AJIL Unbound Call for Papers: The Americas and the New World Order

The *American Journal of International Law*'s October 2026 issue features an Agora on "Latin America and the New World Order." The Agora examines Latin American perspectives on international law and the global order at a moment of geopolitical change, marked by the foreign policy of the second Trump administration.

AJIL Unbound **now invites submissions for a companion symposium that extends this conversation to new areas of inquiry.**

The hemispheric order is in flux. Since late 2025, six Latin American countries have elected right-wing governments. Most of the region now aligns openly with Washington. In September 2026, the United States and fourteen Latin American states announced that they would ask the Organization of American States (OAS) to invoke the 1947 Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance in response to what they call "narco-terrorist" organizations. The statement extended their intended cooperation to investment screening, critical minerals, and "trusted" digital suppliers. These efforts at cooperation, including the invocation of long-neglected legal frameworks, complicate the familiar claim that international law is coming apart. At the same time, the recent elections in Brazil and the US cut in a different direction: they stymied the region's rightward turn and curtailed Trump's influence, complicating any prediction of an entirely new, conservative regional order.

Significant too is China's presence in the region, which has become a source of contention with the US. China has financed and built infrastructure across the region, while also replacing the US as South America's top trading partner. Its engagement, however, rests less on treaties than on under-examined private law instruments, such as contracts.

In this context, we are particularly interested in the following questions:

1. **The new right**. How do the region's new governments use international law? Are labels such as "anti-internationalist" or "internationalist" adequate to describe governments that are critical of international law, yet willing to enhance legal cooperation on hemispheric security? Are we turning to a time of authoritarian international law in the Americas? Or does the widespread regional presumption of a connection between international law, democracy, and human rights hold true?

2. **China and private law**. Through which legal instruments does Chinese investment operate in the region? What role do Latin American and Caribbean lawyers play in shaping Chinese policy in the hemisphere?

3. **Energy and Environmentalism**. China's investment growth is now driven by the green energy sector. What do China's growing investments mean for the environmental movement, which has increasingly engaged with international law? What role will the US and Europe play in this sector as China becomes the top foreign player?

4. **Infrastructure and data**. Washington has started to punish states that work with China on key infrastructure, such as ports and deep sea cables. What room do Latin American and Caribbean states have to secure infrastructural autonomy, and through which legal tools?

5. **Hemispheric traditions.** Projects of regional and sub-regional cooperation as well as sovereign independence have long been pursued in the language of international law. These were not only discourses to imagine the Western Hemisphere, but also legal projects to regulate and solve concrete problems. What is international law for the Americas today? What are the most pressing problems that such international law may have an answer to?

Proposals on other topics that engage the Agora are also welcome.

Those interested in contributing to this Symposium are invited to submit an abstract of up to 500 words to ajilunbound@asil.org by November 30, 2026. The abstract and essays may be submitted in English, Spanish, Portuguese or French. The abstract should be submitted with a cover email indicating name, institutional affiliation (if any), and email contact. We are especially interested in submissions from members of groups traditionally underrepresented in the international legal academy and profession, including authors from Latin America and the Caribbean.

Applicants selected to submit an essay will be notified by December 10, 2026. A first full draft will be due by February 15, 2027. The essays should be no more than 3,000 words (including footnotes). These submissions will be subject to peer review in accordance with *AJIL Unbound*'s standard editorial processes; an invitation to submit a full draft essay does not guarantee publication. It is anticipated that essays included in the Symposium will be published in July 2027. The essays will be published in English and Spanish, and we would expect authors to help with translation to the best of their ability.

Any questions concerning this Symposium may be directed to: francisco.quintana@ed.ac.uk

Symposium editors: Arnulf Becker Lorca (European University Institute); Alexandra Huneeus (University of Wisconsin); Francisco J. Quintana (University of Edinburgh).