

Crime and politics in Central America: Traducing El Salvador's truce Aug 24th , from Print edition Officials who implemented a peace agreement between gangs and the government are on trial.

World Facts Major Cities of Central America Seven cities in Central America are regarded as the most significant for their roles in the economy, culture, and politics in the region. Guatemala City is the largest city in Central America. Central America includes seven nations: The region sits on an area of , square miles and has an estimated population of 46,, Seven cities in the region have been identified as being most significant in the politics, economy, and culture of the region. Cities of Central America experience multiple issues related to urbanization, and these cities are struggling to cope with urban migration as rural immigrants seek better economic opportunities. Crime is another concern in Central America. The city had a total of homicides per , inhabitants in The city is the seat of the national government of Costa Rica and the focal point of economic and political activity in the country. In the was named the Ibero-American culture capital. These districts are further subdivided into smaller neighborhoods that are locally known as barrios. The city was founded in the 16th century by Pedro Arias Davilla, a Spanish conquistador, and served as the starting point for subsequent expeditions that conquered the Inca Empire in Peru. The city also served as a stopover point in one of the most significant trade routes in the history of the American continent. Currently, the city is the administrative and political center in the country, and is located at the entrance of Panama Canal, on the Pacific Ocean. Panama City is also an international hub for commerce and banking, and is widely known as one of three "Beta level cities" in Central America. Tocumen International Airport in Panama City is the busiest and largest in the whole of Central America, which offers daily schedules to major cities around the world. International Living Magazine listed the city among the top five places to retire. The city was also selected as the American capital of culture in , alongside Curitiba in Brazil. The city was founded in , but did not experience high population growth until the 19th century. San Pedro Sula, along with the rest of the nation, is yet to fully recover from the severe devastation caused by Hurricane Mitch in It was adopted as the capital on October 30, The industrial products produced in the region include plastics, ceramics, tires, plywood, farm machinery, metalwork, glass, paper, and lumber. The city hosts both local and international financial institutions. Managua A total of 1,, residents lived in Managua in After it was damaged by floods, an earthquake, and a massive fire in the , the city was rebuilt. Today, Managua has governmental stations, apartments, galleries, museums, monuments, and squares. The economy of San Salvador is primarily dependent on the retail and service sectors. The city operates as the financial, political, educational, and cultural hub of El Salvador. The origins of the Guatemala City region can be traced back to when the Mayans established a city at Kaminaljuyu, while Spanish colonizers built a small town, which was named the capital city in The city boasts of the largest market for goods and services in the country, and thus attracts large public and private investments.

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Politics in Central America fills this gap, analyzing the roots of the current crisis and suggesting solutions to the problems of the region. The author's chief assertion is that the roots of the problems in Central America are not to be found in the East-West struggle but in the competition within each country for control of the scarce natural.

Blockades in the main roads of the country, demonstrations, looting of businesses and widespread violence is what can be seen in some areas of Honduras, eight days after the disputed presidential elections. Elections and Political Uncertainty Tuesday, November 28, Three days after the presidential elections in Honduras, all of the votes have not yet been counted, and as tension escalates, businessmen request political leaders to recognize the results declared by the Electoral Tribunal. With this data, the person emerging as the potential winner is the engineer Salvador Nasralla, candidate for the opposition Alliance against Dictatorship and known in Honduras as "the Man from the television", because of his long career as an event spokesman and sports communicator. Businessmen Take Action Against Corruption Tuesday, September 19, Guatemalan businesses have declared persona non grata congressmen who voted for a law which exempted general secretaries of political parties from responsibility in matters relating to illicit electoral financing and increased the possibility of commuting prison sentences with money. The law, popularly known as the "Corruption Pact", was heavily resisted by Guatemalan society. Pressure from the populace, together with a resolution contrary to the norm from the Constitutional Court, forced Congress to backtrack and archive the law. Will the President of Guatemala Be Spared? Tuesday, September 12, With the decision of Congress not to remove immunity from President Morales, the Public Ministry and the Cicig have been prevented from continuing the investigation into irregular electoral financing. Corruption, Impunity and Politics Monday, August 28, Four petitions for pre trial hearings have already been lodged against President Morales, following his request to expel the leader of the International Commission against Impunity from Guatemala. In response to this, three other requests for preliminary hearings have been filed in the last few hours. While it is true that the current Maduro government still has the loyalty in diplomatic terms of some Latin American and Caribbean governments, which has prevented his condemnation through international organisms, in the economic sphere relations with these allies are cooling off without remedy. The sale in November of the Schafik Handal fuel plant was one of the most recent signs of the financial difficulties facing the conglomerate Empresas ALBA in El Salvador, which has been around since, involving in several businesses linked to the government. Central America, Taiwan, Trump? Thursday, January 19, The attendance of the president of the rebellious Chinese island to the inauguration of President Ortega and visits to the countries of northern Central America could have profound geopolitical significance. The visit of President Tsai Ing-wen could be related to the turmoil of the global political status quo that will surely arise with the new US government Why Trump Wednesday, November 9, The choice of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States is another clear example of how the deterioration of liberal democracies enlightens the way for the emergence of authoritarian leaders. A proposal to reduce Learning and increase Bureaucracy Wednesday, April 20, The real entrepreneurs and CEOs do not need a state official, who will never be an entrepreneur, to tell them how to run a company and increase revenues. Mutation and Death of Democracy? Friday, September 25, Ineptocracy: A government system where the least capable to govern are elected by the least capable of producing, and where the members of society least likely to sustain themselves or succeed, are rewarded with goods and services paid for by the diminishing number of producers. EDITORIAL As the notion of "acquired rights" extends its current deformation which means "even if the world is falling apart the government must pay my salary at the end of each month", the transformation of democracies in ineptocracies is accelerating, especially in reference to democracies in Latin America, and in particular in those like Chile, Costa Rica and Uruguay, where some time ago a combination of enlightened leaders and the majority of industrious citizens created prosperous societies not only in economic terms but also in terms of civility and harmony in coexistence. Guatemala As Seen from the USA Friday, September 11, Amcham claims that the political crisis drove away investors who are now considering returning, "convinced that the message of the intention to strengthen the State is true. An

article in Crhoy.

3: Dem Congressional Candidate: 'I Worked in Opposition to U.S. Policy in Central America'

A clear and balanced presentation of the dilemmas associated with each of the four nations listed in the subtitle. A skillful cultural framework is provided in the first chapter, which serves as an overview.

Alex Eflon The decline in social and economic inequality registered in many Latin American countries since the late s coincided with a shift away from the politics of market-based structural adjustment and towards a political landscape in which the social problems of poverty and inequality play a prominent role. This repoliticization of inequality has manifested itself both in the revival of mass protest movements and in an electoral turn to the left, and it has generated a diverse array of policy tools for tackling inequality, poverty and underemployment. Market reforms and rising inequality: ISI is a policy aimed at aiding a country to reduce its foreign dependency by augmenting local production of industrialized products. Governments across the region cut back their already limited redistributive measures, introduced during the populist-ISI era, which were viewed as wasteful and undermining market efficiency by market reformers. Governments pursuing market liberalization also slashed tariffs, privatized state-owned industries and public utilities, lifted price controls and subsidies, and deregulated labour, capital and foreign exchange markets. These market reforms had three main implications for the politics of inequality. First, the combination of economic crisis and market restructuring altered the regional class structure by shifting employment from the formal to the informal sector of the economy. Second, these changes created impediments to collective action, thereby increasing the political challenges facing unions. Finally, this weakening of class-based collective actors helped shield neoliberal technocrats and policy makers, now in the ascent, from societal pressure, thus allowing them to experiment with social policies that were more compatible with free market principles. Democracy and the repoliticization of inequality The failure of market liberalization to deal with the crisis of poverty, inequality and underemployment did not mean that these problems would inevitably be turned into political issues. In fact many of the social and political actors who had traditionally politicized such issues were not well positioned to do so during the period of economic adjustment. The strength of labour unions was in decline and their ties to political parties had been eroded. The left was on the defensive due to the collapse of socialism in the Soviet Bloc, and in many countries it was the historically labour-based populist parties who took the lead in imposing structural adjustment policies. However, while in the late s over 70 percent of Latin Americans expressed support for free trade and in the aggregate placed themselves slightly to the right-of-centre on the ideological spectrum, there was growing discontent with other aspects of market liberalization. There was a high level of support for a state role in economic and social welfare activities and for the public control of key resources. It is, therefore, not surprising that as democratic regimes became increasingly consolidated and the scourge of hyperinflation was extinguished, the political dynamics in the region shifted. This shift of political dynamic coincided with the economic downturn at the end of the twentieth century and expressed itself in two distinct ways: The most explosive patterns of social protest occurred in those countries that had experienced bait-and-switch patterns of market reform, and which were therefore left with no major institutionalized left-wing party into which discontent with the process of liberalization could be channeled. The mass protests that erupted in countries such as Venezuela, Ecuador and Bolivia culminated in the traditional party system being outflanked on the left, leading to the rise of new populist or leftist movements seizing power, rewriting national constitutions and refounding state institutions. As a consequence of the bypassing of the traditional party system, the social policies introduced in these countries tend to be characterized by decisive breaks with macroeconomic orthodoxy. However, not all the leftist electoral gains in the region were due to a bypassing of the traditional party system. In countries where a conservative military regime Chile or political parties Uruguay, Brazil and El Salvador led the process of market reform, and where a major party of the left remained in opposition, it was through these parties that discontent with market liberalization was channeled. Even in countries such as Mexico, where leftist parties have not captured political office, they have gained in strength and forced conservatives to pay greater attention to social issues. Consequently, the broad pattern across the region is that equity gains have been

made under some conservative as well as leftist governments. In these countries, where the opposition between left and right has been contained within the traditional party system, the policies introduced have generally been compatible with macroeconomic orthodoxy, although reforms have occurred on the social policy front. Instead, it offers a diverse array of policy tools for tackling social problems of poverty and unemployment, some of which are compatible with neoliberal orthodoxy and others that lead away from it.

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About November 15, last updated 8: It was the latest attempt by the administration to discourage migrants, primarily from Central America, from coming to the United States. In the recent pre-election fervor, President Donald Trump likened the caravan of Central Americans, which is slowly making its way north from Honduras and into southern Mexico, to an invasion. Yet the latest caravan was notable not for the number of migrants—roughly 1, Central Americans migrate north toward the U. Migrants, who have been subjected to horrible abuses on the journey northward, have increasingly sought safety in numbers. Still, the administration responded by militarizing the U. What administration officials fail to acknowledge is that these efforts are unlikely to stem the flow of migrants from Central America. On top of that, they endanger already vulnerable populations. Central Americans living in the so-called Northern Triangle countries of Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras are caught in a complex web of violence and corruption, poverty and inequality. Regional governments have failed to provide their citizens with basic guarantees of the rule of law and physical or economic security. For the past decade, the Northern Triangle has been the most dangerous region in the world, with homicide rates that vastly exceed those of other countries. Among those fleeing violence, women and children have been migrating in greater numbers since In , Mexican authorities said that 25 percent of the migrants they apprehended were women, while U. Girls under the age of 18 represented 32 percent of migrants apprehended by U. Central American women and girls are routinely the victims of violence both by the state and at home, as they are targeted by gangs and organized crime and face high rates of domestic violence. El Salvador and Honduras had the third- and fifth-highest rates of femicide—the targeted killing of women because of their gender—in the world in In El Salvador , one out of every three pregnancies is to an adolescent mother, most of whom have been raped. Despite laws to protect women, few cases are ever investigated and even fewer result in prosecution. But a June decision by the now-former attorney general, Jeff Sessions, prevents women from seeking asylum in the U. Meanwhile, few victims of crime in Central America ever receive justice. Only a small portion of victims of violence file police reports. Collusion between state officials and criminal organizations is but one particularly nefarious form of corruption that is rampant in El Salvador and Honduras. The Trump administration congratulated President Juan Orlando Hernandez on his re-election in Honduras and has stayed silent about Morales, which looks like tacit support for his moves. The Trump administration should recognize the crisis that exists not on the southern U. Of course, violence and corruption are intimately linked to economic issues. The lack of the rule of law reduces investment. Businesses close because of extortion. Collusion between governments and organized crime deprives states of much-needed revenue to provide public services. Violence keeps children out of school. Families abandon their homes and businesses due to threats of violence. More than , Salvadorans have been displaced over the past two years due to violence alone. The Salvadoran economy has been stagnant for a decade, growing only 2. Guatemala fared little better at 2. More than two-thirds of Hondurans, more than half of Guatemalans and one-third of Salvadorans live below the poverty line. Honduras has the highest level of income inequality in Latin America. There are few jobs, and even fewer good jobs. Approximately two-thirds of those living in the Northern Triangle are employed in the informal sector, which offers no job security. People living in rural areas experience poverty and inequality at higher rates than the general population. This is particularly true for those working in agriculture. Increasingly, Central Americans living in the zona seca, or dry corridor, have cited severe drought, crop failure and food insecurity as reasons for migrating north. Nearly 60 percent of Guatemalan migrants have said the drought and food insecurity was their reason for leaving. Developing and maintaining the rule of law is vitally important to creating a secure, prosperous Central America. Central American governments need more technical assistance and more funding directed at improving and professionalizing the judiciary and the police. The Trump administration should rigorously apply the Leahy Laws, which bar U. Weak economies also need assistance. A recent report by Manual Orozco at the

Inter-American Dialogue offers some excellent recommendations for how to stem migration and improve economic development in the Northern Triangle, including formalizing the workforce, investing in human capital and growing new markets. Not only are these economies unprepared to absorb such a sizeable number of returnees, but their return will also result in a decline in remittances—both of which are likely to exacerbate the migration crisis. With Democrats in control of the House of Representatives, they should push the administration to instead renew and expand TPS for Hondurans and Salvadorans, as well as Nicaraguans and Haitians for that matter, and develop a path to citizenship for them. Finally, the administration should recognize the crisis that exists not on the southern U.S. Actually addressing that humanitarian crisis requires improving access to official U.S. Those with legitimate claims for asylum should be able to make them and have them processed expeditiously. The United States, across multiple administrations, has contributed to the current crisis in Central America in many ways. It has a role to play in remedying it. Wade is professor of political science and international studies at Washington College. *Emerging from the Shadow of the Eagle*.

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Central America, International Dimensions of the Crisis By Richard E. Feinberg Holmes & Meier, Read preview
Overview Charles D. Brockett: *Political Movements and Violence in Central America* By North, Liisa L. *Canadian Journal of Latin American & Caribbean Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 62, July

Introduction We meet at a time of unprecedented hope for peace in Central America. We celebrate the wisdom and courage of those who made at least more probable what was deemed almost impossible brief months ago. We pray they will succeed, with divine guidance, in bringing it to a successful end. We are fully sensitive to the delicacy of these present weeks in which the schedule for compliance moves forward. We wish our words here to be seen both as a further expression of our strong support for the unfolding peace process as well as the expression of our continual effort to reflect critically on the moral issues at stake. We have joined with our Central American brothers in the episcopate in urging the adoption of sincere dialogue and negotiation among contending parties. And with them we have insisted, as we continue to insist, that true peace can come about only when the fundamental causes of the conflicts, especially the historic denials of social justice, are sincerely faced. Peace, as the cessation of hostilities, may truly be at hand, for which all must give fervent thanks. But genuine peace, a gift from God and the fruit of justice, will continue to elude us until men and women of good will, here and throughout the hemisphere, resolve to construct together the civilization of love to which we are called. Over the years we have prayed and preached and worked in varied ways for peace and justice in that troubled region. We have expressed our solidarity with our brother bishops and their local churches whose pilgrimage is marked with great suffering. We have spoken out publicly, numerous times, seeking to direct the policies of our country into ever more constructive ways. All of these and more "our prayer, our expressions of ecclesial solidarity, our efforts to influence public policy" are distinct and proper elements of our pastoral mission today. As the Holy Father noted last spring in Santiago: But it is also true that, as an imperative of the mission it received from Jesus Christ, the church must cast the light of the Gospel on all temporal situations, including political activity, so that society will increasingly manifest those moral and ethical values that reveal the transcendental character of the person and the need to protect his inalienable rights. In this period we can note certain welcome developments in one or another country "advances in a democratic polity, election of civilian presidents, diminution of some of the most heinous human rights violations. Overall, however, the decade has witnessed a deterioration in the social, political and economic life of the region. It is this situation of crisis, and the role of our own government in affecting it, to which we direct our attention here. It is our impression that the crises that today afflict Central America, indeed Latin America in general, are inadequately grasped by policymakers and citizens alike; that the policy focus has been distorted by an almost exclusive attention to one country; and that the broad public discussion that should inform our policy has become falsely constricted. Central America Today Over the course of this decade the standard and quality of life of the great majority of Central Americans has declined. Untold suffering and misery have increased dramatically and the region has been brought to the very brink of devastation. In part, this is true for much of the hemisphere where the s have been termed a "lost decade" for the economies of most Latin American countries. It is this tragedy that the Holy Father addressed when he met with the U. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean last April, noting that the crisis experienced by the region as a whole was the most serious of the past half century. But these countries have also experienced their own special suffering in recent years. In the recent public debates in our country over U. A near exclusive focus of attention on Nicaragua and a policy debate reduced to the question of U. Voices From Central America A more complete view can be found in the joint messages of the Central American episcopates issued at their regular biennial assemblies. At both their and assemblies, speaking as bishops and pastors, they identified the same five problem areas as of greatest concern to their local churches. We would do well to consider them. At the top, unsurprisingly, is the problem of armed violence "the violation of human rights, the existing armed conflicts and the danger of their expansion. Next is the related issue of militarism, of the exaggerated role assumed by the armed forces in most of those societies, due in part to generous subsidies

provided by outside powers. Third is the matter of rampant corruption, both public and private. Fourth, what may seem an unlikely public policy issue but which is of great concern to the bishops Catholic faith and of popular religiosity by three distinct groups: And fifth, the attacks on the institutions of marriage and the family from several quarters but including, according to the bishops, campaigns financed by foreign governments imposing values hostile to the existing culture. We consider it worth re-starting what our brother bishops of Central America have to say about the fundamental issue which most directly relates to the policy of our own government, that of the problem of violence, of war and of peace: This violence continues to bear down on our countries, causing forced displacement of people within each country, the painful drama of refugees, widows and orphans whose numbers grow constantly, the abandonment of farms, the increasing unemployment, hunger and illness, the lack of doctors and medicines. We support as well those efforts of other nations to seek effective ways of ending armed intervention in our countries, the removal of outside forces from the region and the freedom for Central Americans peacefully to settle their differences. In these few lines the bishops of Central America and Panama have encapsulated much of the real problem of Central America and its only acceptable solution; namely, that the devastation of war affects disproportionately the most vulnerable, the poorest, and sets back already weakened economies; that while the conflicts have indigenous roots in the longstanding patterns of injustice, superpower interference has added the geopolitical dimension, threatening the expansion into a still wider war; that the answer lies in effective dialogue among the contending parties, facilitated by sister nations of Latin America, with the superpowers resolving to deal with one another outside the Central American arena. Central America and U. Policy With this panoramic view in mind, let us look briefly at each of the countries, examining features that relate to aspects of U. El Salvador, once the center of attention, has all but disappeared from the policy discussion. The costly war, now in its eighth year, may have left our newspapers but not the lives of the people of El Salvador. People are still being killed " in armed confrontations, in aerial bombardments, from landmines. Both sets of combatants commit serious violations of commonly accepted human rights. Killings and disappearances by so-called death squads still continue, although not, to be sure, at the appalling levels of a few years ago. The criminal justice system barely functions; there is no single known instance of military personnel being criminally punished for human rights abuses against Salvadoran citizens. The earthquake of October caused such destruction, leaving , people homeless, that it was comparable, in the words of Archbishop Rivera, to a second war. Refugees and displaced persons are still prominent aspects of the Salvadoran reality. Many of the "internal refugees," people who had fled to church-run centers as far back as , have been helped to relocate, but people continue to flock to the city from conflict areas and many continue to seek refuge in the United States. Whatever their individual and personal motivations, most of these people have escaped from truly desperate circumstances, from a country torn by war and devastated by natural disaster, and should be allowed " once having made the difficult journey here " to remain at least until conditions in El Salvador genuinely improve. A civilian presidency is the beginning, not the end, of necessary reforms and improvements. Many refugees as well continue to live in camps in Honduras and should be enabled, but not forced against their will, to return when their safe passage and security in their homeland can be assured. We urge the U. High Commission for Refugees to continue its role in providing for and protecting these persons. There are reports that some Salvadorans are already returning, partly because employers have fired or refused to hire undocumented Salvadorans in the sometimes mistaken fear of incurring sanctions. The return of many thousands would have repercussions far beyond the obvious economic ones, almost certainly increasing the civil strife and violence that have for too long wracked that tiny country. The dialogue for peace between the government and the opposition, which the church and especially Archbishop Rivera Damas have tirelessly pursued had, until lately, largely broken down. The New Central American peace process, the most hopeful development in years, calls for internal dialogue in El Salvador and may succeed in reviving the necessary talks. We continue to urge our government to provide every possible encouragement to this process. Finally, the question of military aid to El Salvador. This was the central issue before us in as we discussed and voted on our statement on Central America. We concluded then, as Archbishop Romero had pleaded just before his assassination, that the United States should not provide arms to the then military-civilian junta. We acknowledge changes since that time, including the election of a

civilian president. And while we also acknowledge the right in principle of a sovereign state to seek abroad the means for its own defense, we cannot accept that outside powers, essentially our country and the Soviet Union, vie with one another in adding fuel to the flames of an already burning house. In the sense in which it applies to both powers, we join with the Central American bishops when they say, as cited above, "We can do no less than condemn the war and the consequent sending of arms to Central America. At some point, one must ask what these expenditures have resulted in. The government has not fallen nor has the insurgency been defeated, that is clear. But have we in fact, while intending to support the emergence of civilian and democratic rule, created a situation which makes it more difficult for the civilian sectors to exercise the necessary control over the military? And is this not of a piece with the problem noted over recent years of ever higher percentages of our bilateral aid being consigned to military and strategic, rather than to development, purposes? When, as in this present year, two-thirds of all bilateral aid is so committed, while in it was but a quarter, we must strongly question the military emphasis of our foreign aid program. Nicaragua is the one country of the region not receiving economic or military assistance from the United States government; it has become increasingly dependent on such aid from the Soviet Union and its allies, an issue of growing concern to the democracies of the region. Tensions between the United States and Nicaragua were aggravated by the breakdown in bilateral relations between the two countries. Significant human rights violations have been reliably attributed to both sides. Contra attacks against non-combatants, forced recruitment and kidnappings, and extensive use of land mines have been widely noted. So have Sandinista abusive treatment of prisoners and detainees, the excessive restrictions on trade union activities, on freedom of expression and other civil liberties, and the reported violation of due process associated with the special tribunals. One area of special concern to us as bishops has been the deeply disturbing conflict that has developed between the government and the leaders of the Catholic Church, with the government on several occasions marshaling the exceptional powers of the state to deprive the church of personnel, property and the free exercise of ministry. We urge that the remaining obstacles be swiftly addressed. We stand with the church in Nicaragua in the defense of their right to preach the Gospel without harassment or interference. The war has been the central issue and the unfortunate, almost exclusive, focus of the policy debate in this country. There is no issue of U. Some of our fellow citizens, indeed some of our faithful, seem genuinely convinced that so evil is the Sandinista regime, or so inevitable an eventual Soviet-Cuban aggression through Managua, that they countenance few restrictions on what the United States may do to prevent such an outcome. We have long argued that a significant U. Further intensification of the military conflict must be avoided and the tide turned decisively in a new direction. We have argued that direct military aid to forces seeking the overthrow of a government with which we are not at war and with which we maintain diplomatic relations is at least legally doubtful and morally wrong. The finding by the International Court of Justice that our government was guilty of nine different violations of international law is at least persuasive. But it is not ours to argue the law, nor is our objective to present policy based on the legal issues. We do believe the policy of support for the contras to be morally flawed, however sincere the intentions of the persons who have crafted and implemented it. Our Catholic teaching demands that several stringent criteria be met before one can discard the overriding "presumption in favor of peace and against war" U. Some would argue that the condition of sufficient cause was well met. Still less do the criteria of likelihood of success, proportionality and even proper authority seem to have been met. Without formally judging any of these criteria, we do hold that the criterion of last resort has truly been disregarded and it is on this matter that we consider the U. As the Central American peace process is beginning to demonstrate, there are alternatives to a war policy; there are available structures — the Central American governments themselves, newly united by the peace accord signed in Guatemala last August, the now-forming regional parliament, the Contadora Group — all committed to the peaceful resolution of the conflicts and the protection of basic rights and freedoms. It is these profoundly hopeful efforts to construct peace with justice that we are called to encourage and support. The peaceful means, far from having been exhausted, have just begun to be explored. Guatemala inaugurated its first civilian president in 20 years in January and some important changes have clearly taken place. For two decades of military rule, Guatemala had endured the most sustained and pervasive political violence in the Americas. Estimates of the numbers

killed in just the past decade vary but all agree the victims, many of them Indians, numbered in the tens of thousands. The now familiar term "disappearance" first entered the human rights vocabulary because of Guatemala, and for years arbitrary arrest, torture, disappearance and political killings were everyday occurrences.

6: Central American crisis - Wikipedia

Another area of dispute was the role of the church, a very important institution in Central America. The Liberals favored greatly reducing its wealth and political power and supported greater freedom of religion.

Baroque painting in Central and South America is basically an extension of that of Spain and Portugal, and even the best rarely rises to the general standard of the European schools. Important paintings and sculptures tended to be imported from Europe.

Pre-Columbian Central America Central America , an archaeological bridge connecting North and South America , was, before the arrival of the Europeans, home to various nomadic and sedentary cultures. Although the Maya were the most advanced pre-Columbian civilization in the hemisphere, they were never unified. Unlike the Aztec and Inca empires, their autonomous city-states remained independent, presaging the political fragmentation that would characterize Central America to the present day. What unity existed was cultural rather than political. There is scant evidence of human life in Central America before bce. Primitive human habitation in the region before that date is likely, perhaps as early as 40,000 bce, but civilized society did not emerge until the 2nd millennium bce. Between 10,000 and 8,000 bce, people of the region made the transition from hunting and foraging to plant cultivation. Pottery in the Parita Bay region of Panama, dating from about 6,000 bce, reflected South American cultural influence, which eventually reached as far north as Guatemala and Chiapas. Mexican influence in Chiapas dates from at least 4,000 bce, and thereafter it extended as far south as Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Central America thus became a meeting ground for Mesoamerican , South American, and Caribbean peoples. After 3,000 bce, organized sedentary farming communities became numerous, and active commerce and communications developed among them. Although cassava manioc and other tubers were important to Indians of the Caribbean coast, corn maize was the primary staple food of most Central Americans, accompanied by a wide variety of beans, squash, and other vegetables and fruits. The Olmec culture and other Mexican influences substantially affected the development of Mayan civilization, while central Mexican Nahuatl influence challenged the Maya and stretched along the Pacific coast, notable especially among the Pipil of El Salvador and the Chorotega and Nicarao of Nicaragua. Fugitives from the European conquistadores in the Caribbean increased this influence considerably at the close of the 15th century. The Miskito , Sumo , Rama, and other tribes on the Nicaraguan and Honduran Caribbean shores have survived to the present. Emergence of the Maya After 3,000 bce an advanced Mayan civilization emerged in the highlands of Guatemala and El Salvador. Although the highlands remained heavily populated, these lowland cities became the centres for a higher civilization. Overcrowding, famine, climatic change , or major geologic catastrophes may have contributed to migration, but contact between the highland and lowland peoples continued as merchants carried cultural, economic, and social traits from one place to another. Mayan temple at Tikal in present-day Guatemala. But the Maya developed the highest culture of pre-Columbian America, which reached its height between 2,000 and 1,000 bce. Maya priests made discoveries in astronomy and mathematics comparable to similar advancements in ancient Egypt. They developed an advanced system of writing, and their hieroglyphs on stone monuments stelae , erected throughout the Maya lands, recorded their history. Brilliant Mayan artistic and scientific achievements in ceramics, sculpture, weaving, and painting, some of which were more advanced than European accomplishments of the same era, all showed remarkable artistic sensitivity. They developed an accurate calendar and complex systems of agricultural and water management. The Maya could not match their European counterparts in technology, however. Their architectural works were also less impressive than those of ancient and medieval European civilizations. Animals were not domesticated, and all work was done by human hand labour directed by an elite group. Decline of the Maya Mayan civilization began to decay after 1,000 bce, perhaps because of overpopulation, deforestation , and stresses in the social structure. The peoples of these cities, much influenced by invaders from central Mexico, built striking stone architectural monuments, but their scientific and artistic achievements were less remarkable than the earlier advances of the Classic period, and their economies remained underdeveloped. In the meantime, internal civil war and intervention from central Mexico sapped Mayan strength and vitality. Returning to northern Guatemala, where they established the city of Tayasal as a

place of refuge, some Maya maintained their autonomy until Disease and social disruption, brought with the Spanish conquest, annihilated a large part of the native population during the 16th century. A year later Christopher Columbus , on his fourth voyage, sailed along the Caribbean coast from the Bay of Honduras to Panama, accumulating much information and a little gold but again making no settlement. Other navigators from Spain followed, some seizing natives as slaves, and in Fernando V , the king of Spain, granted concessions for colonization of the region to Alonso de Ojeda and Diego de Nicuesa. Both suffered staggering losses from disease, shipwrecks, and hostile natives. Balboa turned the survivors into a disciplined and productive colony in Balboa cultivated good Indian relations, made extensive explorations, and found enough gold and pearls to make Castilla del Oro, as it was called, the first profitable colony in the New World. However, the explorations took their toll on the Indians of the region, however, many of whom were wiped out by European diseases. Pedrarias, however, distrusted the ambitious Balboa and, accusing him of treason, had him beheaded in Pedrarias expanded the colony but was responsible for enslaving and murdering the Indian population, despite royal orders for more humane treatment. Accompanied by a large force of Indian warriors from central Mexico and preceded by a smallpox epidemic , Alvarado faced little opposition until he reached Guatemala. Alvarado went on to conquer the Pipil of El Salvador in the same year, but a bloody rebellion by the Cakchiquel took four more years to quell. The discovery of gold in Honduras made the struggle more intense. Alvarado went on to participate in the conquests of Peru and of northern Mexico while retaining his governorship of Guatemala. Although none of his settlements in the Nicoya Bay region survived, he and his men began the permanent Spanish occupation of Costa Rica. Spanish domination of Central America was achieved by relatively few Spanish military forces but at a great cost in Indian lives. Remote areas, however, especially in northern Guatemala and along the Caribbean coast, remained outside Spanish control throughout the colonial period, eventually allowing Great Britain to colonize Belize and the Mosquito Coast of Nicaragua. Yet the conquest was not entirely military. The brutality of the Spanish conquest had repelled Las Casas in the Caribbean. After his Dominican monasteries in Nicaragua and Guatemala failed to bring better treatment to the Indians, he went to a province of northern Guatemala to pacify it without military force. His experiment in this province, which he called the Verapaz, was only partially successful, but it served as the basis for his arguments to the Spanish crown against abuse of the Indians. The resulting New Laws of began the suppression of the encomienda system of exploitation of Indian labour. Page 1 of 2.

7: Central America Economic Outlook | Data, Statistics & Forecasts | FocusEconomics

Central America is comprised of several nations with distinct cultural, political and historical characteristics. Use the quiz/worksheet as many.

Economic Snapshot for Central America November 7, Regional economy likely gained steam in Q3. According to a preliminary estimate, the economy of Central America and the Caribbean should have expanded 3. Excluding Puerto Rico, growth likely picked up from 3. Other indicators for the quarter, such as tourist arrivals, employment and credit growth, also painted a positive economic picture. In contrast, economic activity data suggests Panama continued to perform sluggishly after a month-long strike disrupted activity in Q2. A notable exception is Nicaragua, which appeared to contract sharply due to violent civil unrest. With the fiscal deficit already up significantly so far this year, the swift approval of the reform is considered a vital first step to putting the public finances on a sustainable long-term footing. In October, the government presented its budget, which foresees a sharp fall in revenues next year, and correspondingly cut spending allocations to contain the fiscal deficit. Dialogue between President Daniel Ortega, business and civil society has proved fruitless, and ongoing political tension is likely to continue to dampen tourism and FDI inflows. Growth should be solid going forward, but downside risks remain. Over the next few quarters, Central America and the Caribbean should continue to benefit from solid domestic demand and the booming U.S. Moreover, Puerto Rico should continue to recover as rebuilding efforts accelerate and thanks to a very favorable base of comparison. Uncertainty over immigration policy in the United States—particularly the Temporary Protected Status of many Central Americans currently residing in the U.S. Internally, a further deterioration of the political situation in Nicaragua, a failure to enact tax reform in Costa Rica, and potential political uncertainty in Guatemala leading up to elections next year are the key risks. FocusEconomics panelists expect regional growth of 3. El Salvador was the only country to have its growth forecast upgraded this month. Our panelists see regional growth at 3. Moreover, private consumption should have been buttressed by strong remittances growth in the quarter, which reached their highest USD value on record in August, benefiting from continued robust momentum in the U.S. However, the agency noted that political instability is hampering growth. Looking at Q4, floods and heavy rainfall in October could drag on economic activity somewhat. Momentum in the economy is expected to edge up next year on the back of strong domestic demand. Private consumption is likely to benefit from a tight labor market and robust remittances inflows, while growth in government consumption and fixed investment should also accelerate. FocusEconomics Consensus Forecast panelists expect the Guatemalan economy to expand 3. Credit growth stayed in double digits throughout the period and employment growth picked up, likely supporting private consumption. Moreover, tourist arrivals surged in September in annual terms, boosted by greater arrivals from the U.S. The trade deficit, however, likely widened on greater oil imports. Despite higher oil prices, international reserves are comfortable and have risen year-to-date, supported by remittances, FDI and tourism inflows. This marks a further sign of warming relations with the Asian giant, which could translate into increased investment and commercial opportunities going forward. Looking ahead, growth will likely moderate slightly but should still compare favorably to regional peers. A healthy labor market, solid fixed investment and spillovers from the expansion in the U.S. Downside risks stem from higher oil prices, tighter international financial conditions, vulnerability to extreme weather events and elevated debt servicing costs. FocusEconomics panelists expect GDP growth of 4. For , panelists see the economy expanding 4. Furthermore, freight data for the Panama Canal shows strong year-on-year growth in July and August, though September logged a decline due to a high-base effect. Meanwhile, on 31 October the parliament approved an expansionary budget for , including USD 9 billion dedicated to investment projects. Growth is likely to pick up pace in and , after a weaker performance this year. Notably, new public infrastructure projects will likely buttress the construction sector, while the scheduled opening of the large Cobre Panama copper mine should further stoke industrial activity and exports. This will also likely support the ongoing narrowing of the current account deficit. Nevertheless, the external sector remains vulnerable to the effects of the US-China trade war, which could dampen trade flows in and

around the all-important Panama Canal. FocusEconomics Consensus Forecast panelists project that the economy will grow 5. COSTA RICA Fiscal reform bill yet to clear parliamentary hurdle, investor concerns are rising The economy likely had a mixed performance in the third quarter of , after year-on-year growth accelerated in the second quarter. In August, economic activity increased at the fastest pace in nearly two years, boosted by a resurgent construction sector. However, union strikes against the landmark fiscal reform bill, which began in early September and continued through October, will have taken a toll on the economy. The fiscal bill passed a crucial vote in the Legislative Assembly in early October but was later rejected in its current state by the Supreme Court for containing changes that could affect the independence of the judiciary. The bill should wind up for a final vote in the Legislative Assembly in the coming weeks and, if approved, would come into effect next year and should help to bring down the deficit. Rising household consumption and robust exportsâ€”aided by economic growth in the United Statesâ€”should drive the economy next year. However, fiscal consolidation and tighter monetary conditions are seen weighing on prospects, as could instability in neighboring Nicaragua. Failure to enact serious tax reform which puts the public finances on a sustainable footing is a key downside risk to the economy. Higher oil prices and currency weakening will drive inflation in the Central America and Caribbean region next year. FocusEconomics panelists see inflation coming in at 3. For , FocusEconomics panelists expect inflation to rise to 3.

8: Category:Politics of Central America - Wikipedia

The Rise of Ethnic Politics in Latin America *The Rise of Ethnic Politics in Latin America* explores why indigenous movements have recently won elections for the first time in the history of the region.

9: Politics of Central America and the Caribbean | Subject and Course Guides

Central America makes up most of the tapering isthmus that separates the Pacific Ocean, to the west, from the Caribbean Sea. It extends in an arc roughly 1, miles (1, km) long from the northwest to the southeast. At its narrowest point the isthmus is only about 30 miles (50 km) wide, and there.

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