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FEATURED Q&A

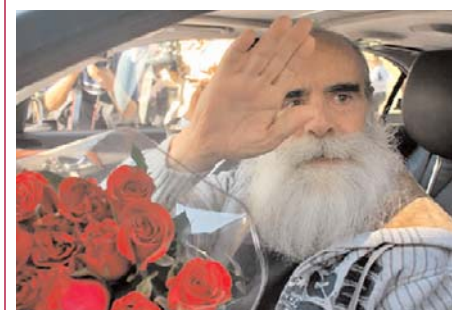
How Will Recognizing Palestine Affect Latin American Nations?

Q On Dec. 1, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva sent a letter to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas saying that Brazil recognizes Palestine as an independent state. Several days later, Argentine Foreign Minister Héctor Timerman announced that Argentina, too, recognizes the Palestinian state and shortly thereafter, Uruguay declared that it would recognize Palestine in 2011. What will be the impact of the announcements on Latin American nations' relations with Israel, other countries in the Middle East and the United States? What is Brazil's role as a foreign policy leader in the region and how will it continue to develop?

A Peter Hakim, member of the Advisor board and president emeritus of the Inter-American Dialogue: "Brazil's recognition of Palestinian statehood, along with that of Argentina and Uruguay, will not do much to change anything in Middle East, at least not anytime soon. Brazil is a country with global stature and influence, and it has decided to once again demonstrate its ability to weigh in on virtually every worldwide issue. Still, in the Palestine-Israel conflict, it doesn't yet count for very much. And if it does want to play a role in Mideast peace negotiations, it will need to take a more nuanced and balanced view—and be seen as a country that is careful, well-informed and balanced in its judgments

and pronouncements. To clearly take one side or the other, regardless of who is right and who is wrong, is not the best way to contribute to the peace process. At the same time, however, Israel should not underestimate the significance of Brazil's actions—which should be seen as part of a growing world rejection of Israel's refusal to stop building settlements on occupied territory. Israel should be deeply worried that, day by day, across the globe, it is losing its moral standing in the conflict, even within the United States—and over the

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Kidnappers Free Former Mexican Presidential Candidate

Diego Fernández de Cevallos, a powerful member of Mexico's ruling National Action Party, was freed by his kidnapers Monday after seven months of captivity. See story on page 2.

Photo: El Universal.

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NEWS BRIEFS

Argentina's Duhalde Announces Bid for Presidency

Former Argentine President Eduardo Duhalde on Monday launched his campaign for the presidency in the October 2011 election, the Associated Press reported. Duhalde was appointed president after violent protests incited by the economic crisis in 2001 led to the resignation of Fernando de la Rúa. Duhalde, a former governor of Buenos Aires province, remained in office from 2002 until 2003, after which he was succeeded by Néstor Kirchner.

Guatemalan Authorities Patrol Streets After Siege Declaration

Hundreds of soldiers and police officers on Monday patrolled the streets of the Guatemalan province of Alta Verapaz, a day after President Álvaro Colom declared a state of siege in the northern province to fight Mexico's Zetas drug gang, which residents say has grown increasingly violent. The 30-day emergency measure allows the military to detain suspects and conduct searches without warrants, prohibit gun possession and control the local media, the Associated Press reported. A spokesman for Colom said the government will evaluate whether to extend the siege to other areas.

Venezuelan Oil Exports Declined 9.8 Percent From Month Prior

Net exports of Venezuelan crude and refined oil products fell from 2.25 million barrels a day in October to 2.03 million barrels per day in November, according to shipping records from **Inspectorate Venezuela SCS**, a contractor to the country's Energy and Petroleum Ministry, Bloomberg News reported Monday. The decline represents a drop in production of 9.8 percent.

Political News

Kidnappers Free Former Mexican Presidential Candidate

Former Mexican presidential candidate Diego Fernández de Cevallos was freed Monday, seven months after he was kidnapped from his ranch in the central state of Querétaro. Fernández de Cevallos appeared Monday outside his home in Mexico City, saying that he is well and forgives his kidnappers, the Associated Press reported. "As far as the kidnappers

“As far as the kidnappers are concerned, as a man of faith I have forgiven [them].”

— *Diego Fernández de Cevallos*

are concerned, as a man of faith I have forgiven [them]," said Fernández de Cevallos, who appeared to be healthy. "As a citizen, I think that the authorities have a task to do, but without abuses." President Felipe Calderón said in a statement that he welcomed Fernández de Cevallos' freeing and said prosecutors were working to catch the captors. Mexico's National Action Party, of which Fernández de Cevallos is a member, called the abduction "a period of anguish and worry" and said those responsible should be punished. Fernández de Cevallos, 69, was abducted in May and photographs of him were sent to the local press. In October, news organizations in Mexico reported that Fernández de Cevallos' family paid a \$20 million ransom, but the family never confirmed that. Fernández de Cevallos gave no details about his ordeal on Monday. "First I have to tell you that I thank God and the virgin for the help they gave me minute by minute during the past seven months," he told reporters. "I'm strong and my life will continue the same." A previously unknown leftist group, the Network for

Global Transformation, posted statements Friday about Fernández de Cevallos' imminent release. The group called the politician's kidnapping "a blow against the plutocracy" and "an act of reparation." Fernández de Cevallos finished second to Ernesto Zedillo in Mexico's 1994 presidential election.

Company News

Chile's Collahuasi Venture Declares Force Majeure After Port Accident

Chile's Collahuasi copper mine declared force majeure on Monday after an accident closed down its port in the northern part of the country, Bloomberg News reported. Collahuasi, the world's third-largest copper mine, will suspend shipments of copper from the port until further notice, spokeswoman Bernadita Fernández told the news service in a statement. Three workers were killed Saturday at the port after a ship-loader collapsed. Collahuasi is evaluating the damage at the port, said Fernández. Companies invoke force majeure when they are unable to meet obligations for reasons beyond their control. The incident will likely tighten world copper supplies further amid record prices due to growing demand and falling stockpiles. On Monday, copper for delivery in three months increased 1.4 percent in London to \$9,201 per metric ton. In addition, a month-long strike at the Collahuasi mine, which ended Dec. 7, could affect annual targets for production, Miguel Ángel Duran, the head of Chilean operations at **Anglo American**, said Dec. 14. Anglo American and **Xstrata** each own 44 percent of the Collahuasi mine and a group headed by **Mitsui & Co.** owns the remainder.

Televisa Completes \$1.2 Billion Investment in Univision

Mexican broadcaster **Televisa** said Monday that it has completed its \$1.2 billion investment in U.S.-based **Univision Communications**, EFE reported. The previously announced agreement also includes an extension of a program license agreement between Univision and

Televisa, the largest media group in the Spanish-speaking world. "We have been working with Univision since the initial announcement to better explore the opportunities that can be created," said Televisa's executive vice president, Alfonso de Angoitia. "We are excited about our findings and ready to start their implementation now that we have completed this transaction." Mexico City-



Azcárraga

File Photo: Televisa.

based Televisa has named three people to Univision's enlarged 20-member board. De Angoitia, Grupo Televisa Chairman and CEO Emilio Azcárraga and Enrique F. Senior Hernández, the managing director of Allen & Co., will take seats on the board. "With a rapidly growing Hispanic population and increasing success of our content in the United States, this is a very appropriate moment in time to expand our content offerings and extend our agreement with Univision," said Azcárraga.

Brazil's Paranapanema Plans to Stay Independent After Failed Vale Bid

Brazilian copper products manufacturer **Paranapanema** plans to stay independent after a failed takeover bid by mining giant **Vale**, Paranapanema's chief executive told Bloomberg News Monday in an interview. The company "should remain independent," said Luiz Antonio Ferraz Jr. "It has a life of its own." Paranapanema, which is headquartered in Dias D'Avila, also may sell a portion of its fertilizer unit in order to concentrate on its metals business, said Ferraz. Vale, the world's largest producer of iron ore, had offered 6.75 reais per share for Paranapanema on Sept. 1, but the company's shareholders rejected the bid after Vale increased the offer four times. Speculation that Paranapanema could receive a new offer led the company's shares to jump 16 percent last week during trading in São Paulo. Vale CEO Roger Agnelli said in October that his company does not plan to make a new offer.

Featured Q&A

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longer term may see its remaining political support wither as well."

A Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.), chairman of the U.S. House Western Hemisphere Subcommittee: "I firmly believe in a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, but bilateral negotiations are the only way to get there. Unfortunately, the Palestinians stayed away from the negoti-

“These actions say to the Palestinians that they can gain more by not talking than by talking.”

— *Eliot Engel*

ating table for nine months of Israel's 10-month settlement moratorium, after criticizing the moratorium as a fraud. Then, they returned to the table with only one month to go saying they can't negotiate if the Israelis are going to build more settlements. This is what an excuse looks like and sounds like. If they want to negotiate, then they can, as they did before and after the September 1993 Declaration of Principles. Rather than rewarding the Palestinians for staying away from the table through recognition at this time, Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay should be pushing them to return. I'm afraid these actions say to the Palestinians that they can gain more by not talking than by talking. Brazil and Argentina, especially, are almost infinitely larger than Israel. Israel, within in the 1967 boundaries, is roughly the size of New Jersey. That is why the authors of U.N. Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 242 did not call for the 1967 'green line' to be a permanent border of Israel. As they knew, recognizing Palestine within the 1967 armistice line is tantamount to putting Israel in an

indefensible position. Moreover, recognizing Palestine outside of a negotiated settlement rejects the basic philosophy of UNSCR 242—that Israel relinquish territory acquired in the 1967 war in exchange for peace and a complete end of the conflict."

A Samir Awad, professor of political science at Birzeit University in the West Bank:

"The recognition of Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay of an independent Palestinian state signals many diplomatic and political developments that are encompassing the globe. For a starter, the United States is beginning to lose its status as a monopole of international political mediation, especially in the Middle East, as its beginning to be viewed categorically as a biased Israeli ally and not a neutral mediator. The recognitions are also a testimony to the high moral standards of the respective governments which are more concerned with international law and with human

“The United States is beginning to lose its status as a monopole of international political mediation, especially in the Middle East ...”

— *Samir Awad*

rights than with private interests. That has to do with a clearer understanding of the Palestinian plight due to the continued struggle of the Palestinian people by means of peaceful struggle."

A Monique Sochaczewski Goldfeld, history lecturer at Fundação Getúlio Vargas:

"Brazil and Argentina, the South American nations that for now have recognized Palestine as a state, emphasize that their positions do not alter their good relations with Israel.

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They recently signed a free-trade agreement, and the deputy prime minister of Israel was in Brazil prospecting for partnerships for the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympics. The decision was, above all, symbolic and should be understood, at least in the case of Brazil, as President Lula's last gesture. The Palestinian representations now have the status of embassies, and it fits the Palestinian strategy to revive this issue, taking it to the U.N. next year, asking for recognition in the Security Council and, if vetoed there, in the General Assembly. The decision widens the gap between Brazil and the United States in the Middle East, following disagreement over Iran's nuclear program."

A **Gilberto M.A. Rodrigues, professor of international relations at the Catholic University of Santos in Brazil and member of Coordinadora Regional de Investigaciones Económicas y Sociales in Buenos Aires:** "The recognition of the Palestinian state according to the 1967 borders by the Brazilian government reflects a growing trend of Brazilian foreign policy becoming a relevant voice, and one of the players in the Middle East peace process. One cannot forget that a Brazilian, Oswaldo Aranha, when president of the General Assembly, was a key

person in the recognition of the state of Israel by the United Nations in 1948. With this recent decision, Brazil is even helping the Obama administration enact its foreign policy toward a sustainable peace in that region. Recognition of a state is a matter of international law and cannot be seen as a provocative act or an intervention in the internal affairs. Brazil's leadership in Latin America and the Caribbean today is recognized by its own neighbors. This is possible because there is an integration process that creates mutual confidence. However, Brazil has interests beyond its own region. Through the principle of cooperation, Brazilian foreign policy has played an important role, not only in its own region, but also in Africa and Asia. Nevertheless, despite the political benefit of being at the center of essential decisions, it must be said that there have been few debates between Brazil's government and Congress, as well as with civil society, on this matter and the real costs that the country's leadership could create for its own citizens in the future is still not clear."

The Advisor welcomes reactions to the Q&A above. Readers can write editor Gene Kuleta at gkuleta@thedialogue.org with comments.

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