

¡Bienvenidas y bienvenidos to El CC, CCLATAM's newsletter!. Every other week you'll find the main events shaking up Latin America, from Ushuaia in the south to Los Algodones in the north. Sign up [here](#) to stay updated on the region. Get [in touch](#) with us, we may feature an excerpt of your response in the next newsletter.

The Agency or Irrelevance Issue



The [Nobel Peace Prize](#) awarded to [María Corina Machado](#) has placed a Latin American political figure at the symbolic center of global democratic debates. Honored for her struggle to achieve a peaceful transition from authoritarianism in Venezuela, Machado's recognition comes just days after Peru's Congress impeached [President Dina Boluarte](#) and appointed [José Jernew chair of the Congress](#) as new interim leader as elections are due in April 2026. Taken together, these events highlight a disjuncture between Latin America's heightened international visibility and its limited strategic coherence. The region's political narratives attract global attention, but its collective agency in shaping international agendas remains weak.

This contrast is sharpened by the global economic calendar. In Washington, finance ministers and central bankers **are set to convene on Monday** for the IMF–World Bank annual meetings, following [Kristalina Georgieva's warning that "uncertainty is the new normal."](#) She emphasized that resilience to date has been driven by temporary adjustments—such as firms front-loading inventories ahead of expected U.S. tariff hikes—rather than structural adaptation. Trump's decision to impose 100 % tariffs on

Chinese goods, in retaliation for Beijing's rare earth export restrictions, triggered market declines and underscored the volatility of U.S.-centered trade policy.

Technology is intensifying these dynamics. [The WTO reports that 20 % of global goods trade growth this year came from AI-related goods—semiconductors, servers, telecommunications equipment—mostly flowing from Asia to the U.S.](#) The Bank of England has warned that valuations in the AI sector now resemble the dot-com boom, raising the risk of a correction that would reverberate through dollar-based markets, a key channel for Latin American economies.

At the [UN](#), [Lula](#) called for binding global AI governance under the Global Digital Compact, while [Trump](#) promoted deregulation and U.S. technological primacy. These are competing regulatory architectures with direct implications for Latin America's digital sovereignty and bargaining power.

Machado's Nobel Prize gives the region symbolic visibility, but symbolic capital without strategic agency is not influence. The real question is whether Latin America can convert political narratives and economic weight into coordinated action on technology, trade, and governance—or remain visible but strategically marginal.

CCLATAM Editorial Board

La Charla

Eric Farnsworth CCLATAM's Board Member has been amongst the first to launch the proposal for the candidature of Maria Corina Machado for the Nobel Peace Prize. We re-publish our Charla with Eric back in April 2025 following the results of the elections in Venezuela. Eric Farnsworth is currently [a senior associate \(non-resident\) with the Americas Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies \(CSIS\)](#)



Eric, we have seen your insightful commentary on various USA networks, including CNN, regarding the election results in Venezuela. You are a passionate advocate for the significance of the Western Hemisphere to U.S. economic and security interests and are considered a trusted voice by senior U.S. and foreign officials.

What insights can you share about Venezuela that you haven't told anyone?

Well, anyone who follows me on X (<https://x.com/ericfarns?lang=en>) knows I'm pretty open about my views on Venezuela. I just think now is a moment for clarity, both moral and in terms of policy options. A Cuba and Russia-backed regime has baldly stolen an election it did everything to tilt in its favor. But it was not enough to dissuade citizens from voting for change, and now the regime has simply declared itself victorious despite all evidence. The regime will do whatever it takes to remain in power, including harassing and killing its own citizens protesting peacefully. This realization is clarifying in the effort to develop effective policy options.

What is the significance of the post-election situation in Venezuela for the region and for the U.S. electoral race?

If the international community cannot rally to condemn even the basic trappings of democracy by rallying to defend the vote in Venezuela, the implications for regional democracy are profound. It means democracy is not secure anywhere. It also means that the United States must get real about our ability to influence regional developments and unless we prioritize concrete steps to improve our position, such as passage and robust implementation of the Americas Act, the Venezuela reversal will not be the last by any means.

The European Union has faced challenges in reaching a unified stance on Venezuela and has ultimately decided not to recognize the election outcomes. How likely is it that the EU and the USA will align on this issue? Could Venezuela serve as a test for Transatlantic relations?

It seems that a unified European position has been prevented by Hungary, at least in part. It's a curious thing. Hungary has no conceivable interests in Venezuela. But Russia does. And Orban and Putin are purportedly bros. Has Putin used Orban to undermine democracy in Venezuela? Who knows. But these are some of the questions we now have to be asking and what makes sustainable solutions so difficult to find. Having said that, a unified US-EU approach to Venezuela, especially in terms of coordinated sanctions and forfeitures of criminals' assets, would be useful.

You've been following the Venezuela crisis closely and are an expert on the subject. Given the current situation, what do you think will be the next move for opposition candidate María Machado, who, along with other courageous Venezuelan citizens like Manuela Bolívar, has been pivotal in maintaining the opposition in Parliament?

Maria Corina Machado is the inspirational, transformational leader who has literally given the people hope for change. She has raised their sights and their aspirations. It's why the regime fears her and disqualified her arbitrarily from running for president. It's also why they are now trying to scare her into exile. They want her gone without creating a martyr. But she is not scared. The reality of repression is palpable. She had

been in hiding since Tuesday and still she led a thousands rallying in the streets of Caracas this past Saturday, waving the Venezuelan flag and singing the national anthem in support of opposition candidate Edmundo González. So anything the regime can do to limit her voice and public reach they will attempt to do. Her public profile is her best

protection but it's not a guarantee. Meantime, her efforts to inspire nationwide public protests against the steal, in the face of brutal regime oppression, will pit her ability to keep on mobilizing the street against those who seek to maintain authoritarian control. Can she do it?

Do you believe that the humanitarian crisis, the notion of a stolen democracy, and the presence of organized crime in Venezuela reflect a failure of the international community and the countries of the Western Hemisphere to ensure safety in Latin America?

Yes. It's tragic things have gotten this far out of hand.

If you were to address President Putin regarding the Venezuelan election results, what would your message be? And what would you say to Mr. Maduro?

I don't really have a good response for this question. I mean, please leave Venezuela in peace and give the long suffering vene citizens some relief? But I'm not sure that would do anything...I wish I had a better response.

What advice would you offer to the U.S. presidential candidates concerning Venezuela?

Venezuela has been on a downward spiral for 25 years, since Hugo Chavez was first elected. For a time, high oil prices obscured reality but the past decade has clearly revealed the worsening damage wrought by chavismo. As they say, when the tide goes out you can see pretty clearly who is wearing a bathing suit and who is not. And chavismo is not. Nor is anyone who has run interference for chavismo internationally. It's a decrepit ideology that has impoverished a nation while enriching a cabal of "corruptos" at the top. So the first advice would be to recognize the true dna of the regime. Don't be naive or sentimental. This is a brutal gang determined to keep power above all else. Normal diplomatic methods will not be sufficient. Second, it's not just inconvenient to have a criminal regime in the heart of the Americas. It's a strategic risk. Ignore the issues at your—and our—peril. And third, this is what happens when we refuse to contend effectively for the Americas, on a bipartisan basis, for years. Our influence and leverage dissipates if not disappears. We might not like it, or we might continue to believe that many other issues are more important, but it's real and the consequences are significant. Although there's also another approach that could be even more effective: just try it, you'll like it.

How do you foresee the situation in Venezuela evolving, and when do you think it might come to a resolution?

I'm not overly optimistic but I still remain hopeful that somehow, people power will prevail in Venezuela. Maduro will not be convinced to depart on his own, either by elections or sanctions. He may face a challenge from protests, or from within

chavismo, or Cuba might decide to pull the plug on him if he's proving to be a drag on their interests, but those are all long shots. I hate to say it but if he beats this latest electoral challenge he can likely stay in power indefinitely, especially with continued support from Cuba, Russia, China, and other global disrupters. Meantime, neighbours like Brazil and Colombia and Mexico and Caribbean island nations, which have done so

little to support democracy in Venezuela, should now prepare along with the United States for large new flows of refugees. We would apparently prefer to deal with the symptoms rather than the cancerous cause of migration, even as we watch Maduro successfully steal a country in real time. It remains a challenging situation.

Elsewhere in LATAM

 [José Jerí sworn in as Peru's](#) seventh president in less than a decade José Jerí was sworn after Congress ousted Dina Boluarte in a lightning overnight impeachment. The 38-year-old lawyer, who only became president of Congress in July and has little political experience, pledged to seek "reconciliation," tackle runaway crime, and guarantee "neutrality" ahead of April's presidential elections. Lawmakers launched a late-night impeachment debate in the 130-seat Congress after approving four separate motions to remove Boluarte for failing to curb worsening crime. When she declined to appear shortly before midnight to defend herself, legislators moved quickly: 124 lawmakers voted past midnight to impeach her, with no votes against – the ninth attempt to remove her. The stunning power shift came just hours after a gunman opened fire at a Lima concert, injuring five people and amplifying public anger.

 Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva asked U.S. President Donald Trump during a phone conversation to lift [the 40% tariff](#) imposed by the U.S. government on Brazilian imports. The leaders spoke for 30 minutes, exchanged phone numbers, and Lula reiterated his invitation for Trump to attend the [upcoming climate summit in Belem](#), according to a statement from Lula's office. U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio invited Brazil's Foreign Minister to Washington to discuss lifting a 40 % tariff now imposed on Brazilian goods.

 Colombia has carried out its **largest domestic public debt swap ever**, exchanging 43.4 trillion pesos (US \$11.18 billion) in securities as part of efforts to manage its strained public finances, the Finance Ministry. Under the operation, the government received domestic public debt securities (TES) maturing between 2025 and 2050 in exchange for TES maturing between 2029 and 2058. Investor demand was strong, with total bids reaching 49.2 trillion pesos (US \$12.68 billion). According to the ministry, the swap will generate **fiscal savings of 1.7 trillion pesos (US \$438 million)** this year through lower interest costs. It marks the **seventh domestic debt swap** carried out by the government in 2025.

 [Growth outlook revised upward](#) The World Bank raised Latin America's growth forecast for 2026, expecting Mexico's growth to accelerate to about 1.4 % next year.

🇸🇦 [Saudi and Chevron eyed for sector revival](#)—Peru’s Energy and Mines Minister is pushing for agreements with Saudi Arabia and Chevron to invest in lithium, mining and offshore oil drilling.

🇲🇽 A woman once vilified for her role in the Spanish conquest of the [Aztec](#) empire is being cast in a new light. Known to the Spanish as [Marina](#), to Indigenous peoples as **Malintzin**, and later as **Malinche**, she served as **translator and intermediary for [Hernán Cortés](#)** during the conquest that led to the fall of Tenochtitlán in 1521. Her story, preserved mainly through others’ accounts, has inspired centuries of myths, legends, and fierce debates. Was she a **traitor**, a **survivor**, or a **historical actor** who influenced the course of colonization? That question still resonates across Latin America. Mexico’s first woman president, **Claudia Sheinbaum**, has joined the discussion. Beginning Sunday — the anniversary of **Christopher Columbus’s arrival in the Americas** — the government will launch a series of cultural programs designed to **reclaim and reinterpret Malinche’s role** in national history.

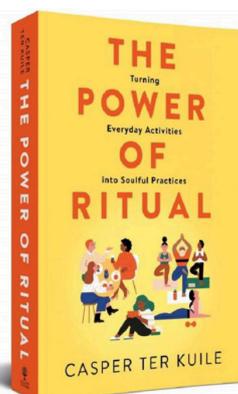
🇨🇴 Solar push in energy mix. Spanish firm Zelestra inaugurated a \$200 million, 144 MW solar plant near Montería as Colombia diversifies away from fossil fuels.

La Cita

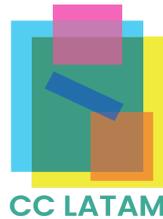
The best relationships develop out of friendships

[Diane Keaton, Actress](#)

La Lectura



You should read [The Power of Ritual](#) because it offers a refreshing and practical way to bring deeper meaning, connection, and spirituality into everyday life—without requiring religious belief. [Casper ter Kuile](#) shows how ordinary activities like reading, exercising, or sharing meals can become intentional rituals that foster mindfulness, belonging, and purpose. Through personal stories and simple practices, he provides tools to transform daily routines into moments of reflection and joy, making it an inspiring guide for anyone seeking a more grounded and connected life



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