
Strategic Insights: From Ideology to Geopolitics: Russian Interests in Latin America

March 24, 2015 | Dr. Jose de Arimateia da Cruz

The implosion of the Soviet Union on the eve of December 25, 1991, has been heralded by pundits and Sovietologists as an unprecedented event in world history. No one expected the powerful Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) to come to an end as uneventfully as it did. The implosion of the Soviet Union sent shockwaves throughout the world. Not only did the Soviet Union cease to exist on that Christmas night, but it also lost half of its territory and half of its population. Furthermore, the Soviets came to find out the morning after that most of its weapons of mass destruction were now in the hands of the newly independent states—former members of the USSR. But, perhaps most importantly, the United States would soon realize that it had lost a common enemy. Russia, since its inception, has been trying to find its place among the civilized nations of the world. Is Russia a superpower? Or, is Russia an emerging power?

The rise of Vladimir Putin to power in Russia has set in motion a new attempt by Russia to find its proper place in the world within what Putin calls an emerging polycentric world order. Part of this emerging polycentric world order is Latin America. According to Putin, in a recent interview in *Russian Today* (RT), he acknowledges that a “united Latin America” is becoming:

an important part of the emerging polycentric world order. In this region, the traditions of love of freedom and respect for other nations and culture are strong, and there are practically no serious intergovernmental conflicts or the wish to pursue the divide and rule policy. On the contrary, nations in the region are ready for joint action to protect their shared Latin American home.¹

While the United States and its Army have been active in other parts of the world and Latin America has long been relegated to a second class region in terms of geopolitical importance, evidenced by Secretary of State John Kerry's announcement that the "Era of Monroe Doctrine is Over,"² Russia and Putin have shown that Latin America is firmly becoming an important strategic piece in Russia's game of geopolitics in the 21st century. Despite the fact that Russian and Latin American diplomatic relations date back to the 18th century, the history of this relationship was not studied until the 1960s and 1970s.³

During the 1960s, Russian-Latin American relations were driven by the precepts of the Cold War between the Soviet Union and its satellite state members of the Warsaw Pact and the United States and its allies, member states of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). During this period, Russia's primary ally in the region was Cuba. In fact, Russia was among the first countries to recognize the Republic of Cuba in 1902 after its independence.⁴ After the end of the Cold War, Russia was no longer the caretaker of Cuba and had cut most of its subsidies to the island. Today, Russia is pursuing a broader foreign policy goal which includes not only Cuba, but also member states of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). Of particular interest for Russia's foreign policy ambitions in the region are traditional partners such as Brazil, Cuba, Venezuela, and Argentina. Latin America, based on its geographical location and abundance of natural resources, is one of the key pieces of Russian's foreign policy. In fact, Putin has publicly stated that "Moscow's cooperation with Latin America is a priority for Russia's foreign policy."⁵ Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, in a recent visit to Latin America, echoed Putin's position vis-à-vis the region, stating that "Russia's interest in Latin America is an important part of forming a fairer, more democratic and polycentric system of world order."⁶

The importance of Brazil in Russia's foreign policy ventures in this emerging polycentric world order cannot be overstressed. Brazilian-Russian diplomatic relations were established in 1828 and solidified in 1876 when Brazil's Emperor, Dom Pedro II, visited Russia for a personnel visit. Diplomatic relations between the two countries were broken in 1917 when Brazil refused to recognize the Bolshevik Government of Vladimir Lenin. In 1945, in the aftermath of World War II, Brazil once again reestablished diplomatic relations with the USSR. In 1947, diplomatic relations were once again broken only to be reestablished in 1961. In 1988, then President José Sarney visited Russia in his official capacity as Brazil's head of state. In 1994, former Minister of Foreign Affairs Celso Amorim visited Russia as the first Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs to do so in that official capacity. Since former Foreign Minister Celso Amorim's visit to Russia, the two countries have had friendly diplomatic relations and today Brazil is one of Russia's main partners in Latin America. As Putin recently stated, "our bilateral cooperation [Russia and Brazil] is of strategic importance, as Brazil is a responsible member of the international community whose political influence is steadily increasing; it is also the largest country in Latin American and one of the leading economies in the world."⁷

Russia's foreign policy initiative toward Brazil is driven by its "Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation" and the "Concept of Long-Term Social and Economic Development of the Russian Federation." According to Alexandre Koval, a Senior Lecturer at the Department of World Economy at St. Petersburg State University, Russia, the main objectives of these two initiatives toward Latin America, but especially Brazil, are "to diversify exports with an enlarged share of high-tech products, to increase investments in the region, as well as the number of representative offices of Russian Transnational Corporations (TNCs), and to develop collaboration with the regional blocs, primarily MERCOSUL and the Andean Community."⁸ Brazil is the second most important market for Russian exports of fertilizers, and Russia is the leading importer of Brazilian meat, as well as the second leading importer of sugar. Manufactured goods such as machinery and equipment have been on the periphery of bilateral trade, 0.6 percent of Russian exports and 9 percent of imports.⁹ Russian and Brazilian investors are highly optimistic about Russian-Brazilian economic rapprochement. Over the last 10 years, according to Putin, "bilateral trade has grown almost three-fold and reached \$5.5 billion in 2013."¹⁰

During the Fédération Internationale de Football Association's (FIFA) World Cup final match held in Brazil in July 2014, Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff warmly welcomed Russia's President Putin to Brazil. The purpose of Putin's visit was twofold. First, Russia will hold the World Cup games in 2018, and second, to discuss trade. Both Rousseff and Putin signed an agreement designed to increase trade with the promotion of mutual investments.¹¹ Putin's presidential and soccer diplomacy to Latin America has paid great dividends to the Russian economy. Commercial bilateral ties between Russian and Latin America are increasing annually, the total volume is today around \$16.2 billion, double the figure of a decade ago.¹² Russian companies are also interested in the Brazilian market and its potential as a gateway to other Latin America markets. For example, Russia's Rosneft and the Brazilian HRT oil and gas company are jointly exploring and producing hydrocarbons in the Solimões river basin. Furthermore, in the southern state of Santa Catarina, the Power Machines corporation is setting up production of hydro turbines of up to 100 megawatts for Brazil and MERCOSUR markets. Also, BIOCAD, a bioengineering company, is developing a research, educational, and training center in Brazil with the goal of producing modern innovative medicines for the treatment of cancer.¹³

In addition to bilateral commercial ties, Russia and Brazil are also establishing long-term technological agreements in the areas of defense, energy, and agriculture cooperation. In a recent visit to Brazil, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu proposed that Brazil and Russia join forces for the development of a fifth-generation fighter jet. In response to this proposal, former Brazilian Defense Minister Celso Amorim told reporters in Brazil that "more than buying military equipment, what we are seeking with Russia is a strategic partnership based on the joint development of technology."¹⁴ Russia has become

an attractive technological market place for Brazil since the Brazilian military is not only purchasing the military hardware necessary but also the transfer technology which most industrialized nations, especially the United States, refuse to sell as part of any technology agreement. According to Carl Meachan, Director of the Americas Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC, in 2013, Russia and Brazil finalized a 5-year deal originally signed in 2008, totaling U.S.\$150 million in which Brazil acquired 12 military-grade helicopters.¹⁵

Other areas of interest between Russia and Brazil include defense against cyber attacks. Brazil's newly created Center for Cyber Defense (CDCiber) and the Brazilian Government have become quite concerned about disclosures by former U.S. National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden that the United States had spied on Brazil's President Rousseff and members of her cabinet, as well as Brazil's petroleum company, Petrobras. This area of cooperation has great potential for Brazil's cyber future strategic goals. However, concern about such a close relationship between the two nations in terms of cyber defense stems from the continuing allegations that the Russian Government has for years been involved in sophisticated techniques to break "into computer networks, including systems run by the Government of Georgia, other Eastern European Governments and militaries, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and other European security organizations."¹⁶ Another area of cooperation between Russia and Brazil involves Brazil's education program known as *Ciencia Sem Fronteiras* (Science Without Borders). This is an exchange program created by the Brazilian Government where students from Brazil will be involved in cultural exchanges with universities in Russia. The Russian Government has already stated that they are ready to welcome students from Brazil.

Besides Brazil, another key strategic partner in the advancement of Russian involvement in Latin America is Argentina. In terms of trade volume, Argentina is Russia's second largest trading partner in Latin America totaling U.S.\$1.8 billion, followed by Venezuela with U.S.\$1.7 billion, Mexico with U.S.\$1.4 billion, Ecuador with U.S.\$1.29 billion, Peru with U.S.\$725 million, Chile with U.S.\$455 million and Cuba with U.S.\$225 million.¹⁷ Evidence of this cooperation between Argentina and Russia is exemplified in their signing of a strategic association agreement during Argentine Foreign Minister Hector Timermam's visit to Moscow. This strategic association, according to Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov, is based on "a common vision about the essence of international relations, values, and objectives of common well-being that both nations are building."¹⁸ As part of this vision of common well-being, Russia and Argentina share the belief that "there is need to create a new and more equitable polycentric world order based on international law with the central and coordinating role of the United Nations (UN)."¹⁹ In his efforts to emphasize Argentina and Russia's common values and diplomatic objectives, Putin often reiterates that the two nations are bound together by more than a century-long history of close ties and strong mutual attraction. In fact, this year marks the 103rd anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two nations.²⁰

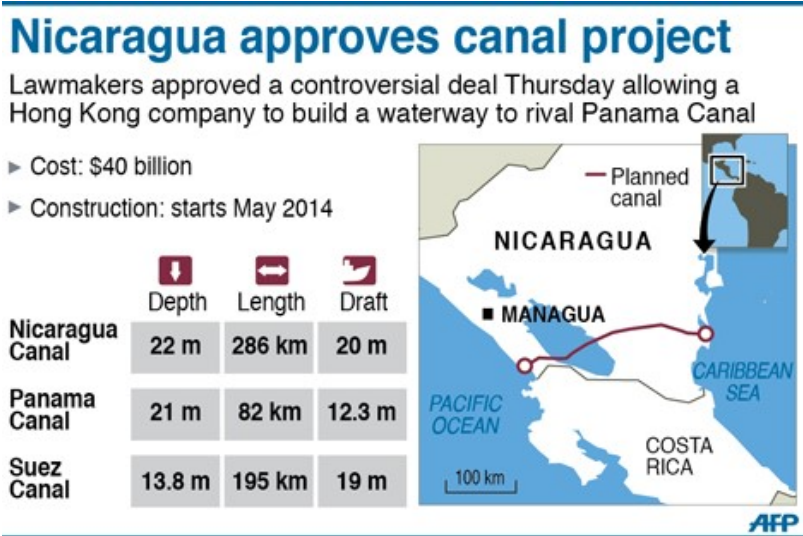
Argentina and Russia have not only strengthened their diplomatic ties but also their bilateral economic agreements. During his recent visit to Latin America, Putin stated that his primary mission while visiting his counterpart, Cristina Fernandez de Kichner, was to discuss “in detail the whole range of key issues on the bilateral and international agenda and lay the groundwork for joint, mutually beneficial projects in energy, including civilian nuclear technologies, machine building and military technological cooperation.”²¹ In fact, during this visit to Argentina in July 2014, Russian President Putin signed a nuclear energy cooperation agreement with Argentina. Russia’s state atomic energy agency, Rosatom, made an offer to pay for the construction of two new nuclear power units in Argentina. According to Argentine President de Kichner, “Rosatom is also ready to provide comfortable financial conditions to Argentina” in order to win the contract.²²

In addition to rebuilding Argentina’s decade old nuclear power plants, Russia is also modernizing Argentina’s air force by providing Russian built Sukhoi Su-24s in exchange for beef and wheat.²³ According to MercoPress, South Atlantic News Agency, the deal involves a lease/lend of 12 Sukhoi Su-24 supersonic all weather attack aircraft, also known by their NATO codenames—Fencers.²⁴ Russia’s offer to provide Argentina’s air force with Sukhoi Su-24s illustrates Russian penetration of Latin American armed forces in an attempt to replace the United States as the country of choice when it comes to armament purchases. In fact, Russia, in 2010, supplied Argentina’s air force with two Mi-17 assault helicopters which are in service with the 7th Air Force Brigade. Obviously, the modernization or acquisition of new military hardware by Argentina is a concern to countries in Latin America as well as England. Russia is not only modernizing Argentina’s air force with Mi-17s and Sukhoi Su-24s, it is also supporting Argentina in its long-standing dispute with the United Kingdom (UK) over the sovereignty of the Ilhas Malvinas Islands or Falkland Islands. In addition to supplying the Argentine Government with Russian weapons, Russian Defense Minister Shoigu recently announced that Russia is planning to expand its long-standing military presence in Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua.²⁵

From the time that Cuba announced it was a socialist republic in 1959 it has supported Russia's attempts to infiltrate the Americas. According to Putin, Russian-Cuban relations today, in the aftermath of the implosion of the Soviet Union, is based on the core principle of strategic cooperation and long-term orientation. To show its future commitment to the island, Russia decided in late-December 2013 to forgive 90 percent of the U.S.\$32 billion in debt that Cuba has owed to Russia since the Soviet Era.²⁶ Furthermore, Russia and Cuba signed two oil agreements in May 2014 with the intent to provide joint offshore drilling opportunities.²⁷ In August 2013, Zarubezhneft started drilling the first development well in the Boca de Jaruco oilfield in Cuba. Zarubezhneft and Rosneft, both oil drilling corporations in Russia, are actively engaged with the Cuban Government and Cupet, Cuba’s state oil company, on several projects on the island.

Another major undertaking in Cuba by the Russian Government involves the planning by INTER RAO to construct power units to provide electric power to the Maximo Gomez and East Havana thermal power plants (TPP). Two others projects of tremendous economic implications to Cuba involve the Russian development of GLONASS ground infrastructure on the island to provide Cuba with products, services, and technologies in remote sensing and satellite telecommunications. Finally, Russia is positioning itself to assist Cuba, if necessary, with the upgrading of the Port of Mariel and building a modern international airport with a cargo terminal in San Antonio de los Banos.²⁸ The Russian-Cuban relationship intends to expand economic relations between the two countries based on the intergovernmental Trade, Economic, Scientific, and Technical Cooperation Program for 2012-20. This program focuses on major “projects in industry and high technologies, energy, civil aviation, the peaceful use of outer space, medicine, and biopharmaceuticals.”²⁹ Moreover, Russia and Cuba are involved in increasing humanitarian exchanges—not to be confused with the exchange of political prisoners. This humanitarian exchange involves the Cuban Government “hosting Russian music and theater performances and large-scale exhibitions” of Russian painters, sculptors, etc.

Russia is also, once again, actively involved in Nicaragua. Diplomatic relations between the two nations goes back to when Nicaragua and its Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) ruled the country from 1979 until 1990. Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega of the Sandinista National Liberation Front refers to Russian President Putin as “his brother president.” Today, Russian-Nicaraguan relations are less ideologically and more geopolitically based. Russia is particularly interested in the construction of the Interoceanic Grand Canal, a new alternative to the Panama Canal.



Source: rbth.com/international/2014/05/14/russia_and_nicaragua_to_cooperate_on_construction_of_new_intero_36645.html.

Figure 1. Canal Proposed by Russia and Approved by Nicaragua as Alternative to Panama Canal.

In a tripartite agreement signed between Nicaragua, Russia, and China, Russia's role will be to guard the construction site against possible acts of terrorism, therefore providing Russia with a large footprint in a region traditionally dominated by the United States since the era of the Monroe Doctrine. As part of this tripartite agreement, Russian "warships and aircraft" will be permitted to be present in Nicaragua's territorial waters "for the first 6 months of this year [2015] and also to carry out patrols of the country's coastline in the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea until June 30, 2015."³⁰ In addition to allowing a Russian Navy and Air Force presence in the backyard of the United States, Russia and Nicaragua have also signed several economic agreements allowing the Russian Government to "construct two ports, an airport, and an oil pipeline, all of which is estimated at a value of U.S.\$40 billion."³¹

Another key strategic partner for the Russians in Latin America is Venezuela. The late Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez was part of the rise of the "pink tide" in Latin America which occurred between 1998 and 2009 when leftist leaders, many hostile to the United States, won elections in Venezuela (1998), Chile (2000), Brazil (2002), Argentina (2003), Uruguay (2004), Bolivia (2005), Nicaragua (2006), Peru (2006), Ecuador (2007), Honduras (2007), Paraguay (2008), and El Salvador (2009). This ideological bloc led by Venezuela is also known as the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas (ALBA). J. D. Gordon argues:

Through its auspices, authoritarians bent on expansion and collectivism have carried out a massive propaganda campaign against the U.S. and its regional allies in order to undermine their legitimacy, while promoting socialism and systematic economic redistribution at home.³²

The strong ties between Caracas and Moscow are exemplified in its arms dealing. Between 2001 and 2014, Russian sales of weapons to Venezuela totaled U.S.\$11 billion of a total sale to Latin America totaling U.S.\$14.5 billion.³³ It has also been reported that the two countries have signed an agreement in which Russia's Rosneft, Transneft, and LUKoil companies will develop and possibly build a pipeline traversing Venezuela.

Putin does not hide the fact that Latin America is a key and very promising partner of Russia's foreign policy. Secretary of State John Kerry's comment that the era of the Monroe Doctrine is over has raised the perception among Latin American leaders that the United States no longer cares about the region. As my colleague, R. Evan Ellis, has written, "while neither Russia nor China can be expected to openly threaten the United States in the near term, both are significantly strengthening economic and military positions in the region, and they are moving toward a posture in which a conflict with the United States is no longer unthinkable."³⁴ In the final analysis, the question becomes: What are the implications for U.S.-Latin American relations given a greater presence of

Russia in Washington's historical backyard? Washington policymakers and military leaders must pay closer attention to what is happening in Latin America and to Russia's assertion that cooperation with Latin America is key to Russia's foreign policy.

The Putin Doctrine is driven by four overall objectives that Putin calls "the emerging polycentric world order." However, for the purpose of this article, the focus is on only two of the four tenets as they apply to Latin America. Leon Aron, Director of Russian Studies at the American Enterprise Institute, explains that the Putin Doctrine's first imperative is to maintain the country as a nuclear superpower.³⁵ Given that Russia is replacing the United States as an alternative weapons supplier to the region without discriminating to whom it sells, the United States and its allies cannot afford to have or allow a militarized Latin America emerge to supersede democracy and the rule of law, which are well established. These young democracies of Latin America remain fragile and feckless. Also part of Putin's Doctrine is Russia's desire to maintain and elevate its status as an exporter of nuclear technologies.³⁶ Russia's Rosatom, the state nuclear corporation, has been active in Latin America by entering into bilateral agreements with Cuba, Argentina, and Venezuela. A nuclearization of the region could result in a nuclear arms race among historical enemies, such as Brazil and Argentina. As Russia replaces the United States as a traditional ally in the region, Russia will make extensive use of its soft power toward the region. Putin may have only a few diplomatic tools at his disposal, but the tools he does possess are attractive to Latin American leaders. Those tools include an abundance of natural gas reserves, the second largest coal reserves, and the eighth largest oil reserves.³⁷

Another important national security implication of Russian-Latin American relations is the fact that Russian allies in the region are mainly regional leaders of the "pink tide" movement, a group who consider the United States a traditional enemy and are antagonists toward U.S. foreign policy in the region. A recent meeting between members of CELAC and the UNASUR was convened at the request of Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro in Montevideo, Uruguay. Members of CELAC and UNASUR issued a statement of solidarity with Caracas and rejected any U.S. interference in the internal affairs of member states. Members of CELAC and UNASUR have also demanded that the United States cease its "exit now" strategy toward Venezuela. The U.S. "exit now" campaign "aimed at the possibility of regime change in Venezuela and led to violent street demonstrations in some middle and upper class neighborhoods" in Caracas.³⁸

Since the United States is currently entangled in the war in Afghanistan and now against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, Latin America has been relegated to its traditional "benign neglect" status within the large U.S. foreign policy arena. The Barack Obama administration's de-prioritization of Latin America has created a political vacuum in the post-American hegemony era which Russia is happy to fill and Latin American leaders welcome. This power realignment is quite disconcerting given the fact that Russian foreign policy is becoming increasingly anti-Western (i.e., anti-U.S.) and is

imperialist in nature. At this juncture, the United States should be pursuing a policy of rapprochement toward Latin America. The United States should consider eliminating trade barriers to Latin American products coming to the U.S. market, encouraging multilateral agreements and interoperability among defense forces, creating a Latin American plan to address the narco-trafficking within the region and between states, and enhancing the exchange of information among national security agencies.³⁹

In conclusion, I agree with the recent statement that R. Evan Ellis gave to the U.S. House of Representatives in his testimony to the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere that of all the possible challengers to U.S. hegemony in the 21st century within the Western Hemisphere, no other country poses a greater challenge than the Russians. As Russian cooperation with Latin America becomes a priority for Russia's foreign policy, Latin America will become even more important for the future of U.S. security and prosperity.

ENDNOTES

1. "Cooperation with Latin America Is Key to Russia's Foreign Policy," available from rt.com/politics/official-word/171900-putin-interview-latin-america, accessed February 9, 2015.
2. "Kerry Makes It Official: Era of Monroe Doctrine Is Over," available from blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2013/11/18/kerry-makes-it-official-era-of-monroe-doctrine-is-over/, accessed February 9, 2015.
3. A. Sizonenko, "Russia-Latin America: Traditions of Interaction," *International Affairs*, Vol. 59, 2013, pp. 105-112.
4. *Ibid.*,
5. "Cooperation with Latin America Is Key to Russia's Foreign Policy."
6. "Russia and Latin America: Geopolitical Posturing or International Partnership," Washington, DC: Council on Hemispheric Affairs, available from www.coha.org/russia-and-latin-america-geopolitical-posturing-or-international-partnership/, accessed February 10, 2015.
7. "Cooperation with Latin America Is Key to Russia's Foreign Policy."
8. Alexandra Koval, "Contemporary Perspectives and Trends in Russian-Brazilian Relations," *Russian Analytical Digest*, No. 91, February 14, 2011, pp. 8-10, especially p. 8.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
10. "Cooperation with Latin America Is Key to Russia's Foreign Policy."
11. "Putin and Rousseff Discussed Doubling Bilateral Trade Ahead of BRICS Summit," available from en.mercopress.com/2014/07/15/putin-and-rousseff-discussed-doubling-bilateral-trade-ahead-of-brics-summit, accessed February 10, 2015.

12. Leopoldo Martinez Nucete, "Opinion: What are Russia's Intentions in Latin America?" available from latino.foxnews.com/latino/opinion/2014/10/21/opinion-what-are-russias-intentions-in-latin-america/, accessed February 10, 2015.

13. "Cooperation with Latin America Is Key to Russia's Foreign Policy."

14. "Brazil Making Inroads as Defence and Technology Supplier to Brazil," available from en.mercopress.com/2013/10/17/russia-making-inroads-as-defence-and-technology-supplier-to-brazil, accessed February 10, 2015.

15. Carl Meacham, "Is Russia Moving In on Latin America?" available from <https://csis.org/publication/russia-moving-latin-america>, accessed February 10, 2015.

16. Nicole Perlroth, "Online Security Experts Link More Breaches to Russian Government," *The New York Times*, October 28, 2014, available from www.nytimes.com/2014/10/29/technology/russian-government-linked-to-more-cybersecurity-breaches.html?_r=0, accessed February 11, 2015.

17. Nucete.

18. "Argentina and Russia Ratify Close Links; Moscow Reaffirms Malvinas Claim Support," available from en.mercopress.com/2014/05/29/argentina-and-russia-ratify-close-links-moscow-reaffirms-malvinas-claim-support, accessed February 11, 2015.

19. "Cooperation with Latin America Is Key to Russia's Foreign Policy."

20. *Ibid.*

21. "Argentina, a Key Partner of Russia Says Putin Ahead of his Buenos Aires Visit," available from en.mercopress.com/2014/06/30/argentina-a-key-partner-of-russia-says-putin-ahead-of-his-buenos-aires-visit, accessed February 11, 2015.

22. "Russia Offers to Build (and Finance) Two New Nuclear Power Plants in Argentina," available from en.mercopress.com/2014/07/14/russia-offers-to-build-and-finance-two-new-nuclear-power-plants-in-argentina, accessed February 11, 2015.

23. "London Concerned as Russian Military Jets Available to Argentina," available from en.mercopress.com/2014/12/29/london-concerned-as-russian-military-jets-available-to-argentina, accessed February 11, 2015.

24. *Ibid.*

25. Ramiro Sebastian Funes, "Russia's Military Power in Latin America," *America's Quarterly*, available from americasquarterly.org/content/russia-military-power-in-latin-america, accessed February 11, 2015.

26. "Russia and Latin America: Geopolitical Posturing or International Partnership."

27. *Ibid.*

28. "Cooperation with Latin America Is Key to Russia's Foreign Policy."

29. *Ibid.*

30. “Russia and Nicaragua to Cooperate on Construction of Interoceanic Canal,” available from rbth.com/international/2014/05/14/russia_and_nicaragua_to_cooperate_on_construction_of_new_intero_36645.html, accessed February 11, 2015.

31. “Russia and Latin America: Geopolitical Posturing or International Partnership.”

32. J. D. Gordon, “The Decline of U.S. Influence in Latin America,” *Defense Dossier*, Issue 9, Washington, DC: American Foreign Policy Control, December 2013, p. 3.

33. R. Evan Ellis, Testimony to the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, Foreign Affairs Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, Tuesday, February 3, 2015.

34. R. Evan Ellis, Strategic Insights, “The Strategic Relevance of Latin America for the United States,” available from strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/index.cfm/articles/The-Strategic-Relevance-of-Latin-America/2014/12/08, accessed February 12, 2015.

35. Leon Aron, “The Putin Doctrine: Russia’s Quest to Rebuild the Soviet State,” *Foreign Affairs*, March 8, 2013.

36. *Ibid.*

37. Robert D. Kaplan, *The Revenge of Geography: What the Map Tells Us About Coming Conflicts and the Battle Against Fate*, New York: Random House, 2013.

38. Frederick B. Mills, “Latin America Unites against U.S. Attack on Venezuela Democracy,” available from www.coha.org/latin-america-unites-against-u-s-attack-on-venezuelan-democracy/, accessed February 12, 2015.

39. Stephen Blank, “Russia in Latin America: Geopolitical Games in the US’s Neighborhood,” available from https://www.academia.edu/7760090/Russia_in_Latin_America_Geopolitical_Games_in_the_USs_Neighborhood._Putin_latest_visit_to_Latin_America_2014July, accessed February 12, 2015.

The views expressed in this Strategic Insights article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government. This article is cleared for public release; distribution is unlimited.

Organizations interested in reprinting this or other SSI and USAWC Press articles should contact the Editor for Production via e-mail at SSI_Publishing@conus.army.mil. All organizations granted this right must include the following statement: “Reprinted with permission of the Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, U.S. Army War College.”

