Japan-Latin America Relations: Then & Now

**8:30 AM – 9:00 AM** COFFEE & REGISTRATION

**9:00 AM – 9:30 AM** WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS
Michael Shifter, President, Inter-American Dialogue
Congressman Joaquín Castro (D-TX), Co-Chair, Congressional US-Japan Caucus

**9:30 AM – 11:00 AM** A NEW ERA IN JAPAN-LAC RELATIONS?

**Moderator:** Francisco González, Riordan Roett Senior Associate Professor of Latin American Studies, Johns Hopkins - SAIS

**Speakers:**
- Yasushi Takase, Director General, Latin American and Caribbean Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
- Mireya Solis, Philip Knight Chair in Japan Studies, Center for East Asia Policy Studies, Brookings Institution
- Arturo Valenzuela, Professor of Government, Georgetown University

Latin America and the Caribbean have risen on Japan’s list of foreign policy priorities in recent years. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe indicated as much during his 2014 tour of Latin America, the first in ten years by a Japanese head of government. Referencing an indispensable partnership, Abe called for a new era in Japan-Latin America relations, based on stronger cooperation in a variety of fields. Japan’s foreign ministry would also seem committed to stronger cross-Pacific relations in the coming years. Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida traveled to the region on three occasions since 2013. His trip to Cuba in 2015 marked the first-ever visit by a Japanese foreign minister to the island nation. How does the Abe administration envision this proposed new era in Japan-LAC engagement? What opportunities exist for enhanced cooperation? What challenges will Japan encounter in its renewed approach to Latin America?

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11:00 AM – 12:30 PM  THE JAPAN MODEL OF ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT: OPPORTUNITIES FOR LAC

Moderator:  Barbara Kotschwar, Research Fellow, Peterson Institute for International Economics
Speakers:  Akio Hosono, Senior Research Advisor, Japan International Cooperation Agency
          Takahiro Hosojima, former Chief Representative in Rio de Janeiro, Japan Bank for International Cooperation
          Claudio Loser, Founding Director and Chief Executive Officer, Centennial Group Latin America

Japan has been an important trade partner, lender, and investor in LAC for decades. Since the mid 2000’s, Tokyo re-emerged as a leading source of finance for Latin American countries, particularly Brazil and members of the Pacific Alliance. Japanese FDI in the region is also notable, averaging $6.9 billion per year between 2010 and 2013. Despite slowing growth on both sides of the Pacific, Japan and Latin American nations are seeking to build stronger economic partnerships. What factors will shape Japanese economic engagement in the region in the coming years? In what sectors and countries will Japanese firms and financiers focus their efforts? How does Japan’s model of engagement compare to that of China and other major economic partners?

12:30 PM  CLOSING REMARKS & NETWORKING LUNCH

ABOUT THE INTER-AMERICAN DIALOGUE

The Inter-American Dialogue is the leading center for policy analysis, exchange, and communications on Western Hemisphere affairs. Its mission is to bring together public and private leaders from around the world to debate the most critical issues facing the Americas and find cooperative solutions. For more information, visit www.thedialogue.org.

ABOUT THE JAPAN ASSOCIATION OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (JALAC)

JALAC was founded in 1958 as a Japanese forum for private-sector engagement with Latin America and the Caribbean. JALAC members include approximately 100 companies and other organizations and 260 individuals. For more information, visit www.latin-america.jp.