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## ***Summit of the Americas, among "friends"?***

But this new Summit has one particular element to consider: the problem of Ukraine. It is foreseeable that "Americanism" will try to move through continental alignment in favor of the US and NATO.



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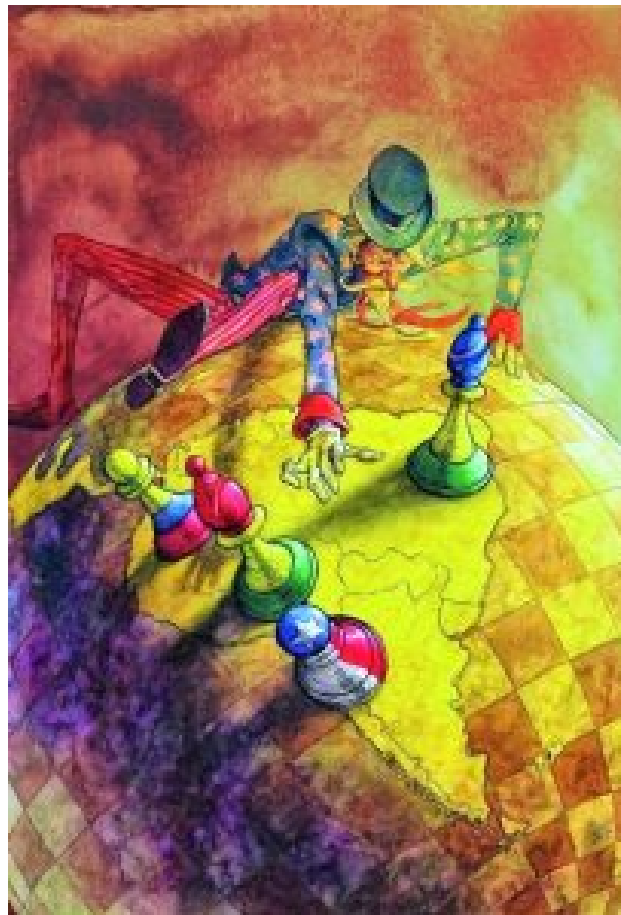
During the Latin American independence processes of the first decades of the nineteenth century, the [Monroe Doctrine](#) (1823), outlined in the phrase "*America for the Americans*", had a double purpose: on the one hand, to stop any European attempt to reconquer the former colonies on the continent; on the other, to secure U.S. commercial interests in nascent countries. But such a Doctrine was transformed into a norm of unilateral conduct to impose a continental geostrategy always favorable to the U.S.

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Paradoxically, during the nineteenth century, the predominant economic relations between most Latin American countries were with Europe.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, to the rhythm of the takeoff of the North American expansion, the monroism justified both direct interventions in Central America or the Caribbean, as well as actions to align the countries of the region with the interests of US companies and the foreign policy of the giant country. The first step in the constitution of a continental international system encouraged by the United States was the First Inter-American Conference of 1890, which created the International Union of American Republics, transformed in 1910 into the Pan American Union and in 1948 into the Organization of American States (OAS).



The OAS was the instrument of the Cold War in Latin America in the wake of the Cuban Revolution (1959). Above its principles and declarations, with the direct action of the CIA, during the 1960s several constitutional governments in the region were overthrown and military dictatorships were established. The most refined anti-communists, who established terrorist states, with permanent human rights violations, were those of the

Southern Cone, in the 1970s. However, the OAS did not act to sanction them or remove them from the inter-American system, as happened with Cuba in 1962. Despite this, the [Alliance for Progress \(ALPRO\) program](#), promoted by John F. Kennedy (1961-1963), although, on the one hand, it responded to the reigning McCarthyism, on the other hand contributed to Latin American developmentalism, which made it possible to liquidate oligarchic systems and pre-capitalist structures, in order to take off the definitive capitalist modernization. In Ecuador, if it were not for the ALPRO and the anti-communist Military Junta (1963-1966), the agrarian reform would not have been carried out, with which the traditional hacienda system that strangled all republican life and turned the country into one of the most backward and underdeveloped in the continent was liquidated. State interventionism only then allowed the take-off of industry and capitalist entrepreneurship in the country.

The 1980s broke the developmental path. Both the new international economic policy inaugurated by Ronald Reagan (1981-1989), oriented as a way forward in Latin America, as well as the IMF's conditions on foreign debt and since 1990 the decalogue [of the "Washington Consensus"](#), introduced neoliberalism. Since then, the dream of "free markets" and private companies that govern the economy has become part of the ideology of the region's political and economic right, led by the richest and most oligopolistic business elites. With the purpose of reinforcing and "continentalizing" globalizing openness, again, under the impulse of the United States, the first Summit of the Americas was convened in Miami in December 1994. [The official document emphasizes the "free trade" and the "community of democracies" of the Americas, linked to the OAS](#). It was the diplomatic path to host the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), an agreement reached in Los Angeles in July.



However, the birth of the FTAA was thwarted by the People's Summit, a parallel meeting to the IV Summit of the Americas held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in 2005. There Presidents Hugo Chávez (Venezuela), Néstor Kirchner (Argentina) and Inácio Lula da Silva (Brazil) stopped the FTAA. Instead, they promoted MERCOSUR, UNASUR and CELAC (Venezuela also alba). Years later, Rafael Correa, president of Ecuador, announced that he would not attend the VI Summit (Colombia, April 2012) if Cuba was excluded, a position also assumed by the ALBA countries, which forced Cuba's presence at the VII Summit (Panama, 2015). It was the starting point for the start of talks with the US, which led to the diplomatic opening between the two countries, including Barack Obama's historic visit to Havana (March, 2016), a process reversed by President Donald Trump (2017-2021), at a time of predominance of conservative and neoliberal rulers in Latin America.



The convened IX Summit of the Americas, to be held in Los Angeles, USA, in June 2022, [projects the possible return of the old and traditional Monroist Americanism](#). This time, the [U.S. would exclude Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. It was Andrés Manuel López Obrador, president of Mexico, who was the first to question this behavior.](#) CarICOM countries may also not attend the Summit if Cuba is excluded and it persists in recognizing Juan Guaidó as "*president*" of Venezuela. It is to be expected that Latin American countries with progressive governments will do the same, because conservative and business governments will subordinate themselves to U.S. foreign policy.



But this new Summit has one particular element to consider: the problem of Ukraine. It is foreseeable that "Americanism" will try to move through continental alignment in favor of the US and NATO. It is a geostrategy in the confrontation between the great powers, really alien to the Latin American countries, which have already been affected by the sanctions against Russia. In this possible continentalist perspective, the "enemy" is not only Russia, but, above all, China. The result would lead to curbing Latin America's sovereign economic possibilities with other regions of the world, which are not its "enemies." Moreover, Latin America is a region of peace and therefore has no reason to align itself with any of the powers that play their own geostrategy. It must demand peace in an inconceivable war and advocate an Americanism of a new kind, capable of becoming a global force for peace and the varied democracies of the twenty-first century, respecting multilateralism at birth and the multiculturalism of the world, in which no power can claim to possess the true and unique way to the construction of human well-being.

Perhaps in the US, the power elites can understand the new dimensions of twenty-first century history and engage in a new program for the development of Latin America, on the basis of discarding neoliberalism, so disastrous for the region. The historical experiences during the past four decades could be assimilated in a different way, so that the US can contribute seriously to strengthening processes of *social economies*, with strong state capacities, high taxes on the rich strata, quality public goods and services (education, health, medicine, social security, infrastructure), which have proven effective, within the framework of contemporary Latin American capitalism itself, to provide structural solutions to the economy, with improvement of living and working conditions for its populations.

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