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THEDIALOGUE

FEATURED Q&A

Will Kelly Help Improve Security in the Americas?

Retired four-star Gen. John F. Kelly is the nominee to head the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. // File Photo: U.S. Southern Command.

Q U.S. President-elect Donald Trump has selected retired four-star Marine Gen. John F. Kelly to lead the Department of Homeland Security. As the leader of the U.S. Southern Command, Kelly was in charge of the military jail at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and armed forces operations in Central and South America. He also took a forceful tone on border security, warning members of Congress last year about the dangers posed by smuggling rings in Mexico and Central America. Is Kelly the right person for the job? If confirmed, what will his appointment mean for U.S. cooperation on security with Latin American countries? What are the main ways DHS policies can affect neighbors and other countries in the region, and what should Kelly and Trump do to address the region's biggest security problems?

A R. Evan Ellis, assistant professor of national security studies at the William J. Perry Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies in Washington: "General Kelly's broad range of career experiences and demonstrated leadership make him well suited to lead the often unwieldy Department of Homeland Security and manage its complex problem set. His command of Marine Forces Reserve and Marine Forces North from 2009 through 2011 give him experience with relating to other U.S. agencies within DHS, as well as their Canadian and Mexican counterparts. Moreover, his command of MARFORNORTH arguably immersed him in the security challenges of Mexico and their interdependence with U.S. homeland security. As head of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, deployed to Iraq in 2008, General Kelly gained experience with armed Islamic extremists, a high-profile threat to the

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TODAY'S NEWS

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Ecuador Declares Emergency After Mine Attack

The government is moving troops into an Amazon region where protesters attacked a Chinese-owned mine as a means of demonstrating against President Rafael Correa's efforts to develop the mining industry.

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Temer Unveils New Measures to Boost Economy

The Brazilian president announced measures designed to increase productivity and cut red tape.

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POLITICAL

Prosecutors File New Charges Against Brazil's Lula

Prosecutors filed additional charges against former Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, accusing him of additional instances of corruption and money laundering related to the Petrobras graft scandal.

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Lula // File Photo: Lula Institute.

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POLITICAL NEWS

Prosecutors File New Charges Against Brazil's Lula

Brazilian prosecutors on Thursday filed new charges against former Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, accusing him of additional instances of corruption and money laundering as part of the larger Petrobras corruption investigation, The Wall Street Journal reported.

Lula also faces trial on separate charges of embezzlement and influence peddling.

A judge must now examine the charges and decide whether to put Lula on trial. A spokesman for the former president denied wrongdoing by either Lula or his wife, Marisa Letícia Lula da Silva, who has also been charged with money laundering. The former president also faces trial on charges of embezzlement and influence peddling in three other criminal cases that are part of the Operation Car Wash corruption probe. Prosecutors on Thursday also filed new charges against the jailed former CEO of construction company Odebrecht, Marcelo Odebrecht. The company declined to comment on the matter, other than to say it is committed to cooperating with authorities. Representatives of the former CEO were not immediately available for comment. The newest charges against the two are based on allegations that the construction company overcharged Petrobras by $22 million on eight different contracts and then used that money to pay off several politicians and political parties in exchange for support of Lula's legislative agenda, prosecutors said. Some of the money allegedly was given to Petrobras officials in exchange for their help in covering up the graft ring.

Ecuador Declares State of Emergency After Attack at Mine

The Ecuadorean government has declared a state of emergency and is moving troops to a region in the Amazon where protesters attacked a Chinese-owned mine as a means of demonstrating against President Rafael Correa's efforts to develop the mining industry, the Associated Press reported Thursday. The 60 demonstrators, who are believed to be of the Shuar indigenous group, attacked the Exploracobres copper mine on Wednesday, killing one policeman and wounding several others. Three prosecutors have been selected to investigate the case, chief prosecutor Galo Chiriboga said Thursday. The incident follows another clash between members of the Shuar people and the Exploracobres mine; in November, 14 police officers and a mine guard were injured in a confrontation. Following Thursday's incident,

Correa // File Photo: Ecuadorean Government.

Correa angrily tweeted that Ecuadoreans must "unite unanimously against barbarism," and he vowed to act "with all the capacities the constitution and laws allow us." He added that the attackers were "the usual violent ones, disguised as 'ancestrals.' " Two Ecuadorean indigenous organizations, the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador and the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of the Ecuadorean Amazon, issued a statement blaming the government for the clash, saying the incident was "the product of the invasion of indigenous lands by a Chinese transnational." The groups added that the government had failed "to listen, dialogue and resolve the conflicts," the AP reported.

NEWS BRIEFS

Peru Keeps Overnight Interest Rate Unchanged

Peru's central bank on Thursday kept its overnight rate unchanged at 4.35 percent, saying it took into account that the current rate was consistent with the bank's expectations for inflation to converge toward 2 percent by the end of 2017, Dow Jones Business News reported Thursday. In related news, Peru's economy grew by only 2.12 percent in October year-over-year, below 3 percent projections for the month, Reuters reported Thursday, citing government data.

Tigo Money Reaches One Million Users in El Salvador

Mobile phone provider Tigo El Salvador has increased the number of users of its Tigo Money mobile wallet service to more than one million from 25,000 in 2011 when it launched the service, Tigo's vice president of digital operations, Daniel Barrientos, told La Prensa Gráfica Wednesday. The service moved some $530 million in transactions this year, a 6 percent increase over last year, Barrientos told the newspaper. Tigo's parent company, Luxembourg-based Millicom, signed deals this year with companies including MoneyGram to extend its network.

Cuba Offers Rum to Czech Republic for Payment of Debt

The Cuban government has raised the possibility of paying its multimillion dollar debt to the Czech Republic with bottles of the Caribbean country's famous rum, according to the Czech finance ministry, BBC News reported Thursday. The Czech government said Cuba had suggested the unconventional arrangement during recent negotiations over the $276 million Cuba owes. Prague said it would prefer to have at least some of the money in cash.

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homeland today. As head of U.S. Southern Command from November 2012 through January 2016, General Kelly gained experience working with partner nations in Latin America and the Caribbean to combat the transnational criminal organizations and illicit networks, which transmit threats to the U.S. homeland through the region. Indeed, General Kelly's career experiences with Latin America and the Caribbean in the latter two jobs likely reinforce his understanding of the fundamental role that security and effective governance in the region plays in U.S. domestic security. This appreciation will be important since the effectiveness of organizations like the DEA, FBI, Coast Guard and ICE requires close cooperation with regional partners, and often presence beyond U.S. borders, combating transnational networks that potentially transmit threats to the U.S. General Kelly may need his utmost skill to maintain that cooperation, while implementing Trump administration homeland security policies unpalatable to U.S. partners, such as expanded deportations."

Arturo Sarukhan, board member of the Inter-American Dialogue and former Mexican ambassador to the United States: "Given the names of most of the candidates being considered for DHS, General Kelly is an encouraging choice as the nominee to head this critically important department. From his perch at U.S. Southern Command in Doral, Fla., he has first-hand knowledge, experience and an over-the-horizon view regarding some of the trends and dynamics—including threats to North American security, the underpinnings of transnational organized crime and the hard facts, true nature and shifting trends in migration flows across the Americas—that are relevant to U.S. national security. He played a key role on Capitol Hill in advocating for and selling the need for a holistic support package for Central America—and the three Northern Triangle nations of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador—in the guise of the Alliance for Prosperity, of which the Inter-American Development Bank is a key partner. And despite the fact that Mexico does not fall under Southcom, the compulsory coordination with Northern Command means that he will surely apply his leadership and out-of-the-box thinking to deepen and widen strategic ties with Mexico, so as to build upon the unprecedented efforts triggered post-9/11 between both neighbors to ensure North American common domain security and awareness. He is aware, as he himself stated in the past, that 'a wall by itself will not work' to ensure U.S. national security and operational control of the southwest border. But things could still unravel; any of the other hopefuls that were being considered for the top job at DHS—whether Jan Brewer, Kris Kobach or Joe Arpaio, all with profound links to the nativist Numbers USA—could end up as either deputy secretary or heading Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Customs and Border Protection or Citizenship and Immigration Services. Pushing for a more enlightened approach to immigration and border and port security will undoubtedly be one of his biggest challenges."

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>
> **— Arturo Sarukhan**

Adam Blackwell, vice president of international development at DSG Development Services Group: "General Kelly is an inspired choice to lead the Department of Homeland Security, a vast enterprise with close to 250,000 employees and missions

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ECONOMIC NEWS

Brazil's Temer Announces Measures to Boost Economy

Brazilian President Michel Temer on Thursday unveiled a package of new initiatives designed to boost economic growth in the country, which is grappling with its most severe recession in decades, The Wall Street Journal reported. Temer said his government will offer higher levels of credit to small businesses from state development bank BNDES and also reduce paperwork required for hiring as part of its efforts to boost productivity and cut red tape, Temer told reporters in Brasília. In addition, Temer said the government is considering ways to encourage the purchasing of new homes and reducing the time needed to receive authorization for imports and exports. "Measures

Temer // Photo: Brazilian Government.

are being taken to get us out of the recession, the recession that we encountered when we entered government," said Temer, who replaced impeached President Dilma Rousseff earlier this year, the Financial Times reported. The country's finance minister, Henrique Meirelles, said Thursday that the government will also help companies to invest more and stretch out the payment of overdue taxes, The Wall Street Journal reported. The measures do not include direct subsidies, and they will be enacted over the coming months, said Meirelles. "We need to reduce the cost of doing business," he added. The announcement happened a day after lawmakers approved Temer's austerity package, which caps government spending limits, in an effort to tame the country's increasing debt.

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as diverse as the Coast Guard and FEMA. No one can doubt his decades of strategic and operational experience and service managing complex missions in some of the most difficult circumstances and theaters on the planet. I have seen his commitment to honesty, integrity, and human rights. Southcom is a joint command with a mission to support U.S. national security objectives and interagency efforts that promote regional security cooperation. While at Southcom, Kelly earned the respect of military and civilian leaders and made sure to meet and get to know the presidents, and politics as well. He brings not only a deep understanding of the regional challenges, but also the importance of interagency coordination in finding the best possible solutions. Despite the head start this will give him at Homeland Security, he will have his hands full dealing with existing and future threats too numerous to mention here. The one thing that I know he understands is that building personal and institutional capacity, capability and respect across the region is more important than finger-pointing in developing regional resilience to the complex threats and risks we face. With the end of the conflict in Colombia, this is a region that now has no ongoing wars. Yet, we are a long way from peace, and General Kelly has an opportunity to help build it."

Riordan Roett, director of the Latin American Studies program at the Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies: "In a cabinet of billionaires, individuals who apparently don't acknowledge climate change and who prefer charter schools to public schools, Gen. John F. Kelly stands out as a professional with decades of experience in managing and leading critical components of U.S. defense policy. He has served as the commanding general of various operations in Iraq. His final posting was as commander of the United States Southern Command from 2012 to 2016. Southcom oversees U. S. Army South, Air Forces Southern, U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command—4th fleet, Special Operations Command South and Joint Task Force Guantanamo. The various components of Southcom address regional security, humanitarian and civil assistance projects, regional disaster relief exercises and counter-narcotics operations, among other duties. As secretary of homeland security, the third-largest federal agency, Kelly will direct Citizenship and Immigration Services, Customs and Border Protection, the Coast Guard, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the U.S. Secret Service, among other responsibilities. Is he the right person for the job? We will see. Could the transition have appointed a person far less qualified? Look at the profile of other major appointments. The hope is that General Kelly will be a voice of reason in addressing critical policy issues such as immigration, Guantánamo, border security, drug gangs and smuggling rings in the region. He will also be the point person for regional security cooperation with our neighbors. He knows the region well and will provide skilled experience in advising—and warning—the White House."

> **"Could the transition have appointed a person far less qualified? Look at the profile of other major appointments."**
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> **— Riordan Roett**

The Advisor welcomes comments on its Q&A section. Readers can write editor Gene Kuleta at gkuleta@thedialogue.org.

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