

CAF-LSE CONFERENCE

"A PIVOT TO LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN?"

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



OPENING REMARKS

ÁLVARO MENDEZ



Álvaro Mendez is the Director of the Global South Unit at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), and a Senior Associate Fellow at LSE IDEAS. He is a Full Research Professor at Rey Juan Carlos University in Madrid, working on a project funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation that focuses on strategies for internationalisation, innovation, and social responsibility. Prof. Mendez is also an Associate Fellow at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP), and a Member of the Colombian Council of Foreign Affairs (CORI). He teaches at LSE, Sciences Po Paris, and Fudan University. He has won numerous teaching awards, such as the IR Departmental Teaching Prize in recognition of his teaching of International Relations at the LSE, and he has contributed to numerous books as an author, co-author, or editor of numerous books.

LARRY KRAMER



Larry Kramer is President and Vice Chancellor of the London School of Economics and Political Science since April 2024. He previously served as President of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation from 2012 to 2024. Larry has spent most of his career in the academy, including as the 15th Dean of Stanford Law School, a position he assumed in 2004. During his tenure, he spearheaded significant educational reforms. Previously, professor Kramer researched and taught at the University of Chicago, the University of Michigan, and New York University, where he served as Associate Dean for Research and Academics and Russell D. Niles Professor of Law. He clerked for U.S. Court of Appeals Judge Henry J. Friendly of the Second Circuit and U.S. Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan Jr., following his education. Larry holds an A.B. in Psychology and Religious Studies from Brown University and a J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School.

SERGIO DIAZ GRANADOS



Sergio Diaz Granados is a lawyer and specialist in public management. He has an extensive career of more than 25 years in public and private service, both nationally and internationally, with a special emphasis on development and regional integration. He has served as Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism of Colombia, Vice Minister of Business Development and Chairman of the Boards of Bancoldex and Procolombia. He has also been a member of Congress and Chairman of the Economic Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives. In July 2021 he was elected as the new Executive President of CAF - Development Bank of Latin America for the term 2021 – 2026. He assumed his new responsibilities on September 1st. He previously served as Executive Director for Colombia and Peru at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), headquartered in Washington D.C. He was the dean and chairman of the coordinating committee of the Board of Executive Directors. He was part of the merger process of the Inter-American Investment Corporation in 2015. Likewise, he supported the approval of the second replenishment of the Multilateral Investment Fund (IDB LAB). As Executive Director, he chaired the IDB Policy and Evaluation Committee from 2016 to 2017, and the Board Committee of the Inter-American Investment Corporation (IIC/IDB Invest) from 2018 to 2019. In 2021, he led the organization of the Annual Meeting of Governors of the IDB and IDB Invest, an event that for the first time in the history of the Bank was held in a hybrid format (face-to-face/digital), in the city of Barranquilla, Colombia. During his tenure as Minister between 2010 and 2013, he was a member of CAF's Board of Directors, contributing to the strengthening of the Latin American and Caribbean dimension of the Institution, as well as its important role in promoting sustainable development and regional integration.

GARETH JONES



Gareth Jones is Professor of Urban Geography at the LSE where he directs the MSc Urbanisation & Development. He has an interdisciplinary background in geography, economics and urban sociology, and research interests that cover urban politics, including youth, violence and security, inequalities, land access and spatial exclusion. From 2015 to 2022 he was the Director of the LSE Latin America and Caribbean Centre, running 23 research grants over six programmes, developing international partnerships with universities, international development organisations and think tanks, and knowledge exchange. Gareth has just completed a British Academy-funded project 'Engineering Food: infrastructure exclusion and 'last mile' delivery in Brazilian favelas'.

KATHRYN HOCHSTETLER



Kathryn Hochstetler is Professor of International Development at the London School of Economics and Political Science. She has been researching Latin American environmental politics and policy for more than 30 years, with a special focus on Brazil. She has published widely on topics from domestic institutions and movements to the participation of emerging powers in international environmental negotiations. Her most recent book (Cambridge 2021) is Political Economies of Energy Transition: Wind and Solar Power in Brazil and South Africa.

DENYSE S. DOOKIE



Denyse S. Dookie is Research Fellow at Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and Environment. Denyse joined the Institute in September 2019 within the Sustainable Development team led by Prof Declan Conway, and her work is broadly centred on using climate information for adaptation, disaster risk reduction and resilience. She is a member of the Policy and Finance Committee of the World Adaptation Science Programme, contributing to insights on adaptation effectiveness, as well as the UK Met Office-led UKCP Development and Knowledge Sharing Network. She was a contributing author on the Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2022.

ALICIA MONTALVO SANTAMARÍA



Alicia Montalvo Santamaría is, since June 2022, Manager of Climate Action and Positive Biodiversity at the Development Bank of Latin America, CAF. Her professional career has focused on the field of international financial cooperation and environmental economics, always in public institutions. In the international arena, she has held the following positions: Chief Counselor of the Economic and Commercial Office at the Embassy of Spain in Colombia; Executive Director for Austria, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Norway and Sweden at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); General Director at ICEX, Spain Export and Investment, of the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness of Spain; Director General of Climate Change at the Ministry of the Environment, and Rural and Marine Affairs of Spain; Member of the Economic Policy Committee of the European Union; General Director of Trade Policy and Foreign Investment at the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Spain. Alicia holds a degree in Economics and Business Administration from the University of Valencia, Spain. He also holds a Master in Public Administration (MPA2) from the KSG of Harvard University. She belongs to the High Level Public Service of Economists of the Kingdom of Spain. In the academic field, she has been a professor of Natural Resources Economics at the Carlos III University and at the Center for Commercial Studies (CECO) of Spain; she has also participated in numerous international conferences and presentations.

IRENE MIA



Irene Mia is Senior Fellow for Conflict, Security & Development and Latin America at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). In her role she is responsible for the research programme on Latin America security, governance, geopolitics, economics and development. She is also providing leadership and management of the Conflict, Security & Development programme activities and staff and she is the editor of the Armed Conflict Survey, one of the IISS flagship publications covering geopolitical and conflict trends globally. She was previously Global Editorial Director, Thought Leadership at the Economist Group, where she was responsible for leading and growing the Thought Leadership business globally (including by overseeing large global client relationships from an editorial perspective and delivering high quality content) and she played a key role in disseminating and presenting the Economist Group's views and work to clients and other high-level audiences around the world. Previously, Irene was regional director for Latin America and the Caribbean at the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), where she provided intellectual and strategic leadership to the regional editorial team within the EIU's Country Analysis division. Before joining the Economist Group, she was director and senior Economist within the Centre for Global Competitiveness and Performance at the World Economic Forum. Before joining the World Economic Forum, she worked at the headquarters of Sudamérís Bank in Paris for a number of years, holding various positions in the international affairs and international trade divisions. She has written and lectured extensively on development, international trade, geopolitics and geo-economics, Global South and Latin America.

LAURA WEISBICH



Laura Weisbich is a non-resident fellow at the South-South Cooperation Research and Policy Centre (Articulação SUL) and the Igarapé Institute, both in Brazil. Her work revolves around various issues such as foreign policy, international development cooperation, policy diffusion, state-society relations, and open government. Her current research projects focus on the disputes surrounding the growing role of rising powers countries like China, India, and Brazil in the current geopolitical landscape and on multi-level governance in the Amazon. Between 2022 and 2024 she worked for the University of Oxford as a Social Science Division Postdoctoral Fellow (2022-2023) and as a Departmental Lecturer in Latin American Studies and Director of the Brazilian Studies Programme, at the Latin American Centre at the Oxford School of Global and Area Studies (2023-2024). Prior to joining Oxford, she accumulated over 10 years of experience working for civil society organizations and think tanks, and as an international development consultant primarily in Brazil and the UK.

STACEY RICHARDS-KENNEDY



Stacey Richards-Kennedy is head and Regional Manager for the Caribbean of CAF – Development Bank for Latin America and the Caribbean’s Regional Management Office located in Port of Spain, Trinidad. Dr Richards-Kennedy is leading CAF’s efforts to provide increased development financing to governments and private sector clients across the region. Dr Richards-Kennedy has over 25 years of experience in multilateral negotiations, development management and international finance. Her diverse experience includes forging strategic partnership, leading multi-disciplinary teams and marshalling resources for the successful execution of projects in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Dr Richards-Kennedy formerly served as Pro Vice-Chancellor for Global Affairs at The University of the West Indies. She also has extensive experience working in multilateral development agencies. She was Assistant Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for Trinidad and Tobago, Aruba, Curaçao and St Maarten; Chief Technical Advisor, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); Consultant, The World Bank, Washington DC and Programme Specialist, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris.

GREGORY T. CHIN



Gregory T. Chin (PhD, York University) is an Associate Professor of Political Science/Political Economy at York University, Canada, and a Senior Fellow of the Global Development Policy Center at Boston University, and of the Foreign Policy Institute at the Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies. He is Co-Director of the Emerging Global Governance (EGG) Project at Global Policy journal online. He has published widely on the international and comparative political economy of China, Asia, the BRICS, international money and global finance. Greg worked in the Government of Canada from 2000 to 2007, in Ottawa at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and the Canadian International Development Agency, 2000-2003, and as First Secretary at the Canadian Embassy in Beijing, 2003-2006.

MARGARET MYERS



Margaret Myers is director of the Asia & Latin America Program at the Inter-American Dialogue, a researcher with the Núcleo Milenio sobre los Impactos de China en América Latina, and a senior advisor to the United States Institute of Peace. She has published extensively on China's relations with the Latin America and Caribbean region, testified before the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate on the China-Latin America relationship, and is regularly featured in major domestic and international media. She is a member of the faculty at Georgetown University and the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

CHRIS ALDEN



Chris Alden is Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and Director of LSE IDEAS. He has published widely on China and Global South, South African foreign policy and post-conflict reconstruction. Amongst his single and co-authored publications is *China in Africa* (Zed 2007), *China and Latin America – development, agency and geopolitics* (Bloomsbury 2023) and *The South in World Politics* (Palgrave 2010).

ROHAN MUKHERJEE



Rohan Mukherjee is Assistant Professor of International Relations and Deputy Director of LSE IDEAS at the London School of Economics and Political Science. His research focuses on rising powers and how they navigate the power and status hierarchies of international order. He is the author of *Ascending Order: Rising Powers and the Politics of Status in International Institutions* (Cambridge University Press). His regional focus is on the Asia-Pacific, particularly how major powers such as India, China, the United States, and Japan, and smaller states in South and Southeast Asia, manage the regional effects of global transitions.

SEBASTIÁN NIETO PARRA



Sebastián Nieto Parra is Head of the Latin American and Caribbean Unit at the OECD Development Centre. He coordinates and manages the Latin American Economic Outlook, in partnership with CAF, UN-ECLAC and the European Commission, the OECD Multi-Dimensional Country Reviews of Latin America and the report Revenue Statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean. He also manages other regional reports, in key topics for Latin America including well-being, informality and financing for development. Previously, he participated in the production of several OECD reports on emerging and developing economies. Before joining the OECD, Mr. Nieto-Parra was senior economist for Latin America at Santander Bank, Madrid. Prior to that, he worked at the Central Bank of Colombia and the Colombian Ministry of Finance. He completed his graduate studies in Economics at Sciences Po Paris and Toulouse School of Economics. He holds a PhD in Economics from Sciences Po Paris. He also teaches economic policy of emerging markets at Sciences Po Paris.

ZHONGJING WANG



Zhongjing Wang is the inaugural Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Multilateral Cooperation Center for Development Finance (MCDF). Before being appointed as CEO, he served as Head of the Interim Secretariat tasked with establishing the multilateral finance facility. Mr. Wang is a global leader and advocate for high quality connectivity infrastructure with a relentless focus on diversity, transparency, equality, innovation, and collaboration. Prior to joining the MCDF, Zhongjing served as the Director-General of the Center for Evaluation of the World Bank Loan Projects in the Chinese Ministry of Finance leading the cooperation between China and multilateral financial institutions and bilateral development partners with an annual lending portfolio of roughly \$7 billion. He has served on the Board of multiple international organizations and financial mechanisms, including the Asian Development Bank, the New Development Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and Adaptation Fund. He was a council member of the Global Environmental Facility, Global Infrastructure Facility, and the Women Entrepreneurship Finance Initiative. Mr. Wang holds an MPA from Harvard Kennedy School, a Certificate of International Tax Program from Harvard Law School and an LL.B from Peking University.

ILIANA OLIVIÉ



Iliana Olivie is Senior Analyst at the Elcano Royal Institute and director of the European Think Tanks Group (ETTG). She is also an Associate Professor at the Department of Applied & Structural Economics & History in Complutense University of Madrid. Ph.D. in Economics in 2002, she is a member of the Spanish Council for Development Cooperation (a consultation body of the Spanish Administration) and vice-president for policy engagement of the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes (EADI). She works on globalization and international development, including global development agendas, European aid policies, economic development and global development finance.

GABRIEL FELPETO



Gabriel Felpeto has over 25 years of experience in the areas of capital markets and other financial activities. As CFO of CAF, his main responsibility is to guarantee the Institution's financial solvency and the continuity of its operations. Currently, he oversees the management of a liquid portfolio of USD 12 bn, as well as the funding in the international capital markets through the issuance of bonds, commercial paper and deposits for a current outstanding of USD 25bn. Additionally, Gabriel is responsible for establishing asset and liability management policies and for the relationship with the international rating agencies. In that front, the Institution has stood out for its high ratings and for various improvements thereof and has been known for a long time as the frequent issuer with the highest ratings in Latin America. The finance department is also in charge of CAF's institutional relationships with other supranational development banks and official government entities. Before joining CAF in 1995, Gabriel was Vice President of Finance at Banco Unión in Caracas, Venezuela. Gabriel holds an MBA from the Instituto de Estudios Superiores en Administración (IESA) and a BS in Mechanical Engineering from the Universidad Simón Bolívar. He was born in Caracas, Venezuela.

DR VERÓNICA FRISANCHO



Verónica Frisancho is Chief Economist at CAF, the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean. Before joining CAF, Verónica worked for over 10 years as a Lead Economist in the Research Department of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). Her research focuses on development economics, with an emphasis on education, labor markets in developing countries, gender, inclusion, and financial education. Verónica has published in various prestigious academic journals and has won several awards for her research. Additionally, she was selected as one of the 50 most powerful women in Peru in 2024 by Forbes Peru. Verónica holds a Ph.D. in Economics from Pennsylvania State University and a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Universidad del Pacífico in Lima, Peru.