



LATIN AMERICA TRADE COALITION

Why Support the Trade Agreements with Colombia and Panama? **They're a Foreign Policy Imperative**

The trade agreements with Colombia and Panama are a great deal for U.S. workers, farmers, and businesses, but they are also an imperative for America's foreign policy and geostrategic interests in Latin America:

Development: By enhancing opportunities for economic growth and development in Latin America, these agreements will lend strength to local economies and provide citizens with long-term alternatives to narcotics trafficking or emigration.

Security: The agreements promote U.S. security interests by forging a deeper partnership with Colombia and Panama through a framework for government to government relationships that is grounded in the tangible national interests of all parties. Such a framework is vital to enhancing cooperation in the fight against terrorism and narcotics trafficking; it also sets an example for other countries around the world as we pursue our global security goals.

Democracy: The agreements will enhance U.S. efforts to strengthen democracy in Latin America by lending direct support for the rule of law, internationally recognized workers' rights, and transparency in business and government. They thus provide important tools to fight the scourge of corruption, which undermines growth, security, and stability.

Narcotics: While Colombia and Panama have made tremendous strides fighting narcotics trafficking over the past 15 years, narcotics trafficking poses serious challenges for the hemisphere. These agreements help establish a cooperative framework in which other fronts such as narcotic interdiction can be constructively addressed, while providing the economic alternatives to keep individuals away from illegal activities. Additionally, the agreements grant duty-free access to the U.S. market for an expanded range of Latin American products, thus offering the possibility of more good jobs locally.

The consolidation of democracy and sustainable economic development throughout Latin America are clearly in the national interest of the United States. These agreements will provide Latin Americans with the tools they need to achieve their own development aims.

For more information, visit www.latradecoalition.org