

“Trump has his Own Monroe Doctrine”: Latin America Is Under the Spotlight - and This Is Bad News for Latin Americans

By [Uriel Araujo](#)

Global Research, November 12, 2024

With **Donald Trump's** recent victory, Latin America seems to be under the spotlight. For one thing, earlier this month, Trump (who will take office on January 20, 2025) said that, if elected, he would call Mexico's newly inaugurated **President Claudia Sheinbaum** “on day one or sooner” to inform her that “if they don't stop this onslaught of criminals and drugs” coming into the US, he would “immediately impose a 25 percent tariff” on everything Mexico sends into the US. The Republican did call her on November 7 - but, despite the previous harsh rhetoric, it was “[a very cordial](#)” conversation - according to Sheinbaum.

Now going further southwards in the Latin continent, Argentine's **Javier Milei** will apparently be the first President to [meet with Trump](#) this week, even before the latter's presidential inauguration. The meeting will take place at Mar-a-Lago, Trump's south Florida club, during the exclusive Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC). Billionaire **Elon Musk**, owner of X, will also be present. **This could indicate Trump will be “favoring” Argentina over its regional rival Brazil.**

Together with Trump's call to Mexico's Sheinbaum the very same day his electoral victory was announced, those are signs that Latin America is going to be a big deal for the new administration. One should expect to see the US increasing pressure on Latin American countries towards [alignment](#) amid the ongoing Chinese-American [geopolitical dispute](#). Oliver Stuenkel (a visiting scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace) [argues](#) that **Trump has his own Monroe Doctrine, and that his “isolationist” foreign policy translates into safeguarding hegemony in the New World.**

One should note that some degree of Monroeism is not exclusive to Trump. In late 2023, analysts such as Tom Long (a reader in international relations at the University of Warwick) and Carsten-Andreas Schulz (an assistant professor in international relations at Cambridge University) were already warning about the “[return of the Monroe Doctrine](#)”. Long and Schulz wrote that, under **Joe Biden**, the “White House's warnings about China's growing footprint in the Western Hemisphere” carried “a distinctively Monroeist undertone.” They argue that Biden might not go so far as to praise the Monroe Doctrine at the United Nations (as Trump [did](#)), but Biden's initiatives in the continent are nonetheless [perceived in a similar light](#) by Latin Americans.

Therefore, talking about the Monroe Doctrine “coming back” is, to be more accurate, a matter of focus and intensity - such a doctrine in fact has never really gone away. Moreover, in more recent years, be it with Trump or Biden, it has become clear that being “pro-American” spells disaster for Latin America countries, as I [wrote](#) in December 2023. When it comes to being thusly inclined, Argentina's Milei is indeed quite an extreme case, with his

[“nightmarish”](#) economic measures.

One may recall that, during his presidential campaign, he even promised to “get rid” of the peso currency by replacing it with the dollar – which would take away the Argentinean Central Bank’s role in the nation’s economy, handing it to the US Federal Reserve – thereby fully giving up any autonomous monetary policy. This plan is still [under discussion](#). Under Milei, Argentina has also stepped back from joining the BRICS group. With Milei’s [heavy austerity measures](#), Argentina’s poverty rate, in the first six months of the new administration, has [risen to 53%](#) (which means [3.4 million](#) Argentinians have been pushed into poverty this year). The new poverty rate is the highest level for two decades – Washington has been his economics.

Image: Trump and Bolsonaro meeting in Florida on the weekend of March 7, 2020 via EPA



Under the previous **Jair Bolsonaro’s** “Westernalist” administration Brazil got [a taste](#) of what “automatic alignment” with Washington looks like. The 2019 [“Technology Safeguards” agreement](#) on the Alcantara Space Center is a pretty good example. In addition to other things, it granted access to some parts of the strategically placed Brazilian Space Agency’s launching facility to US personnel only. The deal also imposed a number of limitations on personnel as well as resources from non-MTCR (Missile Technology Control Regime) countries, which excluded China. What’s more, it limited Brazil to launching rockets that are made with US-developed technology, and money thereby earned by the Brazilian government could not be invested into Brazilian rockets.

Bolsonaro ruled Brazil from January 2019 to January 2023 and thus his presidency also coincided with the first years of the ongoing Joe Biden’s presidency. At the time so much was talked about Brazilian alignment with Washington being limited to a Bolsonaro-Trump “friendship”, with Joe Biden even refusing to talk to his Brazilian counterpart. The truth is that fondness aside, Biden handled his Bolsonaro pretty much the same way Trump would: demanding alignment and offering nothing (or not much) in return. This is illustrated, among other things, by Biden’s administration’s pressure to stop Chinese company [Huawei](#) from taking part in building Brazil’s 5G network.

The Biden administration in any case [“contributed](#) decisively to the maintenance of [Lula da Silva](#) in power after the failed coup attempt attributed to former President Jair Bolsonaro”, as Fabiano Mielniczuk, a research member of NEBRICS, [describes](#) it. With Bolsonaro’s successor and incumbent Brazilian **President Lula da Silva**, a healthy partnership did not materialize, though: for instance, Washington has [weaponized the environmental rhetoric](#), maintained pressure on Brasilia to disengage from BRICS, and forced Brazil to [postpone](#) the

request of Iranian warships.

It was during Trump's years, in his previous presidency, that the Monroe Doctrine [hit Latin America hard](#), though – with “Bay of Pigs”-like plans (that did not come through) to invade Venezuela through Colombia, for instance. Besides alleged [CIA plans](#) to kill Venezuela's **Nicolas Maduro**, in May 2020 American mercenaries attempted to enter the country on speed boats from Colombia as part of so-called [Operation Gideon](#) to launch a coup d'etat against Maduro. Caracas accuses Washington and Bogota of having played a role in it. Operation Gideon has been described as a lousy display of incompetence and hubris.



Operation Gideon. SEBIN agents displaying captured former US Green Berets (Licensed under CC BY 3.0)

With a new [empowered](#) Trump's presidency, the country risks having to face way more efficient operations. The issue of Venezuela has been haunting elections in South America – as we have seen more recently [in Uruguay](#). Tensions between the Bolivarian Republic and Guyana over territorial claims ([amid major oil discoveries](#)) are still on the rise and the specter of both a regional conflict and a US intervention haunt the region.

I've recently [written](#) on how Trump's recent victory marked the end of an over three-decade long Bush-Clinton Era and how this development could be, overall, good news for the planet, considering the record. I argued that Trump's previous 2017-2021 presidency was no match for the Bush-Clinton years in terms of the destruction of nation-states, [complicity in genocide](#), and war-mongering. However, merely pointing out this fact by way of comparison does not amount to implying Trump was or will be a “[peace-maker](#)” by any chance.

The Abraham Accords (which lie at the core of the ongoing predicament in the Middle East in so many respects) were, to some degree, his making. The whole issue of Israel itself will be a test and a challenge for the new administration. As for Washington's foreign policy under Trump pertaining to Latin America, one should not expect, as argued here, anything other than the good old Big Stick approach.

*

Click the share button below to email/forward this article to your friends and colleagues. Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) and subscribe to our [Telegram Channel](#). Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

[Don't Miss Out on Global Research Online e-Books!](#)

This article was originally published on [InfoBrics](#).

Uriel Araujo, PhD, anthropology researcher with a focus on international and ethnic conflicts. He is a regular contributor to Global Research.

Featured image is by Global Times via [InfoBrics](#)

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Uriel Araujo](#), Global Research, 2024

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: **[Uriel Araujo](#)**

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca