firearm is to be subsequently loaned, sold, or transferred to avoid the requirements of any exemption to gun transfer requirements under California law.

7. FIREARMS TRAFFICKING ENFORCEMENT MEASURES ARE INCREASING.

Jocelyn Fong, (Staff, Media Matters), CONSERVATIVE MEDIA OBLIVIOUS TO MAJOR INCREASE IN BORDER ENFORCEMENT, July 29, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://mediamatters.org/research/2010/07/29/conservative-media-oblivious-to-major-increase/168481>.

During the same period [since March 2009], CBP [Customs and Border Patrol] and ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] together seized 1,425 illegal firearms, which represent a 29 percent rise over the same period in the previous year. At the same time, CBP and ICE seized 1.65 million kilograms of drugs along the Southwest border, an overall increase of 15 percent.

8. THE GUNRUNNER IMPACT TEAM INITIATIVE (GRIT) IS INCREASING ENFORCEMENT OF FIREARMS TRAFFICKING LAWS.

U.S. Department of State, (U.S. Embassy in Mexico), COMBATTING ARMS TRAFFICKING, May 2011. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://photos.state.gov/libraries/mexico/310329/16may/Arms_Trafficking_May_2011_Final.pdf.

In 2009, ATF's Gun Runner Impact Team (GRIT) initiative targeted gun traffickers in the U.S. GRIT brought 100 experienced Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) special agents to southern Texas to investigate more than 1,000 criminal leads. Nearly 1,100 firearms license inspections were conducted, involving 70,000 firearms and resulting in 440 violations and 276 federal firearms trafficking-related criminal cases. ATF is currently assisting the PGR in prosecuting four firearms trafficking cases and has identified additional trafficking cases for PGR review. The GRIT teams seized over 440 illegal firearms, 141,440 rounds of ammunition, \$165,000 in U.S. currency, and additional drugs and explosive devices in the U.S. ATF is planning additional GRIT teams to continue this success.

9. THE COMBINED EXPLOSIVES INVESTIGATIONS TEAM (CEIT) IS INCREASING ENFORCEMENT OF FIREARMS TRAFFICKING LAWS.

U.S. Department of State, (U.S. Embassy in Mexico), COMBATTING ARMS TRAFFICKING, May 2011. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://photos.state.gov/libraries/mexico/310329/16may/Arms_Trafficking_May_2011_Final.pdf.

In 2009, ATF formed the Combined Explosives Investigations Team (CEIT) to respond to explosives incidents and to train Mexican partners in the identification, safe-handling, and analysis of seized explosives evidence. The CEIT team has responded 33 times to incidents in Mexico and disabled approximately 200 explosive devices.

10. THE OPERATION ARMAS CRUZADAS (CROSSED ARMS) INITIATIVE IS INCREASING ENFORCEMENT OF FIREARMS TRAFFICKING LAWS.

U.S. Department of State, (U.S. Embassy in Mexico), COMBATTING ARMS TRAFFICKING, May 2011. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://photos.state.gov/libraries/mexico/310329/16may/Arms_Trafficking_May_2011_Final.pdf.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Mexican authorities launched Operation Armas Cruzadas, a counter smuggling program in Mexico that relies on bilateral intelligence sharing and law enforcement efforts with vetted Mexican units. The program has resulted in the seizure of 1,880 weapons, more than \$7.9 million, 206,412 rounds of ammunition, and the arrests of 257 individuals on criminal charges, resulting in 147 criminal indictments and 96 convictions.

11. COOPERATION BETWEEN THE U.S. AND MEXICO ON FIREARMS TRAFFICKING ENFORCEMENT IS ALREADY EXTENSIVE.

Dianne Feinstein, (U.S. Senator, California), HALTING U.S. FIREARMS TRAFFICKING TO MEXICO, June 2011, 10.

A Letter of Intent on Arms Smuggling was signed in August 2009 by Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano and then-Mexican Attorney General Eduardo Medina Mora to develop a coordinated and intelligence-driven response to cross-border smuggling and trafficking of weapons and ammunition.

U.S. Department of State, (U.S. Embassy in Mexico), COMBATTING ARMS TRAFFICKING, May 2011. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://photos.state.gov/libraries/mexico/310329/16may/Arms_Trafficking_May_2011_Final.pdf. Mexico and the U.S. are working together to investigate suspected straw purchasers and others who assist in the trafficking of firearms into Mexico.

U.S. Department of State, (U.S. Embassy in Mexico), COMBATTING ARMS TRAFFICKING, May 2011. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://photos.state.gov/libraries/mexico/310329/16may/Arms_Trafficking_May_2011_Final.pdf.

ATF is training Mexican officials on firearms trafficking techniques and firearms identification on a monthly bases, training approximately 400 Mexican law enforcement personnel in fiscal year 2010. Additionally, Protocols that clarified roles and responsibilities for weapons tracing procedures were established through a series of three bilateral arms trafficking workshops in 2009. U.S. and Mexican officials also have a work plan in place to significantly improve judicial cooperation, intelligence sharing, and the detection of weapons movement.

12. ETRACE PROVIDES THE MEANS TO ENFORCE FIREARMS TRAFFICKING LAWS.

Katherine Corcoran, (Associated Press Writer), BOSTON GLOBE, Oct. 6, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.boston.com/news/world/latinamerica/articles/2010/10/06/atf_new_accord_with_mexico_will_boost_gun_traces/.

The eTrace program was announced in Mexico in January 2008 as the cornerstone of efforts to "terminate the illegal shipment of arms to Mexico and reduce the violence they cause on both sides of the border."

Banderas News, MEXICO TO EXPAND WEAPONS TRACKING, Oct. 6, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.banderasnews.com/1010/nr-weaponstracking.htm>.

The U.S. eTrace program will be deployed across Mexico, in Spanish, to speed up the registering and tracking of weapons, the justice officials said, after a day-long joint workshop in Mexico City. "We're convinced that this will be a useful tool," Mexican Attorney General Arturo Chavez Chavez told journalists. The eTrace program exists in more than 50 countries worldwide and traced about 340,000 firearms traces last year, mainly from the United States, said John Hageman, spokesman for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

13. PROJECT GUNRUNNER IS INCREASING ENFORCEMENT OF FIREARMS TRAFFICKING LAWS.

Banderas News, MEXICO TO EXPAND WEAPONS TRACKING, Oct. 6, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.banderasnews.com/1010/nr-weaponstracking.htm>.

The ATF last month set up seven new groups across the United States to combat illegal firearms trafficking to Mexico under its Project Gunrunner.

14. PROJECT GUNNER SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH THE FAILED "OPERATION FAST & FURIOUS" EFFORT.

Russ Thinker, AMERICAN THINKER, Feb. 18, 2012. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.americanthinker.com/2012/02/project_gunner_wasnt_fast_and_furious_by_any_means.html.

Project Gunrunner was a multinational effort involving the use of eTrace, a Web-based program, "that provides for the electronic exchange of traced firearm data in a secure internet-based environment." Contrarily, as the whole world now knows, Operation Fast & Furious increased cross-border firearms trafficking to the extent that 2,000 dangerous, lethal weapons went missing entirely as no method for tracking them was employed.

XV. BORDER SECURITY IS SUFFICIENT AT PRESENT

1. BORDER SECURITY IS ALREADY THE TOP FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT PRIORITY.

Duncan Wood, (Dir., Mexico Institute at Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars), *NEW IDEAS FOR A NEW ERA: POLICY OPTIONS FOR THE NEXT STAGE IN U.S.-MEXICO RELATIONS*, Jan. 2013, 28.

Recent years have seen a staggering and impressive investment in border enforcement, cementing its place as the United States' most important federal criminal law enforcement priority in terms of financial and personnel resources. A recent MPI report highlights this record high level of spending on law enforcement initiatives, which totaled \$17.9 billion in FY 2012, more than all other criminal federal law enforcement agency spending combined.

2. THE SOUTHWEST BORDER INITIATIVE HAS MASSIVELY INCREASED BORDER ENFORCEMENT.

Jocelyn Fong, (Staff, Media Matters), *CONSERVATIVE MEDIA OBLIVIOUS TO MAJOR INCREASE IN BORDER ENFORCEMENT*, July 29, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://mediamatters.org/research/2010/07/29/conservative-media-oblivious-to-major-increase/168481>.

Obama administration significantly expanded Border Enforcement Security Task Forces. *Politico* reported on May 6 that "[u]nder the Southwest Border Initiative, the Obama administration has doubled agents assigned to the Border Enforcement Security Task Forces." According to Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE), these teams "incorporate personnel from U.S. Customs and Border Protection and other key federal, state, local and foreign law enforcement agencies" to "collaborate and share information to fulfill the overarching goal: to interrupt the flow of cash, weapons and ammunition that fuel the illicit trade of the drug cartels.

3. THE 21ST CENTURY BORDER INITIATIVE ALREADY ENGAGES MEXICO IN A COOPERATIVE EFFORT TO SECURE THE BORDER.

Christopher Wilson, (Analyst, Mexico Institute of the Woodrow Wilson Center), *NEW IDEAS FOR A NEW ERA: POLICY OPTIONS FOR THE NEXT STAGE IN U.S.-MEXICO RELATIONS*, Jan. 2013, 54.

The 21st Century Border initiative, outlined in a declaration by the U.S. and Mexican presidents in 2010, codified the notion that security gains do not have to come at the expense of efficiency and economics. The initiative has built on the earlier idea of Smart Borders to promote the implementation of creative policy options to simultaneously make the border safer and more efficient, which include trusted traveler programs and customs preclearance.

4. ONE HUNDRED PERCENT OF CARGO IS ALREADY SCREENED – IN BOTH DIRECTIONS.

Jocelyn Fong, (Staff, Media Matters), *CONSERVATIVE MEDIA OBLIVIOUS TO MAJOR INCREASE IN BORDER ENFORCEMENT*, July 29, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://mediamatters.org/research/2010/07/29/conservative-media-oblivious-to-major-increase/168481>.

Testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee on April 27, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano stated that "for the first time ever, the Border Patrol is screening 100 percent of southbound rail shipments for cartel-related contraband. This practice augments the longstanding practice of screening 100 percent of northbound rail shipments."

5. BORDER PATROL OFFICIALS SAY THEY ALREADY HAVE EVERYTHING THEY NEED.

Jocelyn Fong, (Staff, Media Matters), *CONSERVATIVE MEDIA OBLIVIOUS TO MAJOR INCREASE IN BORDER ENFORCEMENT*, July 29, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://mediamatters.org/research/2010/07/29/conservative-media-oblivious-to-major-increase/168481>.

David Aguilar, the border-patrol chief, says the newest data show U.S. investments in personnel, equipment and technology are creating a strong deterrent. "We have the right mix at the right places and in the right time," he says.

Jocelyn Fong, (Staff, Media Matters), *CONSERVATIVE MEDIA OBLIVIOUS TO MAJOR INCREASE IN BORDER ENFORCEMENT*, July 29, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://mediamatters.org/research/2010/07/29/conservative-media-oblivious-to-major-increase/168481>.

A June 23 Associated Press article noted: "You wouldn't know it from the public debate, but the U.S.-Mexico border is more fortified now than it was even five years ago. Far more agents patrol it, more fences, barriers and technology protect it and taxpayers are spending billions more to reinforce it."

XVI. EXISTING GUESTWORKER PROGRAMS ARE MEETING THE NEEDS OF IMMIGRANTS AND EMPLOYERS

1. TWO GUESTWORKER PROGRAMS EXIST – ONE FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS AND ONE FOR NON-AGRICULTURAL WORKERS.

Andorra Bruno, (Specialist in Immigration Policy, Congressional Research Service), IMMIGRATION OF TEMPORARY LOWER-SKILLED WORKERS, Dec. 13, 2012, 1.

Under current law, certain lower-skilled foreign workers, sometimes referred to as guest workers, may be admitted to the United States to perform temporary service or labor under two temporary worker visas: the H-2A visa for agricultural workers and the H-2B visa for nonagricultural workers. Both programs are administered by the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (DHS/USCIS) and the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (DOL/ETA).

Southern Poverty Law Center, HOW GUESTWORKER PROGRAMS OPERATE, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.splcenter.org/publications/close-to-slavery-guestworker-programs-in-the-united-states/how-guestworker-programs-ope#.UZQhCILx80s>.

The United States currently has two guestworker programs under which employers are authorized to import unskilled labor for temporary or seasonal work lasting less than a year: the H-2A program for agricultural work and the H-2B program for non-agricultural work.

2. J-VISAS ALSO MAKE PROVISION FOR AN UNLIMITED NUMBER OF STUDENT WORKERS.

Andorra Bruno, (Specialist in Immigration Policy, Congressional Research Service), IMMIGRATION OF TEMPORARY LOWER-SKILLED WORKERS, Dec. 13, 2012, 13.

Beyond the "H" nonimmigrant category, there are other nonimmigrant visas that cover temporary lower-skilled work. Notable among them is the J-1 visa under the "J" nonimmigrant category for exchange visitors. The J-1 visa is for individuals participating in work- and study-based exchange visitor programs and encompasses a variety of work-related programs. Among them are programs for au pairs, camp counselors, and, as discussed below, students engaged in summer work and travel. The J-1 visa is not numerically limited by law. DOS oversees the various J-1 programs and designates sponsor organizations to conduct program activities.

3. HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF GUESTWORKERS ARE ENROLLED IN EXISTING PROGRAMS.

Ron Hira, (Analyst, Economic Policy Institute), BRIDGE TO IMMIGRATION OR CHEAP TEMPORARY LABOR?, Feb. 17, 2010, 3.

The H-1B and L-1 are very large guest worker programs, admitting 214,261 new foreign workers in fiscal year 2008 alone, a year in which the U.S. economy lost a net of 920,000 jobs (U.S. Department of State 2008) While no one knows the exact number of H-1B or L-1 holders in the United States at any one time, because the government does not track those numbers, estimates are in the range of 600,000 H-1Bs and 350,000 L-1s.

4. EXISTING PROGRAMS REQUIRE EMPLOYERS TO ADEQUATELY COMPENSATE GUESTWORKERS.

Andorra Bruno, (Specialist in Immigration Policy, Congressional Research Service), IMMIGRATION OF TEMPORARY LOWER-SKILLED WORKERS, Dec. 13, 2012, 4-5.

Among the other H-2A labor certification requirements, employers must provide a "three-fourths guarantee"; that is, they must guarantee to offer workers employment for at least three-fourths of the contract period. As discussed below, H-2A employers must pay their H-2A workers and similarly employed U.S. workers the highest of several wage rates and must also provide workers with housing, transportation, and other benefits, including workers' compensation insurance.

Andorra Bruno, (Specialist in Immigration Policy, Congressional Research Service), IMMIGRATION OF TEMPORARY LOWER-SKILLED WORKERS, Dec. 13, 2012, 12.

The 2012 final rule made a variety of other changes to the H-2B labor certification process. In an expansion of current employer obligations, the final rule required employers to provide workers engaged in corresponding employment with at least the same protections, wages, and benefits as those provided to H-2B workers. The final rule also placed new benefit requirements on employers, such as requiring them to pay or reimburse workers for transportation and visa costs.

5. GUESTWORKER PROGRAMS ALLOW FAMILY MEMBERS TO JOIN THE WORKERS.

Charles Mathes, (J.D. Candidate), *FORDHAM LAW REVIEW*, Mar. 2012, 1815.

In their native countries, many H-2B workers earn barely enough money to feed themselves. Conversely, while working in the United States, H-2B visa holders are guaranteed at least the prevailing minimum wage for their occupation. In fact, continued participation in the H-2B program has afforded some employees the opportunity to advance to supervisory positions with even higher salaries. Additionally, spouses and unmarried minor children of H-2B visa holders are eligible for H-4 visas, allowing them to join the H-2B holder in the United States for the duration of her employment, and may attend school in the United States while they maintain their H-4 status.

6. THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION HAS ALREADY RE-WRITTEN THE REGULATIONS DESIGNED TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF GUESTWORKERS.

Andorra Bruno, (Specialist in Immigration Policy, Congressional Research Service), *IMMIGRATION OF TEMPORARY LOWER-SKILLED WORKERS*, Dec. 13, 2012, 1.

The H-2A and H-2B programs—and guest worker programs broadly—strive both to be responsive to legitimate employer needs for labor and to provide adequate protections for U.S. and foreign temporary workers. There is much debate, however, about how to strike the appropriate balance between these twin goals. Under the George W. Bush Administration, both DHS and DOL issued regulations to streamline the H-2A and H-2B programs. The Obama Administration retained the DHS rules, but rewrote the DOL rules. Arguing that the latter provided inadequate protections for workers, it issued a new DOL final rule on H-2A employment, which became effective in March 2010.

Southern Poverty Law Center, *HOW GUESTWORKER PROGRAMS OPERATE*, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.splcenter.org/publications/close-to-slavery-guestworker-programs-in-the-united-states/how-guestworker-programs-ope#.UZQhCILx80s>.

H-2A workers also are legally entitled to: Receive at least three-fourths of the total hours promised in the contract, which states the period of employment promised (the “three-quarters guarantee”); Receive free housing in good condition and meals or access to a cooking facility for the period of the contract; Receive workers’ compensation benefits for medical costs and payment for lost time from work and for any permanent injury; Be reimbursed for the cost of travel from the worker’s home to the job as soon as the worker finishes 50% of the contract period. The expenses include the cost of an airline or bus ticket and food during the trip. If the guestworker stays on the job until the end of the contract or is terminated without cause, the employer must pay transportation and subsistence costs for returning home; Be protected by the same health and safety regulations as other workers; and Be eligible for federally funded legal services for matters related to their employment as H-2A workers. To protect U.S. workers in competition with H-2A workers, employers must abide by what is known as the “fifty percent rule.” This rule specifies that an H-2A employer must hire any qualified U.S. worker who applies for a job prior to the beginning of the second half of the season for which foreign workers are hired.

7. EXISTING REGULATIONS ADEQUATELY PROTECT U.S. WORKERS – GUESTWORKERS ARE ALLOWED ONLY IN CASES WHERE NO U.S. WORKERS ARE AVAILABLE.

Andorra Bruno, (Specialist in Immigration Policy, Congressional Research Service), *IMMIGRATION OF TEMPORARY LOWER-SKILLED WORKERS*, Dec. 13, 2012, 4.

As discussed above, an employer who wants to import H-2A workers must first apply to DOL for a certification that (1) there are not sufficient U.S. workers who are qualified and available to perform the work; and (2) the employment of foreign workers will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of U.S. workers who are similarly employed. Prospective H-2A employers must attempt to recruit U.S. workers and must cooperate with DOL-funded state employment service agencies (also known as state workforce agencies) in local, intrastate, and interstate recruitment efforts. Under the H-2A program’s fifty percent rule, employers are required to hire any qualified U.S. worker who applies for a position during the first half of the work contract under which the H-2A workers who are in the job are employed.

Andorra Bruno, (Specialist in Immigration Policy, Congressional Research Service), *IMMIGRATION OF TEMPORARY LOWER-SKILLED WORKERS*, Dec. 13, 2012, 8.

The H-2B program provides for the temporary admission of foreign workers to the United States to perform temporary nonagricultural service or labor, if unemployed U.S. workers cannot be found.

XVII. EXISTING PROGRAMS ADEQUATELY REGULATE MONEY LAUNDERING

1. MONEY LAUNDERING IS ALREADY ILLEGAL.

Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, (U.S. Department of the Treasury), *FINCEN'S MANDATE FROM CONGRESS*, 2011. Retrieved May 21, 2013 from http://www.fincen.gov/statutes_regs/bsa/.

The Currency and Foreign Transactions Reporting Act of 1970 (which legislative framework is commonly referred to as the "Bank Secrecy Act" or "BSA") requires U.S. financial institutions to assist U.S. government agencies to detect and prevent money laundering. Specifically, the act requires financial institutions to keep records of cash purchases of negotiable instruments, file reports of cash transactions exceeding \$10,000 (daily aggregate amount), and to report suspicious activity that might signify money laundering, tax evasion, or other criminal activities. It was passed by the Congress of the United States in 1970. The BSA is sometimes referred to as an "anti-money laundering" law.

2. BANKS ARE REGULARLY PROSECUTED FOR MONEY LAUNDERING OFFENSES.

Paul Kan, (Prof., Military Studies, U.S. Army War College), *CARTELS AT WAR: MEXICO'S DRUG-FUELED VIOLENCE AND THE THREAT TO U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY*, 2012, 79.

Cartels have laundered money through U.S. financial institutions. HSBC, Wachovia, and Bank of America admitted to failing to properly monitor money transfers. Federal agents caught people who worked for Mexican cartels depositing illicit funds in Bank of America accounts in Atlanta, Chicago, and Brownsville, Texas, from 2002 to 2009. Wachovia admitted that it failed to monitor and report suspected money laundering activities to the tune of \$110 million, including funds that were used to purchase four planes that were used to smuggle twenty-two tons of cocaine into the United States.

LONDON DAILY TELEGRAPH, Nov. 9, 2012, 4.

HSBC is facing serious accusations of money laundering in America with executives admitting earlier this week that criminal charges may be imminent. The bank, which has its headquarters in London, was investigated by the U.S. Senate which claimed that its subsidiary in Mexico had allowed people to "shift potentially illicit sums" around the world.

Ivan Castano, (Staff), *LATIN FINANCE*, Feb. 2013. Retrieved Apr. 25, 2013 from Nexis.

As the HSBC scandal rippled across Latin America, banks throughout the region rushed to improve their laundering policies, according to Ricardo Sabella, founder and director of anti-laundering consultancy MVC Risks in Montevideo, Uruguay. "There were two key impacts from HSBC's scandal in Mexico," Sabella says. "One, all the HSBC units in Latin America rushed to improve controls; second, all other banks quickly followed suit. "Laundering controls have been strengthened across the board. Nobody likes to have a money laundering scandal in their backyard."

3. THE U.S. TREASURY DEPARTMENT MAINTAINS A SPECIAL DRUG CARTEL UNIT.

Amy Pope, (Deputy Chief of Staff, U.S. Department of Justice), *ON THE BORDER AND IN THE LINE OF FIRE: U.S. LAW ENFORCEMENT, HOMELAND SECURITY, AND DRUG CARTEL VIOLENCE*, House Hearing, May 11, 2011, 14.

We have also realized that the key to the vitality of the drug trafficking and other criminal organizations is their continued access to enormous sums of money. Thus, we are aggressively using our asset forfeiture and anti-money laundering laws to deprive the cartels of their illicit proceeds. The Criminal Division has created a new Money Laundering and Bank Integrity Unit and a Mexican drug cartel team within our Asset Forfeiture and Money Laundering Section, which is devoted exclusively to investigating and prosecuting complex criminal cases involving the financial institutions and the individual criminal facilitators who hide the money that fuel the cartels.

4. MEXICO AND THE U.S. COOPERATE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST MONEY LAUNDERING

Banderas News, *MEXICO TO EXPAND WEAPONS TRACKING*, Oct. 6, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.banderasnews.com/1010/nr-weaponstracking.htm>.

U.S. and Mexican justice officials also signed an accord to buy equipment to fight money laundering by Mexican drug gangs, funded with \$US2.9 million (\$A2.98 million) which had been laundered through a U.S. bank.

XVIII. THE COLORADO WATER AGREEMENT SOLVES THE PROBLEM OF WATER DELIVERY FOR MEXICO

1. THE AGREEMENT REACHED IN NOVEMBER, 2012, WILL INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF WATER DELIVERED TO THE COLORADO RIVER DELTA BY 1,000 TIMES.

Jason Margolis, (Journalist), COLORADO RIVER AGREEMENT TO HELP RESTORE WETLANDS IN MEXICO, Nov. 26, 2012. Retrieved Apr. 25, 2013 from <http://www.theworld.org/2012/11/colorado-river-agreement-to-help-restore-vanished-wetlands-in-mexico/>.

Under a new agreement reached last week, the United States will get more water during times of drought. And in times of plenty, Mexico will be able to store excess water north of the border. And the Colorado River Delta also stands to benefit. That's welcome news to people like Francisco Zamora, who directs the Sonoran Institute's Colorado River Delta program. He said when his group planted trees last year on 50 acres in the Delta and provided a tiny amount of water for irrigation, the trees quickly bloomed. "It's really amazing how fast they grow and how quickly they produce habitat. We've seen many species of birds using the habitat, and other wildlife, mammals and the bobcat, and there are a few beavers we've seen along the river." Again, that's from a tiny amount of water. Under the agreement reached this week, more than a thousand times as much water will be added to the Delta, over a five-year period.

Ian Lovett, (Staff), NEW YORK TIMES, Nov. 21, 2012. Retrieved May 21, 2013 from Nexis.

The governments of the United States and Mexico signed an agreement on Tuesday to overhaul how the two countries share and manage water from the Colorado River, which provides water to more than 33 million people in seven states and Mexico. Under the agreement, the two countries will share in both surpluses and water shortages. During drought years in the United States, less water will be sent to Mexico. In exchange, during years of plenty, Mexico will be allowed to store some of its water north of its border.

2. THE U.S. HAS AGREED TO STORE WATER FOR MEXICO.

Bret Birdsong, (Prof., Law, UNLV School of Law), WILLAMETTE LAW REVIEW, Fall 2011, 143-144.

Whatever the legal obligations under human rights law to provide water for the delta and the people who depend on it, several recent agreements between the U.S. and Mexico reflect a new level of cooperation between the countries. These agreements show promise that diplomacy and cooperation between the countries might successfully be deployed to address human rights concerns that develop in the future as a result of declining water supply in the Colorado River. The most important of these agreements, Minute 318 of the International Water and Boundary Commission, allows Mexico, for the first time, to store water in U.S. reservoirs for future delivery to Mexico. The agreement was precipitated by last year's devastating earthquake in northern Mexico, which destroyed water delivery facilities in the Mexicali region of the delta, making it impossible for Mexico to beneficially use its full share of Colorado River water for a projected three years.

3. UNDER THE COLORADO WATER AGREEMENT, THE U.S. AGREES TO FUND WATER INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS IN MEXICO.

Tony Perry, (Staff), LOS ANGELES TIMES, Nov. 20, 2012. Retrieved May 21, 2013 from Nexis.

Jorge Zazueta Camacho, president of an irrigation district area near the quake's epicenter, said the repair of hundreds of miles of canals is desperately needed to bring thousands of acres of farmland back into production. Only 20% of his district's alfalfa, cotton and wheat fields currently were being cultivated, he said. "The reconstruction effort has been very slow, and sometimes it stops for months because there's no money," Camacho said. Beyond providing money to rebuild the Mexican infrastructure, the U.S. is promising to buy additional water from Mexico, at a quantity and price to be determined later, and allow it to flow to the delta south of the border -- an area depleted in recent years by drought and increased consumption upstream. To the dismay of Mexican fishermen and of environmentalists on both sides of the border, the river often is barely a trickle when it finishes its 1,400-mile journey to the delta and the Gulf of California.

4. THE COLORADO WATER AGREEMENT WILL RESTORE THE COLORADO DELTA.

Ian Lovett, (Staff), NEW YORK TIMES, Nov. 21, 2012. Retrieved May 21, 2013 from Nexis.

The United States and Mexican governments will each supply 5,000 acre-feet of water a year to the delta, as will a coalition of environmental organizations. Native plants from the delta will also be restored, which will provide a habitat for migratory birds. "This agreement is a model for how we need to be doing water management in the future," said Taylor Hawes, the director of the Colorado River Program for the Nature Conservancy, one of the nongovernmental organizations that will help supply water to the delta.

XIX. “BEYOND MERIDA” IS FULLY SUPPORTED BY THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

1. THE FOUR PILLARS OF “BEYOND MERIDA” REPRESENT THE NEW AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE U.S. AND MEXICO.

Clare Seelke, (Specialist in Latin American Affairs, Congressional Research Service), U.S. MEXICAN SECURITY INITIATIVE: THE MERIDA INITIATIVE AND BEYOND, Jan. 14, 2013, 24-25.

In April 2011, the U.S. and Mexican governments formally approved a bi-national pillar four strategy. The strategy focuses on three objectives: (1) strengthening federal civic planning capacity to prevent and reduce crime; (2) bolstering the capacity of state and local governments to implement crime prevention and reduction activities; and (3) increasing engagement with at-risk youth. U.S.-funded pillar four activities complement the work of the Mexico’s National Center for Crime Prevention and Citizen Participation, an entity within the Interior Department that implemented projects in high crime areas in 237 cities in 2012 where local authorities were making similar investments in crime prevention. In support of this new strategy, USAID launched a three-year, \$15 million Crime and Violence Prevention program in nine target communities identified by the Mexican government in Ciudad Juárez, Monterrey, Nuevo León, and Tijuana, Baja California. The program supports the development of community strategies to reduce crime and violence in the target localities, including outreach to at-risk youth, improved citizen-police collaboration, and partnerships with private sector enterprises.

Vanda Felbab-Brown, (Fellow in Foreign Policy, Brookings Institution), A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY: COUNTERNARCOTICS AND CITIZEN SECURITY IN THE AMERICAS, Senate Hearing, Mar. 31, 2011, 37.

Beyond Merida focuses on four pillars: a comprehensive effort to weaken the DTOs that goes beyond high-value decapitation; institutional development and capacity-building, including in the civilian law enforcement, intelligence, and justice sectors; building a 21st century border to secure communities while encouraging economic trade and growth; and building community resilience against participation in the drug trade or drug consumption. Beyond Merida thus seeks to expand interdiction efforts from a narrow high-value targeting of DTO bosses to a more comprehensive interdiction effort that targets the entire drug organization and giving newly trained police forces the primary street security function once again while gradually putting the military in a background support function. By focusing on the building of a secure but smart United States-Mexico border that also facilitates trade, the strategy not only helps U.S. border States for which trade with Mexico often represents an economic lifeline, but also helps generate economic opportunities in Mexico that reduce the citizens' need to participate in illegality for obtaining basic livelihood. Pillar three then critically meshes with fourth pillar—focused on weaning the population away from the drug traffickers—which again seeks to build resilient communities in Mexico to prevent their takeover by Mexican crime organizations.

2. THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION HAS ESTABLISHED A SMOOTH WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT IN FIGHTING CARTELS.

Eliot Engel, (U.S. Representative, New York), TO APPLY COUNTERINSURGENCY TACTICS UNDER A COORDINATED AND TARGETED STRATEGY TO COMBAT THE TERRORIST INSURGENCY IN MEXICO, House Hearing, Dec. 15, 2011, 18.

The distrust and prickliness which once pervaded the relationship between the U.S. and Mexico has been replaced by trust and cooperation. Obviously, it is a very good thing, and we have even seen this cooperation flow into other areas, including at the United Nations where Mexico and the United States have been working together more closely than ever before.

3. “BEYOND MERIDA” EMPLOYS A BROAD APPROACH TO FIGHTING DRUG VIOLENCE.

Melanie Reid, (Prof., Law, Lincoln Memorial U. School of Law), OKLAHOMA CITY UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW, Fall 2012, 412.

In order to cast a wider net and increase the chances of successfully convicting drug cartel members, the Obama administration shifted its focus beyond drug trafficking and began combating transnational organized crime (TOC). According to Obama's Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime, issued in July 2011, TOC networks are involved in kidnapping for ransom, extortion, drug trafficking, human smuggling, weapons trafficking, intellectual property theft, and cybercrime. The new TOC investigations "will use an integrated approach that incorporates financial, weapons, and TOC-related corruption investigations into a comprehensive attack on the entire criminal organization. Interdiction efforts will focus on depriving TOC networks of their products, proceeds, infrastructure, and enabling means." Perhaps this expansive view of drug trafficking organizations will prove effective in prosecuting Mexican criminals in the United States.

XX. THE MEXICAN TRUCKING ISSUE HAS BEEN RESOLVED

1. THE U.S. HAS AGREED TO ALLOW MEXICAN TRUCKS TO DELIVER GOODS IN THE U.S.

John Crook, (J.D. Candidate), AMERICAN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Oct. 2011, 809.

In July 2011, the United States and Mexico concluded agreements aimed at resolving along-running dispute involving U.S. refusal to allow Mexican long-haul trucks to carry cargoes to and from Mexico on U.S. highways outside of a narrow border zone. The United States has banned long-haul Mexican trucks for many years, although some were allowed under a Bush administration program that ended in 2009. Mexico viewed the U.S. actions as contrary to U.S. commitments under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and in 2009 imposed \$ 2.4 billion in punitive tariffs on exports of pork, dairy products, apples, and other U.S. agricultural and nonagricultural products. Under the agreed arrangements, Mexican trucks and drivers must comply with U.S. safety and operating requirements and will be subject to electronic monitoring, drug testing, and other controls.

Daniel Griswold, (Dir., Trade Policy Studies, Cato Institute), WILL U.S. FINALLY KEEP ITS WORD WITH MEXICO ON CROSS-BORDER TRUCKING?, Mar. 3, 2011. Retrieved Feb. 11, 2013 from <http://www.cato.org/blog/will-us-finally-keep-its-word-mexico-cross-border-trucking>.

President Obama and Mexican President Calderon announced this afternoon that the U.S. government will finally allow qualified, safety certified Mexican truckers to deliver goods in the United States, fulfilling a commitment our government made more than 17 years ago in the North American Free Trade Agreement. It's about time. America's violation of the agreement had resulted in sanctions against \$2.4 billion worth of U.S. exports to Mexico. According to one press report today. The plan, announced at a news conference by the two presidents, will allow for half of those tariffs to be lifted immediately. It will establish a reciprocal, phased-in pilot program that allows Mexican trucks to operate inside the U.S. provided they comply with a series of safety and driver-skills and language tests monitored by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

2. MEXICO PROPERLY USED NAFTA'S GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE TO FORCE THE U.S. TO GIVE UP ON ITS TRUCKING BAN.

Daniel Griswold, (Dir., Trade Policy Studies, Cato Institute), WILL U.S. FINALLY KEEP ITS WORD WITH MEXICO ON CROSS-BORDER TRUCKING?, Mar. 3, 2011. Retrieved Feb. 11, 2013 from <http://www.cato.org/blog/will-us-finally-keep-its-word-mexico-cross-border-trucking>.

After years of patiently waiting for its northern neighbor to do the right thing, and after lawfully pursuing its grievance through procedures set up by NAFTA, the Mexican government responded to the end of the pilot program by imposing punitive duties on \$2.4 billion worth of U.S. exports to Mexico. The duties were strategically aimed at a range of politically sensitive products.

3. MEXICO HAS AGREED TO DROP ITS TARIFF IN EXCHANGE FOR THE AGREEMENT.

John Crook, (J.D. Candidate), AMERICAN JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Oct. 2011, 810.

The settlement involves two documents: a memorandum of understanding, initially for a term of three years, between the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Secretaria de Comunicaciones y Transportes of Mexico, and an exchange of documents regarding the reduction of Mexico's tariffs between the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative and its Mexican counterpart. A U.S. Department of Transportation press release explains: U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and Secretaria de Comunicaciones y Transportes Dionisio Arturo Perez-Jecome Friscione joined today in Mexico City to sign agreements resolving the dispute over long-haul, cross-border trucking services between the United States and Mexico.

4. THE NEW TRUCKING AGREEMENT RESOLVES THAT SAFETY ISSUE THAT WAS AT THE CENTER OF THE ORIGINAL DISPUTE.

USA TODAY, July 6, 2011. Retrieved May 22, 2013 from http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/money/world/2011-07-06-mexico-us-trucking-agreement_n.htm.

The U.S. Department of Transportation says the safety concerns have now been resolved. Electronic monitoring systems will track how many hours the trucks are in service. Drivers will also have to pass safety reviews, drug tests and assessments of their English-language and U.S. traffic sign-reading skills. Mexico has the authority to demand similar measures from U.S. truck drivers entering their territory.

XXI. MEXICO IS ALREADY DEVELOPING A SMART ELECTRICAL GRID

1. MEXICO HAS A PLAN IN PLACE FOR AN ELECTRICAL SMART GRID.

James Fredrick, (Staff, BN Americas), REGULATOR ADVANCES SMART GRID PLANS, Aug. 30, 2012. Retrieved Apr. 25, 2013 from <http://www.bnamericas.com/news/electricpower/mexican-power-regulator-planning-for-smarter-grid>.

Mexican power regulator CRE has begun developing a smart grid plan for the country that will open doors for new private investors, the watchdog told BNamericas. CRE has begun research thanks in part to a US\$405,000 grant from the U.S. Trade and Development Agency. The agency also is working with energy ministry Sener, state power company CFE and international consultants. CRE is in the first of six planning stages that will take 10 months.

2. MEXICO ALREADY HAS ARRANGED FINANCING FOR BUILDING THE SMART GRID.

James Fredrick, (Staff, BN Americas), REGULATOR ADVANCES SMART GRID PLANS, Aug. 30, 2012. Retrieved Apr. 25, 2013 from <http://www.bnamericas.com/news/electricpower/mexican-power-regulator-planning-for-smarter-grid>.

A Mexican smart grid will be financed primarily by CFE, but there will be private investment opportunities for providers of information and control systems as well as large-scale energy storage developers. Total investment, timeframe, and contracting details are not yet available, but CRE expects to announce these details by mid-2013.

3. THE U.S. TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY SUPPORTS THE FINANCING OF MEXICO'S SMART GRID.

Selene Aparicio, (Journalist), A SMART GRID FOR MEXICO?, June 28, 2012. Retrieved Apr. 25, 2013 from <http://www.renewableenergymexico.com/?p=354>.

With regard to Mexico's energy sector, the incorporation of a smart grid into its current electric system is of extreme importance and it is for this reason that the agreement signed this week between the CRE (Energy Regulating Commission) and the USTDA (U.S. Trade and Development Agency) is of such transcendental importance. On Tuesday, June 26th, the USTDA awarded a \$405,000 grant to the CRE to support the development of a regulatory framework for smart grid implementation in Mexico. The grant was signed at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City by CRE Chairman, Francisco Xavier Salazar Diez de Sollano, and USTDA Country Manager, Keith Eischeid.

4. THE SMART GRID WILL SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF WIND POWER IN MEXICO.

Selene Aparicio, (Journalist), REVIEW OF MEXICO WINDPOWER, Feb. 5, 2013. Retrieved Apr. 26, 2013 from <http://www.renewableenergymexico.com/?p=722>.

After two days of intense discussions on the future of Mexico's wind energy industry, most delegates left the conference in a breezy and upbeat mood; feeling like Mexico's renewable energy sector has taken a great step forward. After the hydropower sector, the wind power sector in Mexico is the one demonstrating the biggest advancements and the growth of this industry is a great accomplishment for the national energy sector. To ensure its future growth, the country still needs to establish long-term politics and a stable regulatory framework to attract investment for projects as well as technological development and the creation of a national supply chain. According to Leonardo Beltrán, from the Energy ministry, "by 2020 the market could incorporate approximately one fifth of the current installed capacity; attract investments larger than 350 million pesos; generate nearly 50 thousand jobs; and reduce 13 million tons of CO₂."

5. THE MEXICAN SMART GRID WILL BE CONNECTED TO THE U.S. SMART GRID.

Bill Rose, (Manager, Corporate Communications, ABB Power Products), HISTORIC HVDC TIE PROVIDES POWER SHARING BETWEEN THE U.S. AND MEXICO GRIDS, Sept. 1, 2008. Retrieved Apr. 25, 2013 from <http://www.elp.com/articles/print/volume-86/issue-5/sections/td/historic-hvdc-tie-provides-power-sharing-between-us-and-mexico-grids.html>.

Last October, an important milestone was reached when the power grids in Texas and Mexico were integrated. The Sharyland asynchronous interconnection, located on the banks of the Rio Grande River, now supports energy trading between the two countries and emergency power exchanges via its unique black start capability—the first large-scale asynchronous interconnection to support both. The Sharyland Utilities' high voltage direct current (HVDC) interconnection connected at a point near the border cities of Mission, Texas, and Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico. The project was completed in a tight schedule of just 20 months and is considered a breakthrough success for both countries.

XXII. THERE WILL BE NO ECONOMIC MELTDOWN IN VENEZUELA

1. VENEZUELA'S ECONOMY IS IN MUCH BETTER SHAPE THAN IT WAS BEFORE THE HUGO CHÁVEZ ERA.

Daniel Hellinger, (Prof., Political Science, Webster U.), *POLITICS OF LATIN AMERICA: THE POWER GAME*, 2012, 502.

President Chávez's victory in 1998 raised popular expectations, but Chávez inherited an economy in freefall, low oil prices, and a smaller share of profits (a legacy of contracts signed during the *apertura*). Then, in December 1999, heavy rains devastated much of the coastline, leaving over 10,000 people dead in the worst natural catastrophe in a half-century. Between 2001 and 2003, the government had to contend with the impact of the short-lived coup and three-month oil stoppage. The stoppage cost the country \$9 billion, nine percent of its annual gross domestic product. The economy contracted by 8.9 percent in 2002 and 9.4 percent in 2003. After 2004, the economy began to grow at a very high annual rate (expected to be anywhere between 7 and 12 percent), but it was hard to know how much of the upturn was due to government policies versus high oil prices and recovery from earlier shocks. Oil prices soared above \$50 a barrel in 2004; they would reach \$140 before falling back in the wake of the world financial crisis of late 2008.

2. VENEZUELA HAS OIL RESERVES EXCEEDING EVEN THOSE OF SAUDI ARABIA.

LONDON TIMES, Apr. 15, 2013, 2.

Unlike many of its allies, Venezuela is not a pariah state. Nor is it mired in existential crisis. On the contrary, it was able to experiment with a new and costly brand of statism and distribute its largesse to so many poorer countries because of oil reserves that exceed even Saudi Arabia's and an industrial infrastructure that by South American standards is sturdy and extensive. Venezuela's growth has lagged behind other emerging economies' but its GDP has still nearly doubled in the past decade. Most of the growth has taken place in non-oil industries and in the private sector. Violent crime rates are terrifyingly high and the country has missed out entirely on the tech boom harnessed by Asia's tiger economies, but certain fundamentals are in place that in ordinary circumstances would warrant cautious optimism. Corruption is endemic, but unlike Colombia in the 1990s and Mexico now, Venezuela is not at the mercy of drug cartels. Nor is democracy on life support. Mr. Chávez did his best to neutralise all sources of opposition, but the spirited candidacy of Henrique Capriles to succeed him is proof that in the end he failed.

3. THE LEVEL OF POVERTY IN VENEZUELA HAS FALLEN SIGNIFICANTLY OVER THE PAST DECADE.

Milford Bateman, (Research Fellow, Overseas Development Institute), *WHY DOESN'T MICROFINANCE WORK?: THE DESTRUCTIVE RISE OF LOCAL NEOLIBERALISM*, 2010, 191.

While it has been only a few years in operation, the early results of Venezuela's 'bottom-up' financial sector experiment are nevertheless impressive. At least partly thanks to the extremely supportive local financial system, and the resulting 'bottom-up' development trajectory thereby established, unemployment has decreased from nearly 15 per cent in 1999 to just under 8 per cent in 2008. Interestingly, employment in the informal sector — the traditional destination of most micro-entrepreneurs — has actually fallen over this time period, to just over 6 per cent of the total labour force. The level of poverty has also fallen, with the number in poverty falling from over 50 per cent in 1998 to just over 33 per cent in 2007, while extreme poverty has halved, from 20 per cent of the population to just under 10 per cent.

4. THE FOLLOWERS OF HUGO CHÁVEZ HAVE BEEN DEDICATED TO USING THE NATION'S OIL REVENUE TO ASSIST THE POOR.

Michael Parenti, (Ph.D., Yale U.), *THE FACE OF IMPERIALISM*, 2011, 118.

Millions of his compatriots correctly perceive Chávez as being the only president who has ever paid attention to the nation's poorest areas. His government represents an entirely different mode of social organization in which the nations of the world should put people before profits, using the wealth of the nation to serve the working populace instead of the favored few. For this, he and any other leader with such an egalitarian agenda are immediately listed in the "enemy" column by the ever-vigilant empire builders.

XXIII. ALBA PROVIDES A USEFUL ALTERNATIVE TO RELIANCE ON U.S. HEGEMONY IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

1. THE BOLIVARIAN ALTERNATIVE FOR THE AMERICAS (ALBA) OFFERS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE NEOLIBERAL TRADE MODEL.

Norman Girvan, (Prof., Graduate Institute of International Relations, U. of West Indies & Former General Secretary General of the Association of Caribbean States), *VENEZUELA'S PETRO-DIPLOMACY: HUGO CHÁVEZ'S FOREIGN POLICY*, 2011, 117-118.

The Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas, or ALBA, presents itself as an alternative to the U.S.-sponsored neoliberal model of economic integration based on trade and investment liberalization. ALBA claims to put the basic needs of the population and the reduction of poverty above private profits and the rights of private investors. The guiding principles of ALBA integration are said to be solidarity, complementarity, compensatory financing for the treatment of asymmetries, and differentiated treatment of countries according to their circumstances. In practice, ALBA's cooperation has consisted mostly of concessional financing for the relief of energy import bills, state-owned industries, and physical and social infrastructure; support for health and education projects that directly benefit the poor; and non-reciprocal trading arrangements.

2. ALBA MEMBERSHIP IS INCREASING.

Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), *UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW*, Spring 2010, 699-700.

Negotiations for the construction of ALBA continued on April 27-28, 2005 and involved the governments of Venezuela and Cuba. These have been followed by a large number of agreements, declarations, and actions meant to develop the conceptual framework of ALBA and to construct a number of projects that are supposed to apply those principles in specific sectors and among a variety of shifting groups of ALBA members. And the organization has grown. Since its inception in December of 2004, ALBA has increased its membership to include Bolivia, Nicaragua, Honduras, Dominica, St. Vincent, and the Grenadines. The addition of these members changed the agreement in a number of ways but did not affect the fundamental character of the association.

3. VENEZUELA HAS, THROUGH ALBA, PROVIDED MORE FOREIGN AID THAT THE U.S. AND THE WORLD BANK COMBINED.

Sean Goforth, (Prof., World Politics, Coastal Carolina U.), *AXIS OF UNITY: VENEZUELA, IRAN & THE THREAT TO AMERICA*, 2012, 143-144.

According to a calculation made by University of California-San Diego professor Richard Feinberg, Chávez's aid pledges rival that of the Marshall Plan in real terms. Even by the most conservative estimates, Chávez's aid to other Latin American nations eclipsed that from the U.S. Agency for International Development and the World Bank combined.

4. ALBA IS COMMITTED TO SOCIAL JUSTICE GOALS.

Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), *UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW*, Spring 2010, 693.

In addition to trying to correct the disparities and unfair practices, the governing principles of ALBA place the focus of fighting poverty and social exclusion above those of expanded free trade and commerce. This is an important step in the greater goal ALBA has of integrating and uniting the people and nations of Latin America. To achieve this goal, the root causes preventing this integration must be addressed. They include: (a) poverty that affects a majority of the population; (b) huge inequalities and asymmetries that exist between the countries; (c) unequal exchange and conditions that exist in international relations; (d) the burden of an unpayable debt; and (e) the imposition of structural adjustment policies by the International Monetary Fund ("IMF") and World Bank ("WB"), or the rigid rules imposed by the World Trade Organization ("WTO"), which erode the social and political bases of support.

5. THE BANK OF THE SOUTH PROVIDES AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE IMF.

Daniel Hellinger, (Prof., Political Science, Webster U.), *GLOBAL SECURITY WATCH: VENEZUELA*, 2012, 40.

After difficult negotiations with Brazil, whose participation was crucial to the new bank's success, over its scale and governance, the bank was established on September 26, 2009, by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Venezuela, with US\$20 billion in initial capital. The sum was small compared even with the capital of the national development bank of Brazil alone, but it provided an institutional foundation for expansion—a possible alternative to the U.S.-dominated IMF.

XXIV. CONCLUDING WORDS ON INHERENCY

Inherency is probably the most neglected element of strategy in the debate practices of the last decade. This is unfortunate because it is a study of inherency which best keeps debate practice close to the real policy context of the debate resolution. In the case of the 2013-2014 debate topic, the grounding for inherency argumentation is a thorough understanding of the ways that current mechanisms are already resolving problems in the three countries named in the resolution. This creates an opportunity to argue that indigenous economic activities or economic engagement activities of countries other than the U.S. can better resolve the problems highlighted in affirmative cases. Inherency is important for the following reasons:

1. *INDEPENDENT VOTING ISSUE FOR THE NEGATIVE*: In traditional debate theory, inherency is one of the stock issues; the affirmative case must prove that the harm which it cites is inherent. If it fails to demonstrate inherency, then the affirmative team loses the debate even if it wins every other issue.
2. *MINIMIZES AFFIRMATIVE SIGNIFICANCE*: The term “comparative advantage” means that the affirmative advantage is supposed to be compared to something else. The status quo is the comparison point. If the inherency argument shows that the present system is working to resolve the affirmative harm, then the margin of the affirmative advantage is minimized.
3. *SETS UP SOLVENCY ARGUMENTS*: If the present system has not been able to resolve the problem, despite a positive commitment to resolve the problem shown in the inherency position, then attention is focused on the mechanisms that have prevented solution. Even more significantly, the negative inherency argument may demonstrate that the affirmative case has improperly identified the cause of the problem.
4. *SERVES AS A LOW-RISK COUNTERPLAN*: Suppose that the affirmative case argues that the U.S. should increase its foreign aid support of poverty reduction programs in Mexico. The affirmative argument is that economic problems in Mexico are of concern to the U.S. because they fuel illegal immigration. The negative team can argue that the proper solution to poverty in Mexico is an expansion of Mexico’s own Oportunidades program. This poverty reduction program has been developed by Mexico itself. The negative team could propose an international action counterplan, urging that the Inter-American Development Bank or the United Nations Development Programme provide funding for Oportunidades. Fortunately, however, the negative team can argue, the present system is already adopting this solution. The negative team can read evidence – available in this Negative Casebook – that the Oportunidades program is already expanding and that it is being supported by the Inter-American Development Bank and the United Nations (see card #60 on page 38). This solution preserves the best of both worlds – poverty in Mexico is reduced, illegal immigration is prevented, and the disadvantages of having to expand U.S. foreign aid programs and risking a political backlash are avoided.
5. *HIGHLIGHTS UNIQUENESS ANSWERS TO DISADVANTAGES*: Affirmative teams should carefully study the whole range of possible inherency answers to cases; these arguments can be made by the affirmative as answers to disadvantages. If, for example, the U.S. government already is extensively involved in economic engagement with the three topic countries, then some disadvantages may be nonunique.

- I. THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION HAS LOOSENEED THE CUBAN EMBARGO. (1-2)
- II. TOURISM IS ALREADY EXPANDING IN CUBA.
 - A. Tourism from many countries is increasing. (3-5)
 - B. The increase in tourism sustains the Cuban economy. (6-8)
 - C. Cuba tourism is already at capacity. (9)
 - D. Cuba tourism raises issues for the environment and sustainability. (10-12)
 - E. U.S. tourism is increasing. (13-15)
- III. INDIGENOUS AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN CUBA PREVENTS FOOD SHORTAGES.
 - A. Hunger in Cuba is decreasing. (16)
 - B. The Cuban government is distribution agricultural land to private farmers. (17)
 - C. Health of the Cuban people has improved. (18-19)
 - D. Cuba's goal is agricultural independence. (20)
 - E. Cuba's organic food revolution is healthier. (21)
 - F. Cuba has access to expert agricultural know-how. (22)
 - G. Cuba's urban agriculture movement offers a model for the world of how to develop agricultural independence. (23-29)
- IV. CUBAN BASEBALL PLAYERS HAVE ADEQUATE ACCESS TO MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL.
 - A. Cuban baseball players are now often allowed to return to their homeland. (30-37)
 - B. Cuban baseball players make a lot of money when they defect to play in the major leagues. (38-42)
 - C. Whether baseball players can return to their homeland is up to the Cuban government. (43)
 - D. Many Cuban baseball players now defect. (44-45)
 - E. Cuban baseball players typically become the subjects of a bidding war. (46)
- V. MEXICO'S OWN PROGRAM IS THE SUPERIOR SOLUTION TO POVERTY IN THAT COUNTRY.
 - A. Mexico's economy is strong. (47-48)
 - B. The success of Mexico's economy accounts for a decrease in illegal immigration to the U.S. (49)
 - C. Mexico is developing a middle class. (50-51)
 - D. Mexican President Nieto is committed to reducing poverty. (52-55)
 - E. Mexico's Oportunidades program is explained. (56-59)
 - F. Oportunidades is supported by loans from international organizations. (60)
 - G. Oportunidades is an anti-poverty program. (61)
 - H. Oportunidades reaches all persons in need. (62)
 - I. Oportunidades teaches responsibility. (63)
 - J. Oportunidades is now used as a model anti-poverty program throughout Latin America. (64)
 - K. Poverty in Mexico is decreasing. (65)
- VI. EXISTING ENFORCEMENT MEASURES FOR FIREARMS TRAFFICKING ARE SUFFICIENT.
 - A. Cooperation on firearms trafficking between the U.S. and Mexico is active at present. (66-67)
 - B. Guidance is already provided to gun shop owners and buyers about avoiding the danger of straw purchases. (68-69)
 - C. Firearms trafficking is already prohibited. (70-71)
 - D. Penalties for firearms trafficking are already severe. (72)
 - E. The Crossed Arms system is a joint U.S.-Mexico enforcement initiative against firearms trafficking. (73)
 - F. The U.S. and Mexico already cooperate through the eTrace system of firearms trafficking enforcement. (74-76)
 - G. The eTrace system provides a means of enforcement. (77)
 - H. The eTrace system is used throughout Mexico. (78)
 - I. Project Gunrunner provides an enforcement system for firearms trafficking. (79)
- VII. BORDER ENFORCEMENT IS SUFFICIENT AT PRESENT.
 - A. Border enforcement is increasing. (80)
 - B. Funding is adequate at present. (81-82)
 - C. More agents are being assigned. (83-84)
 - D. Border agents have access to the technology they need for proper enforcement. (85)
- VIII. MONEY LAUNDERING ENFORCEMENT MEASURES ARE WORKING. (86)
- IX. MEXICO IS DEVELOPING AN ELECTRICAL SMART GRID. (87)
- X. ALBA CREATES AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE RELIANCE ON U.S. INFLUENCE IN THE HEMISPHERE.
 - A. ALBA creates an alternative to capitalism. (88-91)
 - B. ALBA creates an alternative to free trade. (92-93)
 - C. ALBA creates an alternative to globalization. (94-96)
 - D. ALBA creates an alternative to hegemony. (97)
 - E. The Bank of the South provides an alternative to the IMF. (98-100)
 - F. ALBA provides foreign aid on a large scale. (101-103)
 - G. ALBA's organizational structure is described. (104-106)
 - H. ALBA is a postcolonial movement. (107-109)
 - I. ALBA is committed to social justice. (110-112)
 - J. ALBA is a uniquely Latin American movement. (113-114)

1. Enrique Zamora, (Prof., Law, St. Thomas U. School of Law), ST. THOMAS LAW REVIEW, Summer 2012, 529-530. Two years ago, President Obama lifted all restrictions on family travel and remittances to family in Cuba. Further, the President wished to focus on expanding eligible humanitarian donations and increasing telecommunications with Cuba. Currently, and most recently, "President [Obama announced] changes ... [in] (1) purposeful travel, (2) non-family remittances; and (3) charter flights to and from Cuba." The purpose of these recent changes is to increase people to people contact; enhance the free flow of information to, from, and among the Cuban people; support a civil society; and help promote their independence from Cuban authorities. From the early moments of his presidency, President Obama has reduced the scope of the embargo on Cuba and this will allow many U.S. citizens to visit Cuba for the very first time. All international airports in the United States will eventually be allowed to have flights to and from Cuba.
2. Howard Wiarda, (Prof., International Relations, U. Georgia), LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS AND DEVELOPMENT, 2011, 459. The Obama administration, on the other hand, changed some of the policies enacted by its predecessor with regard to Cuba, which was consistent with the criticisms that candidate Obama had made during his campaign of President Bush's policy toward Cuba. Keeping one of its pledges, the administration eased restrictions on travel, so Cuban-Americans can now visit Cuba several times a year rather than the one visit every three years permitted under the Bush policy. Remittances can be sent to extended members of a family—not just to immediate relatives.
3. Associated Press, BOSTON GLOBE, Aug. 8, 2012. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.boston.com/travel/destinations/2012/08/09/cuba-says-tourism-income-percent/YrOONHMD3qOk6uqgT4q9xO/story.html>. Cuban authorities report that tourism revenues rose 12.8 percent in 2011, returning to levels from three years earlier as the key sector recovers from losses due to the global financial crisis. In an undated report posted recently on its website, the National Office of Statistics said tourism income was \$2.5 billion in 2011, compared with \$2.2 billion the previous year. In all, the island hosted 2.7 million visitors, up 7 percent from 2.5 million in 2010.
4. Indo Asian News Service, CUBA TO EXPAND LODGING CAPACITY TO BOOST TOURISM, May 8, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://in.news.yahoo.com/cuba-expand-lodging-capacity-boost-tourism-102054713.html>. In 2012, almost 2.9 million travellers visited Cuba, representing a record yearly increase of 4.9 percent, and this year officials hope to host some three million vacationers. With a total lodging capacity of 58,434 rooms in 335 hotels, Cuba's tourism infrastructure has steadily grown to accommodate new arrivals. Seventy-one percent of those rooms are at beaches, 23 percent in cities and two percent in natural reserves.
5. Trip Advisor, FYI: CANADA IS CUBA'S MAJOR TOURIST SENDING MARKET, Apr. 8, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.tripadvisor.com/ShowTopic-g147270-i91-k6372969-FYI_Canada_Is_Cuba_s_Major_Tourist_Sending_Market-Cuba.html. Canada ratified its condition as Cuba's major tourist-sending market, with 284,654 vacationers during the first two months of 2013. Canada is followed by Germany (23,268), France (22,158), the United Kingdom (21,942), Argentina (21,245) and Italy (19,615). The list of major tourist-sending countries also includes Russia (15,660 travelers), Mexico (11,801), Chile (9,833), Spain (9,005), Venezuela (6,448), the Netherlands (5,897) and Austria (4,431). By months, 292,634 tourists visited Cuba in January and 300,595 arrived on the island-nation in February, being this the best two-month period since 2008. It is worth noting that Cuba's tourist industry received 2,838,607 foreign vacationers in 2012, a record for a year in the country.
6. Reuters News Service, THE GUARDIAN, Jan. 24, 2012. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jan/24/cuba-tourism-arab-spring-us>. Tourism brought revenues of about \$2.3bn in 2011. Travel experts say there is continued growth in the number of visitors from Canada, by far the biggest market for Cuba, and rising numbers from countries such as Russia and Argentina. This high season has also seen a resurgence in visitors from Europe, whose numbers had fallen off. Many people who usually go to north Africa for a winter vacation are now looking elsewhere because of security concerns following the Arab Spring uprisings.
7. Robert Buckman, (Prof., Journalism, U. of Louisiana at Lafayette), LATIN AMERICA, 2012, 158. Cuba has hoped tourism would be its economic savior, and to a degree, it has been. In 1999, Vice President Carlos Lage admitted the country was relying increasingly on foreign tourism for development. He said tourism brought in \$1.7 billion in badly needed foreign exchange in 1998 and that it showed a 30% increase in the first quarter of 1999. An estimated 1.8 million tourists visited Cuba in 2000, bringing in \$1.9 billion, dwarfing the amount from sugar exports.
8. Xinhua News Service, CUBAN TOURISM REVENUES UP IN 2011, Aug. 11, 2012. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/726380.shtml>. Tourism revenues in Cuba amounted to more than \$2.5 billion in 2011, increasing 12.8 percent over the year before, the National Statistics Bureau reported Friday. The island country last year earned 284 million dollars more than in 2010, a bureau press release said. Revenues from restaurants and other gastronomic services in the tourism sector reached \$415 million, representing an increase of 6.6 percent, while the national income from hotel accommodations totaled 338 million dollars, rising 15.5 percent. At the same time, it received more than 2.7 million international visitors, up 7.3 percent, said the bureau.
9. Reuters News Service, THE GUARDIAN, Jan. 24, 2012. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jan/24/cuba-tourism-arab-spring-us>. The Arab spring, changes in U.S. policy and economic reforms in Cuba are driving a tourism rush that is giving the communist-run state one of its best seasons ever and stretching its ability to meet demand. Hotels are full to the brim and Old Havana, the capital's historic centre, is teeming with tourists from around the world, soaking up the warm winter sun in outdoor cafes and strolling through narrow colonial streets.
10. DT Cuba News, A BET ON NATURE TOURISM, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.dtcuba.com/show-report.aspx?lng=2&c=48>. Cuba, which benefits from an excellent geographic location at the entrance of the Caribbean Sea, strongly bets on tourism, based on its natural attractions, with unique options for nature lovers. One of the main destinations for nature tourism is western Pinar del Río province, where a project combines sustainable development and tourism in the mountainous Las Terrazas Community. Its importance and interest is stressed by the fact that Las Terrazas is situated in Sierra del Rosario, one of Cuba's natural strongholds, which was designated a Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1985.
11. DT Cuba News, THE STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.dtcuba.com/Showreport.aspx?c=489&lng=2>. The region's exuberant flora, with more than 900 autochthonous species, including 115 native to Cuba, is complemented by 160 species of birds and 12 species of mammals, amphibians and reptiles, especially crocodiles. White-sand beaches of crystal-clear water, exotic forests, rivers, lakes, flooded caverns, natural pools, pristine regions and swamp savannahs are a safe haven for 30 percent of Cuba's autochthonous fauna.

12. DT Cuba News, THE STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.dtcuba.com/Showreport.aspx?c=489&lng=2>. Cuba's tourism industry, a major hard-currency earner in the country's economy, has grown steadily in an environment that prioritizes sustainable tourism. In addition to traditional sun and beach options, and exuberant nature, Cuba also offers its culture and traditions, which are key elements of the island's tourist product. The preservation of the environment and the exploitation of tourist destinations without damaging the environment have gained relevance in Cuba.
13. Reuters News Service, THE GUARDIAN, Jan. 24, 2012. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/jan/24/cuba-tourism-arab-spring-us>. The number of U.S. visitors is also climbing after Barack Obama changed regulations in 2011, making it easier for non-Cuban Americans to visit a country that a U.S. trade embargo put off-limits in the past 50 years.
14. Caribbean Journal, CUBA REPORTS "RECORD NUMBER" OF TOURIST ARRIVALS IN 2012, Jan. 22, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.caribjournal.com/2013/01/11/cuba-reports-record-number-of-tourist-arrivals-in-2012/>. The United States has opened up pathways to travel to Cuba over the last several years, particularly through so-called "people-to-people" visits and educational tours, although purely recreational travel remains prohibited.
15. Peggy Goldman, (Travel Advisor, Huffington Post), DISPELLING FOUR MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT TRAVEL TO CUBA, Apr. 13, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/peggy-goldman/traveling-to-cuba_b_3062395.html. It's only legal for Americans to travel to Cuba on licensed trips that involve cultural or educational exchanges with Cubans. These trips are made possible through People-to-People licenses, granted by The U.S. Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC). Only a handful of tour operators (including my company, Friendly Planet Travel), have been granted a coveted People-to-People license.
16. HAVANA TIMES, May 6, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.havanatimes.org/?p=92598>. The head of the UN Organization for Food and Agriculture (FAO), José Graziano, congratulated Cuban leader Fidel Castro in a letter for the reduction of hunger on the island. Cuba has met the 2015 target of halving the number of people suffering from hunger, according to Graziano's letter dated April 29 and published today on the cover of the official newspaper "Granma".
17. Roger Burbach, (Staff, North American Congress on Latin America), A CUBAN SPRING, Apr. 29, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://nacla.org/news/2013/4/29/cuban-spring>. The government is distributing uncultivated land, which constitutes about half of the countryside's agriculturally viable terrain, in usufruct for 10 years in 10-hectare parcels with the possibility of lease renewal. To date there are 172,000 new agricultural producers.
18. Richard Schiffman, (Staff), THE ATLANTIC, Apr. 18, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/04/how-cubans-health-improved-when-their-economy-collapsed/275080/>. The economic meltdown should logically have been a public health disaster. But a new study conducted jointly by university researchers in Spain, Cuba, and the U.S. and published in the latest issue of the *British Medical Journal* says that the health of Cubans actually improved dramatically during the years of austerity. These surprising findings are based on nationwide statistics from the Cuban Ministry of Public Health, together with surveys conducted with about 6,000 participants in the city of Cienfuegos, on the southern coast of Cuba, between 1991 and 2011. The data showed that, during the period of the economic crisis, deaths from cardiovascular disease and adult-onset type 2 diabetes fell by a third and a half, respectively. Strokes declined more modestly, and overall mortality rates went down.
19. Richard Schiffman, (Staff), THE ATLANTIC, Apr. 18, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/04/how-cubans-health-improved-when-their-economy-collapsed/275080/>. This "abrupt downward trend" in illness does not appear to be because of Cuba's barefoot doctors and vaunted public health system, which is rated amongst the best in Latin America. The researchers say that it has more to do with simple weight loss. Cubans, who were walking and bicycling more after their public transportation system collapsed, and eating less (energy intake plunged from about 3,000 calories per day to anywhere between 1,400 and 2,400, and protein consumption dropped by 40 percent). They lost an average of 12 pounds.
20. Christina Ergas, (Prof., Sociology, U. Oregon). FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: SUSTAINABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE IN CUBA, Mar. 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.globalresearch.ca/food-sovereignty-sustainable-urban-agriculture-in-cuba/5332167>. When the Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990s, Cubans and their economy suffered greatly. Cubans no longer had access to the inputs required to maintain large-scale agriculture, given how dependent such agriculture is on oil. To make matters worse, the end of trade between the Soviet Bloc and Cuba resulted in a loss of access to food, which reduced Cubans' protein intake by 30 percent. The system of agriculture that was in place was not sustainable or organized for self-sufficiency. Cubans refer to the ensuing period of resource scarcity as the Special Period in Peace Time. This period included shortages of food, fuel, and medicine. Faced with food scarcity and malnutrition, Cubans had to revamp their food production systems, which included collectively producing a variety of crops in the most efficient manner possible. Additionally, the necessary mission of Cuban politicians, ecologists, farmers, scientists, biologists, and farm workers was to mend the ecological cycles of interdependence that large-scale, exploitative agriculture destroyed.
21. Richard Schiffman, (Staff), THE ATLANTIC, Apr. 18, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/04/how-cubans-health-improved-when-their-economy-collapsed/275080/>. It wasn't only the amount of food that Cubans ate that changed, but also what they ate. They became virtual vegans overnight, as meat and dairy products all but vanished from the marketplace. People were forced to depend on what they could grow, catch, and pick for themselves - including lots of high-fiber fresh produce, and fruits, added to the increasingly hard-to-come-by staples of beans, corn, and rice. Moreover, with petroleum and petroleum-based agro-chemicals unavailable, Cuba "went green," becoming the first nation to successfully experiment on a large scale with low-input sustainable agriculture techniques. Farmers returned to the machetes and oxen-drawn plows of their ancestors, and hundreds of urban community gardens (the latest rage in America's cities) flourished. "If we hadn't gone organic, we'd have starved!" said Miguel Salcines Lopez in the journal *Southern Spaces*. Salcines is an agricultural scientist who founded "*Vivero Alamar*," one of Cuba's best known *organopónicos*, or urban farms, in vacant lots in Havana.
22. Christina Ergas, (Prof., Sociology, U. Oregon). FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: SUSTAINABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE IN CUBA, Mar. 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.globalresearch.ca/food-sovereignty-sustainable-urban-agriculture-in-cuba/5332167>. Cuba had the human resources to address food scarcity, given that they had 11 percent of the scientists in Latin America. Scientists were already experimenting with agroecology, in order to take advantage of ecological synergisms, utilizing biodiversity and biological pest control. These efforts were focused on diminishing the need for inputs such as artificial fertilizers and pesticides. Other projects included integrating animals into rotational grazing systems with crops and diversifying with polycultures. Cubans also began recycling sugarcane waste as cattle feed; the cows, in turn, excrete waste that is applied to soil as fertilizer, thereby restoring ecological interdependence. By combining manure with worm castings, Cubans were able to fertilize most of their crops organically without having to import fertilizer from long distances.

23. Christina Ergas, (Prof., Sociology, U. Oregon). FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: SUSTAINABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE IN CUBA, Mar. 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.globalresearch.ca/food-sovereignty-sustainable-urban-agriculture-in-cuba/5332167>. Urban agriculture and reforestation projects also constituted important gains for the environment. Shifting food production away from reliance on fossil fuels and petrochemicals is better for human health and reduces the carbon dioxide emissions associated with food production. Urban reforestation projects provide sinks for air pollution and help beautify cities. Finally, local production of food decreases food miles. It also requires both local producers and consumers. Therefore, community members get to know each other and are responsible for each other through the production and consumption of food.
24. Christina Ergas, (Prof., Sociology, U. Oregon). FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: SUSTAINABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE IN CUBA, Mar. 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.globalresearch.ca/food-sovereignty-sustainable-urban-agriculture-in-cuba/5332167>. There are also international movements that are working to change agricultural policies and practices. For example, La Via Campesina is an international movement comprised of peasants, small-scale farmers, and their allies. Their primary goals are to stop neoliberal policies that promote oligopolistic corporate control over agriculture and to promote food sovereignty. In conjunction with these movements, Cuba has made remarkable strides toward establishing a system of food sovereignty. One of their most notable projects in this regard is their institutionalized and organized effort to expand agroecological practices, or a system of agriculture that is based on ecological principles and environmental concerns. Cuba has largely transformed food production in order to pursue a more sustainable path. These practices are not limited to the countryside.
25. Christina Ergas, (Prof., Sociology, U. Oregon). FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: SUSTAINABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE IN CUBA, Mar. 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.globalresearch.ca/food-sovereignty-sustainable-urban-agriculture-in-cuba/5332167>. Cuba is the recognized leader of urban agriculture. As Koont highlights, the Cuban National Group for Urban Agriculture defines urban agriculture as the production of food within the urban and peri-urban perimeter, using intensive methods, paying attention to the human-crop-animal-environment interrelationships, and taking advantage of the urban infrastructure with its stable labor force. This results in diversified production of crops and animals throughout the year, based on sustainable practices which allow the recycling of waste material. In 2007, urban agriculture comprised approximately 14.6 percent of agriculture in Cuba. Almost all of urban agriculture is organic.
26. Christina Ergas, (Prof., Sociology, U. Oregon). FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: SUSTAINABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE IN CUBA, Mar. 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.globalresearch.ca/food-sovereignty-sustainable-urban-agriculture-in-cuba/5332167>. Cuba's environmental protections and agricultural innovations have gained considerable recognition. The 2006 Sustainability Index Report, put together by the World Wildlife Fund by combining the United Nations Human Development Index and Ecological Footprint measures (or natural resource use per capita), contends that the only nation in the world that is living sustainably is Cuba. The island nation is particularly lauded for its strides in urban food production.
27. Christina Ergas, (Prof., Sociology, U. Oregon). FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: SUSTAINABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE IN CUBA, Mar. 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.globalresearch.ca/food-sovereignty-sustainable-urban-agriculture-in-cuba/5332167>. Koont indicates that the significance of urban agriculture in Cuba is that although Cuba is not completely food self-sufficient, it is the only example the world has of a country that produces most of its food locally, employing agroecological techniques for production. Furthermore, most of the food produced is for local consumption. As a result, Cuba has one of the shortest producer-to-consumer chains in the world. In this book, Koont documents the impressive transformations that have taken place within this nation.
28. Christina Ergas, (Prof., Sociology, U. Oregon). FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: SUSTAINABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE IN CUBA, Mar. 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.globalresearch.ca/food-sovereignty-sustainable-urban-agriculture-in-cuba/5332167>. Cubans employ various forms of urban agriculture, including gardens, reforestation projects, and small-scale livestock operations. In 2010, 75 percent of the Cuban population lived in cities—a city is defined as such if the population is in excess of 1,000 persons. Thus, urban food production is the most practical and efficient means to supply the population with food.
29. Christina Ergas, (Prof., Sociology, U. Oregon). FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: SUSTAINABLE URBAN AGRICULTURE IN CUBA, Mar. 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.globalresearch.ca/food-sovereignty-sustainable-urban-agriculture-in-cuba/5332167>. With the very real threat of climate change, potential energy crises, market fluctuations, worldwide droughts, or other economic and environmental problems that may force nations to relocate food production, this example can serve as a template for future food sovereignty. We can continue to learn from Cuba as they generate new technologies and innovations in organic urban agriculture into the future. In addition, the Cuban example serves as a testament to the potential for a society's resilience and is worth investigating not just for their innovations, but for inspiration.
30. Fox News Latino, CUBAN DEFECTORS GET A CHANCE TO RETURN HOME, Nov. 17, 2012. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2012/11/17/cuban-defectors-get-chance-to-visit-home/>. Cuba is "normalizing the temporary entrance into the country of those who emigrated illegally following the migratory accords of 1994 if more than eight years has gone by since their departure," Homero Acosta, secretary of the governing Council of State, said in a recent TV program examining the changes announced last month. The migration accords with the U.S. called for 20,000 immigration visas to be issued to Cubans each year, and for the repatriation of islanders caught at sea before reaching American shores. For Cubans who abandoned the country while on missions overseas, the rule applies to those who defected after 1990. Exiles who want to return for visits must use Cuban passports and will be able to come as often as they like. They initially will be allowed to stay up to 90 days, with possible extensions.
31. Jeff Franks, (Staff, Reuters News Service), CUBAN BASEBALL DEFECTOR RETURNS HOME UNDER NEW LAW, Jan. 29, 2013. Retrieved Apr. 28, 2013 from <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/01/30/us-cuba-travel-baseball-idUSBRE90T01Y20130130>. Before January 14, when new travel regulations went into effect, high-profile defectors such as Contreras were effectively barred from returning to Cuba, but now they can return if they have been away for at least eight years. Much to the chagrin of Cuban officials, many Cuban athletes have left the country over the years to cash in on their sporting prowess. Contreras was in Mexico playing for the Cuban national team when he defected in 2002 and signed a four-year, \$32 million contract with the New York Yankees. He went on to pitch for the Chicago White Sox, Colorado Rockies and Philadelphia Phillies. Contreras was the first big-name athlete known to have tested the new law, returning to Cuba from the United States a few days ago, driven not only by a desire to see his homeland, but to be with his 77-year-old mother Modesta Camejo, who is ill.

32. Orlando Matos, (Staff), NBC Latino, Jan. 23, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://nbclatino.com/2013/01/23/cuban-defector-jose-contreras-former-all-star-pitcher-first-athlete-to-return-to-cuba-under-new-immigration-law/>. Major League Baseball pitcher Jose Ariel Contreras Camejo is in Cuba tending to a family matter. This makes him the first Cuban athlete to return to the country under the new immigration policy, after leaving the island to play professional baseball. In a phone interview with NBC News, Contreras denied having any problems entering the island. "If there had been a problem, they would have sent me back," said Contreras on the phone before declining a more extended interview.
33. Orlando Matos, (Staff), NBC Latino, Jan. 23, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://nbclatino.com/2013/01/23/cuban-defector-jose-contreras-former-all-star-pitcher-first-athlete-to-return-to-cuba-under-new-immigration-law/>. Under the new immigration guidelines adopted on January 14, Cubans who left the country through irregular channels in the 90s and had spent eight years outside of the country since their emigration would be allowed to make temporary visits. An official Cuban online encyclopedia, that usually labels athletes who leave their teams to turn pro as "deserters," omitted the derogatory label under Contreras' encyclopedia entry. Instead it describes Contreras as "one of the best pitchers in the country since 1962, with impressive numbers" during the decade that he played in the national tournament, where he won 117 games, lost 50 and had 1,346 strikeouts. On one occasion, then president Fidel Castro called Contreras the "Bronze Titan" for his athletic achievements, praise that equated him to Antonio Maceo, one of the heroes of independence of Cuba.
34. Orlando Matos, (Staff), NBC Latino, Jan. 23, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://nbclatino.com/2013/01/23/cuban-defector-jose-contreras-former-all-star-pitcher-first-athlete-to-return-to-cuba-under-new-immigration-law/>. When [Jose] Contreras was in Mexico in 2002, he defected to the United States to fulfill his dream of playing in the U.S. Major Leagues and became a millionaire. Contreras now returns to Cuba where he has many admirers, especially in his hometown, Pinar del Rio, home to other excellent pitchers who are not representing Cuba in the upcoming World Baseball Classic.
35. Patrick Oppmann, (Staff, CNN), CUBAN TRAVEL REFORM A HOME RUN, Jan. 28, 2013. Retrieved Apr. 28, 2013 from <http://www.cnn.com/2013/01/28/world/americas/cuba-baseball-defector-returns>. Sports stars who left Cuba for mega-salaries abroad were considered traitors by Cuba's government. If they abandoned the island for the lure of playing in the majors, they could be barred from their homeland, never to see friends and family again. That was until January, when authorities instituted long-hoped-for reforms, lifting many of the restrictions on Cubans who wanted to travel abroad and return to the island.
36. Cuban Insider, MILLIONAIRE DEFECTORS NOW RETURNING, Jan. 28, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://cubaninsider.blogspot.com/2013/01/baseball-reflects-changes-underway-in.html>. After being absent from the island for a decade, Jose also visited his mother who is facing an amputation at Salvador Allende Hospital in Cuba. During his Major League career in the U. S., Cuba has quietly let his mother see him perform on baseball's biggest stage. His return to Cuba this week, despite his defection to the U. S., comes under the island's new immigration laws that will benefit many others in addition to Jose. He will report to the Philadelphia Phillies Spring Training in Florida in a couple of weeks. But it's for sure he will return to his Cuba often now. He defected at age 31; had he defected at age 20 he probably would have earned an additional \$100 million or so in his 20s.
37. Patrick Oppmann, (Staff, CNN), CUBAN BASEBALL DEFECTOR RETURNS HOME, Jan. 28, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.wptz.com/news/national/Cuban-baseball-defector-returns-home/-/8869978/18308196/-/n4hs3n/-/index.html>. While other sports stars who left Cuba said they were uneasy about returning -- afraid they could still be banned or might even be imprisoned -- Contreras couldn't wait. His mother was ill in a hospital, and he said he had been homesick every day he was away. Other Cuban players who had defected, like Orlando "El Duque" Hernandez, complained that Cubans who live abroad still needed to ask the government for a visa to return. But Contreras said it was an important sign that the door had finally been opened to allow defectors to come back.
38. Baseball World, CHASING DREAMS: CUBAN BASEBALL DEFECTORS, Jan. 15, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://baseballdeworld.com/2010/01/15/chasing-dreams-cuban-baseball-defectors-part-1/>. The Boston Red Sox dished out \$8.2 million to sign shortstop Jose Iglesias, who along with pitcher Noel Arguelles defected last summer from the Cuban Junior National Team at the IBAF World Junior AAA Championship in Edmonton, Canada. The Kansas City Royals recently inked Arguelles to a \$7 million, five-year contract with performance bonuses.
39. Cuban Insider, MILLIONAIRE DEFECTORS NOW RETURNING, Jan. 28, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://cubaninsider.blogspot.com/2013/01/baseball-reflects-changes-underway-in.html>. As a young lefty pitcher in Cuba, Aroldis Chapman had a 100-plus mph fastball. He defected in 2010 and signed a \$30.26 million contract with the Cincinnati Reds. As a Major League sensation, his fastball has been clocked at a record 106 mph. The Reds are one of the favorites to be in the 2013 World Series, with Chapman as their ace. Still just 24-years-old, it is expected he will earn around \$200 million in the Major Leagues if he stays healthy, and that's not a bad number to be "around."
40. Cuban Insider, MILLIONAIRE DEFECTORS NOW RETURNING, Jan. 28, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://cubaninsider.blogspot.com/2013/01/baseball-reflects-changes-underway-in.html>. Jose Contreras was Fidel Castro's favorite player when the big right-hander pitched for the Pinar del Rio Vegueras. Fidel nicknamed Jose the "Bronze Titan." After beating the Baltimore Orioles in an exhibition game, Jose defected in October of 2002 and signed a lucrative contract with the New York Yankees. In the past ten Major League seasons he has pitched for the Yankees, the Chicago White Sox, the Colorado Rockies and Philadelphia Phils. He has been paid \$67.5 million, \$47 million of that from the White Sox. Now 41, Jose's best Major League season was with the White Sox in 2005 when he had a 15-7 record. Even in his 40s, Jose earned \$5 million the past two years with the Phils.
41. La Vox Media Group, CUBAN BASEBALL PLAYERS LOOK TO PLAY ABROAD, July 23, 2012. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.voxxi.com/cuban-baseball-players-look-to-play-abroad/>. Three months after Cespedes' signing, the Chicago Cubs reached a nine-year, \$30 million deal with 20-year-old prospect Jorge Soler, who had defected to Haiti. It was huge money for a player who had yet to prove himself in the Cuban leagues, let alone in U.S. Major League Baseball. The records were broken again last month when the Los Angeles Dodgers signed 21-year-old Cuban outfielder Yasiel Puig to a seven-year, \$42 million deal, the most ever for a Cuban defector. Puig, like Soler and Cespedes, had never played a single inning of professional baseball. But Cuba's participation in international competitions has given professional talent scouts new opportunities to size up the island's players.

42. Patrick Oppmann, (Staff, CNN), CUBAN BASEBALL DEFECTOR RETURNS HOME, Jan. 28, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.wptz.com/news/national/Cuban-baseball-defector-returns-home/-/8869978/18308196/-/n4hs3n/-/index.html>. In 2002, he defected while playing in Mexico. After years of barely scraping out a living playing in Cuba, [Jose] Contreras was signed by the New York Yankees for \$32 million. Sports stars who left Cuba for mega-salaries abroad were considered traitors by Cuba's government. If they abandoned the island for the lure of playing in the majors, they could be barred from their homeland, never to see friends and family again. That was until January, when authorities instituted long-hoped-for reforms, lifting many of the restrictions on Cubans who wanted to travel abroad and return to the island. Sports stars and government officials will still need special permission to leave. But for the first time, high-level defectors like Contreras are allowed to come back. He is the first sports star to test the new law.
43. La Vox Media Group, CUBAN BASEBALL PLAYERS LOOK TO PLAY ABROAD, July 23, 2012. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.voxxi.com/cuban-baseball-players-look-to-play-abroad/>. In the current season of record-breaking contracts for Cuban baseball talent, it's tempting to wonder what might have happened had Antonio Castro gotten his way. Rumors began circulating in late 2010 that Castro, one of the highest-ranking baseball officials in Cuba and a son of Fidel Castro, had advanced a proposal to allow the island's "peloteros" to play professionally abroad. The players would still represent Cuba in international competitions. But they could spend part of the year and a portion of their careers earning large sums in professional leagues abroad, with taxes on their salaries helping to generate much-needed revenue for Cuba's baseball leagues back home. Excitement about such an arrangement spread as highly regarded Cuban ex-players and personalities seemed to endorse the idea in public, their once-taboo comments appearing in Cuba's state media. Victor Mesa, the manager of Cuba's national team, was quoted in 2010 questioning the prohibitions on Cubans playing abroad. After all, the top stars from ideological ally Venezuela play in the United States and elsewhere during the summer. Then they return home to play in the country's own winter-league season, just as Cuban stars often did before Castro's 1959 Revolution and the unyielding turn against professional sports that followed. "If other countries can do it, why can't we?," Mesa asked. "In the end they'll just steal the players anyway." Rey Anglada, another former star and Cuban baseball manager, told Cuba's Prensa Latina: "Times change." "There are Cuban players who have wanted to test their luck," Anglada said. "They see themselves having possibilities and see others who have done well. I don't see how that can stop." The Castro plan that supposedly circulated in 2010 would have been nothing less than a Cuban baseball revolution. But it seemed like an eminently sensible way to stem the constant stream of defections that have become a major drain on the island's athletic talent, not to mention the players and their families. Only the proposal seemed to land in a drawer, and there's been little talk of it since.
44. Jesse Sanchez, (Staff, MLB.com), TWO TOP CUBAN PROSPECTS NEAR MLB FREE AGENCY, Nov. 27, 2012. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://mlb.mlb.com/news/article.jsp?ymd=20121127&content_id=40434576&c_id=mlb/. It's already been a banner year for Cuban prospects. Last season's class was highlighted by outfielders Yasiel Puig, who signed a seven-year, \$42 million deal with the Dodgers last summer, and Yoenis Cespedes, who signed a four-year, \$36 million deal with the A's in February. Outfielder Jorge Soler also signed a nine-year, \$30 million deal with the Cubs in June. Other notable signings include left-handed pitcher Omar Luis Rodriguez, who signed a Minor League deal worth \$4 million with the Yankees, and lefty Gerardo Concepcion, who signed a five-year, \$6 million deal with the Cubs.
45. La Vox Media Group, CUBAN BASEBALL PLAYERS LOOK TO PLAY ABROAD, July 23, 2012. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.voxxi.com/cuban-baseball-players-look-to-play-abroad/>. Instead, forced to choose between a poorly paid amateur career at home and a shot at a life-altering payday abroad, Cuban players continue to resort to defections. They know it's the best chance they have to take care of their family's financial needs for life, and test their skills against top competition. Communist party officials view the defections as "betrayals," but ordinary fans on the island grew accustomed to them long ago. They quietly follow the success of Cuban big-league stars like Orlando "El Duque" Hernandez and LA Angels slugger Kendry Morales via word of mouth or the internet, even though the players' names are never again mentioned in Cuba's state-run sports broadcasts.
46. Jorge Ortiz, (Staff), USA TODAY, Jan. 3, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/mlb/2013/01/03/cuban-defectors-aledmis-diaz-dariel-alvarez-bidding-free-agent/1808243/>. The roaring big-league success of Aroldis Chapman, Yoenis Cespedes and Alexei Ramirez has heightened expectations for the latest round of Cuban defectors. Outfielder Yasiel Puig signed a seven-year, \$42 million contract with the Los Angeles Dodgers in June. And two players recently declared free agents are about to trigger a bidding war. Infielder Aledmis Diaz and outfielder Dariel Alvarez established legal residence in Mexico after defecting. Agent Jaime Torres, who represents both, said they've drawn considerable interest and could sign by the end of this month.
47. Tim Padgett, (Staff, Time Magazine), MEXICO'S NEW BOOM, Mar. 8, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://world.time.com/2013/03/08/mexico-new-boom-why-the-world-should-tone-down-the-hype/>. I couldn't be happier that Mexico's economy is rebounding. After barely 2% average annual growth between 2000 and 2010, the country's GDP expanded almost 4% in 2011 and 2012. Investment is booming and the middle class is enlarging. Mexico's manufacturing exports lead Latin America, and its trade as a share of GDP tops China's. Its No. 53 spot on the World Bank's ease-of-doing-business rankings far outshines the No. 126 grade of its main regional rival, Brazil; it has signed more free trade agreements (44) than any other country, and it's enrolling more engineering students than any south of the Rio Grande. As I noted a year ago, it's a trend well worth applauding.
48. Jaime Darembaum, (Dir., Latin American Studies, Hudson Institute), MEXICO IS CATCHING UP TO BRAZIL, Sept. 17, 2012. Retrieved Feb. 18, 2013 from http://www.weeklystandard.com/blogs/mexico-catching-brazil_652462.html. On August 31, the Brazilian government announced that second-quarter growth was only 0.4 percent, prompting Reuters to note that "Brazil may struggle to reach the market's average expectations for 1.7 percent GDP growth for 2012." Mexico, meanwhile, grew by 3.9 percent last year, and analysts expect it to grow by around 3.75 percent this year, according to the latest monthly survey by the Mexican central bank. (Barclays is more bullish, predicting that the country's 2012 growth rate will reach 4 percent.) Mexico's car industry has been thriving, and its rapidly expanding middle class now represents a majority of the national population.
49. Olga Khazan, (Staff), THE ATLANTIC, Apr. 17, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/04/mexico-is-getting-better-and-fewer-mexicans-want-to-leave/275064/>. Our neighbors south of the border are also more and more interested in staying put. In 2007, 21 percent of Mexicans said they wanted to move permanently to another country. Today, that number is 11 percent, the same as for U.S. residents.

50. Olga Khazan, (Staff), THE ATLANTIC, Apr. 17, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/04/mexico-is-getting-better-and-fewer-mexicans-want-to-leave/275064/>. Even though Mexico is clearly still struggling, there are signs that the country is gradually improving. Crime is down in border cities like Ciudad Juarez. Mexico's fertility rate is falling and its population is aging, meaning there are fewer young workers scrambling for jobs (half of all Mexican immigrants are under age 33). For the first time in decades, Mexico has a fledgling middle class. Its GDP growth rivals Brazil's, and economically, some economists think the country is doing even better than the United States. According to the OECD, Mexicans are about as satisfied with their lives as people in Iceland or Ireland are.

51. Olga Khazan, (Staff), THE ATLANTIC, Apr. 17, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/04/mexico-is-getting-better-and-fewer-mexicans-want-to-leave/275064/>. For just one example, we can look at the mean "life today" score, in which Gallup asks respondents to think of a ladder with 10 steps -- with each next step representing an improved overall situation -- and rank their lives as being on one of the ten steps. According to that score, Mexico's mean "life today" score is 7.1. In the U.S., it's 7.0. By comparison, in 2007, that number was 7.2 in the U.S. and just 6.6 in Mexico.

52. Mexico's Office of the President, IT IS TIME TO MOVE MEXICO TO DEAL WITH POVERTY, Jan. 22, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://en.presidencia.gob.mx/articles-press/it-is-time-to-move-mexico-to-deal-with-poverty-and-hunger-enrique-pena-nieto/>. Addressing the members of the Legal Cabinet, state governors and the Mayor of Mexico City, the president explained that the point is to move the whole government, all the orders of government and all the government's programs; to move their budgets in order to attend Mexicans in the greatest need. The president declared that this crusade is not a welfare measure. The point is not to distribute food among those who need it; it is an integral strategy of inclusion and social wellbeing that involves a structural change in the alleviation of poverty." He declared that the Crusade is a new generation social strategy, because it will increase the productive inclusion of its beneficiaries, "In other words, those who receive support today will be able to emerge from poverty in the future, by increasing their incomes as productive individuals."

53. Thomas Friedman, (Staff), NEW YORK TIMES, Feb. 24, 2013, SR-11. Mexico still has huge governance problems to fix, but what's interesting is that, after 15 years of political paralysis, Mexico's three major political parties have just signed "a grand bargain," aka "Pact for Mexico," under the new president, Enrique Peña Nieto, to work together to fight the big energy, telecom and teacher monopolies that have held Mexico back. If they succeed, maybe Mexico will teach us something about democracy.

54. Lauren Villagran, (Staff), CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, Apr. 24, 2013. Retrieved Apr. 30, 2013 from Nexis. Donning a flower necklace and traditional embroidered serape over his white button-down, President Enrique Peña Nieto recently traveled to Mexico's southern Chiapas state to promote a crusade against hunger. The nearly six-month-old administration has promised to reduce the country's glaring inequalities, starting with malnutrition. In eradicating hunger, he told a group of supporters in Zinacantan, the government "wants to achieve a more inclusive Mexico," one of "opportunities for all Mexicans." In addition to social programs like the anti-hunger campaign, President Peña Nieto's administration is pushing an ambitious reform agenda to deliver on the promise of greater equality and economic opportunity.

55. Reuters NewS Service, MEXICO'S PENA NIETO TO LAUNCH DRIVE TO END HUNGER, Jan. 18, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/01/18/mexico-penanieto-hunger-idUSL1E9C1JW20130118>.

Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto unveils his plans to eradicate extreme poverty on Monday, a blight affecting more than 10 percent of the population in Latin America's second biggest economy. Hoping to emulate the recent success of Brazil in lifting millions out of poverty, the 46-year-old Peña Nieto will kick off a "national crusade against hunger" in southern Mexico in Chiapas, one of the states hardest hit. About half of Mexico's 115 million population is classified as poor, with about 12 million of those living in extreme poverty, many of them in the southern states that are home to a greater concentration of people of indigenous origin. The drive will encompass 400 of some 2,500 municipalities in Mexico and involve the ministries of social development, agriculture, defense and education among others.

56. Jose Gutierrez, (Intern, Catholic Relief Services), THE YALE GLOBALIST, Oct. 21, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://tyglobalist.org/in-the-mag/politics-and-economy/the-opportunidades-of-mexico/>. Oportunidades is Mexico's flagship social program. Targeting the country's poorest, it distributes cash stipends to families based on their attendance at doctors' appointments and health lectures and children's school attendance. The program provides nutritional supplements to mothers, babies, and undernourished children. Since the program's founding in 1997, academics have praised it and foreign governments have imitated it. According to Laura Rawlings of the World Bank's Human Development Department, Oportunidades is so innovative because it addresses "both future poverty by fostering human capital accumulation among the young... and current poverty by providing income support for smoothing consumption in the short run."

57. Mexico Secretariat for Social Development, OPORTUNIDADES: A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.opportunidades.gob.mx/Portal/wb/Web/opportunidades_a_human_development_program. The Food Support Program assists more than 50,000 localities nationwide which at the moment don't have access to health or education services. It started as a Program called "Pa que te alcance" and "Te nutre" which were instrumented in 2003, by 2007 it operated as "Rural Food Support Program" (PAAR) in two different modes: nutrition and rural supply, in 2008 it transformed into the Food Support Program in Priority areas (PAAZAP), by 2009 with the fusion of PAAR and PAAZAP the Food Support Program (PAL) was created. By 2010 Oportunidades started operating it. Its main objective is to contribute to the development of basic capabilities of its beneficiaries in order to improve the nutrition of families, boy and girls 5 years old and younger and pregnant and breastfeeding women.

58. Nicholas Rowe, (Henriksen Fellow, Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies), MEXICO'S OPORTUNIDADES: CONDITIONAL CASH TRANSFERS AS A SOLUTION TO GLOBAL POVERTY?, 2011, 3-4. In 1997, Mexico launched a revolutionary, incentive-based poverty alleviation program known as Progresa (later renamed and henceforth referred to as Oportunidades) in response to these dilemmas. The idea is simple: small amounts of money are dispensed bimonthly to poor families based on the strict conditions that children regularly attend school and family members obtain preventive medical care through regular clinic visits and attendance of educational talks. In this way, Oportunidades aimed to provide short - term income poverty relief from the impacts of the crisis and afterwards by increasing immediate consumption possibilities, while promoting the formation of human capital as a means to break the intergenerational transmission of poverty as part of a long-term development strategy. Oportunidades, and in a more general sense conditional cash transfers, represent a departure from traditional forms of social policy. The program moves beyond conventional approaches such as food and in-kind subsidies to embrace a multidimensional approach, one which redefines poverty beyond consideration of income to encompass welfare indicators such as health, education, and nutrition. Families are free to spend cash transfers as they wish and continue to receive them so long as they adhere to the prescribed conditions. Oportunidades is one of the first examples of conditional cash transfers (CCTs).
59. Tina Rosenberg, (Pulitzer-Prize Winning Journalist), INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, Jan. 6, 2011, 6. The program, called Bolsa Familia (Family Grant) in Brazil, goes by different names in different places. In Mexico, where it first began on a national scale and has been equally successful at reducing poverty, it is Oportunidades. The generic term for the program is conditional cash transfers. The idea is to give regular payments to poor families, in the form of cash or electronic transfers into their bank accounts, if they meet certain requirements. The requirements vary, but many countries employ those used by Mexico: Families must keep their children in school and go for regular medical checkups, and mom must attend workshops on subjects like nutrition or disease prevention. The payments almost always go to women, as they are the most likely to spend the money on their families. The elegant idea behind conditional cash transfers is to combat poverty today while breaking the cycle of poverty for tomorrow.
60. Nicholas Rowe, (Henriksen Fellow, Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies), MEXICO'S OPORTUNIDADES: CONDITIONAL CASH TRANSFERS AS A SOLUTION TO GLOBAL POVERTY?, 2011, 5. Oportunidades garnered the enthusiastic support of international financial institutions such as the World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank, who played critical supporting roles in exporting the conditional cash transfer model abroad. By 2007, 29 developing countries, primarily in Latin America, had implemented a CCT, with many others in the planning phases. 15 The Inter-American Development Bank supports conditional cash transfers to much so that in 2001 it approved the largest loan in its history to facilitate the expansion of Oportunidades from rural into urban areas.
61. Mexico Secretariat for Social Development, OPORTUNIDADES: A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.oportunidades.gob.mx/Portal/wb/Web/oportunidades_a_human_development_program. Oportunidades is one of the main instruments of Mexican social policy and it is within its framework that joint actions are developed in order to create wellbeing amongst families living in extreme poverty conditions. Its design combines the issuance of conditioned cash transfers with coordinated interventions regarding health, nutrition and education. In the short term, these incentives help families improve their socioeconomic condition providing the beneficiaries with the possibility to obtain better wages. In the medium term it stimulates the development of capabilities by promoting regular school attendance and medical checkups. Oportunidades uses gender approach helping girls, boys and teens maintain regular school attendance so they finish and obtain their middle and high school diplomas. Nowadays, Oportunidades provides more than six million educational grants, thus allowing beneficiaries' children and teens achieve higher education standards and acquire higher expectations than those their parents had for themselves.
62. Nicholas Rowe, (Henriksen Fellow, Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies), MEXICO'S OPORTUNIDADES: CONDITIONAL CASH TRANSFERS AS A SOLUTION TO GLOBAL POVERTY?, 2011, 4-5. Oportunidades gradually replaced food subsidies to become the largest single poverty alleviation program in Mexico's history. By the end of 2005, 24 million people, or 23.8 % of Mexico's population, benefitted from the program. This figure is slightly higher than the number living in extreme poverty in the previous year. Gradually expanding from small and marginalized rural localities to larger and less marginalized urban areas, it has expanded in line with the geographical distribution of poverty. The six states (Chiapas, Mexico State, Puebla, Veracruz, Oaxaca, and Guerrero) accounting for 48.2% of total poverty are home to 53.6% of beneficiary households.
63. Mexico Secretariat for Social Development, OPORTUNIDADES: A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.oportunidades.gob.mx/Portal/wb/Web/oportunidades_a_human_development_program. Oportunidades applies a rigorous beneficiaries' identification system by means of a socioeconomic and demographic inquiry. Families incorporated to the Program hold that place due to their poverty conditions and vulnerability; their continuance will be determined by the fulfillment of their co-responsibilities: regular attendance to school and medical appointments. The Program's correct focusing method has allowed Oportunidades to grow and increase its coverage to a larger number of families, directing its efforts towards states with the highest marginalization indexes and fewer possibilities of human development. In states that show the lowest indexes of human development, more than half of their population receive Oportunidades' incentives. In Chiapas, for instance, this proportion equals to 6 out of every 10 inhabitants.
64. Ray Suarez, (Staff, PBS), IN MEXICO: A PLAN TO BEAT POVERTY WITH HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION, Dec. 29, 2009. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/health/july-dec09/mexico_12-29.html. In fact, at least 30 countries have now adopted Oportunidades, most of them in Latin America. Cambodia and Thailand have programs. And officials from South Africa and China have contacted Mexico to investigate.
65. Thomas Friedman, (Staff), NEW YORK TIMES, Feb. 24, 2013, SR-11. With 40% of the population living below the poverty line and more than 10% in extreme poverty (i.e. on less than \$1.25 per day), poverty in Mexico has nonetheless come a long way. From about 65% of extreme poverty in the 1950s, the number went down to 20-25% from the 1960s to 1995.

66. Banderas News, MEXICO TO EXPAND WEAPONS TRACKING, Oct. 6, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.banderasnews.com/1010/nr-weapontracking.htm>. Mexico on Tuesday signed a deal to extend a U.S. weapons tracking program across the country as part of a crackdown on its vicious drug gangs, which are mainly armed with U.S.-bought firearms.
67. U.S. Department of State, (U.S. Embassy in Mexico), COMBATTING ARMS TRAFFICKING, May 2011. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://photos.state.gov/libraries/mexico/310329/16may/Arms_Trafficking_May_2011_Final.pdf. A specialized, vetted unit to work in collaborations with the U.S. on arms trafficking investigations and prosecutions, made up of 110 certified agents from Mexico's Attorney General's office and the Federal Police, is being created to link firearms to drug cartels for prosecution.
68. National Sport Shooting Foundation, FAST FACTS, Mar. 30, 2011. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.nssf.org/factsheets/PDF/strawPurchase.pdf>. Firearms retailers receive a Don't Lie kit to educate sales personnel on how to detect and deter straw purchases. The kit includes a video detailing common straw purchasing scenarios use to obtain firearms illegally, store display materials to warn consumers about straw purchases and the penalties associated with them, and retailer guides for training employees.
69. National Sport Shooting Foundation, FAST FACTS, Mar. 30, 2011. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.nssf.org/factsheets/PDF/strawPurchase.pdf>. Billboards, posters, transit signs, public service announcements, press conferences with federal, state and local enforcement, and educational/warning messages on display at firearms retailer shops support the program's no-nonsense message about the consequences of participating in a straw purchase: "Purchase a gun for someone who can't, and buy yourself 10 years in jail." These efforts have led to over 1 billion media impressions of the Don't Lie campaign.
70. Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, STRAW PURCHASES POLICY SUMMARY, Oct. 28, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://smartgunlaws.org/straw-purchases-policy-summary/>. Federal law prohibits straw purchases by criminalizing the making of false statements to an FFL about a material fact on ATF Form 4473, or presenting false identification in connection with the firearm purchase. Two federal statutes – 18 U.S.C. § 922(a)(6) and 18 U.S.C. § 924(a)(1)(A) – are the primary laws under which straw purchases are prosecuted.
71. Robert Browning, (U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms), FORMAL DECLARATION BETWEEN U.S., MEXICO GOVERNORS TO USE ATF PROJECT GUNRUNNER, ETRACE, Aug. 15, 2008. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.reuters.com/article/2008/08/15/idUS212614+15-Aug-2008+PRN20080815>. The Border Governors Conference announced a significant partnership to stop the flow of illegal guns into Mexico by utilizing the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) programs called Project Gunrunner and eTrace. The two programs make up the centerpiece of a new declaration of cooperation between the 10 border governors from the United States and Mexico that aims to eliminate illegal sources of weapons and bring gun traffickers and violent criminals to justice. Border governors agree to support Project Gunrunner and the eTrace programs, as legally and practically permissible, to reduce violence along the U.S.-Mexico border.
72. Chris Knox, (Director, Firearms Coalition), GUN TRAFFICKING LAWS ALREADY EXIST, Mar. 7, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2013/03/07/gun-trafficking-laws-the-firearms-coalition/1972165/>. But passing a law is only one step. Enforcing the law is quite another. In 2010 (the latest year available), according to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service, 6 million Americans applied to buy a gun through the National Instant Criminal Background Check System. Of those, fewer than 1.2% — more than 72,000 — were denied. Of that number, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives referred 4,732 cases for prosecution. And out of that small percentage, 44 were prosecuted, yielding only 13 guilty pleas. Even worse than the selective enforcement is what happens when paperwork violations become federal felonies. Paperwork felonies have ensnared honest people in a web of laws premised on "known or should have known." The latest example is the Reese family of New Mexico. Their family gun shop, for decades a fixture in the Deming area, is now closed after the owners were prosecuted under a federal indictment for making a straw sale. Store personnel failed to psychically discern that a government informant was lying on a purchase form. The case against the Reese family has been crumbling in the face of proven misconduct, yet prosecutors are so invested in the case that they continue to pursue it. The Reeses are facing bankruptcy and the loss of their livelihood. With little left to lose, they are continuing the fight to clear their name. The laws around buying and selling guns are already complex, arcane and subject to prosecutorial abuse. Adding another layer will not make the laws more effective against criminals.
73. U.S. Department of State, (U.S. Embassy in Mexico), COMBATTING ARMS TRAFFICKING, May 2011. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://photos.state.gov/libraries/mexico/310329/16may/Arms_Trafficking_May_2011_Final.pdf. In March 2010 ICE provided training to 18 Secretariat of National Defense (SEDENA) officials on Crossed Arms, a domestic Mexican program that tracks firearms trafficking cases. ATF provided courses on explosives and evidence collection to representatives from SEDENA, the Attorney General's office, the Navy, and Mexican State agencies in April 2010. ATF has also provided three post-blast explosive investigation techniques courses to Mexican federal and state agencies with two more planned in the coming months.
74. Dianne Feinstein, (U.S. Senator, California), HALTING U.S. FIREARMS TRAFFICKING TO MEXICO, June 2011, 10. A Memorandum of Understanding on eTrace was signed by the United States and Mexico in September 2010 to increase tracing of firearms seized in Mexico. This Memorandum of Understanding authorized the sharing of data under the eTrace system which is administered by the ATF. This system helps to identify the sources of firearms purchases and is essential in curbing the firearms trafficking that fuels the ongoing violence in Mexico. Comprehensive tracing of firearms is necessary to provide investigative leads to both Mexican and U.S. law enforcement in order to identify and disrupt sources of firearms trafficked to Mexico.
75. Ray Walser, (Analyst, Heritage Foundation), U.S. STRATEGY AGAINST MEXICAN DRUG CARTELS: FLAWED AND UNCERTAIN, Apr. 26, 2010, 10. The U.S. and Mexico are also turning to e-Trace, a U.S. government initiative that allows online access to data on registered firearms. The program is available in many U.S. consulates in Mexico in a Spanish version. The U.S. also continues to prosecute gun sellers who knowingly break U.S. laws, although securing convictions in key cases has been difficult.

76. U.S. Department of State, (U.S. Embassy in Mexico), COMBATTING ARMS TRAFFICKING, May 2011. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://photos.state.gov/libraries/mexico/310329/16may/Arms_Trafficking_May_2011_Final.pdf. As requested by the Government of Mexico, ATF is providing e-Trace training to CENAPI personnel in each Mexican state. Implementation of the Train-the-Trainer model has been expanded to the entire Spanish e-Trace program, with five of eight trainings completed to date. The culmination of these efforts will result in Mexican law enforcement personnel training their own colleagues, with the first such course planned for April 2011.
77. Chris Hawley, (Staff), USA Today, Jan. 7, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2010-01-06-mexico-guns-Spanish-tracer-system_N.htm?csp=usat.me. The eTrace computer system allows the ATF to track the unique serial number of a weapon. Requests for a trace are made by police to the ATF through a website. Then, police sometimes can identify "straw purchasers" who buy guns for others illegally or gun sellers who may be dealing with cartels. The Spanish-language eTrace could conceivably help U.S. authorities prosecute the cartels' gun suppliers, said Maureen Meyer, Mexico associate at the Washington Office on Latin America, a think tank.
78. Dianne Feinstein, (U.S. Senator, California), HALTING U.S. FIREARMS TRAFFICKING TO MEXICO, June 2011, 9. The expansion of eTrace – an electronic firearms tracing system – is a critical component of Project Gunrunner in Mexico. This includes the deployment of eTrace technology in U.S. consulates throughout Mexico. A Spanish language version of eTrace was installed in Mexico in December 2009, and ATF has engaged its Mexican counterparts in extensive training on the system. Mexican officials are able to input information regarding recovered crime guns into the data system stored at ATF's National Tracing Center.
79. Dianne Feinstein, (U.S. Senator, California), HALTING U.S. FIREARMS TRAFFICKING TO MEXICO, June 2011, 9. A November 2010 report by the Office of the Inspector General at the Department of Justice noted that "through Project Gunrunner, the ATF has increased several of its program activities related to firearms trafficking, including the number of gun trace submissions, the number of investigations it initiated, the number of these investigations it subsequently referred for prosecution, and the number of defendants it referred for prosecution."
80. Ray Walsler, (Analyst, Heritage Foundation), U.S. STRATEGY AGAINST MEXICAN DRUG CARTELS: FLAWED AND UNCERTAIN, Apr. 26, 2010, 7. In August 2009, Secretary Napolitano highlighted the achievements of the Administration during its first six months: "In the past six months, we have added hundreds of agents and deployed additional technology to the border. We've doubled the number of agents that ICE [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement] has assigned to the border enforcement security teams.... We have tripled the number of DHS intelligence analysts working on the Southwest border. We have doubled the number of DHS agents collaborating on looking for and apprehending violent criminal aliens [and have] ramped up southbound inspections to search for illegal weapons and cash, adding mobile X-ray machines, license plate readers, more Border patrol agents, and K-9 detection teams to that effort. For the first time we have begun inspecting all southbound rail shipments into Mexico."
81. Jocelyn Fong, (Staff, Media Matters), CONSERVATIVE MEDIA OBLIVIOUS TO MAJOR INCREASE IN BORDER ENFORCEMENT, July 29, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://mediamatters.org/research/2010/07/29/conservative-media-oblivious-to-major-increase/168481>. DHS has requested, and Congress has provided, large and increasing budgets for immigration enforcement programs since 2005 on a bipartisan basis that includes both the Bush and Obama administrations and Republican- and Democratic controlled Congresses. The department has spent billions on enforcement while making great strides in gaining control over our borders and bringing integrity to our immigration system.
82. Brad Plumer, (Staff), WASHINGTON POST, May 13, 2013. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/05/13/study-the-u-s-stops-about-half-of-illegal-border-crossings-from-mexico/>. There's no question that the United States has poured vast resources into border security over the past few decades. The government has built 650 miles of fence and hired 21,000 Border Patrol personnel. It spent \$18 billion on enforcement in 2012 alone.
83. Jocelyn Fong, (Staff, Media Matters), CONSERVATIVE MEDIA OBLIVIOUS TO MAJOR INCREASE IN BORDER ENFORCEMENT, July 29, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://mediamatters.org/research/2010/07/29/conservative-media-oblivious-to-major-increase/168481>. The number of Border Patrol agents has more than doubled in the past 10 years. The majority of agents are assigned to the U.S.-Mexican border, with more than 16,000 on the southwestern border today.
84. Jocelyn Fong, (Staff, Media Matters), CONSERVATIVE MEDIA OBLIVIOUS TO MAJOR INCREASE IN BORDER ENFORCEMENT, July 29, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://mediamatters.org/research/2010/07/29/conservative-media-oblivious-to-major-increase/168481>. There are currently more Border Patrol agents "than ever before in the history of this country." PolitiFact has noted that Obama has been "increasing the number of border patrol officers." Indeed, in a July 22 hearing of the House Committee on Homeland Security, Michael Fisher, Chief of the U.S. Border Patrol, stated, "Currently we have over 20,000 Border Patrol agents nationwide, more than ever before in the history of the country."
85. Tom Barry, (Analyst, Center for International Policy), POLICY ON THE EDGE: FAILURES OF BORDER SECURITY AND NEW DIRECTIONS FOR BORDER CONTROL, June 2011, 4. Unmanned aerial vehicles now patrol overhead, along with 290 other Border Patrol aircraft, and since 2003, the number of Border Patrol agents has doubled. Paid through DHS grants, sheriff deputies have joined the official guardians of the border. In addition, newly deployed legions of federal agents have been assigned to border security duties, including special southwest border units from the FBI, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) as well as hundreds of newly assigned federal prosecutors and U.S. Marshalls.
86. Jocelyn Fong, (Staff, Media Matters), CONSERVATIVE MEDIA OBLIVIOUS TO MAJOR INCREASE IN BORDER ENFORCEMENT, July 29, 2010. Retrieved May 15, 2013 from <http://mediamatters.org/research/2010/07/29/conservative-media-oblivious-to-major-increase/168481>. Since March 2009, CBP and ICE have seized \$85.7 million in illicit cash along the Southwest border, an increase of 14 percent over the same period during the previous year. This includes more than \$29.7 million in illicit cash seized heading southbound into Mexico -- a 39 percent increase over the same period during the previous year.
87. Telecommunications Media Group, MEXICO SMART GRID MARKET TO REACH \$8.3 BILLION BY 2020, October 19, 2011. Retrieved Apr. 26, 2013 from <http://www.telecomengine.com/article/mexico-smart-grid-market-reach-83-billion-2020>. Research and consulting firm Northeast Group, LLC (Washington, D.C.) last week released its Mexico Smart Grid Market Forecast, which projects the total smart grid market will reach a cumulative \$8.3 billion by 2020. Mexico trails only Brazil in terms of potential for smart grid in the Latin America region. The smart metering market in Mexico represents the largest opportunity, with more than 21 million smart meters to be deployed by the end of the decade, according to the report. Other smart grid market segments such as distribution automation, wide area measurement, and home energy management are also projected to grow strongly over the forecast period, says Northeast Group.

88. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Spring 2010, 702. ALBA is grounded on an opposition to capitalism as an economic and political ideology. ALBA member states have taken the position that "capitalism is exhausting mankind and the planet. The crisis we are experiencing is a global, systemic and structural crisis that cannot be considered just one more cyclic crisis. Those who believe that a fiscal injection and regulatory measures alone will resolve the crisis are mistaken." ALBA member states also believe that "capitalism has caused an ecological crisis, by subordinating the conditions necessary to support life in the planet to the demands of markets and profitability." Consequently, ALBA bases its actions on four anti-capitalistic values: complementary action (based on the strengths that each country may possess), mutual cooperation, solidarity, and respect for the national sovereignty of each country. These actions stand in stark opposition to the "transnational, imperialist, and capitalist strategy" that, under the guise of the market, aims to impose the rights of capital above the social, political, cultural and human rights that states have achieved for their citizens through centuries of struggle. Hence the participation and incorporation of the masses in building the framework for integration is vital to the success of ALBA. However, the task is enormous because Latin American unity is not deemed enough; the process of creating a new non-capitalist world-order, in which people and nations can peacefully co-exist with one another, nature and the environment, must also be something the people struggle to achieve.

89. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Spring 2010, 702. ALBA's first step in achieving the new process of integration embodied in its ideals is to break the capitalist logic of lucrative gains, competition and of viewing the economy as chrematistic. Other steps have taken form through massive programs in literacy, education, health care (such as vaccination campaigns), labor unions, workshops, and other measures that educate and mobilize the masses into becoming informed participants in the democratic process. In this context, ALBA then becomes a political tool as well. If ALBA is successfully carried to fruition, it would embody a reaction to the FTAA, and simultaneously serve the function of preventing the divide et impera of Latin American nations that has traditionally been achieved with the use of bilateral free trade agreements.

90. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Spring 2010, 705. The general conceptual basis of ALBA outlined above is more specifically elaborated in the development of: (1) the four anti-capitalist values of ALBA, (2) the three pillars of ALBA, and (3) the goals of ALBA. ALBA articulates four so-called anti-capitalist values around which ALBA interventions are built. These include: (1) complementary action based on the strengths that each country may possess, (2) mutual cooperation, (3) solidarity among the member nations, and (4) respect for the national sovereignty of each country. It is not clear whether these are anti-capitalist or anti-colonialist values, and, more particularly, whether the solidarity and action suggested is meant to be reactive -- that is, deployed against the policies and interests of the United States. Thus, for example, it has become understood that the "ethos of the trade system has gradually shifted from a relatively pure focus on the elimination of protectionism and barriers to trade among the World War II victors to encompass the global lifting of standards of living." Indeed, except for the oppositional stance within which ALBA is situated, it would be difficult to suggest that these values are not amenable to capitalist systems.

91. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Spring 2010, 740. The differences between the ALBA approach and the FTAA approach are revolutionary in the sense that, under ALBA, the state is attempting to become the main player within the traditional capitalist system. Yet that revolutionary approach is, in a sense, a reaction as well. ALBA seeks to invert the vectors of social and political movements back to a framework that privileged the state over all other institutions, and that sought to invest the state, and its apparatus, with a monopoly of authority over politics, society and economics. The now ancient, and from a Chinese perspective, anachronistic, framework is heavily grounded on traditional Marxist-Leninist notions from the first half of the twentieth century. Rather than continue with the existing process of transnational integration within which private multinational corporations are the main players and main beneficiaries of bilateral and multinational trade agreements, ALBA aims to construct both public markets and public multinational enterprises. ALBA would use the government apparatus as a public leveraging mechanism that can compete with and against these corporations within markets that are grounded in public rather than private incentive structures.

92. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Spring 2010, 688-689. ALBA is an alternative approach to economic, social, cultural, and political integration that aims to foster trade, development, and unity among the nations of Latin America and the Caribbean on the basis of a set of principles distinct from those underlying conventional integration efforts. To the authors of ALBA, traditional agreements, such as the FTAA, have focused on the interests of transnational corporations and capital without taking into account the social and economic needs of the people of Latin America. In contrast, ALBA focuses its emphasis on eliminating the social and economic disparities that exist among Latin American nations, by creating mechanisms that use cooperative advantages that a nation may possess, as a tool to compensate for existing disparities among other nations in the region. ALBA's primary emphasis is to create a sub-regional bloc built on a number of strategic agreements grounded in the founding ideology of ALBA -- socialist and public law-oriented -- for the betterment of the peoples in the member states and to serve as protection against other states or economic blocs. The challenge is to provide a space for unified action that can help smaller states resist the conventional private enterprise-oriented systems represented by conventional trade and integration agreements.

93. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Spring 2010, 703-704. Opposition to the FTAA was a primary reason for attempting to create the alternative system of commercial trade embodied in the ALBA agreements. However, the movement has transformed into a rallying flag and hope for a common and prosperous future for Latin America that is possible through the betterment of the social, political, economic, environmental, and cultural areas of the region. ALBA thus marks a strategic shift in the actions of Latin American and Caribbean people because it encompasses a proposal created by these nations while simultaneously serving as a protest against the imposing of agreements by external powers. It is an offensive act, rather than a defensive response, that rests on three major pillars of action: education to inform others about the necessity of ALBA, expanding the distribution of informational material among the masses about the benefits of ALBA, and mobilizing and organizing concrete steps that will foster the integration of Latin American people.

94. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Spring 2010, 681. ALBA (Alternativa Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra America) (Bolivarian Alternative for The People of Our America), the command economy alternative to the free trade model of globalization, is one of the greatest and least understood contributions of Cuba to the current conversation about globalization and economic harmonization. Originally conceived as a means for forging a unified front against the United States by Cuba and Venezuela, ALBA has grown to include Nicaragua, Honduras, and Bolivia. It has also grown to include a number of Caribbean states, including Dominica in 2008, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines in 2009. It has the support of other states, including Ecuador and Haiti. ALBA is meant to provide an alternative to the conventional trade models of privatization and globalization that are assumed to be bad for people, especially for those who live in developing states.
95. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Spring 2010, 686-687. ALBA presents an ideological and functional alternative and challenge to transnational institutions built on the operating assumptions of economic globalization and the developing convergence of public and private law. Originally it was viewed as interesting but benign: "ALBA, a proposed alternative to the controversial U.S.-sponsored Free Trade Area of the Americas ("FTAA"), presents a socialist vision for regional commercial cooperation, although at this point its value is largely political, symbolic and somewhat short on economic specifics." Today, the institution of a number of programs aimed at aiding particularly poor states and regions has begun to have effects beyond the symbolic. ALBA's potential to provide a public sector variant on private sector globalization should not be underestimated. It is no longer focused on eliminating borders for the production and management of private capital; instead, it is focused on using borders as a site for the assertion of public authority to control all aspects of social, political, cultural, and economic activity.
96. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Spring 2010, 692-693. To the promoters of ALBA, the neoliberal view of granting access to markets through the elimination of tariffs or regulation of commerce and foreign investment has predominantly served the interests of large and developed nations. Numerous scientific studies can attest to the fact that the application of current globalization practices, such as the FTAA, have not and will not produce a desired level of development that can guarantee a greater quality of life and living for the people of developing nations.
97. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Spring 2010, 701. ALBA is built on the idea of the inherent potential for Latin America's development independent of the United States and Europe, a development that has thus far failed to materialize. Latin America is a region rich in natural resources, biodiversity, land and culture, and a history that predates the European invasion and conquest. Although prior attempts at unity have been unsuccessful, globalization presents a new opportunity for Latin America to join forces in dealing with the challenges and demands associated with this phenomenon. The power and advantages of integration -- and the resulting economies of scale -- which are best observed in the creation and unification of the United States, serve as an example of how economic prosperity is best achieved. Therefore, in the eyes of the founders and members, it has become a necessity to develop integrated regional trade blocs in order to be better positioned to deal with transnational powers that would otherwise swallow small and isolated countries.
98. Daniel Hellinger, (Prof., Political Science, Webster U.), GLOBAL SECURITY WATCH: VENEZUELA, 2012, 40. In December 2005, Venezuela bought out the last of the debt that Argentina owed the IMF and brought its total bond purchase in Argentine debt to \$3.5 billion. Some leftist critics in Venezuela complained that the money should have been used for social purposes, but admirers of the Venezuelan president welcomed the prospect that the IMF might never again wield the same power. In 2007 Chávez initiated the creation of the Banco del Sur to reduce the influence of the international financial institutions.
99. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Spring 2010, 711. The most interesting development has been the efforts to build the Banco de ALBA (Bank of ALBA). Its founders hope that it will serve as the blueprint for the future financial system through which ALBA's social, cooperative, and Grandnational Projects are to be funded. The primary purpose of the Bank of ALBA is to provide the economic and financial credit needs of ALBA member countries in financing and completing the thirty-two Grandnational Projects agreed to during the fifth ALBA Summit. The Bank of ALBA, like ALBA itself, is founded on the principles of solidarity and mutual cooperation, and it extends those ideals into the banking sector. The host country for the Bank as well as the operating aspects related to its functioning are currently under negotiation by the four ALBA member states. The framework for the Bank's operation was discussed and approved during a meeting of the Bank of ALBA Commission held on July 30, 2007.
100. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Spring 2010, 711-712. In the area of finance, however, Banco del Sur (Bank of the South) has emerged as another project that, although not within the framework of ALBA, is also being promoted in an effort to create a wholly South American source of funding and economic solidarity. Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela are founding members of the banking entity. It is also likely that Brazil will join. In addition, MERCOSUR members have agreed to participate in the creation of the Bank. To date, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela have agreed to work together in establishing the framework under which this entity will operate. In addition to serving as the financial center for ALBA, the members have also begun talks to create a national currency of the south, to be known as the "sucre." The object is to aid efforts at integration in a way that avoids the incidental and perceived detrimental effects of national economies bound by connections to the U.S. dollar.
101. David Perez, (J.D., Yale Law School), HARVARD LATINO LAW REVIEW, Spr. 2010, 219-220. In recent years, Venezuela has committed itself to funding or subsidizing over \$ 30 billion in massive infrastructure programs and foreign aid allotments. President Chávez has used his Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), a trade agreement ostensibly designed to rival the U.S.-led Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), to parlay the distribution of Venezuelan funds around the region into political support. ALBA now counts Antigua and Barbuda, Bolivia, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Venezuela as members, while Grenada, Haiti, Paraguay, and Uruguay are observer countries.
102. Javier Corrales, (Prof., Political Science, Amherst College), DRAGON IN THE TROPICS: HUGO CHÁVEZ AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF REVOLUTION IN VENEZUELA, 2011, 104. Venezuela under Chávez has become a world champion of foreign aid. According to a recent estimate of South-South development assistance outside of multilateral organizations (by non-OECD countries), Venezuela has come to occupy one of the top positions, if not the ranking one, in development aid as a percentage of the country's national income. Some estimates have suggested that the total outlay of Chávez's offerings or promises of aid to other countries is as large in real terms as the Marshall Plan, the U.S. program to rebuild Europe following the Second World War.

103. Javier Corrales, (Prof., Political Science, Amherst College), *DRAGON IN THE TROPICS: HUGO CHAVEZ AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF REVOLUTION IN VENEZUELA*, 2011, 107. Chávez often trumpeted that ALBA (Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América—Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America) is a "socially oriented" trade bloc bent on eradicating poverty. In Bolivia, the government disbursed Venezuelan aid by distributing checks payable to local mayors and citizens, issued by the Venezuelan embassy.

104. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), *UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW*, Spring 2010, 708-709. ALBA is comprised of seven Commissions, each dealing with a separate area: Political, Social, Economic, Investment and Finance, Energy, Environment, and Youth. The Commissions report to the Council of ALBA Ministers and Council of ALBA Social Movements, who in turn must report to the Council of ALBA Presidents. The Commissions are headed by the national Ministers of the respective areas of each of the member nations and together form the Council of ALBA Ministers. The Council of ALBA Presidents is made up of the respective presidents of each ALBA member nation. Because ALBA seeks to respect the national sovereignty of member nations, by nature the interaction among member states takes the form of agreements that must be accepted by the national legislative bodies of the member nations. There are calls, however, for the creation of an ALBA Constitution, with supranational authority to coordinate and delegate ALBA policies that can better achieve the social and political integration of Latin American nations. ALBA, then, is organized more as a space through which mutual cooperation on the basis of ALBA principles can be effected, rather than a more conventionally constituted international organization; it has been criticized as such. Yet this institutional organization reflects the objectives of the organization.

105. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), *UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW*, Spring 2010, 710. ALBA is a young organization. Still, it has begun to elaborate a series of programs to provide a basis for understanding how the member states intend to translate ideology and concept to reality on the ground. The principal effect of ALBA has been an increase in state-to-state trade, especially among the ALBA founders. ALBA's most important efforts have centered on the establishment of PETROCARIBE, an energy cooperation agreement proposed by Venezuela to Caribbean nations that aims to resolve the asymmetries that said nations have in accessing energy resources. It aims to create a new order that is more equitable and just. Its objective is to contribute to the transformation of Latin American and Caribbean societies into more just, cultured, participatory, and solid-minded societies by removing social inequalities and promoting an improved quality of life through the effective participation of the people in the determination of the affairs of their respective states. Signatory nations include: Cuba, Venezuela, Antigua and Barbados, Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Saint Kitts and Neves, Haiti, and Nicaragua. The program has produced a number of trade agreements that represent state-to-state barter relations centered on the provision of Venezuelan petroleum.

106. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), *UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW*, Spring 2010, 715. Despite the prominence of the ideological element, ALBA has managed to initiate a number of programs. Though all are in the initial stages of development, they suggest the ways in which ALBA may be implemented. One group of programs is focused on education. Mision Robinson was a program to reduce illiteracy with a focus on the illiteracy of indigenous people. Phase II of the project is intended to guarantee at least a sixth grade level education for all. Another program, Mision Ribas, extends Robinson's goal in its attempt to guarantee high school education and diploma to all those who lack this basic education. In addition, another program, Mision Sucre (Mission Sugar), sought to give thousands of Venezuelans access to university education with an emphasis on graduates in much needed specialties.

107. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), *UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW*, Spring 2010, 690. The history of ALBA is in essence a continuation of the history of integration in Latin America. This is a history of tensions and interventions. Integration pits the post-colonial project of state building against the internationalist project that aims to reduce the sovereign authority of states, both against each other and in their relations with private power. Integration can also serve as a proxy for strong state interventions under the cover of private market internationalism, and in this way also subvert the post-colonial projects of national liberation. But it can also serve to liberate individuals from the oppression of cliques and ideologies that hijack the apparatus of states by posing supranational norms against narrow assertions of state power.

108. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), *UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW*, Spring 2010, 690. The desire of ALBA to integrate Latin America independent of colonial or neo-colonial powers is an attempt to make Simon Bolivar's dream of a united confederation of American states a reality. This is a sentiment that was also echoed in the writings of Jose Marti. It is the antithesis and response to the Monroe Doctrine, and presents an age-old confrontation between the people of Latin America and imperialism. Bolivar's vision was abandoned in the South, but was cemented in the North, and led to the strengthening and rise of the union of states that became the United States. ALBA, then, is meant to ally like-minded states committed to promoting their sense of the Bolivarian ideals.

109. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), *UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW*, Spring 2010, 707-708. The ideological position combines a long tradition of anti-colonialism with anti-Americanism to produce an ideological system in which states are essential to combat the direct and indirect interventions of the United States (and to a lesser extent the old European colonial powers) in the development of adhering states. For many states in Latin America, this is an intoxicating mix. It serves to legitimate stronger state control over a private sector that had been relying on the development of global markets to liberate itself from local barriers to development. It shifts the power to direct markets from the private to the public sector. It provides an avenue for transferring blame to a demonized "other" against which state activity is directed. It provides a basis for the maintenance of control through the form of democratic mass movements by linking state action to the maintenance of the masses, and by so doing, marginalizing the relationship between the masses and other institutional or civil society elements.

110. Kepa Artaraz, (Prof., International Relations, U. of Brighton), *RETHINKING THE CUBAN REVOLUTION NATIONALLY AND REGIONALLY: POLITICS, CULTURE AND IDENTITY*. 2012, 31. ALBA's alternative model of development is based on two key principles: international cooperation and more participative forms of democracy. The former is guaranteed, because ALBA constitutes a trade and solidarity bloc that is socially oriented rather than strictly in search of profit maximization. ALBA appeals to principles of social justice, well-being and human development as well as solidarity between the poorest peoples of the Americas. In this sense, it is fond of arguing that this is a form of association based on the principle of 'collaborative advantage', as opposed to the hegemonic principle of competitive advantage that informs mainstream economics. This principle of collaboration and solidarity exchanges between countries operates largely in the area of social-policy delivery, especially in health and education, making Cuba a key player within ALBA, in supporting countries' attempts to eradicate illiteracy and deliver free universal health care provision.

111. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), *UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW*, Spring 2010, 744. If successful, ALBA could reign in a new era of trade and commerce whose primary interest is the welfare of all people, and not merely just profits, as the standard mode of operation. Still, whether Bolivar's dream can indeed become a reality remains to be seen. In the face of a flexible and resourceful opponent, one that can embrace ALBA's core ideology without its politics, that challenge will not go unmet.

112. Richard Gott, (Journalist, The Guardian), *HUGO CHÁVEZ AND THE BOLIVARIAN REVOLUTION*, 2011, 315. ALBA was designed as a free trade area that would promote economic integration 'in the interests of the people not of the elites'. A declaration on its ambitions, specifically excluding the participation of the United States in the development of Latin America, was signed by Chávez and Fidel Castro in Havana in April 2005: "ALBA will not become a reality with mercantilist ideas, or the selfish interests of business profitability or national benefit to the detriment of other peoples. Only a broad Latin Americanist vision, which acknowledges the impossibility of our countries' developing and becoming truly independent in an isolated manner, will be capable of achieving what Simón Bolívar called for — 'the formation in the Americas of the greatest nation in the world, not so much for its size and riches as for its freedom and glory'; and that José Martí conceived of as 'Our America', to differentiate it from the other America, the expansionist one with imperialist appetites."

113. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), *UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW*, Spring 2010, 701-702. The development of ALBA, however, is and shall be different from that of the United States, because the founding members do not seek to follow the same path of warfare, genocide and pillaging that the United States undertook in achieving unity. The founders of ALBA also do not wish to follow the European Union ("EU") model, because, in the eyes of ALBA, the unity of the EU was built under capitalistic parameters of amassing strength, and as a defense mechanism to counter and compete with the strong economies of the United States and Japan. ALBA instead hopes to build an integration model that is unique and responsive to the needs, hopes, and aspirations of Latin American countries and their people.

114. Larry Backer, (Prof., Law, Penn State U. Law School), *UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW*, Spring 2010, 707. In addition to these goals, ALBA also has four major objectives that seek to blend values and concerns over practical implementation. The first is to promote the integration and development of Latin America through cooperation, solidarity, and unity in an effort to place the interests of the people above those of transnational capital. The second aims to promote integration agreements that develop the industrial and social infrastructures of a nation, and the region, with the goal of eliminating poverty, social exclusion and to assure better living conditions for all the inhabitants of Latin American nations. The third is to counter Neo-Liberal policies, particularly the attempt by the United States to create a Free Trade of the Americas, which traditionally benefit developed nations at the expense of other developing nations. The fourth is to use complementary action based on the strengths that each country may possess, mutual cooperation, solidarity, and respect for the national sovereignty of each country. Together, these values, objectives, and goals present a unified ideological position. This position serves as a basis for approaching all issues of transnational arrangements. It privileges the state against private actors. It suggests a tighter control of individuals and their arrangements by the state, and also suggests that private interests must be subordinated to the needs of the state (as understood by those in control of the apparatus of state governance).